THE IDEOLOGY OF NATION AND RACE: THE CROATIAN USTASHA REGIME AND ITS POLICIES TOWARD MINORITIES IN THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA, 1941-1945.

NEVENKO BARTULIN

A thesis submitted in fulfilment

Of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of New South Wales

November 2006

PLEASE TYPE

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
Thesis/Dissertation Sheet

Surname or Family name: Bartulin

First name: Nevenko

Other name/s:

Abbreviation for degree as given in the University calendar: PhD

School: History

Faculty: Arts and Social Sciences

Title: The Ideology of Nation and Race: The Croatian Ustasha regime and its policies toward minorities in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941-1945.

Abstract 350 words maximum: (PLEASE TYPE)

This thesis examines the central place of racial theories in the nationalist ideology of the Croatian Ustasha movement and regime, and how these theories functioned as the chief motive in shaping Ustasha policies toward the minorities of the Nazi-backed Independent State of Croatia (known by its Croatian initials as the NDH), namely, Serbs, Jews, Roma and Bosnian Muslims, during the years 1941 to 1945.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first part deals with historical background, concentrating on the history of Croatian national movements from the 1830s to the 1930s. The second part covers the period between the founding of the Ustasha movement in 1930 and the creation of the NDH in 1941. The third part examines the period of Ustasha power from 1941 to 1945. Through the above chronological division, the thesis traces the evolution of Ustasha ideas on nation and race, placing them within the historical context of processes of Croatian national integration. Although the Ustashe were brought to power by Nazi Germany, their ideology emerged less as an imitation of German National Socialism and more as an extremist reaction to the supranational and expansionist nationalist ideologies of Yugoslavism and Greater Serbianism. In contrast to the prevailing historiographical view that has either ignored or downplayed the significance of racial theories on Ustasha policies toward the minorities of the NDH, this thesis highlights the marked influence of the question of 'race' on Ustasha attitudes toward the 'problem' of minorities, and on the wider question of Croatian national identity.

This thesis examines the Ustashe by focusing on the historical interplay between nationalism and racism, which dominated so much of the modern political life of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The fusion of nationalism and racism was not unique to Ustasha ideology, but the evolution and nature of Ustasha racism was. Ustasha racial ideas were therefore the product of both specific Croatian and wider European historical trends. This examination of the historical intersection between nationalism and racism in the case of the Ustashe will, I hope, broaden our understanding of twentieth-century nation-state formation, and state treatment of minorities, in the Balkans and Eastern Europe.

Declaration relating to disposition of project thesis/dissertation

I hereby grant to the University of New South Wales or its agents the right to archive and to make available my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in the University libraries in all forms of media, now or here after known, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. I retain all property rights, such as patent rights. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.

I also authorise University Microfilms to use the 350 word abstract of my thesis in Dissertation Abstracts International (this is applicable to doctoral theses only).

N. Bartulin ..... Signature

N. Bartulin ..... Witness

20/08/07 ..... Date

The University recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances requiring restrictions on copying or conditions on use. Requests for restriction for a period of up to 2 years must be made in writing. Requests for a longer period of restriction may be considered in exceptional circumstances and require the approval of the Dean of Graduate Research.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY Date of completion of requirements for Award:

ORIGINALITY STATEMENT

'I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at UNSW or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom I have worked at UNSW or elsewhere, is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis. I also declare that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work, except to the extent that assistance from others in the project's design and conception or in style, presentation and linguistic expression is acknowledged.'

Signed .....

Date .....20/08/07.....

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

'I hereby grant the University of New South Wales or its agents the right to archive and to make available my thesis or dissertation in whole or part in the University libraries in all forms of media, now or here after known, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. I retain all proprietary rights, such as patent rights. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.
I also authorise University Microfilms to use the 350 word abstract of my thesis in Dissertation Abstract International (this is applicable to doctoral theses only).
I have either used no substantial portions of copyright material in my thesis or I have obtained permission to use copyright material; where permission has not been granted I have applied/will apply for a partial restriction of the digital copy of my thesis or dissertation.'

Signed .....N. Santhi.....

Date .....20/08/07.....

AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT

'I certify that the Library deposit digital copy is a direct equivalent of the final officially approved version of my thesis. No emendation of content has occurred and if there are any minor variations in formatting, they are the result of the conversion to digital format.'

Signed .....N. Santhi.....

Date .....20/08/07.....

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Nicholas Doumanis, lecturer in the School of History at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, Australia, for the valuable guidance, advice and suggestions that he has provided me in the course of the writing of this thesis. Thanks also go to his colleague, and my co-supervisor, Günther Minnerup, as well as to Dr. Milan Vojković, who also read this thesis. I further owe a great deal of gratitude to the rest of the academic and administrative staff of the School of History at UNSW, and especially to my fellow research students, in particular, Matthew Fitzpatrick, Susie Protschky and Sally Cove, for all their help, support and companionship.

Thanks are also due to the staff of the Department of History at the University of Zagreb (*Sveučilište u Zagrebu*), particularly prof. dr. sc. Ivo Goldstein, and to the staff of the Croatian State Archive (*Hrvatski državni arhiv*) and the National and University Library (*Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica*) in Zagreb, for the assistance they provided me during my research trip to Croatia in 2004. I must also thank the University of Zagreb's Office for International Relations (*Ured za međunarodnu suradnju*) for the accommodation made available to me during my research trip.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents Luka and Manda Bartulin, for all their support, moral and financial, without which this thesis could not have been completed.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the short period from 1941 to 1945, the Croatian Ustasha* regime attempted to remove, through deportation, physical extermination and forced assimilation, the Serbian, Jewish and Roma minorities of the 'Independent State of Croatia' (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH). The Nazi-backed regime also attempted the first serious effort by any regime in the region to nationally integrate the large Muslim population of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This endeavour of 'demographic engineering' in the Balkans in the 1940s was, as Stanley Payne rightly asserts, of 'truly Hitlerian proportions,' considering the fact that non-Croatian ethnic, racial and religious minorities constituted approximately one-half of the NDH's population.[1] Jonathan Gumz correctly attributes Ustasha policies to an agenda of a 'nationalizing war', that is, 'the extensive use of military and political violence to reduce a multi-national state to a nation-state.'[2] This war was another in the series of nationalizing wars that have plagued Balkan and Eastern European political life since the early nineteenth century. The principle of ethnic homogeneity was viewed by successive politicians in the Balkans as a corollary to political, social and economic modernization.[3] Modernization implied centralization, and this in turn implied cultural uniformity.[4]

---

* 'Ustasha' (*Ustaša*) is singular and adjectival, while 'Ustashe' (*Ustaše*) is the plural form.

[1] Stanley Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), p. 138.

[2] Jonathan E. Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia, 1941-1942' *The Historical Journal,* 44, 4, 2001, p. 1019.

[3] Mark Mazower, *The Balkans* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000), p. 109. In Mazower's words, 'the liberal concept of the nation-state aimed to reconcile majoritarian ethnic rule with guarantees of individual rights…In theory, assimilation of the minority to the majority was supposed in the long run to lead to a homogenisation of the population. But the theory collided with the realities of politics in Europe's

Nationalizing wars were prominent in the East and South-East of Europe because until the nineteenth century, this area was home to multi-national empires 'with an appallingly complex patchwork of linguistic and cultural differences'.[5] In conditions such as these, wrote Ernest Gellner, 'culturally homogeneous nation-states, such as are held to be normative and prescribed by history in nationalist theory, can be produced only by ethnic cleansing'.[6] As Holm Sundhaussen notes in the case of Croatia, 'the excesses of the Ustasha regime toward the Serbs stand in the tradition of "ethnic cleansing", which was practiced to a great extent for the first time by the participant states of the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and was now raised to an extreme'.[7]

The Ustashe were conscious that their 'independent state' could only be culturally homogeneous through 'ethnic cleansing', and they willingly accepted this fact. In contrast to earlier Balkan and East European attempts of ethnic cleansing, Ustasha 'nation-building' was able to converge with Nazi Germany's European wide race war.[8] In other words, the Ustashe

---

post-imperial states, where tensions, animosities and suspicion between ethnic groups ran high'. See ibid, p. 105.

[4] ibid, p. 110.

[5] Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), p. 54.

[6] ibid, p. 56.

[7] See Holm Sundhaussen, 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan-Raum', *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte,* 48, 1993, p. 250. All translations of German and Croatian citations in this thesis are the author's own.

[8] The Ustasha mass murder of 'undesirable' ethnic minorities in the NDH has been well documented by both Croatian and non-Croatian historians. See in particular, Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941-1945* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1977), pp. 162-187, Jonathan Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia', Ladislaus Hory and Martin Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat, 1941-1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1964), pp. 89-106, Yeshayahu Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1984, pp. 195-210, Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1994), pp. 154-164, Holm Sundhaussen, 'Der Ustascha-Staat: Anatomie eines Herrschaftssystems', *Österreichische Osthefte,* No. 37, 1995, pp. 521-532 and Jozo Tomasevich,

aided the Nazis in the latter's racial persecution of Jews and Gypsies, while the Nazis supported the anti-Serbian policies of the Ustashe. Ustasha racism differed considerably from Nazi racism, however, in that the former was based primarily on the principle that state and nationality should correspond, while German racism was based on an imperialist expansionism, which sought *Lebensraum* for the German *Herrenvolk,* as well as the enslavement of the Russian *Untermenschen*, in the expanses of the East.

Ustasha genocide was underlined by two principal aims. One was to establish a Croatian nation-state for the first time in modern history, and secondly, to simultaneously remove the ethnic, racial and religious minorities that the Ustashe considered both alien and a threat to the organic unity of the Croatian nation. Closely linked to the above two aims was the attempt to redefine the notion of Croatian nationhood by grounding it upon a firm ethno-linguistic/racial basis. The way the Ustashe 'imagined' the Croatian nation has received little attention from historians. This is because the historiography has always centred on the attempt to establish an independent state, which is represented by historians as the main Ustasha aim.

The lack of historiographical interest in Ustasha 'imaginings' of the nation is due, to a large extent, to the fact that historiography on the Ustashe was tainted for a long time by the ideological conflict between 'Marxist' Yugoslavism and anti-Communist Croatian separatism.

War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration (California: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 392-409, 528-548, 592-604, 608-610. For policies on Jews and Gypsies, see, respectively, Ivo Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu* (Zagreb: Novi Liber, 2001) and Narcisa Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima. Jasenovac 1942* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni cvijet, 2003).

Following 1945, 'one can certainly speak of a divided Croat memory' regarding the events of the Second World War.[9] Tito's Communist regime wanted to emphasize that during the war, all 'Yugoslav' peoples had fought together against the fascist occupiers, including the puppet Ustasha regime.[10] Yugoslav historiography in turn reflected official 'Marxist' dogma, which condemned the Ustasha NDH both for its aim to create a separate Croatian state and its alliance with fascism. Although post 1945 Yugoslav constitutions guaranteed the right, in principle, of self-determination for the nations of Yugoslavia, 'in practice', as the Croatian historian Nikša Stančić points out, 'every declaration for the realization of such a principle was sharply sanctioned as a danger for the "brotherhood and unity of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia" and for socialism'.[11] Any open manifestation of support for an independent Croatian state in post war Communist Yugoslavia, or outside it, was immediately castigated by the regime as an 'Ustasha' or 'pro-Ustasha' sentiment. On the other hand, right-wing anti-Yugoslav Croat political émigrés in the West (many of whom were former Ustashe) defended the NDH as a symbol of the Croatian struggle for independence against the forces of Greater Serbian nationalism and Yugoslav Communism. For the émigrés living in the West during the Cold War, the NDH seemed 'validated because of its radical opposition to communism'.[12]

---

[9] Mark Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State": Nationalism, Myth, and Memory in Twentieth-Century Croatia' in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), p. 66.

[10] ibid.

[11] Nikša Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Barbat, 2002), p. 135.

[12] Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State": Nationalism, Myth, and Memory', p. 66.

Consequently, two basic approaches, or what the Croatian historian Nada Kisić-Kolanović refers to as 'models', came to dominate historiography on the Ustashe from 1945 to 1990: one is the above 'Marxist' model that dominated Croatian and Yugoslav historiography; the other is the 'Nostalgic-Apologetic' model, which was found primarily among the Croat émigrés.[13] Kisić-Kolanović aptly cites both models as 'unambiguous approaches in which the NDH is defined and interpreted within one idiom'.[14] Thus, the 'Marxist' approach, represented by historians such as Bogdan Krizman and Fikreta Jelić-Butić, categorized the NDH and the Ustasha regime as an exclusively Nazi-Fascist puppet state that was primarily the result of an international constellation (i.e. the Second World War).[15] This 'Marxist' definition was the product of an official ideology, 'according to which any attempt to create an independent Croatian state was exclusively an act of Croatian chauvinism and the legitimizing of terror on other peoples'.[16] On the other hand, émigré intellectuals such as Vinko Nikolić and Antun Bonifačić, and their journal *Hrvatska revija*, downplayed or ignored the racism and genocidal policies of the Ustashe and sought to understand the NDH almost solely as the 'historical realization of an independent Croatian state'.[17] Therefore, the way the Ustashe 'imagined' the Croatian nation was dealt with in a perfunctory manner by both 'Marxist' and 'Nostalgic-Apologetic' historians; the former approach was primarily interested in finding 'fascist traitors' in order to justify Communist Yugoslavia's existence, while the latter one

[13] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest,* God. 34, Br. 3, 2002, p. 684.
[14] ibid.
[15] ibid, pp. 684-685.
[16] ibid, p. 685.
[17] ibid, p. 687.

sought to find 'Croat patriots' to justify the legitimacy of establishing an independent Croatian state.

Many of the above works are certainly not without scholarly merit, but they lack in-depth historical analysis, and facts are used selectively to make an implicit or explicit political point. This is the case, for example, with the largest piece of research conducted in the former Yugoslavia on the Ustashe, Bogdan Krizman's massive five volume series on the history of the Ustashe from the late 1970s and early 80s: *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, the two volume *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, and *Pavelić u bjekstvu* (the last volume dealt with the postwar fate of the Ustashe). Although of estimable value for its factual information, drawn from an exhaustive amount of archival sources, Krizman made few insightful conclusions about either the nature of Ustasha rule or of the evolution of Ustasha ideology. His works consist for the most part of a systematic narrative. At the end of each book Krizman provided his own conclusions, with a point-by-point summary, on the basis of the archival evidence. Krizman, writing from a Yugoslav and 'Marxist' perspective, was only interested in emphasizing the fascist – and therefore traitorous – links of the Ustashe. In the final point of his conclusion to his first book, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, Krizman asserted, for example, that the Ustasha leader Ante Pavelić, 'who led the radical extremist nationalistic wing of Croatian bourgeois politics with a greater Croatian programme', had already betrayed the Croatian people in the 1920s and 30s by 'linking himself in his political activities in exile with the imperialism of Italian Fascism and the remaining totalitarian-terrorist regimes and forces in Europe'.[18]

[18] Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978), p. 530.

In short, Krizman is helpful in providing facts but not with any insightful analysis of how Ustasha ideas were formulated historically. Other standard works on the Ustashe in Croatian from the 'Marxist' period follow much the same pattern. Of the publications by émigré Croat historians, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike 1895-1945* by Jere Jareb is the most illuminating work, for it attempts to locate the Ustashe within the context of half a century of Croatian politics. His assessment of Ustasha rule is based on Western archival material and the testimonies of émigré Ustasha politicians and officials. Its main weakness lies in Jareb's attempt to legitimize the NDH as an independent Croatian state, whilst condemning the Pavelić regime (which he describes as 'totalitarian'), thereby attempting to distinguish the state from the regime, which is not plausible, considering the state was created and controlled by the Ustasha movement. Furthermore, Jareb writes little on the subject of Ustasha ideology itself, especially the movement's racism, which he generally downplays, although he readily admits, in stark contrast to other émigré writers, that 'the destruction of the Serbs' was a policy of the Ustasha movement.[19]

The historiography on the Ustashe during the period 1945-1990 in Western languages is quite limited. *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941-1945* from 1964, written by the late German historian Martin Broszat, in collaboration with the Hungarian journalist Ladislaus Hory, remains one of the most comprehensive studies. Broszat's work was also strong on narrative history but weak on analysis, especially with regard to the evolution of Ustasha ideology and the role of that ideology in shaping the policies toward minorities. For Broszat,

[19] Jere Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike 1895-1945* (1960; Zagreb: Biblioteka hrvatska povjesnica, 1995) p. 89.

the Ustashe were a 'proto-fascist or half-fascist' radical nationalist movement committed to ethnic purity with no detailed economic or social programme.[20] Broszat paid a great deal of attention to the apparently important role of Catholicism in Ustasha ideology, even referring to the Ustashe as the 'Catholic-Croatian type of fascism'.[21]

This identification of the Ustashe, and Croatian nationalism in general, with Roman Catholicism has long been popular with Western authors, probably because it is convenient to reduce the complex historical relationship between Croats and Serbs to a simple question of religious (i.e Catholic-Orthodox) conflict. This is important to note, because the dividing line between Croats and Serbs has often been erroneously designated as being fundamentally a religious one, between two 'groups' of essentially the same 'nation'. This interpretation has also led to a subsequent misinterpretation of the aims of the Ustasha regime, including attempts to portray it as a Catholic clericalist regime.

The 'Catholic interpretation' of the Ustashe and their aims was most popular in the 1960s and 70s, especially with the publication of the very biased anti-Catholic work of Edmond Paris, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia, 1941-1945.* Particular mention should also be made here of Carlo Falconi's *The Silence of Pius XII*, which dealt with the wartime Vatican response to Nazi and Ustasha atrocities. There were other books that appeared during the 1960s, such as the works by Robert Katz, which also sought to accuse Pope Pius XII for his supposedly

[20] See Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, pp. 177-178.
[21] ibid, p. 72.

passive stance toward Nazism.[22] Paris and Falconi also accuse the Vatican, or at least certain Church figures, of complicity and/or passivity in the face of Ustasha crimes. Although Falconi uses considerable archival sources, the conclusions he often arrives at are simply not tenable. According to Falconi, for example, the NDH 'was racist, true enough, but not, or only partly, on merely biological grounds; the main grounds were religious. Its aim was not to turn the Croats into a pure people by the elimination of any mixture of blood but by the elimination of elements extraneous to its faith'.[23]

Contrary to Falconi's assertion, the Ustashe were in fact a secular ultra-nationalist movement that considered the notions of nation and race, rather than religion, to be supreme, as made clear by the Ustasha attempt to integrate the Bosnian Muslims into the Croatian nation. The Ustashe did indeed emphasize the Western Catholic heritage of the Croats, but they also stressed that the Croats were a 'bridge' between the West (understood as the Latin-Germanic world) and the East (the Slavic world), as well as between Europe and the Islamic 'Orient'. The Ustashe were adamantly opposed to political Catholicism and were determined not to allow the Catholic Church in Croatia the opportunity to shape or determine any major state policy, internal or external. Although the Church welcomed the establishment of an

[22] Pius' niece successfully sued Katz for defamation for his book *Death in Rome* (1967). See Nicholas Farrell, *Mussolini: A New Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), pp. 367-369. While Pius's role in the Second World War – especially as to whether he should have openly spoken out against the Nazis – is still a matter of debate, one cannot overlook the role of the Vatican in saving Jewish lives. According to a former Israeli diplomat, Pinchas E. Lapide, the Catholic Church was responsible for saving at least 700,000 Jews from death in the Holocaust, which 'exceeded by far those saved by all other churches, religious institutions, and rescue organizations combined'. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 604.

[23] Carlo Falconi, *The Silence of Pius XII*, Translated by Bernard Wall (London: Faber & Faber, 1970), p. 271. Also see Edmond Paris, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia, 1941-1945: A Record of Racial and Religious Persecutions and Massacres* (Chicago: American Institute for Balkan Affairs, 1961) for similar views to those of Falconi.

independent Croatian state, it could not identify with the secular aims and policies of a racist regime closely allied to 'pagan' Nazi Germany, and which wanted, among other things, to subordinate all institutions in the state to the interests of the Ustasha movement.

The coupling of Catholicism and Ustasha nationalism continues to be accepted by many Western scholars, even though the arguments in its favour are weak. Jonathan Steinberg, for example, pays little attention to the tension between the Church and Ustashe in his short 1994 chapter-length study, 'Types of Genocide? Croatians, Serbs, Jews, 1941-5'.[24] He argues that the Ustashe 'combined Catholic piety and Croatian nationalism' and that 'the Church and its faith provided a part of the ideology in whose name the Ustasha practised genocide'.[25] According to Steinberg, 'to be a Serb or Croat was to be Orthodox or Catholic' and the Croatians hated the Serbian minority in Habsburg ruled Croatia because, as 'Vlachs', the Serbs had received privileges from the Habsburgs in addition to being Orthodox.[26] The Croats were supposedly a 'community defined by religion and by almost nothing else' and therefore 'hated the [Orthodox] Serbs and so killed them'.[27] Steinberg's simplistic argument sheds very little light on the nature of Ustasha nationalism. At the very least, it cannot explain why the Ustashe exterminated the small number of Catholic Gypsies in Croatia.

In his article, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia 1941-1942', Jonathan Gumz provides new insights into the different nature of 'technocratic' Nazi and 'primitive'

[24] See Jonathan Steinberg, 'Types of Genocide? Croatians, Serbs, Jews, 1941-5', in David Cesarani (ed.), *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
[25] ibid, pp. 177, 189.
[26] ibid, pp. 188-189.
[27] ibid, p. 189-190.

Ustasha violence against enemy civilian populations, by examining the language used by Wehrmacht officers in their reports, but also misinterprets the relationship between Ustasha ideology and Roman Catholicism. He argues that the Ustashe 'envisioned a Croatian and Catholic nation-state', and that the 'Ustaša attempted to tie itself to Catholicism through using a dagger superimposed upon a Catholic crucifix as the movement's symbol', even though this is not factual.[28] By giving Catholicism such a central place in Ustasha ideology, Gumz is unable to answer why the Ustashe attached so much importance to the national integration of Bosnian Muslims. He can only comment that 'once in power, the Ustaša simply declared Muslims to be ethnic Croatians of the Islamic faith'.[29]

Rory Yeomans is also unable to account for Ustasha Islamophilia in his recent article, 'Militant Women, Warrior Men and Revolutionary Personae'.[30] Yeomans admits that the Ustashe were not wedded to Catholic doctrine, but instead maintains that they were driven by a Catholic derived religious 'mysticism'. He remarks that 'as with the Orthodox Romanian Iron Guard, the overtly apocalyptic, violent and chiliastic imagery the Ustashas employed reflected their extreme Manichean view of the world'.[31] Yet, the major Ustasha ideological tracts show little trace of such a *Weltanschauung*. For example, in the seventeen 'Ustasha principles', the central Ustasha ideological document issued by the 'Poglavnik' ('Leader')

[28] Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia', pp. 1025-1026.
[29] ibid, p. 1026.
[30] Rory Yeomans, 'Militant Women, Warrior Men and Revolutionary Personae: The New Ustasha Man and Woman in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941-1945, *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4, October 2005.
[31] ibid, pp. 705-706.

Ante Pavelić in 1933, and which acted as the 'legal' basis of the NDH, there was not a single reference to Catholicism or any chiliastic Manichean 'mysticism'.[32]

In contrast to Steinberg, Gumz and Yeomans, Mark Biondich has recently brought attention in his article, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', to how little the Ustashe were motivated in their anti-Serbian measures by Catholic clericalism, for their central aim, that of an independent Croatian state, was 'eminently secular'.[33] The Ustashe were, as Biondich points out, 'integral nationalists', worshippers of the 'cult of the state' and motivated by anti-Serbianism and anti-Communism.[34] The Ustashe were also racists, but Biondich downplays the racial aspect of Ustasha ideology by arguing, with little evidence, that the Ustashe 'never formulated a coherently racist ideology' in that the ideology's 'racial undertone' was implicit 'rather than explicit'.[35] This thesis makes the contrary claim.

The key subject of Ustasha ideology – and the central place of race within it – has not been examined thoroughly by any historian, Croatian speaking or not, and continues to be neglected or ignored. Since the collapse of Communist Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and the opportunity to examine once inaccessible archives, a great deal of scholarly work has

[32] The ideology of the Orthodox Romanian Iron Guard was quite different from that of the Ustashe. The leader of the Iron Guard (or the 'Legion of the Archangel Michael' as it was originally known), Corneliu Codreanu, stated that the 'final aim' of the Iron Guard 'is not the life, but the resurrection. The resurrection of people in the name of our saviour Jesus Christ'. See Constantin Iordachi, 'Charisma, Religion, and Ideology: Romania's Interwar Legion of the Archangel Michael', in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), p. 28.

[33] See Mark Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustaša Policy of Forced Religious Conversions, 1941-1942', *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 83, No. 1, January 2005, p. 113.

[34] ibid, pp. 77, 113.

[35] ibid, p. 78.

inevitably appeared in, and outside of, Croatia on the NDH, especially on its political relations with other Axis countries and the NDH's internal political and military structures.[36] During the 1990s, there were also, unfortunately, official attempts aimed at rehabilitating the NDH by the government of the newly independent Republic of Croatia, under the former Partisan and Yugoslav army general, Franjo Tudjman, and his Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). Tudjman felt that Croatian national unity could not be achieved without overcoming the post-war 'divided Croat memory'. He therefore tried to reconcile and harmonize the opposing Communist Partisan and Ustasha pasts of Croatia by simultaneously emphasizing the Croat role in the Partisans and the legitimacy of the Ustasha aim to create an independent state, while the mass crimes and fascist nature of the NDH were generally either conveniently downplayed or simply ignored.[37]

Generally, however, such politicized attempts aimed at revising history did not influence public opinion in any significant way, and few historians were affected by any revisionism.[38] No serious Croatian historian now questions the terrible crimes committed by the NDH or the totalitarian system of Ustasha rule. All the same, fundamental questions regarding the 'real' nature of the NDH continue to be debated by Croatian historians, because the Ustasha state needs to be placed both within the wider historical context of processes of Croatian

[36] Kisić-Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', pp. 691-696.
[37] In 1990, for example, Tudjman stated, at the first general congress of the HDZ in Zagreb, that the NDH 'was not only a fascist creation but also an expression of the centuries long aspirations of the Croatian nation for an independent state'. See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 596-618 and Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State"', pp. 70-73.
[38] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 618.

national integration, as well as the context of Nazi policies of occupation and genocide.[39] Yet Croatian and non-Croatian historians remain reluctant to attach any historical significance to the crucial topic of Ustasha race theories. Outwardly, this is hardly surprising, since historians have been traditionally unwilling to treat crackpot racist ideas, such as those of the Nazis, with serious scholarly appraisal. As the late George Mosse pointed out, 'racism has been on the whole a stepchild of modern historiography…historians have tended to see it as a by-product of other more tangible forces: the ruling class, capitalism or the bourgeoisie'.[40] In the case of the Ustashe, however, there are other more specific reasons as to why their racist ideas are treated with little or no historical analysis.

Croatian historians, for their part, have probably been reluctant to analyse Ustasha race theory in depth because the whole question of Croat ethnic or 'racial' identity and origins has long been a highly politicized question. This is because all the main Croatian national ideologies since the mid nineteenth century have adhered to romantic racial notions whereby the 'true' identity of the modern Croatian nation is derived from the earliest ancestors of the Croats. If those early Croats were found to be, for example, 'pure' Slavs, then pan-Slavist ideologists could feel justified in their political beliefs. If, on the other hand, the proto-Croats were a Slavicized 'Iranian' or 'Gothic' tribe, then anti-pan-Slav Croatian nationalists also felt ideologically vindicated. As Noel Malcolm aptly notes, 'racial history is the bane of the Balkans…at many times during the last two centuries, bogus theories of

[39] Kisić-Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', pp. 693-698.
[40] George Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution: Toward a General Theory of Fascism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1999), pp. xiii-xiv.

racial-ethnic identity had dominated the national politics of the Balkans'.[41] The question of Croatian ethnogenesis is, as Ivo Rendić-Miočević recently observes,

> 'one of the most perplexing questions of the early Middle Ages in Central and South-East Europe, and has been ascribed variously to the Slavs, Iranians, or Avars…some of these hypotheses…even if not based on solid evidence, have been transformed into conventionally accepted ideology'.[42]

The question of Croatian ethnic origins has thus been subject to the influence of what the Croatian philologist Radoslav Katičić has referred to as 'ideologems', in other words, the 'ideological undertakings, which make selective choices [from history] in order to orchestrate contemporary thoughts and feelings.'[43] It is therefore no surprise that Croatian historians have been cautious to analyse seriously any 'ideologems' of Croat ethnic origins, especially the racist Ustasha one. By undertaking such an analysis historians may fear giving intellectual credence to Ustasha nationalism, an ideology that was based on extreme ethnic nationalism and race hatred. Yet, a historical analysis of Ustasha racism is necessary if we are to have a deeper understanding of how racial ideas shaped the formulation of state policies toward ethnic minorities that resulted in mass murder.

The lack of interest Western historians have shown in analysing Ustasha race theories is largely due, on the other hand, to the continuing adherence of many, explicitly or implicitly,

---

[41] Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1996), p. 1.
[42] Ivo Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', *East European Quarterly*, XXXVI, No. 1, March 2002, pp. 3-4.
[43] Radoslav Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', in Ivan Supičić (ed.), *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), p. 149.

to the 'dogma' of Yugoslavism; in other words to the idea that Croats and Serbs are more or less 'groups' or 'tribes' of the same 'Yugoslav' nation, or that at the very least, are ethnically very closely related peoples, differentiated only by religion.[44] According to this view, any notion (and not simply the racist Ustasha one) that Croats are ethnically distinct from Serbs is treated almost solely as the ideological prejudice of 'Germanophile' or 'Catholic reactionary' nationalists or, at the least, needs to be taken with great caution. Subsequently, Ustasha race theory is seen as too obviously ridiculous and instrumentalized, because the Croats are supposedly of the same, more or less pure Slavic 'ethnic stock' as Serbs. Such an idea is itself a pan-Slavist racial myth, for there is no such thing as the 'Slavic race' or the South Slav 'ethnic branch' of such a race.[45] Although this last point may seem superfluous, it is still necessary to stress it in view of the sizeable number of noteworthy academics who persist in maintaining Yugoslavist race myths.

The idea of pan-South Slav 'racial unity' had, to be sure, widespread acceptance in both academic and popular circles, not only in the two Yugoslav states, the Kingdom of

[44] The historian John V. A. Fine Jr. is one of the most ardent academic supporters of such a view. He claims, for example, that 'it is a pity that the narrow "Croat" choice (or "Serb" choice, etc.) won out, for had the South Slavs then (in the nineteenth or twentieth century) come to see themselves in the reasonable and broad terms of being Yugoslavs, then they would have spared themselves much vicious warfare in the twentieth century'. See J. V. A. Fine Jr., *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early-Modern Periods* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006), p. 561. Fine's assertion implies that 'Croat' is some sort of inferior 'tribal' name within the 'broad' 'Yugoslav' racial category.

[45] Yugoslavist supranationalism sought to derive the national identity of Croats and Serbs almost solely from the Slavic migrations into the Balkans in the sixth and seventh centuries AD. As Noel Malcolm appropriately remarks in connection with the history of Kosovo, 'we should never forget that all individual ancestries are mixed – especially in this part of Europe [i.e. the South-East]. When a Serb today reads about the arrival of the early Serbs, he may not be wrong to suppose that he is reading about his ancestors; but he cannot be right to imagine that *all* his ancestors were in that population. The equivalent is true for the Albanians, and indeed for every other ethnic group in the Balkans'. See N. Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1998), p. 22.

Yugoslavia (1918-1941) and Communist Yugoslavia (1945-1990), but also in the West, where under the influence of popular works such as Rebecca West's 1941 publication, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon,* most Western scholars, journalists and politicians saw little cultural or ethnic difference between the South Slav peoples. During the first half of the twentieth century, one could argue that there was an almost universal acceptance in the West of the idea of South Slav racial 'homogeneity'. This view began to change somewhat during the second half of the twentieth century, for Tito's Yugoslavia did officially recognize the various South Slav peoples as separate nations. These nations were nevertheless thought to belong, in whatever vague sense, to a larger South Slavic 'national' community, united by South Slav 'brotherhood and unity'. This was implicit in the ethno-linguistic term 'Yugoslav'. Unfortunately, the collapse of Communist Yugoslavia did not mean the end of the acceptance of the idea of Yugoslav 'ethnic homogeneity' among a large number of Western academics and politicians. On the contrary, the outbreak of war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1991 and 1992 only strengthened the conviction among many in the West that what was at play was an inter-religious conflict (or 'civil war') among the otherwise ethnically homogeneous 'South Slav tribes'.[46]

Since historians have not undertaken a thorough analysis of Ustasha racism, myths of 'Serbo-Croat' or 'Yugoslav' ethnic-racial homogeneity have continued to appear in Western

[46] For example, Thorvald Stoltenberg, a UN representative engaged in peace-making efforts in Bosnia, made the following remark in 1995: 'Ethnic war? I don't think so. The whole lot of them are Serbs…So are the Muslims…a great number of those who have the appearance of Croats…are in fact also Serbs'. For Stoltenberg, 'Serb' and 'Yugoslav' were synonymous terms. See Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 136.

academic works. For example, in the most comprehensive English study of the Ustashe (and Axis collaboration in the former Yugoslavia), the 2001 publication, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration*, the author, the late American historian Jozo Tomasevich, argued that

> 'many Ustashas, including Pavelić, believed that the Croatian people were not of Slavic, but of Gothic, origin. Their aim was probably to show that there was no kinship between the Croats and Serbs, although the two nations spoke practically the same language, lived intermixed or in contiguous areas, and came to the Balkans at about the same time'.[47]

Tomasevich spent a mere paragraph on Ustasha race theory in an otherwise detailed account of Ustasha rule (consisting of hundreds of pages), and dismissed Ustasha racial theory with the common assertion that Croats and Serbs were 'practically' the same people, since they shared the same language and a common ancestry. Tomasevich was so easily able to explain away the significance of Ustasha race theories because he had a 'reductionist' understanding of the complex nature of Croatian, and Serbian, nationhood. In other words, Croats and Serbs are more or less the same people because they speak the same language.

Similarly, the authors of *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change,* Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, claim, on the basis of the same common cliché that Croats and Serbs are, more or less, linguistically and ethnically the same people apart from religious differences, that 'the Ustase found it impossible to identify consistent "racial" or "biological" differences between Croats and Serbs, who had been formed from much the same Balkan "melting pot"

[47] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 348.

and even used the same spoken language (Serbo-Croat)'.[48] In *The Contested Country*, Aleksa Djilas similarly argues that the Ustashe 'never developed a coherent racist theory' and 'made no attempt to establish what radical characteristics distinguished Serbs from Croats'.[49]

One of the major English language historians of the Ustasha movement, the Slovak born Yeshayahu Jelinek, has also found it fit to argue that 'there existed no clear-cut and well developed national policy in the NDH'.[50] According to Jelinek, Ustasha racial theories vacillated between either arguing that the Croats were Aryans of Gothic or Iranian descent and had no Slavic origin, or admitting that the Croats were pure Slavs, but that the Serbs were descended from 'nomadic Vlach Balkanic elements'.[51] In fact, as this thesis highlights, the Ustashe developed a rather coherent racial theory whereby the Croats were identified explicitly as an Aryan people, but of mixed ethnic stock (including Iranian, Gothic, Illyrian-Celtic *and* Slavic strains). The Croats were specifically identified by the Ustashe as being predominantly of 'Dinaric' racial type, with a marked Nordic admixture (i.e. the 'Nordic-Dinaric' race). As far as the Serbs of the NDH were concerned, the Ustashe actually divided them into three main groups on the basis of their purported mixed ethnic-racial origins, which included Vlach, Serbian, Gypsy, Croatian and other origins, and accordingly, did not conduct a uniform policy toward all Serbs in the NDH. On the basis of such a division, some

[48] Robert Bideleux & Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 481.
[49] Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919-1953* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 119.
[50] Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', p. 195.
[51] ibid, pp. 195-196.

Serbs were to be deported or exterminated (those of 'Vlach' or 'Gypsy' origin), while others were to be assimilated (those of 'Croatian' background).

Contrary to widespread opinion, Ustasha racial theories and decrees were also not 'in defiance of Hitlerian racial theories', as Misha Glenny argues, and nor were the decrees (and the theories behind them) 'woolly', as Mark Mazower describes the Ustasha 'legal definition of Croatian nationality'.[52] Nor was Ustasha racism, to quote Jelinek, simply for 'external consumption', in other words, an attempt to win German sympathy through theories of Aryan racial descent.[53] As this thesis points out, the Ustashe found a good deal of 'understanding' from the Nazis on the issue of 'race', for the Nazis actually denied the existence of any such 'Slavic race' and 'Yugoslav nation', and awarded the Croats with 'Aryan' status, while the Serbs were described as having a 'Near Eastern' racial identity.

Ustasha race theories did not just appear out of the blue in 1941. Their origins lie in the earlier works of Croatian nationalist intellectuals, such as Filip Lukas, Milan Šufflay and Ivo Pilar. The Ustashe did not simply invent a racial theory to adapt to the political reality of a Nazi dominated Europe, although they were eager to place themselves as high as possible in the German imposed racial hierarchy of the 'new Europe'. As Mosse argued, one needs 'tradition to activate thought or else it can not be activated'.[54] For example, Mussolini found it difficult (though not impossible) to 'activate' an imported 'Nordic-Aryan' racial theory,

---

[52] Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), p. 499 and Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 111.
[53] Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities', p. 195.
[54] George L. Mosse, *Nazism: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978), p. 101.

which had had few adherents in Italy prior to the 1930s: 'when Italian racism was introduced, it had to be invented and you get a crude transposition from the German Aryan man to the Mediterranean Aryan man, whatever that was supposed to mean'.[55] In contrast, the Ustashe were able to build their theories upon the traditions of Ante Starčević's nineteenth century anti-pan-Slavism, medieval mythological traditions linking the Croats and the Goths, and upon a sizeable body of Croatian and non-Croatian academic work, dating as far back as the late nineteenth century, which dealt with the non-Slav (Iranian) origins of the proto-Croats.

The emphasis on 'race' was one significant reason why the Ustashe moved to a closer ideological and political relationship with the German Nazis rather than with the Italian Fascists, although the Ustashe were never as obsessed as the Nazis with physical 'racial' characteristics. James. J. Sadkovich, for his part, is somewhat off the mark when he claims that 'early Ustaša racism was…cultural, not biological, and more akin to Fascist italianità than the more virulent Nazi aryanism'.[56] From its very beginnings in the 1930s, the Ustasha movement and its racism leant toward National Socialist ideology. Sadkovich further maintains that the Ustashe 'began to develop a rather ambiguous racial theory' that was 'initially rather flexible', since both Muslims and Serbs living within 'historic' Croatia were accepted as Croats, and therefore, race for the Ustashe was a 'tactic needed to distinguish Croat from Serb and justify the rejection of Yugoslavism'.[57] This argument fails to take into

[55] ibid.
[56] James J. Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism 1927-1937* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987) p. 151.
[57] ibid, pp. 150-151.

account the influence of earlier Croatian racial theories, which gave Ustasha ideas much more coherence than Sadkovich assumes. Furthermore, there was nothing ambiguous or flexible about the acceptance of the Bosnian Muslims into the Croat nation, for the Ustashe had always regarded them as the racially purest Croats; nor was the inclusion of a substantial number of Croatian Serbs the result of 'initial flexibility', for they too were defined as racially Croatian ('Orthodox Croats').

Race theory was not simply a convenient 'tactic' the Ustashe stumbled across, for exclusive Croatian nationalists were faced with two rival national/racial ideologies, Yugoslavism and Greater Serbianism, which had long been intent on the national assimilation of the Croats. The Yugoslavists, for their part, sought to assimilate Croats into a broader South Slav national community, while Greater Serbian nationalists, who held that the Serbs were 'purer' Slavs than the Croats, attempted to assimilate Croats to Serbian nationhood. Ustasha ideologists therefore felt forced to spend an undue amount of time and effort elaborating on the distinct ethnic and cultural history of the Croats, albeit an ethnocentric and racist version. In this respect, the Ustasha movement managed to come up with a fairly coherent national 'ethno-history'[58] even before attaining power in 1941, the clearest example of which was Mladen Lorković's 1939 study, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* ('The People and Land of

[58] Ethno-history refers to 'the subjective view of later generations of a given cultural unit of population of the experience of their real or presumed forebears'. Ethno-histories are based on a combination of 'varying degrees of documented fact' and 'political myth', the latter being 'stories told, and widely believed, about the heroic past that serve some collective need in the present and future'. See Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 63.

the Croats'), the work of one of the leading Ustasha ideologists, which is analysed in detail in this thesis.[59]

Lorković's work viewed Croatian history outside of a pan-Slav and/or Yugoslav framework; in other words, a history unique to the Croats, who were a separate ethnic group, quite distinct from other Slavs. As this thesis shows, Lorković's study was one of a number of books and ideological tracts written by Ustasha and pro-Ustasha nationalist ideologists both before and after 1941, aiming to deconstruct the idea of Yugoslav and Slav ethnic/racial 'unity'. In her 1998 biography of Lorković entitled *Mladen Lorković*: *Ministar urotnik*, Kisić-Kolanović makes, however, only a brief mention of one of Lorković's central arguments in his 1939 publication, namely, that the Croats were the historical product of an ethnic mixture of Iranian proto-Croats, Slavs and the various peoples living in the former Roman provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia. Kisić-Kolanović simply notes that 'it is difficult to justify the historical digression that the Croats are a tribe "of Iranian-Caucasian race" and that they are "the non-Slavic stratum, which overlayed and organized the Slavic masses"'.[60] While there is no doubt that Lorković's *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* displays many such 'historical digressions', the most important point to note is that Lorković was able to write a coherent 'ethno-history' that could justify Ustasha claims of Croat ethnic/racial distinction.

The ideological coherence of pre-war Ustasha texts and articles shows that, contrary to Srdjan Trifković, who asserts that the Ustasha movement 'was an an anti-Serb and anti-

[59] See the newest edition, Mladen Lorković, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* (1939; Zagreb: DoNeHa, 1996).
[60] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković: Ministar urotnik* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1998), p. 30.

Yugoslav fit of rage, rather than a coherent elaboration of the Croatian national identity and "mission"',[61] a more critical and in-depth analysis of Ustasha ideas on race and nation is needed. Like so many other historians, Trifković merely repeats the same generalizations about the religious nature of the Croat-Serb divide.[62] This leads him to exaggerate the importance of the 'Serb' as the fundamental 'Other' to Croatian nationalism, as when he claims that, 'while to a Nazi "the Jew" was a necessary social and political concept, to a Frankist or an Ustasa "the Serb" was more than that: he was an integral part of his Croatness. Without him, Croatdom could not be defined, let alone practiced'.[63]

A closer look at Ustasha ideology will show it was more anti-Yugoslav in nature than anti-Serb. The Ustashe were therefore primarily interested in destroying the ideology of Yugoslavism, and not in the elimination of Serbs per se. Furthermore, the Ustashe also defined Croats in relation to other ethnic groups, such as the Jews and Gypsies. In any case, it is wholly unjustified to compare Nazi anti-Semitism, which, from the beginning of 1942, aimed at the destruction of *all* Jews found on the European continent, with Ustasha anti-Serbianism, which aimed at the removal of the Serb population from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but had no interest in the Serbians of Serbia, and which was to include from 1941, not only policies of outright extermination, but also deportation and forced

[61] Quoted in Srdjan Trifković, 'Yugoslavia in Crisis: Europe and the Croat Question, 1939-41', *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 1993, p. 531.
[62] Srdjan Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', *East European Quarterly*, XXVI, No. 3, September 1992, p. 366. Trifković remarks that, 'even though neither Orthodoxy nor Catholicism have never been the crucial moulding forces in the mainstream political movements in South Slav lands, the old schism created the first and by far the strongest means of differentiating the Serb from the linguistically and racially similar Croat'.
[63] ibid.

assimilation. Aleksa Djilas also similarly argues that the Ustasha 'massacres of Serbs are not essentially different from the attempt by the Third Reich to exterminate Jews'.[64] This line of argument actually brings into question the singularity of the Jewish Holocaust, in which of course the Ustashe, as loyal Nazi allies, were participants. By making a distinction between Ustasha and Nazi persecution, this thesis is not thereby attempting to downplay the gravity of the murderous racist policies to which Serbs in the NDH were subjected.

Why was the question of 'race' so important to the Ustashe? All the major Croatian national movements prior to the Ustashe – the Illyrianists, Yugoslavists and the Croatian Peasant Party – continually claimed that the Croats were a unique nation on the basis of their political and historical identity, but that their ethnic, cultural and 'racial' identity was not simply Croatian, but rather 'Yugoslav' and/or 'Slavic'. Faced with expansionist anti-Slav Hungarian, Italian and German nationalisms in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, proponents of Yugoslav ideology sought to counter Croatian fears of assimilation by more powerful neighbours with the idea of cultural unification with other South Slavs, and indeed all Slavs. Even the anti-Yugoslav Croatian Party of Right of Ante Starčević did not create a distinctly Croatian 'ethno-history' separate from other South Slavs. Consequently, the Ustashe became the first major Croatian national movement to unequivocally state that the Croats were a unique nation not only on the basis of their political traditions and history, but also, more significantly, on the basis of 'race'. Historians of the Ustashe, and Croatian nationalism in general, have failed to adequately examine the distinction between political and ethno-linguistic notions of Croatian nationhood, precisely

[64] Djilas, *The Contested Country*, 15fn, p. 208.

because of historiographical interest on the Ustasha political struggle for an independent state and the widespread tendency to regard Ustasha race theories as not being worthy of historical analysis.

Although historians have adequately noted the 'fascist' nature of the nationalist ideology formulated in the 'Ustasha principles', there has been little elaboration among historians on the difference and relationship between these ideological principles and those of earlier Croatian national ideologies. Kisić-Kolanović writes 'totalitarian' and 'authoritarian' in inverted commas to describe the Ustasha principles.[65] Martin Broszat pointed out that the document showed no 'ideological originality' or clearly defined either the 'government system' or the 'political-social new order'.[66] Fikreta Jelić-Butić also argues that the Ustashe did not 'work out [their] own concept' of social organization.[67] That was, on the contrary, the whole point. The Ustashe were far less interested in elaborating on socio-economic issues than their Fascist and National Socialist counterparts in Italy and Germany were, because they were concerned with a more fundamental issue: proving that Croats were a unique ethno-linguistic nation.

The 'Ustasha Principles' expressed the idea, as the German historian Holm Sundhaussen aptly summarises, that the Croats were 'a god-given immortal blood community, which conquered its settled areas 1400 years ago and therefore had acquired inalienable territorial

[65] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika: Sjećanje Slavka Kvaternika* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1997) p. 20. See also Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 94.
[66] Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 77.
[67] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 24.

rights'.[68] Sundhaussen fails, however, to mention that in contrast to the earlier programs of the Illyrians, Yugoslavists, of the Croatian Peasant Party and Croatian Party of Right, the Ustashe laid out, in the most unequivocal terms, the program of a purely Croatian nationalism. Jelić-Butić also neglects to note this when she argues, for example, that the Ustashe could not comprehend the fact that the Illyrian movement was a Croatian national movement that used the Illyrian name in order to overcome the regional differences of the Croats.[69] That this was the case is not in doubt, but the Illyrian movement was also dedicated, as shown in this thesis, to culturally uniting all South Slavs, not just the Croats, and did not regard the national identity of the Croats as simply Croatian, but also as Slavic and specifically South Slavic ('Illyrian'). In order to explore how the Ustashe came to define Croatian national and 'racial' identity, this thesis offers a deeper examination of the processes of Croatian national integration with special reference to the place of the Ustashe.

The Ustasha movement saw itself as being involved in a struggle over the fundamental aspects of Croatian national identity. This explains the movement's immense attachment to the Croatian national name itself, a name in its eyes of great antiquity, but threatened by the alien 'Yugoslav' name. A proper starting point for an understanding of Ustasha ideology must be to examine the 'cult of authenticity' among Croatian nationalists. This cult, as Anthony D. Smith explains, lies 'at the centre of the nationalist belief system…and at the heart of this cult is the quest for the true self.'[70] Alongside the national flag and anthem, it is the national

[68] Sundhaussen, 'Der Ustascha-Staat', p. 513.
[69] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH,* p. 23.
[70] Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 37. The 'authentic' in any nation is something which is 'genuine,' 'pure' and

name that is the first mark of uniqueness and authenticity ('our own and nobody else's').[71] The Ustashe felt that they had to 'prove' the 'authenticity' of a separate Croatian nation, which had a right to its own independent state. In the political tradition of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, this 'proof'' was best served by ethno-linguistic arguments. In comparison, while the German Nazis and Italian Fascists felt threatened by foreign racial minorities and foreign nations, they were not troubled by the very authenticity of the German or Italian nation per se. The ethnic self was unproblematic. The Ustashe also singled out the 'alien' in their nation's midst, but were just as obsessed by the potential threat of being 'drowned' within an amorphous Yugoslav or Slav mass, through the supranational/racial ideology of Yugoslavism.[72]

Ustasha opposition to Yugoslavism required, in the first instance, defining the Croats in relation to the Serbs, as the principal South Slav speaking neighbours. As Holm Sundhaussen points out, without *Abgrenzung* (fencing/marking off), there can be no nationalism for the

---

'particular.' A good example of national authenticity is the apparently uncorrupted life of the peasantry. Most importantly, the authentic is a 'necessity that separates "us" from "them", our nation from all others, and makes it and its culture unique and irreplaceable. In that sense, the nation becomes the source of collective meaning, and hence "sacred."' See ibid, pp. 38-40.

[71] ibid, p. 38.

[72] John A. Armstrong briefly explores the difference between the German National Socialists and the Ustashe, as well as the pro-Axis Slovak and Ukrainian groups, with regard to the question of national identity. As he wrote, the national ideologies of both the Nazis and the integral nationalists of Eastern Europe 'rested on the idolatry of the ethnic group, but for the Germans the *separate identity* of the group, a historical nation, was scarcely in question'. See J. Armstrong, 'Collaborationism in World War II: The Integral Nationalist Variant in Eastern Europe', *Journal of Modern History*, Sept. 1968, pp. 404. Armstrong does not, however, consider the stronger influence of supranational ideology on the Croats, which was much more pronounced than among the Slovaks and Ukrainians, and repeats the common argument that 'the real dividing line between Croats and Serbs has been the division between Catholic and Orthodox'. See ibid.

nation is defined, first and foremost, through its relations to others.[73] The Ustasha war against the ideology of Yugoslavism could not be won without a solution to the 'Serb problem' in the NDH, for both Yugoslav and Greater Serbian nationalists used the presence of the large Serbian minority in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to substantiate their claims to the territory and ethnic identity of the Croats. By highlighing the ethnic-racial differences between Croats and Serbs and providing a European or 'Aryan' racial identity for the Croats, the Ustashe would also come to identify Jews and Roma as the other outsiders to the Croatian 'national community'; the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the other hand, were identified as racially Croat, on the basis of history, language and 'blood'. Stereotypes of, and policies toward, Serbs, Gypsies and Jews would merge, and these ethnocentric and racist stereotypes would in turn merge with anti-Communism during the course of the wartime Ustasha struggle against the Communist led Partisans, who were committed to Yugoslav nationalism.

The prevailing historiographical view argues, mistakenly, that Ustasha policies toward Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were essentially separate phenomena, in that the persecution of Jews and Gypsies was primarily motivated by the desire of the Ustashe to win favour with their German patrons. For example, Jelić-Butić notes that policies toward Serbs and Jews were part of the same 'racial politics' of the Ustasha regime, but does not detail how Serbs were racially identified with Jews and Gypsies in Ustasha propaganda and makes only brief mention of Ustasha race theories (in two pages) without exploring the historical roots of

[73] Sundhaussen, 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan-Raum', p. 244. Also see John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 328.

these theories.[74] Jelinek, for his part, argues, with little evidence, that 'the racial violence employed against Jews and Gypsies was a novelty, an import of the foreign product from Germany' and that 'the fictionalization and manipulation of Moslem history had all the characteristics of arbitrariness'.[75] The historiography has therefore overlooked the subject of the conflating of Serbian, Jewish and Gypsy racial stereotypes, because it has been dismissive of the aforementioned need to analyse critically Ustasha race theory in the first place.

Although the Ustashe did not blindly copy the racial and ethnic politics of the Nazis, one cannot overlook the historical context in which Ustasha policies were executed. The NDH was founded under the patronage of National Socialist Germany (and to a lesser extent, Fascist Italy) and was turned, within the first two years of its existence, into a satellite territory of the German Reich, owing to the increasing political, military and economic subordination of the Ustasha state to Germany. One of the few areas where the Ustashe were able to pursue their policies with a degree of 'independence' was in the persecution of ethnic and racial 'undesirables', especially during the period from April 1941 to November 1942. Significantly, in the case of his genocidal policies, the Ustasha Poglavnik Ante Pavelić found the willing collaboration of Adolf Hitler, whose foreign policy objectives in the Balkans were partly motivated by racial prejudices. Consequently, the relationship between German National Socialism and Ustashism, as well the complex and troubled relationship of the Ustashe and Italian Fascists, is also explored in this thesis.

[74] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, pp. 138-140, 158, 162-163.
[75] See Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities', pp. 205-206.

The specific aim of this thesis is, then, to examine how the question of 'race' permeated Ustasha attitudes on the 'problem' of non-Croatian minorities in the NDH. Policies toward Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in the NDH merged together because of the central place of 'race' in Ustasha ideology. Assimilationist policies toward Bosnian Muslims, the second largest minority in the NDH after the Serbs, also reflected Ustasha racist notions. 'Race' was of central concern for the Ustashe not because they simply imitated the German Nazis, but because they had constructed, long before 1941, a counter Croatian 'European-Aryan' racial myth to the racial myths of Croatian pan-Slavists/Yugoslavists and Greater Serbian nationalists.

Furthermore, this thesis sheds light, for the first time, on the deep influence the supra national-racial ideology of Yugoslavism had on the emergence of Ustasha ideas on nation and race. Although Croatian pan-Slavists and Yugoslavists never advocated the 'ethnic cleansing' of foreign 'non-Slav' minorities, they were, all the same, the first modern national ideologists to teach Croats to think of their nationhood in ethno-racial terms. For the Yugoslavists, Croatian ethno-racial identity was primarily Slav or Yugoslav, while for the Ustashe, that racial identity was solely Croat. Yugoslavism has had a largely negative bearing on relations between Croats and Serbs since the mid-nineteenth century and its role in one of the lowest points in those relations (1941-1945) needs to be explored. As this thesis is also a broader work on Croatian nationalism, much attention is paid to the national ideas of the leading Croatian national ideologies and movements that came before the Ustashe. To date, there has been no historical study dealing specifically with Ustasha ideology and its place

within the history of modern Croatian national ideologies in any language, including Croatian. This thesis aims to rectify this neglect by asserting the importance of Ustasha racial ideas, ideas that informed one of the worst cases of genocidal violence in the Nazi dominated Europe of the 1940s.

No study of Ustasha ideology and policies toward minorities can also ignore the complex political, historical, ethnic and cultural relationship between Croats and Serbs, which cannot be reduced, as it is often still done, to the simplistic argument that Croats and Serbs are basically the same nation, or very closely related 'ethnic brethren', divided only by religion. Accordingly, this thesis also examines the frequently misunderstood issue of religion in that relationship.

This thesis essentially explores the Ustasha movement by focusing on the fusion between nationalism and racism, which dominated so much of Central and Eastern European political life from the mid-nineteenth century. The case of Croatia is particularly illuminating for students interested in the historical relationship between nationalism and racism, and not only because the NDH itself was built upon both nationalist and racist principles. Even earlier in 1918, Croatia had became part of a 'national' state that was the only one to be constructed in twentieth century Europe almost solely upon the basis of the tripartite racial division of Europe as devised by the nineteenth century romantic mind set; these three major 'races', based on Indo-European linguistic branches, were the Germanic, the Romanic and the Slavic. This intellectual racial division led to the founding of pan-Slavist, pan-

Germanist and other 'pan-ist' movements, most of which were mainly committed to furthering the cultural links between 'consanguineous' peoples. Some movements had political aims as well. This included most, though certainly not all, of the particular variants of the Yugoslavist movement, which adhered to a narrower version of pan-Slavism, 'South-Slavism' or Yugoslavism. The most infamous example of a philological term being turned into a racial one was the linguistic classification 'Aryan', and with it, the term 'Semitic'.[76] The academic philological term 'South Slav' became the 'Jugoslav' nation or, in the parlance of the 1920s, the 'Jugoslav race'.

The widespread acceptance and propagation of the above tripartite racial division among intellectual circles in Western Europe, especially in Italy and Germany, was to greatly influence Croatian romantic nationalists. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, most educated Croats accepted the theory that the modern Croats inherited their national identity almost exclusively from an early medieval amorphous Slavic mass migration from northeastern Europe. This was to have a seriously negative effect on how the Croats saw the relationship to their land and neighbours. To be sure, Croatian writers and intellectuals had for centuries nurtured a strong sense of belonging to the Slavic world, but that feeling was primarily cultural and linguistic. From the nineteenth century onwards, Croat Yugoslavists began to transform that cultural identity into a modern national and 'racial' one. The theory

[76] As Bernard Lewis notes, 'serious scholars have pointed out – repeatedly and ineffectually – that "Semitic" is a linguistic and cultural classification, denoting certain languages and in some contexts the literatures and civilizations expressed in those languages…It has nothing whatever to do with race in the anthropological sense that is now common usage'. Lewis' words also apply to the linguistic classification 'Slav', which is still often used today as an ethnic or racial term. See B. Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (London: Phoenix Giant, 1997), p. 45.

that Croatian ethnic/national identity essentially began and ended with the arrival of the Slavs in the Balkans meant that, for the Yugoslavists (as well as for anti-Slav Italian nationalists), the pre-Slav Classical culture that existed in Roman Dalmatia was thought to be alien to Croatian culture. According to this history, the Slavs and Latins were locked in a continual 'clash of civilizations' along the Adriatic.[77] Such notions of racial conflicts (between Germans and Latins, Germans and Slavs, etc) were, of course, quite common in the history textbooks of European nations in the nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth, but in the Croatian case, pan-Slavist intellectuals helped lay the groundwork for the eventual creation of a nation-state called 'Yugoslavia' based on the tripartite racial division, with the 'South Slavs' forming an ethnic branch or 'nation' of the 'Slavic race'.[78]

The anti-pan-Slavist Ustashe, for their part, found their natural ideological bedfellows among the pan-Germanist Nazis. Ustasha ideology began as an attempt to prove Croatian national individuality. However, the Ustashe would go well beyond the simple argument that there was no such thing as a Yugoslav nation and/or Slavic race. The Ustashe proceeded to construct an 'Aryan' race myth that was then used to 'assist' them in the construction of a modern Croatian nation-state, modelled on what they, and many others in the 1930s, saw as the 'modern' and 'dynamic' Third Reich.

---

[77] Bruna Kuntić-Makvić, 'Greek and Roman Antiquity', in Ivan Supičić (ed.), *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), p. 88.

[78] One of the first European intellectuals to divide Europe into the three main races of the Latin, Germanic and Slavic was the French-Swiss Romantic, Madame de Staël. She believed that only the Latin and Germanic 'races' were truly European and civilized, but held out the hope that the Slavs would develop something 'original' rather than simply imitate the Latin and Germanic races. See Ezequiel Adamovsky, 'Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810-1880', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77, September 2005, p. 597.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first part deals with historical background, concentrating on the period from the 1830s to the 1930s. The first modern Croatian national movement made its appearance in the 1830s, but the process of Croatian national integration was only completed by the late 1920s. Therefore attention has to be paid to this entire century long period in order to answer the question: why the Ustashe were the first national movement to declare unequivocally that the Croats were a unique ethno-linguistic nation? The second part covers the period between the founding of the Ustasha movement in 1930 to the creation of the NDH in 1941. In this section I highlight that even well before attaining power in 1941, the Ustashe had mananged to come up with a more or less coherent national/racial ideology, which then provided the ideological basis for the regime's minority policy. The third part of the thesis examines the period of power from 1941 to 1945. Here I examine closely the interaction of theory and practice through an analysis of Ustasha ideological literature – especially newspapers and journals from this period. The most important period to cover is from April 1941 to November 1942, for it was during this period that the Ustashe were effectively free to conduct internal policy as they wished, at least in the so-called German 'zone' of the NDH. It was during this period that the Ustashe promulgated race laws, established concentration camps and carried out their policies of mass killings, mass deportation and forced assimilation. After that period the NDH lost the limited sovereignty that it had and became for all intents and purposes a total German satellite state, except in name.

The scope of this thesis is, then, quite extensive and depends to a great deal on previous historiography to construct a synthesis of general events and developments in Croatian history from the 1830s to the 1940s. As particularly helpful sources for the history of Croatian national ideologies and national integration, I must cite Ivo Banac's well balanced and extensively researched *The National Question in Yugoslavia,*[79] as well as the articles (some in English) and books, particularly her comprehensive history on the Croatian Party of Right, *Izvorno pravaštvo,*[80] by the Croatian historian Mirjana Gross. Nikša Stančić's *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19 i 20 stoljeću* is also commendable for its ability to present an orderly and easily understood outline of the complex history of Croatian national integration. As my thesis highlights how both the Croatian Yugoslavists and the Ustashe 'racialized', and thereby manipulated and distorted, the notion of Croatian nationhood, it is necessary to briefly explore the history of the pre-modern Croat nation. In doing so, I largely follow the 'anti-modernist' approach to the study of nation formation and nationalism. There are two basic kinds of approaches to the study of nationalism and the construction of modern nationhood: the 'modernist' approach, which traces the origins of modern nations no further than to the French and American revolutions of the late eighteenth century and essentially views the nation as a notion consciously 'invented' either by nationalists or nation-states; and the 'anti-modernist' discourse, often referred to as the 'primordialist'

[79] Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984).
[80] Mirjana Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo: Ideologija, agitacija, pokret* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 2000).

camp, which highlights the importance of pre-modern ethnic links and traditions in Europe, stretching back to the Middle Ages, for the formation of modern nations.[81]

Although the concept of the 'nation' as we know it today owes much to modernity, to the ideas of the French and American revolutions and to the conscious manipulations of nineteenth and twentieth century nationalists and nation-states, one cannot reasonably deny that a strong sense of nationhood existed in pre-modern Europe, and without which the modern nation could not have been conceived. In other words, when tracing the origins of modern nations, one must be careful not to 'throw out the ethnic baby with the nationalist bath-water'.[82] This is important in the case of Croatia, where an abstract romanticist ethno-linguistic nationalism originating in the mid-nineteenth century, namely Yugoslavism, unsuccessfully tried to extinguish older pre-modern Croatian and Serbian ethnic identities. This is not to imply that the 'Yugoslav project' of uniting the 'South Slavs' was doomed from the outset, but simply that cultural, social and historical conditions were not in favour of this modern racial supranational ideology supplanting older and well-established 'ethnies'. Similarly, the more extreme racist Ustasha project tried to construct a new Croatian 'national community' on the basis of another modern romanticist racial myth, namely the 'Aryan' one.

---

[81] For the 'modernist' view, consult, for example, Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) and Gellner, *Nationalism*. For views considered more 'primordialist', see Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood,* and Smith, *Chosen Peoples*. Smith denies, however, that he is a 'primordialist' or 'perennialist' in the strictest sense of the word, for the nation is not, as he points out, 'immemorial', existing outside of time and unaffected by modernity. Smith in fact argues that 'the evidence for pre-modern nations is at best debateable and problematic'. See A. D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, p. 58.

[82] T.H. Rigby, 'Russia's Nationhood from its Origins to Putin', *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1-2, 2003, p. 127.

In arguing that the notion of Croatian nationhood can be traced, however tenuously, to the late Middle Ages and Renaissance does not imply that I am, in any way, attempting to justify the tendentious arguments of modern Croatian ethnic nationalists who seek 'primeval' roots for the 'nation'. Rather, by acknowledging that a Croatian 'ethnie' existed before the nineteenth century, one is better able to expose the conscious manipulations of Croat ethnicity by the Ustashe. There is a very significant difference between the argument that one can trace Croatian nationhood to pre-modern times, on the one hand, and the racial claim that Croats are the 'Nordic-Dinaric' descendants of 'Slavo-Iranian-Gothic warriors', on the other.

Furthermore, an 'anti-modernist' approach to Croatian nationalism actually helps to better explain the emergence of Ustasha national and racial ideology, because modernist studies of nationalism tend to adhere to the obvious 'Croat = Catholic' historical explanation, which, as already noted, does not allow one to analyse seriously the roots of Ustasha racism, nor of the earlier pan-Slavic racial myths. As Eric Hobsbawm claims:

> 'it is equally clear that conversion to different religions can help to create two different nationalities, for its certainly Roman Catholicism (and its by-product, the Latin script) and Orthodoxy (with its by-product, the Cyrillic script) which has most obviously divided Croats from Serbs, with whom they share a single language of culture'.[83]

[83] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, p. 70.

In a similar vein, Ernest Gellner argued that 'certain nations, such as Serbs, Croats and Bosnians, are very nearly definable only by their religion'.[84] More recently, Patrick Geary has sought to demolish the 'myth' of the medieval origins of European nations, yet he himself adheres to the Yugoslavist myth that 'Serbian and Croatian are dialects of the same language, one spoken by a traditionally Orthodox community, the other by a traditionally Roman Catholic one'.[85] The above arguments are part of the same aforementioned generalizations that aim to reduce the Croat-Serb relationship to a question of religious difference.

Apart from analysing the two broad approaches to nationalism, studies on the relationship between racism and nationalism in late nineteenth and twentieth century Europe have also been cited extensively. George Mosse's work is particularly useful in that regard. Mosse placed racism, namely 'Aryan' racism, firmly within European historical trends, and not as some aberration outside of them.[86] By 'Aryan' racism, one should understand an ideology that arose in late eighteenth century Enlightenment Europe. Racism was born amidst the attempts of *philosophes* to define man's own nature and his place within the natural world.[87] Science and anthropology were called in to help characterize and categorize the various types of physically distinct human populations or 'races'; added to this was a growing

[84] Gellner, *Nationalism*, p. 78.
[85] Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 37.
[86] See, for example, the chapter, 'Racism and Nationalism' in Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution*.
[87] George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1978), p. 2.

aestheticism that found its ideal in the 'classical Greek of harmonious proportions'.[88] The fusion of racism and nationalism was not unique to Ustasha ethno-nationalism, but the evolution and nature of Ustasha racism was. Ustasha race theory was therefore the product of both particular Croatian and wider European historical traditions.

Much of the historiography on the Ustashe cited here is still particularly important with regard to tracing the events leading to the establishment of the NDH and the political and social organization of the Ustasha state. For English speakers, Jozo Tomasevich's *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia* is very useful in that sense, as is Martin Broszat's *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat* for German speakers. Holm Sundhaussen's article, 'Der Ustascha-Staat: Anatomie eines Herrschaftssystem' is also a good brief account of all aspects of Ustasha rule. For a well-researched and reliable history of the pre-war Ustashe, especially the political contacts between Fascist Italy and the Ustashe, one should consult James Sadkovich's *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*. In Croatian, Nada Kisić-Kolanović's articles and books, particularly *NDH i Italija*[89], are the best sources for a critical analysis of the international relations of the Ustasha state and the mechanics of the Ustasha political system. Bogdan Krizman's four volume series on the history of the Ustashe from 1930 to 1945 and Fikreta Jelić-Butić's *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* are still indispensable for detailed facts about the NDH and Ustasha rule and they also quote extensively from Ustasha newspapers and texts and in the case of Krizman include useful appendixes, including Ustasha propagandistic texts. Although dated in many respects, Jere Jareb's *Pola stoljeća hrvatske*

[88] ibid.
[89] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija: Političke veze i diplomatski odnosi* (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2001).

politike is nonetheless of value for its summary of half a century of Croatian politics including the Ustasha period. For detailed analyses on particular Ustasha policies, such as the regime's anti-Semitic policies, see Ivo Goldstein's *Holokaust u Zagrebu* (which also includes a good selection of excerpts from Ustasha newspaper articles) and Petar Požar's *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva: U prošlosti i budućnosti*, for detail on the Ustasha regime's attempt to establish a 'Croatian Orthodox Church' in 1942.[90]

The main source base for this thesis, however, was found in primary sources located in the National and University Library in Zagreb *(Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica*), most notably, Ustasha ideological literature, including newspapers and texts. Four wartime Ustasha newspapers, the dailies *Hrvatski narod* and *Novi List* and the journals, *Spremnost* and the German language *Neue Ordnung*, covering various months of the years 1941, 1942 and 1943 provided overwhelming evidence for the main argument of this thesis, namely, the centrality of race in Ustasha ideology and the accompanying merging of the stereotypes of, and policies toward, Serbs, Gypsies and Jews. Original texts written by Ustasha or pro-Ustasha ideologists were also extremely useful in this respect. Here I would cite in particular Mladen Lorković's *Narod i zemlja Hrvata*, Filip Lukas' 1944 *Za hrvatsku samosvojnost: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha*,[91] Ante Pavelić's 1938 *Strahote zabluda,*[92] and Julije Makanec's

[90] Petar Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva: U prošlosti i budućnosti* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1996).
[91] Filip Lukas, *Za hrvatsku samosvojnost: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha; eseji, govori, članci* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944).
[92] Pavelić's book was first published in Italian as *Orrori e Errori* in 1938 and in Croatian in 1941. See the edition, Ante Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (Madrid: Domovina, 1974) and the newest Croatian edition under the same title from 2000 (published in Zagreb by Croatiaprojekt).

1944 *Hrvatski vidici*.[93] I also used two Ustasha annual journals, with a good collection of political and ideological essays, *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* and *Ustaški godišnjak 1943*,[94] along with a series of short articles written by leading Ustashe, such as Mladen Lorković's 1944 *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*[95] and Mijo Bzik's *Ustaški pogledi 1928-1941-1944*.[96] Petar Požar's published 1995 collection of Ustasha documents, law decrees and ideological literature, *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*[97] is also a useful and handy source for studying Ustasha ideology.

This thesis was not based on an extensive amount of archival sources since the focus of the thesis was on Ustasha ideological literature, found in media such as newspapers. Nevertheless, the archives contained in the Croatian State Archive (*Hrvatski državni arhiv*) I perused during the research conducted for this thesis, namely sixteen boxes of files from the NDH Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP NDH) covering the years 1941, 1942 and 1944 and eight boxes for the years 1942-1945 from the archives of the wartime German police attaché in Zagreb, Hans Helm, did yield some interesting facts in connection with Ustasha ethnic and race policies, and have been cited where necessary in the thesis.

Another source I should mention here include the memoirs of leading Ustashe written during interrogation in or after 1945, or written in post-war exile. These memoirs can help

[93] Julije Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici: Nacionalno-politički eseji* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1944).
[94] Glavni ustaški stan (Supreme Ustasha Headquarters, ed.) *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni tiskarski zavod, 1942) and Glavni ustaški stan (ed.) *Ustaški godišnjak 1943* (Zagreb: Hrvatski tiskarski zavod, 1943).
[95] Mladen Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma* (Zagreb: Velebit, 1944).
[96] Mijo Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi 1928-1941-1944* (Zagreb: Ustaša, 1944).
[97] Petar Požar (ed.), *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995).

shed light on the ideological attitudes of the NDH's leaders. For example, although he wrote in an apologetic and self-righteous tone, the two volume memoirs of the Ustasha Poglavnik Ante Pavelić, *Doživljaji I and II* (written in Italy during the years 1946-1948),[98] nonetheless clearly reveal his ideological and racial prejudices. Other valuable memoirs cited in this thesis include those of the former Ustasha Militia commander Ante Moškov, written during Communist interrogation after 1945 and published as *Pavelićevo doba*,[99] and those of the second most important man (from 1941-1942) in the NDH, Field Marshal Slavko Kvaternik. His memoirs were also written in prison after 1945 and can be found in Nada Kisić-Kolanović's biography of Kvaternik, *Vojskovođa i politika.*[100] Finally, I have also relied on the post war memoirs of Kvaternik's son Eugen, NDH police chief from 1941-1942, published as *Sjećanja i zapažanja 1925-1945.*[101]

[98] Ante Pavelić, *Doživljaji I* (Madrid: Domovina, published 1968) and *Doživljaji II* (Madrid: Domovina, published 1998).
[99] Ante Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, Petar Požar (ed.) (Split: Laus, 1999).
[100] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika: Sjećanja Slavka Kvaternika*, pp. 73-244.
[101] Eugen Dido Kvaternik, *Sjećanja i zapažanja 1925-1945: Prilozi za hrvatsku povijest*, Jere Jareb (ed.) (Zagreb: Naklada Starčević, 1995).

PART ONE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Chapter One: Croatdom and Slavdom

Political and cultural identity: kingdom, religion, language and literature

The search for Croatian 'national authenticity' among all modern national movements, from the Illyrianists to the Ustashe, has continually revolved around the question of the distant ethnic-racial origins of the Croats. The earliest Croats themselves probably arrived in the former Roman provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia, the territory also known as Illyria, from their proto-homeland in present day southern Poland and northern Bohemia, known in historical sources as 'White Croatia', sometime in the first half of the seventh century AD. In the first few centuries of their settlement, the Croatian tribes were concentrated in the area stretching from eastern Istria to the river Cetina in Dalmatia. Inland, it stretched as far as the river Vrbas in northwestern Bosnia. The 'White Croats' were Slavic in language and culture, although the name 'Croat' is probably of Iranian origin, indicating that certain Slavic tribes were in extensive contact with Indo-Iranian tribes around the Black Sea.[1]

[1] Scholars have traced the Croat name (*Hrvat* in Croatian) to different Iranian words, such as *har-vat*, (meaning 'inhabited by women'), *hu-urvatha*, ('friend') and *haurvata* ('shepherd'). In any case, the Croat ethnic name is not Slavic. See Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', p. 160. Also see Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 7.

The ethnic/racial identity of the 'White Croats' has often been placed under the scrutiny of the 'ideologems' of nineteenth and twentieth century nationalists, seeking either to show that these 'proto-Croats' were pure Slavs, or a Slavicized 'Iranian' or 'Gothic' warrior caste that ruled over a Slav tribe. In contrast to such one-sided arguments, one must bear in mind, as Rendić-Miočević notes, that 'during the period of the great migratory waves, the peoples arriving had a polyethnic structure and it is impossible to imagine that the Croats, any more than any of the other peoples, would have reached the South as a "pure race"'.[2] In any case, the Croats also extensively intermarried with the Roman and/or Romanized (mainly Illyrian) population still found living in parts of Illyria.[3] By the ninth century, a Croatian dukedom, headed by a prince and organized in clans (*gens Chroatorum*), and adhering to Latin Christianity, had been established. The Croats were also referred to in the West as Slavs (*Sclavi*) and Dalmatians (*Dalmatini*).[4] From the early tenth century Croatia was to be headed by its own *rex*, and territorially stretched northwards to the river Drava.

[2] Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', p. 4.
[3] ibid, pp. 4-5.
[4] Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', p. 150.

Map 1. The Kingdom of Croatia in the first half of the tenth century (Tomislav Raukar, 'Land and Society' in Ivan Supičić (ed.), *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey*, p. 186).

By the early twelfth century, the Croatian nobility had elected a King from the Hungarian Árpád dynasty and for the next eight hundred years, Croatia (varying in shape and size) was to be united with Hungary. Croatia remained politically autonomous, through the native institutions of the *Ban* (viceroy) and the *Sabor* (parliament). This situation would remain intact after the Hungarian-Croatian crown was handed to Ferdinand Habsburg in 1527. The Croats were thus, alongside the Austro-Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and to a lesser extent Bohemians/Czechs, one of the so-called 'historic nations' of the Habsburg Empire. This term

referred to all those peoples, or more precisely to the nobilities of such peoples, that had a tradition of statehood, usually dating from the Middle Ages, and possessed some form of constitutional or legal document, which 'regulated the manner of administration and determined the legal rights and obligations of and the relationships between the various social strata'.[5] These 'historic nations' retained symbols of sovereignty, such as the royal crown; the 'Crown of Zvonimir' represented the sovereignty of the Croatian kingdom long after its incorporation into the Habsburg Empire.[6] On the other hand, the Slovenes, Slovaks, Serbs and Romanians were considered 'non-historic nations', since they could not claim historic statehood (or 'historic state right') and had no autonomous political life. Although the prerogatives of the Croatian *Ban* and *Sabor* would be continually curtailed by both Budapest and Vienna, Croatia retained its legal and political autonomy until the end of the Habsburg Empire in 1918.

The territorial boundaries of Croatia changed considerably over the centuries, particularly during the early modern era. Faced with the expansion of both Ottoman and Venetian power in the central Balkans and the Adriatic coast, the territory ruled over by the Croat *Ban* was gradually reduced to the area of northern Croatia known as 'Slavonia'. Although it had been part of the Croatian kingdom, the population of medieval Slavonia seems to have consisted mainly of a generic Slav population with no particular ethnic or tribal identity, hence the name 'Slavonia'. The ethnic picture in Slavonia began to change in the early

[5] See Peter F. Sugar, 'External and Domestic Roots of Eastern European Nationalism', in P. Sugar and Ivo Lederer (eds.) *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), p. 24.
[6] ibid, pp. 24-25. Zvonimir was the last King of Croatia (1075-1089), before its union with Hungary.

fifteenth century with the northward migration of the Croatian nobility from its old domains in the Dalmatian hinterland, Lika and western Bosnia.[7]

The western part of Slavonia became known as Civil Croatia, while the eastern part was referred to as Civil Slavonia; the latter region was part of the Ottoman Empire from the early sixteenth to the late seventeenth centuries, after which Habsburg rule was re-established there. The Habsburgs would also establish a military frontier along the border with the Ottoman Empire, separating Civil Croatia and Civil Slavonia. Ottoman rule had also extended over Lika and the Dalmatian hinterland during the same period (circa 1520s to 1690s). Civil Croatia, Istria, the Venetian ruled Dalmatian Littoral and the Republic of Dubrovnik were the only areas of Croatia that were never conquered by the Ottomans. Of these regions, only Civil Croatia was officially known by the ethnic Croat name. Its nobility regarded itself as the direct and rightful heir to the medieval Croatian kingdom, including its former lands.[8]

[7] Mirjana Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation: A Case Study in Nation Building', *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XV, No. 2, June 1981, p. 211.
[8] ibid, p. 211.

Map 2. Croatia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Catherine Wendy Bracewell, *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Banditry, and Holy War in the Sixteenth-Century Adriatic*, p. 21).

The Croat nobility in Civil Croatia thus claimed Venetian held Dalmatia as part of its historical domains.[9] Ruled over by Croatian kings in the Middle Ages, the towns and islands of the Dalmatian coast were not only home to Croats, but also home to a numerically small, but politically and culturally powerful Latin-speaking minority, the remnants of the once large Roman or Romanized population of the province of Dalmatia. This minority would

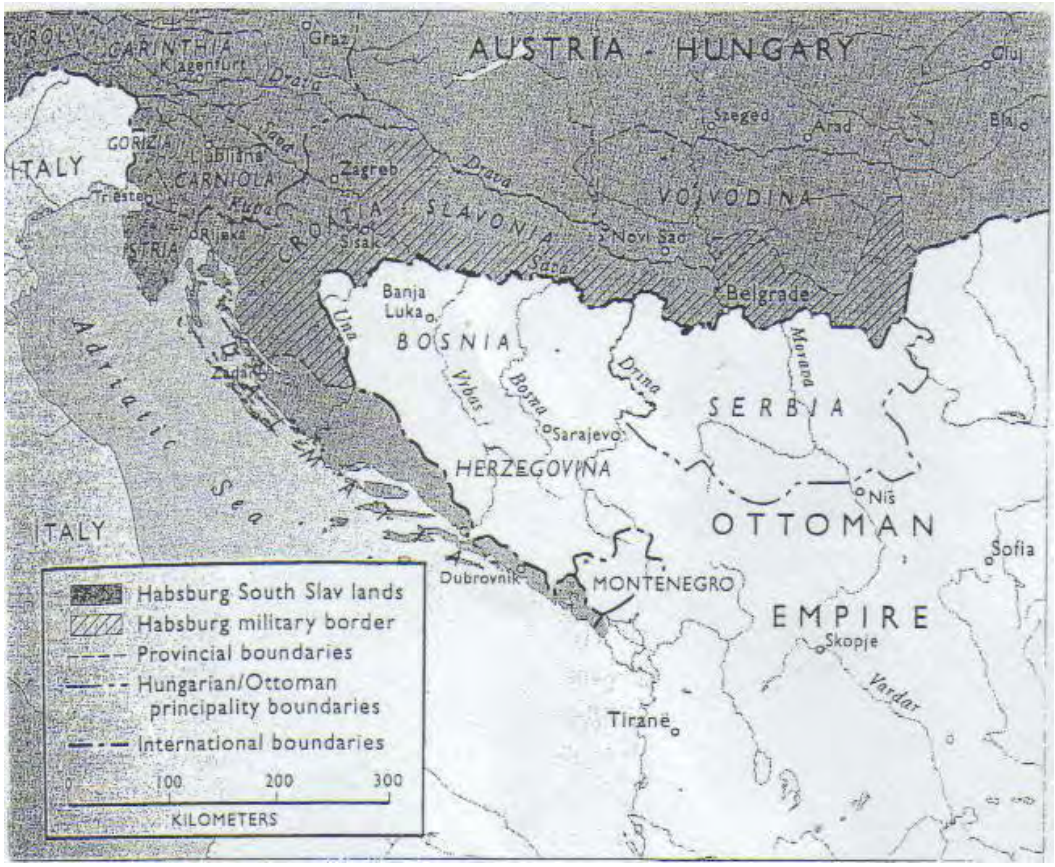
[9] Elinor Murray Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj and the Illyrian Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 6-7.

eventually be Croatized, but the Dalmatian name remained as a separate indicator of a distinct regional identity. Centuries after the Venetian and Ottoman conquests of large parts of the medieval Croat territory, the nobility in Civil Croatia, now the *reliquiae reliquiarum* ('relics of relics') of the 'once glorious' Croatian kingdom laid continuous claim not only to Dalmatia, but also to parts of Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina (the so-called 'Turkish Croatia' and 'Turkish Dalmatia') and the (eastern) Istrian peninsula (which was under direct Austrian rule).[10] The historical unity of the Croatian lands was reflected in the collective royal title of the 'Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia.'[11] The use of diverse names – Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia – to refer to the Croatian ethnic area 'testifies', as Rendić-Miočević notes, 'to the complexity of Croatian history'.[12]

This complexity ensured that the Croats were to have great difficulty in constructing a unified and coherent modern national consciousness in the nineteenth century. Along with the centuries old political division into several provinces ruled until the late eighteenth century by three different empires (Habsburg, Venetian, Ottoman)[13], the Croats were also linguistically divided into three dialects – kajkavian, čakavian and štokavian – each with its own literary heritage. The Croats share the štokavian dialect, albeit with sub-dialectal

[10] '"Turkish Croatia' (north-western Bosnia) and 'Turkish Dalmatia' (western Herzegovina) extended to the rivers Vrbas and the Neretva. See Stančić*, Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 95-96.
[11] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, p. 6.
[12] Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', p. 6.
[13] The provinces under Habsburg rule were Civil Croatia, Civil Slavonia, eastern Istria, the Military Frontier and the 'Hungarian' Littoral (i.e. Rijeka). Western Istria and Dalmatia were under Venetian rule (until 1797), while there was a sizeable Croatian population living in Ottoman ruled Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Republic of Dubrovnik (or Ragusa as it was commonly known) and the peasant principality of Poljica near Split were the only Croat inhabited territories that enjoyed any real independence. For further information see Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 210.

differences, with the Serbs, but čakavian and kajkavian are exclusively Croatian dialects.[14] There were no precise territorial boundaries defining the three Croatian dialectal areas. Among Dalmatians, for example, there were both čakavian and štokavian speakers.



Map 3. Croatia from 1815 to 1881 (John Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice there Was a Country*, p. 47).

There was also an overlapping of regional and national identities. Although by the late eighteenth century 'Croat' was applied in a political sense only to Civil Croatia, the Croat name was often used interchangeably with 'Dalmatian' and 'Slavonian' in those ethnically

[14] The štokavian sub-dialects of ijekavian and ikavian are Croat, while ekavian is standard Serb. Alongside štokavian, the Serbs also use the Torlak dialect. Čakavian is today spoken by Croats in Istria, in some coastal towns and on most islands. Kajkavian is the dialect of the northwestern Croats around Zagreb. Prior to the Ottoman invasions of the 15th and 16th centuries, the Croatian kajkavian and čakavian dialects were spread much farther south and east than found today. For more on the language question, see Banac, *National Question,* pp. 46-49.

Croat inhabited areas.[15] From the sixteenth century onward, the name 'Illyrian' was also increasingly used by foreigners and educated Croats alike, in the Renaissance fashion of applying classical names to modern peoples, as an express synonym for 'Croat'; the name 'Slav' as used by Croatian writers (*slovinski*) was also a synonym for both 'Illyrian' and 'Croat'.[16] This practice continued right into the nineteenth century.

For centuries, the Croats had, like all Central and South-East Europeans, lived in the political, social and cultural reality of multi-ethnic empires. The Croats, from whatever class, felt it perfectly natural to give their allegiance and loyalty to foreign sovereigns, whether it was the Hungarian King, Habsburg Emperor, Venetian Doge or the Roman Pope. Nevertheless, Croatia held a unique cultural position, even in the ethnic melting pot of East-Central Europe. As a Slav speaking Catholic people inhabiting a former Roman province neighbouring Italy, they were exposed to the influences of Western culture much more directly than the other peoples of the 'Slavic East'.[17] This geographical immediacy to the centre of the Western Christian world ensured, on the other hand, that the small Croatian people remained tenaciously faithful to their own heritage (primarily their Slav language) as

[15] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 83-84. For the interchangeable use of the terms 'Dalmatian' and 'Croat', see Ivan Ostojić, 'The Terms Croats Have Used for Their Language', *Folia Croatica-Canadiana*, Vol. II, at www.hic.hr/hrvatski/izdavalaštvo/FOLIA.pdf, 1999, pp. 20-22.

[16] 'Illyrian' could also apply to the South Slavs as a whole, but usually signified only the Croats. For example, some Croatian writers referred to the Serbs as 'Dardanians'. See Michael B. Petrovich, 'Croatian Humanists and the Writing of History in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 37, No. 4, Dec. 1978, p. 638. In his 1801 Latin-Italian-Croatian dictionary, the Ragusan Franciscan friar, Joakim Stulli, defined the word 'illyrice' as 'slovinski, harvatski, hrovatski, horvatski', thus as 'Slavic' and 'Croat'. See Dominik Mandić, 'Crvena Hrvatska u svjetlu povijesnih izvora', Vol. 2 of Vinko Lasić (ed.) *Sabrana djela Dr. o. Dominika Mandića* (Chicago-Rome: Ziral, 1973), p. 283 and Banac, *National Question*, p. 72.

[17] The old 'Classical-Christian civilization' of formerly Roman Dalmatia had a great cultural impact on medieval Croatian society. See Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', pp. 4, 7.

a way of preserving their identity. In contrast to their Western Catholic neighbours, the Croats – in many areas along the Adriatic – used the Glagolitic script and Church Slavonic language instead of Latin during mass in the medieval and early modern periods.[18]

Croatia was thus a frontier country on the boundary between Western Christendom and the Byzantine-Slavic Orthodox world. Although Catholic, the Croats were linked to the Slavic East through the literary tradition of the Croatian recension of Old Church Slavonic and the Glagolitic script. Furthermore, a strong pan-Slavic tradition entered Croatian literature during the Baroque period. The Ottoman invasions of the early modern period, Venetian domination of Dalmatia, and Habsburg encroachment of northern Croatia forced a number of Croatian Baroque writers to seek inspiration and solace in the idea of Slavic solidarity, the idea that Croats belonged to the largest 'nation' of Europe (i.e. the Slav).[19] It was a Croat, the Catholic priest Juraj Križanić (1618-1683), who was among the first to proclaim Slav unity and lay the intellectual foundations of pan-Slavism.[20] A contemporary Croatian nobleman, Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652-1713), also proclaimed the unity of the Slavs, but did so on the basis of the fanciful idea that all Slavs were in fact Croats, an idea that was based on legends claiming that all the Slav peoples originated from Illyria.[21] As with so many other educated Croats of his time, Vitezović used the terms 'Croat' and 'Slav' as synonyms. Croats (at least

[18] It should be noted that not all Croat regions used the Glagolitic, with many strictly adhering to Latin. Some Croats also used a particular form of Cyrillic script known as *bosančica* (the 'Bosnian' script, so-called because it was mainly employed by the Catholics and Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina). See Banac, *National Question,* pp. 61-62.

[19] ibid, p. 70.

[20] Križanić travelled to Russia in a vain attempt to convince the Tsar of the need to liberate and unite the Balkan Slavs. Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953), p. 4. See also Banac, *National Question,* p. 71-72.

[21] Banac, *National Question*, p. 73.

literate ones) had always nurtured a strong sense of belonging to the Slavic world, but the Croatian term *slovinac* or *slovinski* ('Slav/Slavic') as used prior to the nineteenth century should not be confused with the later term 'Yugoslav'. *Slovinski* was less an ethnic or national term than it was a linguistic and cultural one.[22]

Croatian pan-Slavic writers did not regard their Catholic faith as an obstacle to the feeling of a broader cultural commonality with Orthodox Slavs, even if the Catholic-Orthodox religious divide ensured that a wide cultural gulf did exist between the Croats and their closest Orthodox Slav neighbours, the Serbs. The Orthodox faith was central to Serbian ethnic identity. Orthodoxy was in fact far more important for the shaping of modern Serb nationhood than Catholicism was for Croat national identity, simply because the Serbs possessed a national institution in the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbian Church not only preserved the traditions of the medieval Serbian kingdom during centuries of Ottoman rule (by canonizing Serbian kings), but was also able to assimilate ethnically large numbers of non-Serb Orthodox Balkan inhabitants (Vlachs, Romanians, Albanians, Greeks, Roma and Bulgarians) that came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć (i.e. the Serbian Orthodox Church).[23]

---

[22] Even committed pan-Slavists such as Juraj Križanić were quite aware that the Croats were a separate people. In 1646, Križanić told the Russian diplomat, Gerasim Doxturov, in Warsaw: 'Sir, I am by nationality a Croat from Illyria…I already speak Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian and come here in order to learn Polish and Russian'. See Ante Kadić, *The Tradition of Freedom in Croatian Literature: Essays* (Bloomington: The Croatian Alliance, 1983), p. 13.

[23] Banac, *National Question,* pp. 65-66. See also Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* p. 120. During the 1890s, for example, the Serbian government began to systematically Serbianize non-Orthodox Roma on its territory through conversion to Orthodoxy. The so-called 'White Gypsies' of Serbian Orthodox faith had already been long assimilated. See David Crowe, *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 200-209 and Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 116-117, 200.

The Catholic Church in Croatia did not and could not do the same in the case of assimilating non-Croat Catholics. Many Austrian-German, Italian and Hungarian immigrants and/or their descendants were assimilated, but their 'Croatization' was not accomplished through the mere fact of being Catholic.[24] Common faith made the assimilation of non-Croats easier in the pre-modern era, when religious affiliation was generally considered more important throughout Europe, but membership in the Catholic Church did not *a priori* make them Croats. Catholicism itself was never exclusively synonymous with Croatdom. There were in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, sizeable communities of Islamicized Croats living in Ottoman occupied areas of the Dalmatian hinterland, Lika and Slavonia, who were conscious of their ethnic links to Catholic Croats (and vice-versa).[25]

This is not to imply that religion has had no influence on the shaping of Croatian ethnic identity, but it has not been the only or even most important factor. Rather than exaggerate the role of Catholicism in defining Croat nationhood, it is more accurate, as Nikša Stančić points out, to argue that the Church served as a medium through which Western cultural, social and ethical values were disseminated among the Croat masses.[26] As a result, distinct cultural and social attitudes emerged, separating Catholic Croats from Orthodox Serbs,

[24] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 120.
[25] There was also a small, but culturally very active, Croatian Protestant circle that operated a printing press in Tübingen, Germany during the 1560s. Some Muslims from Croat inhabited parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina also referred to themselves as Croats. A Muslim by the name of Mehmed of Transylvania (also under Ottoman rule) wrote *Chirvat türkisi* ('Croatian poem') in 1588. See Ostojić, 'The Terms Croats Have Used for Their Language', pp. 36-43, 45-46.
[26] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 89-90.

which reflected cultural (and not necessarily theological) differences between Western and Eastern Christianity.[27]

To be sure, the ethnic and linguistic boundaries between the Croats and the Serbs were blurred to the point that in many regions it was difficult to define who was a Croat or Serb, once defining peoples by their true 'nation' became a political fashion in the nineteenth century. However, this was not the case in all areas. Religious differences played a significant role in the shaping of Croat nationhood not in the entire region, but only in religiously and ethnically mixed areas that had been part of the Ottoman Empire (particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina), where the population spoke the same štokavian dialect. Religion had far less importance in the Croatian čakavian and kajkavian speaking inhabited areas (Civil Croatia, Istria, the islands and the Croatian and Dalmatian Littoral) where the population was overwhelmingly Croat and Catholic.[28] These latter Croats lived under the rule of, and in contact with, Catholic foreigners – Austrian-Germans, Italians and Hungarians – and therefore language and not religion, was a far more important source of cultural differentiation.[29]

---

[27] Ivo Banac, 'The Confessional "Rule" and the Dubrovnik Exception: The Origins of the "Serb-Catholic" Circle in Nineteenth-Century Dalmatia', *Slavic Review,* Vol 42, No 3, Fall 1983, p. 470.
[28] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* p. 89.
[29] ibid, p. 119. Hobsbawm makes the point 'that the prevalence of transnational religions, at all events in the regions of the world in which modern nationalism developed, imposed limits on religio-ethnic identification. It is far from universal, and even where it is found, it usually distinguishes the people in question not from all its neighbours, but only from some.' See Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780,* p. 69.

In any case, despite a close linguistic relationship, the Croatian literary language was, and is, distinct from Serbian.[30] From the earliest times, Croatian writers, whether from the čakavian, kajkavian or štokavian regions, had always been conscious 'that they were writing in the same language, whatever it might have been called' (i.e. Slavonic, Illyrian, Croatian).[31] Even Croats who spoke štokavian had a significantly different literary tradition from the Serbs.[32] The separate literary traditions of Croats and Serbs form important foundations for distinct Croat and Serb cultural identities. The Croats produced a vernacular literature at a very early date. By the sixteenth century, Croatian writers and poets in Dalmatian cities were employing the vernacular language written in the Latin script, building on the earlier tradition of Glagolitic works.[33] A common cultural identity was formed around this literature, at least among literate Croats.[34] The small number of literate Serbs, on the other hand, continued to use a form of Russified Old Church Slavonic and the Cyrillic script until well into the nineteenth century.[35] Croatian literature was, to be sure, mainly regional in

[30] As George Schöpflin remarks, 'the cultural aspects of language show that over time, the different experiences of two communities speaking the same language philologically differentiates their language as well, as words begin to acquire different meanings…Serbian and Croatian were culturally different languages and culture…has a central role in the definition of nationhood'. See G. Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 331.

[31] See Matica hrvatska, 'Memorandum about the Croatian Language', Luka Budak (trans.) in *Croatian Studies Review*, No. 1, 1997, p. 103.

[32] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 121-122.

[33] Banac, *National Question,* p. 62.

[34] Adrian Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood,* pp. 137-138. An elite literary language 'creates a community of this intercommunicating elite which, if it coincides with…a particular territorial state area and vernacular zone, can be a sort of model or pilot project for the as yet non-existent larger intercommunicating community of "the nation"'. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 59-60.

[35] By the end of the eighteenth century, a new literary language, *slaveno-serbski,* emerged from a mixture of Serbian vernacular, Church Slavonic and Russian. See Rado L. Lencek, 'The Enlightenment's Interest in Languages and the National Revival of the South Slavs', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* Vol. 10, No. 1, 1983, p. 113.

character, owing to the use of three different dialects, but there was a degree of linguistic and literary cross-fertilization between the Croat dialectal regions.[36]

Furthermore, all ethnic Croats, from whatever region and in spite of stark regional differences, referred to themselves as 'Croats' (depending on the dialect spoken, 'Harvati', 'Horvati', 'Arvati' and the modern standard 'Hrvati') and accordingly called their language 'Croatian' (hrvatski).[37] As Stančić notes:

> 'From the observation that language was a "differentia specifica" there emerged an unreflected, spontaneous and unconscious understanding that language is also a peculiarity of one's own collective individuality and that as a result the language is named after the name of the community'.[38]

Serbians from Serbia, on the other hand, were often referred to as 'Rascians', while the ancestors of today's Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian Serbs were known as 'Vlachs' (see last section of this chapter).[39]

---

[36] Banac, *National Question*, p. 77.
[37] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 83-84.
[38] ibid, p. 83.
[39] 'Rascian' historically denoted somebody from 'Rascia' or Raška, the heartland of medieval Serbia (located in present day Southwest Serbia). See Catherine Wendy Bracewell, *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Banditry, and Holy War in the Sixteenth-Century Adriatic* (London: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 29-30. Also see Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 72, 148. The name Vlach was also applied to the Croats of the Dalmatian hinterland, who were known as 'Morlachs' ('Black Vlachs') to the Venetians. See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 77-78.

The pre-modern Croatian ethnie/nation

'Modernist' analyses of Croatian nationalism, which basically posit a religion equals nation explanation for the formation of a modern Croatian nation, have thus ignored or downplayed the centuries long existence of a Croatian 'nation' or ethnic group, grounded in language, history, law, culture and territory, even if that 'nation' was not a decidedly political entity. As the late Adrian Hastings convincingly argued, during the late medieval and early modern periods, there was a

> 'gelling of national identities…in regard to Serbs and Croats…a gelling produced by a mix of religion, literature and political history which…is hard indeed to alter. The point is made against scholars and politicians in the West who have so often implied that the Southern Slavs remained into modern times, "no more than ethnographic raw material" or that they were all "Serbs really"'.[40]

Contrary to the many contemporary scholars and politicians who still cannot help seeing the pre-modern Croats as 'ethnographic raw material', or as 'Serbs really' or 'just Slavs', a sense of Croat nationhood was present in pre-modern times and had significance for the wider masses during the later Middle Ages and the early modern period.

The pre-modern Croats could be best described as an 'ethnie', a term used by Anthony Smith to define 'named units of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories,

[40] Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, p. 145. Hastings has provided ample evidence that the term 'natio' in the Middle Ages meant something quite similar to modern definitions of nationhood. Through the Old Testament, the Bible offered the European nations, from an early date, a model in Israel 'of what it means to be nation', in other words, 'a unity of people, language, religion, territory and government'. See ibid, p. 18.

elements of shared culture, some link with a historic territory and some measure of solidarity, at least among their elites'.[41] The pre-modern Croats were not a 'nation' in the modern sense of the term, for the majority of ethnic Croats did not aspire to political sovereignty nor did they possess a corresponding national consciousness.[42] Hastings defined the ethnie as 'a group of people with a shared cultural identity and spoken language', while the nation is 'identified by a literature of its own [and] possesses or claims the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, together with the control of a specific territory'.[43]

The pre-modern Croats consisted of two main groups: the Croatian 'ethnic community', consisting essentially of the peasantry, and the Croatian 'political nation' (*natio croatica*), which was comprised primarily of the nobility in Civil Croatia.[44] The Croatian ethnic community was 'the raw material out of which the Croatian nation was shaped in the gestative period of bourgeois society'.[45] The basic difference between the two was that the *natio croatica* was politically institutionalized in the office of the *Ban* and *Sabor* on the territory of Civil Croatia.[46] Nobles in the Dalmatian cities were not part of the *natio croatica*

[41] Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era,* p. 57.
[42] See Sundhaussen, 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan-Raum', p. 236. See also Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, p. 47. Mirjana Gross noted that 'national consciousness compells the individual to participate in the struggle for the creation of the freest possible political community and civil society for his nation'. Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 212.
[43] Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, p. 3.
[44] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 47-48.
[45] Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 209.
[46] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 95-96.

of Civil Croatia. They identified rather with their own city, region or with Venice, whilst also identifying, culturally speaking, as Croats.[47]

The Croatian nobles in Civil Croatia did not usually identify with the wider ethnic community. Their Croat identity was primarily territorial and political rather than ethnic, especially as many northern Croat nobles usually employed German in everyday conversation and Latin in official communication.[48] The nobles claimed territories outside of Civil Croatia, chiefly Dalmatia and 'Turkish Croatia', on the basis of the 'historic right' that belonged to the *Regna Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*.[49] The ethnic Croat peasant identified primarily with the village, the lord's estate (in those areas where feudalism reigned), with Catholicism, or with the peasant commune (*zadruga*).[50] Regional identities were also important for the *misera plebs*, but the ethnic Croat name was not unknown in the wider population and could act as a synonym for 'Dalmatian', 'Slavonian' and so on.[51] This is revealed by the common practice of adopting ethnic names as surnames.

Among the Croat refugees, of all social classes, who fled to Austria, Hungary and Italy to escape the Ottoman invasions, there were numerous families that carried surnames such as

[47] It was primarily Dalmatian noblemen such as Marko Marulić and Petar Zoranić who wrote the first prose works in the Croatian language during the Renaissance. See Benedikta Zelić-Bučan, 'The National Name of the Croatian Language Throughout History, *Folia Croatica-Canadiana*, Vol. II, 1999 at www.hic.hr.hrvatski/izdavalaštvo/FOLIA.pdf, pp. 77-78.
[48] See also Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj,* p. 19.
[49] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 95-96.
[50] Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 213.
[51] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 82-83.

'Horvát' ('Croat') or 'Croata'.[52] Even in Croatia itself, Ivan Ostojić has found numerous examples in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period where Croats 'emphasized their ethnicity by adding to their name or their name and surname the word Croat (*Hrvat*), regardless of their social positions, occupations or even religions'.[53] T. H. Rigby also makes the point that the 'mass adoption' of surnames such as 'Welsh, French, Scott and Lombard' in the Middle Ages 'offer evidence of the popular significance then attached to such "national" identities' in Europe.[54] In other words, ordinary people in medieval Europe did not just think of themselves simply as 'Christians' or 'peasants' and were certainly aware of ethnic differences.

Despite the wide social, cultural and economic distance between the 'ethnic community' and Croatian nobility, they were linked through 'mediators' such as village priests.[55] There are signs of a rudimentary proto-national 'Croat' ideology among the peasants. Proto-nationalism refers to the pre-modern 'feelings of collective belonging' mobilized by modern states and national movements; the existence of proto-nationalism itself was not sufficient to produce nations, although it did provide ready-made symbols for the 'inventors' of modern nations.[56] Although there are no literal records from the mass of illiterate peasants concerning their feelings on 'national' identity, one can still find evidence in the later

[52] See Ivan Jurković, 'Das Schicksal des kroatischen Kleinadels unter dem Druck des Osmanenreiches', *East Central Europe*, Vol. 29, Part 1-2, 2002, p. 248.
[53] Ostojić, 'The Terms Croats Have Used For Their Language', p. 39. Among the most famous examples are those of the Bosnian Croat feudal lord, Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić (1350-1416) and the Renaissance miniature painter, Julije Klović (1498-1578), known in Italian as Giulio Clovio Croata. Note that the common first name 'Hrvoje' is also derived from 'Hrvat'.
[54] Rigby, 'Russia's Nationhood from its Origins to Putin', p. 126.
[55] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 12.
[56] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780,* pp. 46, 77.

medieval and early modern periods in Croatia of, for example, popular traditions of anti-Venetian dissent in Dalmatia. As Catherine Wendy Bracewell remarks, in sixteenth century Dalmatia, 'a sense of political unity embracing the Croat nation could still be detected in many strata of society'.[57]

The refined proto-national ideology of the Croat upper classes (including the clerical estate) was, on the other hand, based mainly on two historical sources, which played important roles in the shaping of a unique Croat identity that was grounded in history and culture. The first was the tenth century account of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, which detailed Croatian settlement in the Western Balkans and the Croats' subsequent victory over the enemies of the Byzantine Empire, the Avars.[58] The second source was the Hieronymian legend, that is, the medieval myth that the Roman Dalmatian St. Jerome, one of the Church Fathers (who translated the Bible into Vulgate Latin) had been a Croat and inventor of the Glagolitic alphabet.[59] Additionally, the idea of Croatia as a bulwark of the West held an important place in Croatian noble proto-national mythology. In 1519, Pope Adrian IV awarded the Croats with the title of *antemurale Christianitatis* ('bulwark of Christianity') for having steadfastly opposed the Ottoman

[57] Bracewell, *Uskoks of Senj*, p. 28.
[58] There are two versions in Constantine's account of how the Croats arrived from either 'north of the Hungarian lands' or from the 'other side of Bavaria' to Roman Illyricum where they defeated the Avars. As to the historical accuracy of the Emperor's account, that is still a matter of debate among historians. The two accounts could well be legends of *origo gentis*, tales of national origins the barbarian invaders of Roman territory in the Middle Ages presented to the 'heirs of classical antiquity'. See Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', p. 151. Also see Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 11.
[59] See Banac, *National Question,* 61. Marko Marulić wrote a historical tract on the subject of St. Jerome entitled: 'Against Those Who Contend that Blessed Jerome was an Italian.' See Petrovich, 'Croatian Humanists and the Writing of History', p. 637.

Turkish invasions and this title was eagerly appropriated by Croatia's nobles who saw themselves as defenders of Western Christian civilization.[60]

Despite the political division of the Croatian lands, many Croats of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance knew that they belonged, in whatever vague sense, to the Croatian 'nation', and a number of educated and noble Croats expressed open 'national' pride in their letters, epistles and prose works. The anti-Ottoman (and at times, anti-Venetian) literature of the Croatian Renaissance, 'lamenting the devastated and dismembered homeland and the reproaches to those who are ashamed of their native tongue are filled with an awareness of the Croat nation as a historical entity'.[61] While historians must always be careful to distinguish between modern nations, which as we have noted are political communities, and pre-modern ethnic groups, one cannot disregard the evidence that highlights the considerable continuity between the proto-national traditions of pre-modern ethnies and modern nations. As Pierre van den Berghe argues,

> 'Ethnicity…cannot be invented or imagined out of nothing. It can be manipulated, used, exploited, stressed, fused or subdivided, but it must correlate with a pre-existing population bound by preferential endogamy and a common historical experience. Ethnicity is *both* primordial *and* instrumental'.[62]

---

[60] See Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 212. In a speech in Nürnberg in 1522, entitled *Oratio pro Croatia*, the nobleman Bernardin Frankopan pleaded for European assistance against the Turks, and spoke of Croatia as the 'shield and gate of Christendom'. See Michael B. Petrovich, 'The Croatian Humanists and the Ottoman Peril', *Balkan Studies,* Vol 20, No 2. 1979, pp. 266, 268.

[61] Bracewell, *Uskoks of Senj*, p. 26.

[62] Pierre L. van den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter?' *Nations and Nationalism*, 1 (3), 1995, p. 361.

In the case of Croatia, both the Yugoslavists and Ustashe 'manipulated' and 'exploited' Croat ethnicity, but they could not have exploited that ethnicity if a distinct Croatian 'ethnie' had not existed in the first place.

The 'instrumentalization' of Croatian nationhood began in the early nineteenth century. The inclusion of the peasantry and nobility into the modern Croatian nation would be a long and slow process, evolving in tandem with the slow modernization of Croatian political and socio-economic life. Historians refer to this process as 'national integration'.[63] 'National integration' was necessary in the nineteenth century in order 'to transform the pre-modern [feudal] into a modern [capitalist] society'.[64] It began in Eastern and Central Europe with what Miroslav Hroch defines as the first stage of such a process, namely the period when 'men of letters' start to study the 'national' language and culture; in the second stage, a 'group of patriots begin to disseminate national propaganda in a systematic and organised fashion', while in the last stage, the masses become 'nationally conscious' and are mobilized through the national movement.[65] At first, the national movement only seeks 'to achieve all the attributes of a "fully fledged" nation', while the ideology of nationalism 'is a state of mind

[63] National intergration is 'a process in the course of which localisms and regionalisms of the ethnic community are gradually overcome, a political community is formed and with it conditions for economic concentration and cultural homogenisation of the national community'. See Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', p. 215.
[64] Duško Sekulić, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Croatia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3, May 2004, p. 463.
[65] See Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', pp. 218-219. Also see Banac, *National Question*, pp. 28-29.

that gives priority to the interests and values of one's own nation over all other interests and values'.[66]

In short, the process of national integration is, to a large degree, an ideologically conceived undertaking on the part of 'national' intellectuals and politicians, but as Ivo Banac aptly notes, 'in order to be accepted an ideology must proceed from reality', for 'nationalism can attempt to deal with the conditions of its group's subjugation, but it cannot manufacture the conditions'.[67] Miroslav Hroch also argues that, one 'cannot interpret the phenomenon "nationalism" without taking into account the real existing large social group "nation", which emerged as the result of a long nation-forming process, which had its prehistory in the Middle Ages'.[68]

Relations with the Serbian Orthodox minority

To conclude this chapter on pre-modern Croatian ethnic identity, it is important to remark on the early history of the Orthodox Serbian minority in Croatia, for this minority's existence has had a huge effect on modern Croat-Serb relations. By the late Middle Ages, a fairly 'stable Croatian ethnocultural identity' had been formed in what historians have termed the 'Croatian space', which refers to the geographical distribution of the Croats,

[66] Miroslav Hroch, 'Nationalism and National Movements: Comparing the Past and Present of Central and Eastern Europe', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2 (1), 1996, p. 36.
[67] Banac, *National Question*, p. 29.
[68] Hroch, 'Nationalism and National Movements', p. 36.

encompassing today's Republic of Croatia and parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.[69] However, by the early modern period the Ottoman invasions had brought huge changes in the ethnic map of the Croatian area, with the appearance of a new large Orthodox (mainly Vlach) population in parts of 'Old Croatia' (Lika, the Dalmatian hinterland and northwest Bosnia), as well as an Islamic population centred in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in parts of Dalmatia and Slavonia.[70] The great diversity of Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim religions, as well as Croatian, Vlach and Serbian ethnic identities within the 'Croatian space' would prove to be 'disintegrative factors' in the eventual creation of a modern Croat nation.[71]

Although Orthodox Christians had been present in Croatia (mainly Vlachs in the Dalmatian hinterland and Greeks in the Dalmatian cities) since the early Middle Ages, most Croatian Serbs were descendants of Orthodox refugees (including Serbs, but also large numbers of Vlachs and other Balkan Orthodox Christians) who fled to, or were resettled in, Croatia in the late sixteenth and especially early seventeenth centuries. Most of these Orthodox refugees, known collectively as 'Vlachs' to the authorities and local population, were eventually organized as military peasant colonists by the Habsburgs in the so-called *Militärgrenze/Vojna Krajina* (Military Frontier), a defensive zone designed to act as a buffer against the Ottoman Empire, which also organized groups of Orthodox Vlachs as military

[69] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 71, 77.
[70] See ibid, p. 77. Also see Banac, *National Question*, pp. 42-43 and Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', pp. 6-7.
[71] Rendić-Miočević, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', p. 6.

colonists on its side of the border known as *martolosi*.[72] The colonists of the Military Frontier, who were not exclusively Orthodox, but included a large number of Catholic Croats, were exempt from feudal dues and were not subject to the authority of the Croatian *Ban* and *Sabor*.

The Frontier would not be reunited with the rest of Croatia until 1881. From the time of Emperor Ferdinand II's 1630 *Statuta Valachorum* ('Vlach Statute'), which guaranteed religious autonomy for the Orthodox population of the Frontier and the colonists' free-peasant status, to 1881, the Croatian nobility tried strenuously to reduce the so-called *Grenzer* to serf status and return the Frontier to the *Ban's* jurisdiction. The Military Frontier was neither a Serbian nor Orthodox entity, but it did end up institutionally separating the majority of Croatian Serbs from the rest of the Croatian population.[73] More importantly, it was the autonomous Orthodox Church that was most instrumental in separating the Croatian Serbs from their neighbours in a socio-cultural sense.[74]

---

[72] The Vlachs are an ancient Balkan people likely descended from the Illyrian (and other aboriginal) tribes of the Balkans who were then later Latinized under Roman rule and in many cases Slavicized during later centuries. They were mainly a pastoral people engaging in semi-nomadic transhumance. The Vlachs were predominantly Orthodox, but there were Catholic Vlachs in Croatia. On the history of the Vlachs, see chapter six, 'Serbs and Vlachs', in Malcom, *Bosnia*. Also see Banac, *National Question*, pp. 42-45.

[73] Nicholas J. Miller, *Between Nation and State: Serbian Politics in Croatia before the First World War* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), p. 8. A large number of Serbs/Vlachs within the historic Croatian provinces lived outside of the Military Frontier (notably the Serbs of the Dalmatian hinterland).

[74] ibid, pp. 12-14. The Serb population of Croatia-Slavonia was subject to the Orthodox metropolitan of Srijemski Karlovci, to whom many Romanians were also subordinate during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The religious and social background of the Vlach immigrants was viewed by the Croatian nobility as a threat to its way of life.[75] Croatian nobles dismissed the Vlachs as 'brigands', 'depraved people', who lived from theft and plunder and did not give the 'labor and due respect which are due to the manorial lords.'[76] Furthermore, as the Vlachs were Orthodox 'schismatics', they were deemed unwelcome in a devout Catholic country.[77] For their part, the Vlachs despised the Croatian nobility with equal fervour. One group informed the imperial authorities in 1628 that they would prefer being 'hacked into pieces than be separated from their German officers and placed under the Bishop of Agram or any other Croatian noble.'[78]

The conflict between 'Croatian' noble and 'Vlach' free-peasant was primarily a social conflict with little or no 'national' overtones. Relations were not always bad between the two groups; during an attempted joint Croatian-Hungarian noble anti-Habsburg rebellion in 1671, the Croatian nobility, led by the families Zrinski and Frankopan, called on the *Grenzer* to support them.[79] Furthermore, it was not uncommon to find Orthodox Frontier officers who referred to themselves as Croats.[80] However, by the second half of the nineteenth century, under the influence of Serb Orthodox confessional schools, the 'Vlach' peasant soldiers would come to identify themselves with the Serbian nation.[81]

---

[75] Gunther Erich Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522-1747* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), p. 68.
[76] ibid, p. 69.
[77] ibid.
[78] ibid, p. 72. Agram is the German name for Zagreb.
[79] ibid, pp. 84-85.
[80] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 102.
[81] See Miller, *Between Nation and State,* pp. 21-22 and Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 120-121.

Despite their privileges, the Frontier Serbs/Vlachs remained at the bottom end of the social scale in Croatia. Their socio-economic conditions appeared to lend credence to aristocratic Croatian prejudices. As Jasminka Udovički points out, the poverty of the Frontier, 'which the Serbs shared with the Croatian serfs [sic] living in the same area – played a distinct role in forming the perception of Serbs as a backward and inferior race.'[82] In the Croatian nobility's eyes, 'everything to the east of the Drina river [i. e. Serbia] appeared tainted by the lawlessness, corruption, and poor hygiene characteristic of "Asia". And the Krajina Serbs seemed to have brought that mentality into Croatia.'[83] The social, ethnic and religious antagonisms between the Orthodox Vlachs and Catholic Croatian majority were to provide the Ustashe with one of the important bases on which to build an anti-Serbian national ideology. The Ustashe often used the term 'Vlach' as a synonym for the Serbs.

The complex relationship to the Serbs, Croatia's unique space on the European continent, and heterogeneous cultural traditions opened the way to supranational/racial notions of nationhood being adopted by the nineteenth century Croatian cultural and political elite, which hoped to complete the national integration and liberation of the Croats.

[82] Jasminka Udovički, 'The Bonds and the Fault Lines' in Jasminka Udovički and James Ridgeway (eds.) *Burn this House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 17.
[83] ibid, p. 20.

Chapter Two: Illyrians and Yugoslavs

One language = one people?

Prior to the appearance of the Ustashe, all the major Croatian national movements either adhered to some form of cultural pan-Slavism or were unable to define the Croats along distinctive ethno-linguistic lines. The first modern Croat nationalists to proclaim the Croats as nationally 'South Slav' were the Illyrianists, who operated in the 1830s and 1840s. This view was to be shared by their political successors, the Yugoslavists. It was first and foremost the 'brotherly' attitude of the Illyrians and Yugoslavists toward the Serbs and all Slavs generally, which the Ustashe rejected out of hand. For the latter, the Serbs were the principal 'Other' against whom they defined the Croats, although the Serbs were not the only 'Other', as will be shown. Ustasha and pro-Ustasha ideologists would later blame the Illyrianists and Yugoslavists for having either consciously or sub-consciously betrayed the cause of Croatdom by declaring the Croats as nationally South Slav and/or Slav, and thereby having laid the foundations for the future state of Yugoslavia. What is important to note is that by emphasizing the primacy of language in defining Croat nationhood, and by indentifying language with 'race', the Illyrianists and Yugoslavists would introduce a 'German' romantic ethno-nationalism into Croatian political life.[1]

[1] Ethno-nationalists believe that nationhood is based on inherited ethnic, cultural and linguistic characteristics, rather than on political citizenship. This type of nationalism was more common in Germany and Eastern Europe than in Western Europe and the Americas, simply because the British, French, Spanish and other Atlantic states were able to provide a territorial and political framework for

Subsequently, all the major Croatian national movements, from the Illyrians to the ultra-nationalist Ustashe, defined the Croats, to a lesser or greater extent, 'in primordial terms'. In other words, the Croats were defined according to a 'myth of common ancestry'.[2] The idea that the nation was based on a 'community of descent', or on *ius sanguinis* ('law of blood') was central to the type of nationalism that was particularly prevalent in Central and Eastern Europe.[3] The following five chapters will answer why ethno-nationalism became the dominant political ideology in Croatia, and how it eventually facilitated the emergence of the particular brand of extreme Ustasha ethno-nationalism.

For the Illyrians, the primary ethnic 'Other' was the Hungarian.[4] This notional alterity evolved from the resistance of Croatian noblemen to Hungarian attempts, beginning in the 1790s, to introduce Magyar as the official language of the Hungarian kingdom (which at the time included Croatia and Slavonia). The Croatian nobles at first argued for the continued use of the traditional Latin. However, they realized that they could not defend themselves against an increasingly aggressive Hungarian nationalism, which sought to turn the multi-ethnic 'lands of St. Stephen' into a Magyar national state, on the basis of defending a 'dead'

---

the formation of nations. As there was, for example, no unified German national state prior to 1871, it was left primarily to poets, writers and philosophers, rather than a monarchy or state, to define German nationhood. Accordingly, these thinkers concentrated on cultural rather than political aspects of nationhood. See Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 3-10.

[2] Sekulić, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Croatia', p. 462-463.

[3] ibid, p. 464.

[4] Contrary to arguments of 'ancient hatreds' between Serbs and Croats, just as it was first of all the Hungarians (and later Austrian-Germans and Italians) against whom the early Croatian nationalists defined themselves, for Serbian nationalists in the nineteenth century, the 'Other' was primarily represented by the Turk and/or Muslim. See Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia,* pp. 329-330.

language used only by a minority.[5] By the early nineteenth century, among all of the Croats' immediate neighbours – Hungarians, Slovenes and Serbs – cultural elites were beginning to standardize their 'national' languages and provide their 'nations' with modern literary languages.[6] The Croat political and cultural elite saw that they needed to do the same if they were to protect Croatia's distinct political and cultural identity.

By the late eighteenth century, most Croats spoke štokavian, but the growing centre of Croatian political and cultural life, Zagreb, was still predominantly kajkavian at this time. The Illyrian movement wanted the process of the standardization of literary štokavian Croatian to include not only Zagreb, but also the other 'ethnically related' South Slavs.[7] The Croatian decision to allow for linguistic standardization to be partly influenced by the desire for closer relations with other South Slavs, was, as Benedikta Zelić-Bučan notes, the opposite of the standardization processes among those same Slavs, who 'developed their standard languages by starting from the principle of the greatest language differences', while 'only the Croats, led by dreams, began from the principle of convergence'.[8]

The standardization of the Croatian literary language was thus partly motivated by political factors. The partial artificiality of this case of linguistic standardization was no different to

[5] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, pp. 20-22. Latin was retained as the official language of the *Sabor* until 1848, but the *Sabor* had also decided to make Hungarian a required subject in all Croatian schools in 1827.
[6] ibid, p. 20.
[7] ibid, p. 26. For more on the standardization of Croatian, see Banac, *National Question*, pp. 77-78.
[8] Zelić-Bučan, 'The National Name of the Croatian Language Throughout History', p. 96.

other attempts at standardizing national languages in nineteenth century Europe.[9] The common usage of the štokavian dialect by both Croats and Serbs, however, 'deprived Croat nationalism of the convenient linguistic justification and provided both Serbs, and later Croats, with an excuse for expansionism.'[10] For their part, Serbian nationalists regarded the štokavian dialect as a purely Serbian language. The Serbian language reformer, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787-1864), was the first Serb to expound this view and he did so on the basis of the work of the German scholar August Ludwig von Schlözer and Czech and Slovak Slavicists such as Josef Dobrovský and Jan Kollár. Thus, alongside a traditional Orthodox definition of Serb nationhood, Karadžić provided an ethno-linguistic one.[11]

The Illyrian movement

In contrast to Serbian nationalists, the Illyrians saw štokavian as providing the basis for a literary language for the South Slavs as a whole. They also sought to further cultural ties with West and East Slavs, for all Slav speaking peoples were viewed as ethnic brethren by the Illyrian movement. The Illyrian leader Ljudevit Gaj (1809-1872) was greatly influenced in this respect not only by the long intellectual Croat tradition of pan-Slavism (dating from the Renaissance), but also by the founders of modern pan-Slavism, the Slovak poet Jan Kollár

[9] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780,* p. 54.
[10] ibid, p. 55.
[11] Banac, *National Question,* p. 80.

and his compatriot, the scholar Pavel Josif Šafařík.[12] Each had categorized the southern Slavs into the distinct Slav dialectal group called 'Illyrian'.[13] Gaj believed that the ancient Illyrians had been Slavs and were ancestors of both the modern South Slavs and the Slavs of central and northeastern Europe.[14] He believed that the name 'Illyrian' could unite the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes and others under a 'neutral' name, which would not threaten any group's individual identity.[15]

Pan-Slavism, including the narrower ideology of Illyrianism, was, in the first half of the nineteenth century at least, a cultural movement aimed at furthering and cementing the cultural and literary links among the Slav peoples. The pan-Slavs argued for Slav unity on the basis of linguistic affinity – and it was their reading and interpretation of the ideas of German cultural unity among German romanticists, such as Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1811), which saw them disregard the historical, cultural, religious and political differences that existed between the Slavic peoples.[16] Romanticist notions of nationhood based on ethnicity and culture were popular among Croat pan-Slavists in part because of the strong

[12] Wayne S. Vucinich, 'Croatian Illyrism: Its Background and Genesis' in Stanley B. Winters and Joseph Held (eds.), *Intellectual and Social Developments in the Habsburg Empire from Maria Theresa to World War 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), pp. 55, 66-67.
[13] According to Kollár, the Slav dialects were Polish, Russian, Czecho-Slovak and Illyrian, while Šafařík distinguished between Northeastern Slavs (Czechs and Poles) and Southeastern Slavs (Russians and Illyrians). See Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, p. 87.
[14] The idea that all Slavs came from the South originated with Vinko Pribojević, a sixteenth century Croat theologian, who was the initiator of the idea of Slavic reciprocity among the Croats. See Banac, *National Question*, pp. 71, 76. Also see Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', p. 164.
[15] Banac, *National Question*, p. 76.
[16] Kohn, *Pan-Slavism,* pp. 1-2.

German cultural influence over northern Croatia.[17] The acceptance of these notions led to the contradiction between romantic idealism on the one hand, and social, historical and political realities on the other, and this would frustrate and complicate the ideological program of the Illyrian movement.

Elinor Murray Despalatović has aptly described the program of the Illyrians as consisting of three characteristics: on a cultural level, they wanted to create a unified standard literary language; on a political level they wanted to preserve the Croats' traditional autonomy within the Habsburg Empire; and thirdly, they aimed to culturally unite all southern Slavs on the basis of their new literary (štokavian) standard.[18] The movement's slogan, coined by Gaj in 1841, summarised the Illyrian program thus: 'God preserve the Hungarian Constitution, the Croatian Kingdom and the Illyrian Nationality.'[19] The struggle to preserve Croatia's historic state right on the one hand, and create a culturally unified South Slav nation on the other, was going to be difficult to reconcile. Although the Illyrian program carried no explicit demand for South Slav political unity, the rise of an autonomous Serbia in the 1830s tested Illyrian loyalty (at least on the part of Gaj) to the Habsburgs. As Despalatović notes, although the Illyrian leader

> 'officially proclaimed loyalty to the Habsburg Empire…Gaj seems to have come to believe that one possible alternative for the Croats in the future, would be membership in a Southern Slav state. This may always have been inherent in Gaj's

[17] Vucinich, 'Croatian Illyrism', p. 66. German was 'the language of Zagreb's bourgeois society, the greater part of the intelligentsia and educated women'. See Ivan Stržić, *Hrvatski portreti* (Zagreb: DoNeHa, 1993), p. 112.
[18] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, p. 2.
[19] ibid.

ideas of Illyrian nationality, for it is only one step from ethnic and cultural unity to political unity'.[20]

The Serbs, on the other hand, were well ahead of the Croats in forming a unified and separate modern national consciousness. As Mirjana Gross remarks, the Serbs had a far more homogeneous social make up than the Croats, and furthermore, the Serbian Orthodox Church 'effected a conjunction of the Serbian name and religion', making it easy for the Serbs to switch the use of the name 'Serb' from a religious term to one of national identity.[21] The Serbs had already achieved considerable autonomy vis-à-vis the Porte in 1815. By 1878 they would attain complete independence. As Nicholas Miller argues, the stronger national consciousness of the Serbs made them 'much more coherent political actors.'[22]

Coherent political action was less clear in the Illyrian political program because the movement felt compelled to both defend Croatia's historic state right and to argue for the construction of a modern nationality, which existed outside the boundaries of that 'historic state'. The determined Illyrian defence of state rights was in large part due to the many nobles who had come to support Gaj. This alliance between the Illyrians (many of whom were non-noble professionals) and part of the nobility explains the lack of proposals for social reform, naturally unacceptable to the conservative nobility, in the movement's program.[23] The first Croatian 'national' manifesto, the *Disertacija*, written in 1832 by the

[20] ibid, p. 149.
[21] See Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', pp. 214-215.
[22] Miller, *Between Nation and State,* p. 32.
[23] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, pp. 102-103.

pro-Illyrian nobleman Count Janko Drašković, reflected the cautious approach of the Croat political elite. The 'Dissertation' called for the unification of Croat inhabited areas (including Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as the Slovene lands), but did not call for Croatia's withdrawal from the Empire.[24] Drašković referred to the inhabitants of 'Great Illyria', regardless of whether they were Catholic or Orthodox, as 'Slavo-Croats' ('kroatische Slaven').[25] As Ivo Lederer writes, 'since "independence" for Croatia, in the sense of breaking the Habsburg or Crown of St. Stephen ties, was neither contemplated nor practicable…Croat nationalist thought pursued the elusive line between self-assertion and accommodation.'[26]

With the growing support of many Croatian nobles, the pan-Slavic aspect of the Illyrian movement was toned down.[27] The nobility concentrated on the Croats' traditional political struggle for preservation of its autonomy vis-à-vis Hungary. Gaj, on the other hand, toyed with ideas of forging links with Russia, hoping it would act in the role of liberator of the South Slavs (although he came to fear the possibility of Russian political hegemony).[28] Gaj wanted to convince Croats that they had nothing to fear from Hungarian nationalism, for they belonged to a 'nation' (i.e. the 'Slav') that was much larger than the Magyar nation. In fact Gaj argued that the Croats 'belonged to three nationalities: the Croats, the Illyrians and the Slavs'.[29] Fear of being swallowed up by other nations played a large role in Illyrian

[24] Ivo J. Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs' in Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (eds.) *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), p. 410.
[25] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 168.
[26] Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', p. 410.
[27] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj,* p. 110.
[28] ibid, pp. 117-120, 123-128.
[29] ibid, pp. 90-91 & 110.

perceptions of forming the modern nation.[30] The Illyrians felt that they needed a wider ethnic and cultural identity with which to combat the threat of Magyarization. As a result, Illyrian politics was based on two concepts: 'cultural Illyrianism' and 'political Croatianism'.[31] As one leading Illyrian, Ljudevit Vukotinović, explained, Illyrianism referred to the ethnic and linguistic identity of the Croats, while Croatianism referred to their political identity.[32] The movement could not consider its people simply as Croatian in a national sense, for this name at that time applied more specifically to Civil Croatia.[33]

While the northern Croats tried to fend off the threat of Magyarization, Dalmatian Croats contended with Italian nationalist claims to their province. During the period of Habsburg rule (1815-1918), Dalmatia was 'exposed not only to Italian culture, as it had always been, but also to Italian national consciousness', for the Habsburg rulers imported Italian administrators from Austrian northern Italy to administer the province of Dalmatia (which was ruled separately from Civil Croatia and Slavonia).[34] The struggle for *Italia irredenta* on the part of Italian nationalists from the second half of the nineteenth century not only contravened Italian and Croatian national interests, but also enabled nationalists on both sides to view Italian-Croatian relations in the light of an apparently thousand year 'racial' struggle for domination of the Adriatic. Italian imperialist designs against Croatian territory

[30] Fear of the 'other' is an aspect of nationalism in general. As Holm Sundhaussen notes, 'justified or suggested fear is a powerful factor in the formation of modern nations'. See Sundhaussen, 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan Raum', p. 244.
[31] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj,* p. 142.
[32] ibid.
[33] ibid.
[34] Banac, 'The Confessional "Rule" and the Dubrovnik Exception', p. 450.

pushed many Dalmatian Croats toward pan-Slavism and Yugoslavism, much as northern Croats such as Gaj had turned to their 'Slav brothers' in the struggle against the Hungarians.

Despite initial support, during the revolution of 1848, from the Habsburg court in its struggle against the increasingly hostile Hungarian nationalists, the Illyrian movement was unable to procure imperial backing for its main aim, namely, the administrative unification of Dalmatia with Croatia and Slavonia. Although the Imperial court had appointed the pro-Illyrian Baron Josip Jelačić as *Ban* in 1848 against the wishes of the revolutionary nationalist government in Budapest, and although Jelačić helped quell the Hungarian revolt and the liberal rebellion in Vienna, the Habsburgs did not reward the Croats with administrative union of their provinces. The Triune Kingdom was subject to the same policies of imperial absolutism as the rest of the Empire.[35] All the same, the Illyrians succeeded in having the *Sabor* recognize the štokavian (-ijekavian) literary language as the official language of the Triune Kingdom in 1847.[36]

A more telling defeat for the Illyrians was the thorough rejection of their program by the Serb and Slovene cultural and political elites.[37] The Serbs, already possessing a stronger sense of nationhood, had no use for the 'dead' Illyrian name.[38] Although the Serbs of Southern Hungary co-operated with Jelačić against the Hungarians, the government of the

[35] Although the Ban was retained, 'a Croatian governmental bureaucracy, whose key positions were staffed by Imperial appointees, was formed'. Mario S. Spalatin, 'The Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević, 1845-1871', *Journal of Croatian Studies*, 16, 1975, p. 48.
[36] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, pp. 181-183 & 189.
[37] Banac, *National Question,* pp. 78-79.
[38] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj,* pp. 133-134.

Principality of Serbia was pursuing its own national, and not Gaj's South Slav, aims. The foremost Serbian national aim was 'the liberation and unification of all Serbs into a single Great Serbian state', an aim most clearly laid out in the 1844 document, *Načertanije* ('Outline'), written by the Serbian interior minister, Ilija Garašanin.[39] As Misha Glenny acutely notes: 'Given that the Serbs were well advanced in their project of state-building, the Croats were faced with an awkward dilemma. Either they would need to co-operate with the Serbs, and accept a subordinate role, or oppose them and face the consequences'.[40] Further to the Illyrians' dismay, the Slovenes also rejected the Illyrian name, for they too considered it 'unhistorical', and instead developed their own literary standard.[41]

Differences in Croat and Serb understandings of the 'nation' were apparent from the very beginning of the national movements with regard to the language question. As Banac argues:

> 'The unique Croat dialectal situation, that is the use of three distinct dialects, could not be reconciled with the romantic belief that language was the most profound expression of national spirit. Obviously, one nation could not have three spirits, nor could one dialect be shared by two nationalities.'[42]

[39] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 83-84. Garašanin's plan focused on the future acquisition of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
[40] Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers,* p. 57.
[41] Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, pp. 134-135.
[42] Banac, *National Question*, p. 81.

For the Serbs, the štokavian dialect was theirs alone, and therefore Croats who used it must have been 'Catholicized Serbs.' Karadžić popularized the notion that only the čakavian speaking Croats were true Croats, while the kajkavian Croats were probably Slovenes.[43]

The Illyrian movement had succeeded in overcoming the regional and linguistic divisions of the Croats, but their ultimate aim had been to provide the South Slavs with one common literary language, which in turn would provide the basis for a common 'Illyrian' (South Slav) culture.[44] The Illyrians failed in this endeavour, which, in any case, would have been difficult to reconcile with their defence of Croatia's historic state right. The result of Illyrian political failures and the imposition of Habsburg absolutism, was, as Lederer clearly spells out,

> 'political frustration that, in turn, rendered inevitable the splintering after 1860, of Croatian nationalist thought into channels of Greater Croatian extremism, opportunist collaboration with Budapest and Vienna, and – into a seeming contradiction of Croatianism – Yugoslavism.'[45]

---

[43] Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, 'Serbs All and Everywhere', in Bože Čović (ed.) *Roots of Serbian Aggression: Debates/Documents/Cartographic Reviews* (Zagreb: Centar za strane jezike & AGM, 1993), pp. 90, 101. Like the Illyrians, Karadžić also used the štokavian-ijekavian dialect, but adopted a phonetic, rather than etymological, writing system and based his language on the peasant speech of Orthodox Eastern Herzegovina. The Illyrians, on the other hand, had relied on the wealth of the Croatian literary heritage, written in all three Croat dialects. Ironically, the Serbians of Serbia would eventually reject Karadžić's standard in favour of štokavian-ekavian, while, after the 1890s, literary Croatian would be based largely on the standard formulated by pro-Karadžić Croat linguists. See Banac, *National Question*, pp. 209-211.

[44] ibid, pp. 78-79.

[45] Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', p. 410.

Yugoslavism

The heirs of Gaj's Illyrianism were the 'Yugoslavists', led by the Catholic bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815-1905), who continued to strive for South Slav cultural unity in the period roughly from the 1860s to the 1890s. As with Illyrianism, Yugoslavism would be caught between the goals of a culturally unified Yugoslav nation on the one hand, and the continued defence of Croatian state right on the other. Strossmayer would be even more frustrated than Gaj in his attempts to forge South Slav unity, as Serbia would assert its full independence in 1878 and embark on a program of territorial expansion, based not on 'Yugoslav' but Greater Serbian nationalism. That the Serbs were motivated by a purely Serbian, and not Yugoslav, nationalism can be discerned from a perusal of Serbian school textbooks from the period from 1878 to 1914. Serbian geography, history and literature textbooks made virtually no reference to the existence of a separate Croatian people, but rather to a 'Catholic' or 'Western' branch of the Serbian nation.[46] All the historic provinces and towns of Croatia were claimed as Serbian.[47]

The Croat Yugoslavists, on the other hand, believed in the existence of a unique Slavic spirit. In this respect, Herder's theory of language as the best expression of the national spirit or

[46] Charles Jelavich, 'Serbian Textbooks: Toward Greater Serbia or Yugoslavia?' *Slavic Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4, winter 1983, pp. 601-619.

[47] Only in the immediate period before the First World War did Serbian textbooks begin to acknowledge the existence of Croats and take a more 'brotherly' and 'Yugoslav' attitude toward them. However, even at this time the general line of the textbooks was to emphasize Serbian greatness and Serbia's right to other South Slav lands. See ibid, p. 618.

soul (*Volksgeist*) was very important for Strossmayer.[48] The Serbs and Croats were one people because they shared more or less the same language and therefore possessed the same spirit or soul.[49] However, as was the case with the Illyrians, the Yugoslavists could not clarify with precision to what nation the Croats actually belonged. The words 'nation' and 'tribe' were used synonymously to describe the Croats, South Slavs and the Slavs in general.[50]

At the same time, Strossmayer felt that the separate state-historical traditions of the Serbs and Croats had to be maintained in order to ensure equality between the two ethnic 'brothers' in a future federal South Slav state.[51] Yugoslavism first ventured to secure South Slav unity, and maintain Croat political autonomy, within Austria-Hungary. This remained the basic and principal goal, while the vague vision of a unified federal South Slav state was left to an indeterminate date in the future.[52] Even the modest desire to enhance Croatian autonomy and unify northern and southern Croatia was, however, to remain unsuccessful. In 1867, the *Ausgleich* divided the Empire into Austrian and Hungarian halves, with Croatia-Slavonia in the latter half, while Dalmatia and Istria remained Austrian. This was further confirmed by the 1868 'Agreement' or *Nagodba* between Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia whereby Croatia-Slavonia remained politically autonomous, with the *Ban* and *Sabor* retaining authority over internal matters (such as education), but with the Magyar

[48] Mirjana Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies from the End of Illyrism to the Creation of Yugoslavia', *Austrian History Yearbook,* 15-16, 1979-1980, p. 7.
[49] ibid.
[50] ibid, pp. 12-13.
[51] ibid, p. 13.
[52] James Bukowski, 'Yugoslavism and the Croatian National Party in 1867', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* Vol. 3, No. 1, 1975, pp. 73-74.

dominated parliament in Budapest also exercising great influence over Croatia's external and financial policies.[53]

The political weakness of the Croats led Strossmayer to concentrate on cultural rather than political matters, founding and financing a whole range of cultural institutions and activities that promoted the national enlightenment of the 'Yugoslav nation.'[54] The Serbs, though, suspected Strossmayer was a proponent of Catholic and Habsburg expansionism in the Balkans.[55] Strossmayer's attempts to initiate political co-operation with the Serbian state came to nothing, given that Serbia was following a policy of *Realpolitik,* based on nationalist expansionism and not the romantic idealism of Yugoslavism.[56] Sharing little enthusiasm for a wider South Slav identity, the Serbs aimed at expanding their borders into other South Slav lands.[57] Serbian nationalism was inimical to Strossmayer's defence of historic Croat state right and his ideas of forming a state based on a Croat-Serb partnership.[58] Strossmayer's Yugoslavist National Party therefore faced the same problem as Gaj's Illyrian movement, namely, the Serbian rejection of their fundamental ideas of Serbian-Croatian 'national unity'.

---

[53] Banac, *National Question*, p. 91.
[54] This included the important Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences in Zagreb. See Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', pp. 11-12.
[55] Bukowski, 'Yugoslavism and the Croatian National Party', p. 74. Although a Catholic bishop, Strossmayer supported Christian ecumenism and regarded the religious division between Serbs and Croats as unfortunate and a detriment to 'national unity.' Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', pp. 14-15.
[56] Bukowski, 'Yugoslavism and the Croatian National Party', pp. 84-85.
[57] Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 349.
[58] Banac, *National Question,* pp. 90-91.

Banac notes that one of the main reasons why the Slovenes and Serbs had rejected Illyrianism in the first place was because:

> 'the Illyrianist solutions were so heavily dependent upon Croat national and cultural traditions that they failed to attract the other South Slavs – who of course had no particular interest in Croat literary monuments, notably the heritage of Dubrovnik, nor in the defense of Croatia's municipal autonomy'.[59]

Clearly the traditions of the pre-modern Croatian, Serbian and Slovene ethnies were too strong to be replaced by the artificial ideology of Yugoslavism. If it was already clear by the early 1850s that the Serbs and Slovenes had no specific interest in preserving either Croatian cultural traditions or Croatian historic state right, then for Bishop Strossmayer to once again attempt to build a 'genuinely South Slavic national culture'[60] (while at the same time ensuring the preservation of Croat historic state right) was an enterprise with little likelihood of success. Strossmayer's talk of Croat-Serb 'brotherhood' had the affect of concealing the increasing gulf between Croatian and Serbian political, economic and cultural interests, both between Croatia and the Kingdom of Serbia, as well as between the Croats and the Serbian minority in Croatia. Nowhere was that gulf better observed than in disputes over territory.

Despite their longing for South Slav brotherhood, the Yugoslavists' legalistic defence of Croatian state rights was bound to be a problem in their relations with the Serbs, because the question of what territory belonged to each nation could not be agreed upon. Croats and

[59] ibid, p. 78.
[60] ibid, p. 89.

Serbs each claimed Bosnia-Herzegovina and regarded the question of its sovereignty to be of supreme strategic importance. As Lederer states, 'the party that could legitimize or secure its proprietary claim to the Bosnian middle zone would likely become dominant in any future Yugoslav state.'[61]

It would be helpful at this point to observe that territorial issues have been at the heart of Croat-Serb national conflicts, primarily because both nations have had great problems in spatially defining 'Serbia' and 'Croatia.' John Allcock has explored the role of space and landscape in the 'imagining' of the nation among the South Slavs.[62] As the boundaries of 'Serbia' and 'Croatia' have shifted many times over the centuries, the Croats and Serbs have had a more problematic relationship to a 'spatial' identity than their immediate neighbours.[63] With regard to Croats and Serbs, Allcock concludes: 'Lacking clear linguistic identity and with an ambiguous attachment to space, they are equally burdened by historical mythologies in terms of which they define themselves in relation to others.'[64] The imprecise territorial definition of Serbia, for example, can be inferred from the slogan for a *Velika Srbija* ('Greater Serbia'): 'wherever there is a Serbian grave, there is Serbia.'[65]

Territorial disputes were unavoidable between Croat and Serb national demands. The ethnic, linguistic and religious lines between Croats and Serbs were blurred in certain areas to such an extent that both nations tended to claim entire territories (such as Bosnia) even if they

[61] Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs, p. 426.
[62] Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia,* pp. 337-347.
[63] ibid, pp. 341-347.
[64] ibid, p. 348.
[65] ibid, p. 346.

included large non-Croat or non-Serb minorities.[66] Serbian nationalists also claimed large parts of the Croatian Triune Kingdom. In 1881, the Military Frontier, with its large Serb population, was finally reunited with Croatia-Slavonia. Although welcomed by most Croatian politicians, the incorporation of the Frontier increased Serbian clout in Croatia's political life. The growing political power of the Croatian Serbs was to be exploited by the new *Ban* of 1883, Count Khuen-Héderváry, a Hungarian magnate from Slavonia who openly favoured the party of the Serbian minority at the expense of the Croatian majority.[67] The Serbs had been feeling increasingly agitated since 1874 with the closure of Serbian Orthodox schools under *Ban* Ivan Mažuranić. Although the policy was motivated by secularism and not by Croatian nationalism (or Catholic clericalism, as Catholic schools were also affected by the *Ban's* policy of secularizing education), the Serbs felt threatened and made common cause with Héderváry who was adamantly opposed to the administrative unification of the Croat provinces.[68] Along with many Hungarians and Austrians, Héderváry feared a stronger Slav political influence in the Empire that might arise if Croatia was strengthened. His Habsburg *divide et impera* policy, had the effect, however, of strengthening both anti-Croat Serbian and anti-Serb Croatian nationalism.

The ideology of Yugoslavism could neither reconcile Serbian and Croatian nationalisms nor the divergent political, economic and cultural interests of Croats and Serbs. This was still not clear to Yugoslavist Croats, but it was well clear to Greater Serbian nationalists. In a scandalous article, entitled 'Until Your or Our Extermination', published in a Zagreb Serb

[66] Miller, *Between Nation and State,* p. 121.
[67] Banac, *National Question,* p. 92.
[68] ibid and Miller, *Between Nation and State,* pp. 21-22. See Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 120-121.

newspaper in 1902, which set off anti-Serbian demonstrations in Zagreb, the author, Nikola Stojanović, predicted that the Croats, who 'have neither a separate language, nor common customs, nor a firm unity of life, nor…a consciousness of mutual affiliation, and cannot therefore be a separate nation', were destined to become Serbs.[69]

'National oneness'

Despite the growing rift between the national aims of Croats and Serbs, a new generation of Croatian politicians in the 1890s nonetheless continued to nurture a Yugoslav ideology, this time under the slogan of *narodno jedinstvo* ('national oneness/unity'). These politicians, in both Croatia-Slavonia and Dalmatia, began to discard the old struggle of defending Croatian autonomy on the basis of historic state rights and insisted instead on the primacy of *natural* rights.[70] This was contrary to political custom in the Habsburg Empire, where 'people acted as groups, defined according to a variety of categories: first as social classes – aristocracies, peasantries, city dwellers; then perhaps as national or religious communities; always, however, as groups, and never as citizens or individuals'.[71] The Emperor, in turn, would confer privileges and rights to corporate groups.[72] The concept of natural rights (or in other words 'human rights') in contrast, would not only confer rights on the individual citizen, but

[69] Nikola Stojanović, 'Until Your or Our Extermination', in Bože Čović (ed.) *Roots of Serbian Aggression: Debates/Documents/Cartographic Reviews* (Zagreb: Centar za strane jezike & AGM, 1993), p. 107.
[70] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 96-97.
[71] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, p. 30.
[72] ibid, p. 45.

also base the national struggle for liberation 'on the natural right of every nation to freedom and self-determination'.[73] Many of the politicians espousing the 'natural right' of the Yugoslav nation to self-determination had studied in Prague, where they had come under the influence of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the Czech political leader who based the Czech peoples' right to national self-determination on the concept of natural rights and not the historic rights of the Bohemian 'political nation'.[74] This new generation of Yugoslavist nationalists, known as the *napredna omladina* ('Progressive Youth'), saw Croat-Serb conflict as detrimental to the interests of both groups, for it favoured only the enemies of the 'Yugoslavs' (i.e. Germans and Hungarians).[75]

The 'Progressive Youth' led the way in putting forward a program known as the 'New Course.' The New Course essentially called for Croat-Serb political co-operation in the Triune Kingdom, reflected in the new Croato-Serbian Coalition Party, as well as laying the groundwork for a future South Slav state.[76] The 'New Course' political activists also endeavoured to make Croatia an Eastern 'bulwark' against what they feared as German and Austro-Hungarian expansionism toward South-Eastern Europe, a new German 'Drang nach Osten'. According to the Croatian politician, Frano Supilo, Croatia was to become an 'inverted antemurale', thus no longer the *antemurale christianitatis* of the *natio croatica*

[73] Banac, *National Question*, p. 96.
[74] ibid.
[75] ibid, p. 97.
[76] ibid, pp. 97-98.

defending Western Europe from the East, but now the defender of the 'Slavic East' from the 'Teutons'.[77]

Most Croatian political groups adhered in one way or another to the ideology of *narodno jedinstvo* immediately prior to the First World War.[78] This ideology, first emanating from the Progressive Youth, was in reality little different from Illyrianism or Yugoslavism in its idea of 'a particular reciprocity, a relationship of a special type between the South Slavic, or rather Yugoslav nations, according to which these nations altogether represent a greater national community in comparison to all other nations'.[79] The main difference between the different forms of Yugoslavism lay in the nature of South Slavic 'reciprocity'. What sort of political relationship should exist between the South Slav peoples? Strossmayer adhered to a sort of federal Yugoslavism because he wanted primarily to preserve Croatian political autonomy within the Habsburg Empire.[80] For the *omladina,* however, the possibility of war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia grew increasingly realistic and the prospect of a united South Slav state was a distinct possibility. The military defeat of Austria-Hungary in 1918 would finally open the door to South Slav political unification.[81] The 'Yugoslav' solution to the Croatian national question had not, however, gone unchallenged in all Croat political circles.

---

[77] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 199.
[78] Banac, *National Question*, p. 98.
[79] See Wolf Dietrich Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten 1830-1914: Analyse und Typologie der nationalen Ideologie* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1980), p. 51.
[80] ibid, p. 172.
[81] Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', p. 429.

Chapter Three: Ante Starčević and the Croatian Party of Right

Croat versus Slav

The opposition to Yugoslavism and pan-Slavism, as well as to expansionist Serbian nationalism, found its first spokesman in the figure of the philosophy student and writer Ante Starčević (1823-1896), a former Illyrian born of a Catholic father and an Orthodox mother in the Lika district of central Croatia. To many non-Croat historians, Starčević is still considered, quite wrongly, the father of modern exclusive Croatian nationalism.[1] For its part, the Ustasha movement considered Starčević and the party he founded in 1861, the Croatian Party of Right (*Hrvatska stranka prava,* HSP), as its direct ideological predecessor. Starčević's ideological appeal was so broad, nevertheless, that even Yugoslav nationalists laid a claim to his political legacy; as Wolf Dietrich Behschnitt explains, this is because Starčević adhered to a form of pan-Croatian nationalism that sought to assimilate all South Slavs as Croats.[2]

Thus, according to the Yugoslavist interpretation, if Starčević believed that all South Slavs were in fact Croats, then he essentially agreed with the Yugoslavists that Croats and Serbs

[1] See for example, Djilas, *Contested Country*, pp. 103-108, Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions and Mass Violence in Croatia', p. 1025, Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', pp. 420-421, and Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 365.
[2] Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten,* pp. 173.

were one people.[3] In truth, Starčević was opposed to Yugoslavism and his ideal remained an independent Croatian state, but his political ideas were otherwise quite different to those of the Ustashe. He was, for example, devoted to the democratic ideals of the French revolution and had a deep contempt for Austrians and German culture in general. Historians are not wrong to argue that the Ustashe misconstrued Starčević's ideology to suit their exclusivist agenda.[4] However, while there is no doubt that the Ustashe wilfully misinterpreted much of Starčević's ideology to legitimize their politics, the HSP leader's national ideas nonetheless exerted a marked influence on Ustasha nationalism, for Starčević was the first Croatian political figure to attempt to define a modern Croatian national consciousness outside of a pan-Slavic or Yugoslav framework. Starčević did not, however, manage to clarify what exactly separated Croats from Serbs in an ethnic or 'racial' sense. The Ustashe adopted Starčević's anti-pan-Slavism, but would also seek to construct a clear ethno-linguistic definition of Croatian nationhood.

Unlike the Illyrians, or his Yugoslavist political opponent Strossmayer, Starčević attempted to define the Croats, not only in opposition to Austrian-Germans and Hungarians, but first and foremost to Serbs. In the same manner that the Illyrian movement was largely a defensive reaction to Hungarian nationalism, during the 1850s and 1860s, Starčević's notion of Croatian historic 'rights' (*pravaštvo*) was also a defensive reaction to Vuk Karadžić's expansionist Serbian ethno-linguistic nationalism – which aimed to assimilate the Croats who were 'really' Serbs (i.e. štokavian speaking Croats) – as well as a reaction to the political

[3] See Banac, *National Question,* p. 100.
[4] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 23, and Goldstein, *Holokaust,* p. 90.

failure of Illyrianism.[5] In response to Karadžić's expansionism, Starčević argued that the Croats and Bulgarians were the only state-creating nations among the South Slavs; accordingly, he denied the existence of Serbs, arguing that they, like the Slovenes, were simply Croats.[6]

The HSP defined Croatian nationhood according to the notion of the historic state right of the *natio croatica* (or Croatian 'political nation'), which, as far as the party was concerned, included the lower classes. This was in line with Starčević's understanding of democratic sovereignty lying in the hands of the 'nation', not the monarch. The Habsburg Emperor was, in Starčević's eyes, the legitimate King of Croatia, but the Croatian people had a right to remove him if he did not act in the interests of the nation.[7] During a session of the *Sabor* in 1861, Starčević became the first Croatian politician to publicly call for an independent Croatian state. Starčević's demand for independence was a radically new concept for Croatian politics, which had never before 'contemplated breaking the Habsburg or Crown of St. Stephen ties'. Starčević's more aggressive style of politics was a welcome relief for many Croats from the stifling atmosphere of absolutism and Germanization in the 1850s.[8]

In spite of such ideologically radical ideas, Starčević avoided any extreme political action. Rather, he believed his task was to enlighten the Croats to their glorious past and preserve

[5] Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', p. 420.
[6] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', pp. 18-19.
[7] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 86-88.
[8] Following the 1859 defeat of the Austrian army by the French in Piedmont, the Emperor Franz Josef began to reform his prior centralist and absolutist policies. See Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', pp. 70-71.

their spirit.[9] This was the only recourse, thought Starčević, because no part of Croatian society was yet ready for the struggle for independence. The urban population of the towns was, Starčević argued, Germanized, the nobility was 'selfish' and 'lazy', while the middle-class and intelligentsia were practically non-existent. The peasantry, although 'open to all that is good and uplifting [was] uneducated and oppressed'.[10] Starčević's ideological radicalism enjoyed, all the same, a great deal of success for he managed to attract a large following from students and intellectuals who were looking for a more dynamic Croatian nationalist political alternative after the disappointments felt with the promulgation of the *Ausgleich* and *Nagodba*, both of which confirmed Croatia's political and economic inferiority in relation to Austria and Hungary.[11] As Banac writes, 'Starčević's ideology helped arouse Croat national sentiment far outside its hothouse in Croatia-Slavonia…the first generations of Croat political leaders in Dalmatia, Istria and Bosnia-Herzegovina were formed largely in his mold'.[12]

The 'Other': Slavoserbs and Vlachs

In line with his demand for full Croatian independence, Starčević was an avid opponent of pan-Slavism in any form. Notions of Slavic reciprocity were, according to Starčević, 'empty words, because for those dreams without any content, there is no basis in history, no reason

[9] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 17.
[10] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 112.
[11] Banac, *National Question*, p. 89.
[12] ibid.

in the present, and no perspective in the future'; for the 'Father of the Homeland' (*otac domovine*, as he was named by his followers), pan-Slavism was 'barbarism' and a threat to European civilization.[13] 'Slavic barbarism' was linked, in Starčević's mind, to the 'slave' nature of the Slavs.

Although committed to the ideals of the French revolution, Starčević departed from the idea of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' in one important respect. In line with the Aristotelian justification of slavery whereby certain individuals and peoples ('barbarians') were slaves by nature, Starčević developed the idea that there were similar 'slaves' in his time; these were people who were unfit for democratic life because they did not understand true freedom and the needs of the nation.[14] Starčević was first and foremost thinking of those Croats who 'served' foreign powers and ideologies, whether Austria, Hungary or pan-Slavism. His rejection of pan-Slavism and opposition to Karadžić led him to borrow the term *slavoserb* from Jan Kollár. Unlike Kollár, Starčević gave this name a negative connotation, deriving the words 'slav' and 'serb' from the Latin words *sclavus* and *servus*, both meaning 'slave'.[15] An etymological association between 'Slav' and 'slave' had also been made in Western European countries.[16]

---

[13] Ante Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?: Dva razgovora', in Josip Bratulić (ed.)*Djela dra. Ante Starčevića: 3. Znanstveno-političke razprave, 1894-1896* (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995), pp. 6, 17.
[14] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo,* p. 18.
[15] ibid, p.p. 220-221, 230; Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 19 and also Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten*, p. 182.
[16] Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe* (London: University of Sussex Press, 1975), p. 17.

Who exactly was a *slavoserb* in Starčević's eyes? He identified five categories among them. The first category consisted of people of 'impure breed' discovered by Aristotle in Thrace. The next two categories included Croats who had sold out their country for money and the intelligentsia. The fourth category was made up of foreigners who could not speak Croatian, while the fifth group was a collection of people who simply followed whatever the majority thought and said.[17] Starčević identified the first category with the Serbs and the nomadic inhabitants of the Balkans, namely the Vlachs.[18] In his essay, *Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hrvatskoj* ('The Slavoserb Breed in Croatia'), Starčević recounted the arrival of the nomadic Orthodox Vlachs into Croatian lands during the Ottoman invasions and their supposed propensity for looting, murder and other criminal deeds. According to Starčević, these Vlachs were intermingled with Gypsies and together they served the invading Ottoman armies.[19]

There were Serbs who were acceptable to Starčević, namely those who were supposed to possess a Croatian 'spirit.'[20] For him, this primarily meant the spirit of a ruling and master nation that had imposed its will upon the inhabitants of the western Balkans.[21] Using historical sources such as Constantine's *De administrando imperio,* Starčević was able to

[17] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo,* pp. 249-250.
[18] ibid, p. 341.
[19] Starčević, 'Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj' in J. Bratulić (ed.) *Djela dra Ante Starčevića: 3. Znanstveno-političke razprave 1894-1896* (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995), pp. 157-158. Starčević gave figures of the number of Gypsies in Turkey (140,000), Romania (130,000) and Serbia (30,000), although he believed these to be low estimates. According to him, the number of Gypsies in the above countries was at least five, perhaps ten times that number, considering that many Gypsies did not actually recognize themselves as such. See fn1, p. 159 in ibid.
[20] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo,* p. 341.
[21] ibid, p. 348.

buttress his claims of the supremacy of Croatian historic rights, which were won by conquest. According to the Byzantine Emperor, the Croats fought and defeated the Avars for possession of Dalmatia and Pannonia in the seventh century AD.[22] In contrast to the Croats, the Emperor claimed that the name 'Serb' was derived from the Latin *servus,* because the Serbs were supposedly slaves of the Romans.[23] Starčević used this information to compare the Croatians who 'bravely fight against the terrible Avars' and have an organized state with the Serbs who 'beg Byzantium for a piece of land.'[24]

In Starčević's eyes, the Serbs were a *pasmina* (a 'breed') but not a people or nation, because they were nomads of various origins, had little or no concept of land ownership – which promoted 'human dignity, love for the home and law' – had served various rulers and even assimilated into different cultures.[25] The Serbs had also been exposed to the corrupt Greek 'spirit', which was inferior to the Roman spirit. This eternal struggle between the Greek and Roman was reflected somewhat in the split between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.[26] According to Starčević, the archetypal Roman was a proud peasant-soldier whose chief virtue was fidelity. The Greek, on the other hand, was a decadent figure, inclined towards commerce, philosophizing and debauchery.[27] Starčević nevertheless argued that the split between the churches was detrimental to Croatian unity, for there were Orthodox Croats as

[22] J. V. A. Fine Jr., *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth Century to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983) pp. 49-59.
[23] ibid, p. 52.
[24] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 65.
[25] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, pp. 342-343, 345, 347.
[26] ibid, p. 340.
[27] Starčević, 'Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj', pp. 144-146.

well as Catholic ones, and religion was not the main mark of Croatian 'national authenticity', but the Croatian people's marked state-building qualities.[28]

Starčević at times claimed that all Serbs were Orthodox Croats who had been 'Serbianised' by Imperial Russia during Peter the Great's effort to expand the influence of Orthodox Russia into the Balkans.[29] The position of Serbia itself in Starčević's ideology remains unclear. Starčević claimed all South Slavs were really Croats, but as Mario Spalatin notes, he does appear to have made a distinction between the Serbs of 'historic' Croatia (including Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the Serbians of Serbia proper. Starčević thought that the latter should accept a Croatian national consciousness, but did not believe that the Serbians should be forcibly Croatized. On the other hand, 'any inhabitant of historic Croatia, who did not wish to be identified as a Croatian, had to be either a foreigner or a traitor to his nation.'[30] In other words, the Serbians of Serbia had a choice, which the Croatian Serbs did not – and if the latter refused their membership of the Croatian nation, they were nothing more than 'Slavoserbs.'

Despite the ambiguities present in his attitude toward Serbs, there was, as Banac argues, 'enough detestation of "political Serbs" in Starčević's ideology to raise questions about his belief that the Serbs were really Croats.'[31] Behschnitt notes that Starčević was not simply interested in philology when he sought the etymology of the Serbian name: 'the legitimacy

[28] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 348. The HSP claimed 'that no people divides itself according to religion.' Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 124.
[29] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 123.
[30] ibid, p. 125.
[31] Banac, *National Question,* p. 88.

of national claims through the historical right of the Croats favoured the negation of the Serbian name'.[32] The national name, 'the first mark of national authenticity', was of great significance to both Croat and Serb nationalists. Spalatin concludes succinctly that 'both peoples were very sensitive about each other's national identities precisely because, in being so close and yet different, one side might successfully substitute its own particular national identification and justify it by saying "we are all essentially one nation"'.[33] The primacy of the Croatian ethnic name over the Serbian one was justified not only by historic state right but also by a superior culture. Starčević mocked Karadžić's language reforms, which were based on the language of the common people. In contrast to Karadžić's language based on the speech of 'cowherds', Starčević glorified the 'classical language' of the Croats.[34] Apart from the praise showered on the Croatian literary heritage, the HSP also honoured the Croats as the saviours of Europe, defending it from all manner of 'barbarians', including Avars, Franks, Tatars and Turks.[35]

This was the favoured argument not so much of Starčević, but of his closest political collaborator, Eugen Kvaternik (1825-1871). He shared his leader's antipathy toward Germans, but admitted, with pride, that the Croats belonged to the great Slavic family of nations.[36] He claimed the Serbs of Croatia (and Bosnia-Herzegovina) as ethnic Croats, but did not usually claim the Serbians of Serbia as Starčević had. Kvaternik argued that the Serbs of Croatia, or 'Orthodox Croats', were the 'purest type' of Croatian, because they had not

[32] Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten,* p. 182.
[33] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 141.
[34] See Strižić, *Hrvatski portreti*, p. 16.
[35] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, pp. 74-75.
[36] ibid, p. 78.

come under the corrupting influences of Latin and German culture, which had affected the 'Western' (i.e. Catholic) Croats.[37] In 1861, Kvaternik became the first Croatian politician to call for the establishment of a Croatian Orthodox Church.[38] Kvaternik also occasionally advanced the borders of Croatia to the Serbian-Bulgarian border, thereby including Serbia as a historically Croat land.[39] Both Starčević and Kvaternik further claimed the Slovenes as 'Alpine' or 'Noric' Croats, an assertion based partly on the similarity of Slovene and Croatian (kajkavian) dialects.[40]

Ideas of 'blood' and race

Starčević viewed the unity of the Croatian nation resting on essentially spiritual rather than biological grounds.[41] He did not believe in the notion of race purity. Starčević argued, correctly, that 'every nation was a mix of diverse nations, of diverse blood' and the Croat too undoubtedly had 'Roman, or Greek or some Barbarian blood.'[42] However, he also used racial arguments from time to time. For example, he felt that those of 'Slavoserb' extraction – whom he referred to as being of 'impure blood' – could be assimilated into the Croatian nation through permanent settlement of the land (thereby acquiring property) and mixed

[37] ibid, pp. 268-269. In 1871, Kvaternik had even tried to entice the Orthodox *Grenzer* of the town of Rakovica into rebellion against Habsburg rule. After a skirmish wth loyal Habsburg troops, Kvaternik was killed. Starčević had not been involved in Kvaternik's plan and later distanced himself from the attempted revolt. See Banac, *National Question*, p. 88.
[38] Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva,* pp. 103-105.
[39] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 238.
[40] ibid, pp. 77, 591.
[41] ibid, pp. 347-348.
[42] Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu', pp. 39-40.

marriages with 'true Croats'.[43] Starčević never defined what the characteristics of a 'true' Croat were, nor did he clarify the exact identity of the Serbs. Furthermore his concepts of 'impure blood' and 'breed' are also muddled. Kvaternik, on the other hand, argued that only those Croats related by blood to the five brothers and two sisters who had brought the Croats to their present day homeland in the seventh century AD, as recounted in Emperor Constantine's account, could be called true Croats.[44]

Although there were no pure blooded Croats according to Starčević, he argued at the same time that the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina were the racially purest Croatians. His positive attitude to the Muslims was shaped by his theory of historic state right. In Starčević's mind, Bosnia-Herzegovina had been part of the medieval Croatian kingdom and furthermore, the Bosnian Muslims – who had formed the upper class of Ottoman ruled Bosnia – were the descendants of the medieval Bosnian Croat nobility that had converted to Islam at the time of the Ottoman occupation in order to preserve its titles and privileges.[45] To Starčević, this action on the part of the Bosnian nobility – sacrificing its faith in favour of its 'lordship' – proved just how strong the sense of noble honour was in this part of the Croatian nation.[46] This action further ensured that the Bosnian Muslims remained a closed upper caste, distinct from both ethnic Turks and non-Muslim Bosnian serfs. Consequently, the Muslims had, in Starčević's eyes, retained 'the purest Croatian blood'.[47] These were novel ideas in a country

[43] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 348.
[44] The five brothers were named Klukas, Muhlo, Lovel, Kosenztes and Hrvat, the two sisters, Tuga and Buga. See ibid, p. 268.
[45] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 55.
[46] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 308.
[47] Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu', p. 40.

where the nobility prided itself on Croatia's role as *antemurale Christianitatis.*[48] In contrast, Starčević admired the Ottoman Empire for what he saw as its greater religious toleration and less stricter feudal system in comparison with Christian Europe.[49] Furthermore, the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina had escaped the corrupting influences of 'decadent' Western civilization, 'which obscures the mind, poisons the heart and kills our existence.'[50] Starčević even went so far as to encourage his followers to read the Koran, 'so that they might be able to better understand their "brothers" in the Ottoman Empire'.[51] In fact, Starčević 'was one of the first Christian thinkers anywhere to express admiration for Islam'.[52]

Starčević's somewhat confused ideas on 'race' and the relations between 'master' and 'slave' nations had developed in an environment of growing national antagonisms, which characterized the inter-ethnic relations within the Habsburg Empire. All of these national conflicts, Croat-Serb, Hungarian-Romanian, German-Czech and so on, were centred around, to a large extent, the clash between the nationalisms of 'historic' and 'non-historic' nations. Usually, the disputes involved territory; in a typical scenario, a 'non-historic' nation, such as the Serbs or 'Vlachs' of the Croatian Military Frontier, was found living on the land of a 'historic nation'.

---

[48] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 55.
[49] Banac, *National Question,* p. 364.
[50] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 54.
[51] ibid, p. 55.
[52] Banac, *National Question*, p. 108. Starčević's Islamophile attitudes were not uncommon among the Croats of his time; a contemporary of his, the Dalmatian poet Luka Botić (1830-1863), wrote a poem in 1861, *Bijedna Mara*, based on a folktale dealing with the love between a Christian woman and Muslim man. See Ivo Goldstein, 'Granica na Drini – značenje i razvoj mitologema' in H. Kamberović (ur.) *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu* (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2003), p. 111.

More ominously, a growing number of nationalist politicians and academics began to interpret the national conflicts of Europe (especially those of Austria-Hungary) in a racial light. As George Mosse pointed out, 'racism gave new dimensions to the idea of rootedness inherent in all of nationalism, while at the same time sharpening the differences between nations, providing clear and unambiguous distinctions between them.'[53] The most significant racist current that found widespread acceptance in both popular and intellectual circles in Austria-Hungary was the notion that Slavs were totally incapable of forming and maintaining states; this task was reserved only for Germanic and/or Aryan peoples. The concept of Slav inferiority was especially welcome to the adherents of the *Ausgleich* of 1867, which divided power in the Empire between the Austrian-Germans and Hungarians at the expense of the Slav speaking peoples. The Slavs were considered the losers in a Darwinian contest over political power. The Austrian sociologist Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838-1909) used the term *Rassenkampf* ('racial struggle') to denote struggles between different peoples or races; states were formed when one racial group conquered another and established itself as the ruling class.[54] According to Gumplowicz, this race war had also occurred in early Croatian history for a Gothic tribe had apparently founded the Croatian medieval kingdom and formed a warrior caste ruling over a group of Slavs.[55]

---

[53] Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution,* p. 55.

[54] For more on Gumplowicz and his influence on the intellectual discourse on the 'national question' in Austria-Hungary, see Marius Turda, '"The Magyars: A Ruling Race": The Idea of National Superiority in Fin-de-Siècle Hungary', *European Review of History,* Vol. 10, No. 1, 2003, p. 25.

[55] Ludwig Gumplowicz, 'Die politische Geschichte der Serben und Kroaten', *Politisch-Anthropologische Revue: Monatschrift für das soziale und geistige Leben der Völker* (Eisenach und Leipzig: Thüringische Verlags-Anstalt, 1902/03). Gumplowicz also argued that the Serbian state had been founded in a similar manner.

Croatian nationalists of Yugoslav orientation were also thinking in terms of 'race'.[56] Yugoslav-Croat nationalists equated language with race, as was the romanticist fashion. The Croats spoke a Slav language, language was the key to the origins of a people and Slavs were supposedly more or less one people; so Croats were 'racially' Slavs. In nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe, the term 'race' did not necessarily refer to physical characteristics as it was often used as a synonym for the 'nation' and/or ethnic group. Thus the notion of race was applied individually to European nations and language groups: 'the *Homo Europeaus* about which the eighteenth century anthropologists wrote would become the German, Slavic, or French race'.[57] The discovery that Sanskrit was related to the Romance, Germanic, Celtic and Slavic languages led to the idea that India was the original birthplace of the Indo-European or 'Aryan' race; at about the same time another language group and race was discovered, namely the 'Semitic'. Distinct physical types found within the white 'Aryan' race would later be classified, such as the Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean 'sub-races'. This classification was, in large part, the result of the development of the new science of phrenology, which measured the shape of skulls.[58]

---

[56] In order to establish distance from the Hungarians, Ljudevit Gaj had stressed that the Croats spoke an Indo-European language – unlike the Finno-Ugric Hungarians. See Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj*, p. 84. Gaj was certainly not immune to racial 'self-glorification': 'See how the wild Tatar race, the Magyar, tramples on our tongue, our nation: but before he crushes us, let us cast him into the pit of Hell…The heroic Slav of the North clasps the hand of the Illyrian of the South…the trumpet sounds, the swords clash, the cannon roar'. See C. A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969), pp. 253-254.

[57] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution,* p. 34.

[58] During the 1840s, the Swedish scientist Anders Retzius coined the term 'cephalic index', a measurement that was able to distinguish between long-headed or dolichocephalic peoples (found mainly among fair north Europeans or 'Nordics') and broad-headed or brachycephalic peoples (found mainly among Slavs, 'Finns', and 'Celts'). The Alpine race was characterized as short, brown-haired and brachycephalic, while the Mediterranean was short, long-headed and of dark pigmentation. See ibid, pp. 27-28 and Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, p. 264.

Racism did not simply rely on 'science' for its classification of human types. Races also had 'souls' in the same manner as each nation had a *Volksgeist*. Alongside the 'science' of race, there existed the 'mystery of race', which was concerned primarily with the soul, spirit and/or personality of a race and less with physical features.[59] The question of 'race' implied that cultural/ethnic differences were somehow 'immutable'. As Katherine Verdery writes,

> 'a racist ideology is one that classifies a person on the basis of what are socially presumed to be *unchangeable* characteristics…Although physical traits are in objective terms generally unchangeable and cultural ones are not, some systems of ethnic classification nonetheless proceed on the contrary assumption. For instance, many Hungarians…spoke of Romanians *as if they were incapable of civilization* – that is in racist terms but with culture as the relevant trait'.[60]

For the HSP, the Croatian *Volksgeist* was that of a master and warrior 'historic nation'. Despite the use of terms such as 'blood' and 'breed', Starčević rejected the notion that Croats belonged exclusively to any one of the major European ethno-linguistic branches or 'races' (Slavic, Germanic or Romanic). Starčević's belittlement of the 'Slavoserb' and/or Vlach 'spirit' was often aggressively ethnocentric (though not racist), for the Croats felt increasingly insecure because of great internal regional differences and the seemingly greater assimilatory strength of Serbian, Italian, Hungarian and German nationalisms. The attraction of a Serbian irredentist nationalism for increasing numbers of Croatian Serbs (who had a

---

[59] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, p. 94.

[60] See Verdery's introduction in Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery (eds.) *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995), p. xvii.

great deal of political influence in the Croatian *Sabor* after 1881) greatly worried the HSP, which sought to counter the growth of Serbian and Yugoslav nationalisms in Croatia by negating the existence of Serbs or denigrating their culture.

The Frankists

It was an uphill battle for the HSP, for after Starčević's death in 1896 the Party began to split into factions. Many younger Croats saw the futility of the argument of outdated theories of historic rights and turned to the modern notions of human rights and the natural rights of self-determination for nations. Furthermore, denial of Serbian national individuality no longer made any sense in light of Serbia's independent statehood.[61] In any case, Starčević himself moderated his views on the Serbs during the 1880s as he began to view Orthodox Russia as a possible ally against the Habsburgs.[62] Starčević was therefore willing to accept the existence of a people named 'Serbs' in Croatia, but he continued to deny that it was a national appellation, arguing rather that it signified an ethno-religious group.[63]

One faction was to continue Starčević's latter day policy of moderation toward the Croatian Serbs and sought their co-operation, as well as that of Strossmayer's Yugoslav National Party.[64] This faction was opposed to Starčević's successor, Josip Frank, a lawyer of German

[61] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 21.
[62] ibid.
[63] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo,* p. 565.
[64] Banac, *National Question,* p. 96.

Jewish parentage, and a convert to Catholicism. Frank named his party the Pure Party of Right, but his ideas entailed, in some respects, a complete reversal from the ideas of the party's founder. His followers were later known as 'Frankists', and this term was carried into the interwar period as a pejorative term for exclusive right-wing Croatian nationalists. It is certainly the case that Frank's Party modified some of Starčević's ideas and went even further than the HSP's founder in its anti-Serbian diatribes. Ante Pavelić's generation of Croatian nationalists were schooled in the Party of Right led by Frank, not Starčević. However, due to his Jewish background and Habsburg loyalism, Frank himself was to occupy a very minor place in the Ustasha pantheon of Croatian national heroes (see chapter thirteen).

Frank's political program was based on loyalty to the Habsburgs and the chief aim of 'trialism'.[65] Trialism was to involve the reorganization of the Empire from a dualist Austro-Hungarian monarchy to one that would include a third Croatian autonomous state in the south, comprising the Triune Kingdom, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Slovene provinces.[66] Frank sought the support of the 'Greater Austrian' circle around the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who aimed to reorganize the Empire on an absolutist and conservative Catholic basis.[67]

[65] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', pp. 30-31.
[66] ibid.
[67] Banac, *National Question,* p. 99.

In accordance with the Greater Austrian program and Starčević's opposition to Yugoslavism and pan-Slavism, Frank portrayed the Serbs and Hungarians as Croatia's chief enemies.[68] Whereas Starčević had always shied away from any concrete political action against Serbs, Frank roused the mob against the Serbs when he had the chance. In 1902, for example, following Nikola Stojanović's anti-Croat article, a Croatian mob, spurred on by Frank, took to the streets of Zagreb attacking Serbian shops and businesses.[69] Frank, for his part, had no interest in assimilating the Serbians of Serbia as Croats for he regarded Serbia as the mortal enemy of both the Empire as a whole and Croatia in particular.[70] On the other hand, Frank's party claimed that the Serbs of Croatia were, 'in good part autochthonous Croatian population from time immemorial'.[71] The 'real' Serbs (and not Slavoserbs as with Starčević) were, according to Frank's party line, 'a rabble of Cincars, Gypsies, Albanians and Vlachs', and to this nation of 'non-Slavic, Albanian, or rather Semitic origin' the HSP announced the need of a 'struggle to a final extirpation'.[72]

Frank was motivated by political realism in his pro-Habsburg stance. Complete Croatian independence on Starčević's model looked as unachievable to him as it had to the Illyrians and Yugoslavists.[73] Others in the Party of Right did not look favourably on Frank's overtly pro-imperial and Catholic clericalist tone. Under the leadership of Mile Starčević, Ante's nephew, these discontented members would form the so-called Starčević's Party of Right

[68] ibid, pp. 94-95.
[69] Miller, *Between Nation and State,* pp. 53-54.
[70] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 719.
[71] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, p. 128.
[72] Cited in Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 719. The Cincars are a community of Hellenized Vlachs.
[73] Banac, *National Question,* p. 94.

(SSP) in 1908, claiming that they wanted to reinstate the party's founding principles.[74] This faction would later co-operate with the Croato-Serb Coalition in the hope of securing a bigger say for the Croats in a future Yugoslav state, which they thought was a real possibility (the party was in fact to participate in the founding of Yugoslavia in 1918).[75]

In a further split, a Frankist youth group even fully converted to Yugoslavism. According to its reinterpretation of HSP ideology, if Starčević believed that all South Slavs were in fact Croats, then he agreed that South Slavs were one people; he was therefore deemed a 'Yugoslav' nationalist and it was only the choice of name, 'Croat' as opposed to 'Serb', that separated him from Karadžić.[76] Even prominent Serbs, such as the literary figure Jovan Skerlić, interpreted Starčević in this manner, arguing that the latter was 'full of all the imperfections and virtues common to our [Yugoslav] race'.[77] Starčević's imprecise definitions of what it meant to be Croatian or Serbian certainly provided disparate political groups with a number of possible interpretations of his writings. To be sure, Starčević's ideas contained 'elements of Slavic reciprocity', for he did regularly claim all South Slavs as Croats.[78]

However, there is no denying his faithfulness to the Croatian name. His ideal remained an independent Croatian state, even if he couldn't precisely determine its borders or the ethnic character of its inhabitants. In any case, not all HSP activists claimed all the South Slavs as Croats; Kvaternik and Frank usually placed the Croatian border firmly on the Drina river

[74] See ibid, p. 99 and Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 32.
[75] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 33.
[76] Banac, *National Question*, p. 100.
[77] Quoted in Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 140.
[78] Banac, *National Question*, p. 106.

boundary between Bosnia and Serbia. On the other hand, they also claimed the Slovenes and Croatian Serbs as Croats. Thus, the question of the ethno-linguistic identity of the Serbs of 'historic Croatia' and what precisely divided Croats from Serbs (and other South Slavs) in an ethnic sense remained unsettled.

Starčević's notion of Croatian nationhood was actually more civic and political in nature than the nationalism of Strossmayer, which viewed Croatian identity as resting on a purely Slavic and Christian basis.[79] Starčević recognized the importance of different civilizations and cultures in the history and ethnic make-up of the Croats, a nation that could not simply be defined by its supposedly essential Slavic 'soul'. The nineteenth century ideas of Starčević would therefore provide the Ustashe with a great deal of intellectual and cultural legitimacy, even if the Ustashe rejected much of Starčević's ideas, namely his anti-German prejudices and his love of the French revolution. The HSP introduced certain fundamental ideas that would be further developed, exploited and misconstrued by the Ustashe – historic state right as the foundation of full Croatian independence, the rejection of pan-Slavism and Yugoslavism, the threat to Croatian national interests from Greater Serbian nationalism, Croatia as a bulwark of the Christian West and the Croatian ethnic origin of the Bosnian Muslims.

[79] Although Strossmayer's sentiments were ecumenical when it came to his Orthodox Slav 'brethren', he was intolerant of the presence of the Muslim Turks on the European continent; in Strossmayer's view, 'the existence of the Turks in Europe was a gangrene, which should be cut out from the body of Europe as soon as possible'. See Robert J. Rohrbacher, 'Bishop J. J. Strossmayer's Yugoslavism in the Light of the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878', *East European Quarterly*, XXXV, No. 3, September 2001, p. 354.

Chapter Four: Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Peasant Party

Tribe and nation

A few years after the HSP split into factions, a new force appeared on the Croatian political stage, the Croatian Peasant Party. The Peasant Party would dominate Croatian politics in the interwar period and lead the national struggle against Serbian hegemony in the new Yugoslav state. The Peasant Party's tactics and ideas were not, however, pleasing to the self-appointed successors of Starčević, at first found in the 'Frankist' wing of the HSP and later in the Ustashe. For the Peasant Party was not only committed to pacifism, but also continually adhered to some form of cultural pan-Slav nationalism. The Ustasha leader Ante Pavelić felt that the struggle for Croatian independence could not just rest on political arguments of Croatian historic state right. In contrast to the Peasant Party, the Ustashe would try to prove unequivocally that the Croats were racially different to the Serbs. This chapter will focus not only on the national ideas of the Peasant Party, but also on the establishment of Yugoslavia, the only state in twentieth century Europe to be established on the basis of the romantic tripartite racial division of Europeans into 'Slavs', 'Teutons' and 'Latins'.[1]

[1] For more on politics, and especially national conflicts, in interwar Yugoslavia, see Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia,* pp. 264-269, Banac, *National Question*, pp. 141-405 and John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 108-196.

Founded in 1904 by the brothers, Stjepan and Antun Radić, the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, HSS) was committed to the economic, social, political and cultural betterment of the Croatian peasantry.[2] The Radićes viewed the peasantry, the *narod* (people/nation), as the foundation of Croatian national culture rather than the elite or *gospoda* (nobility/upper classes), with its Latin/German culture.[3] As far as the 'national question' was concerned, Stjepan Radić's program was split between 'political Croatism' and 'cultural Yugoslavism'.[4] In the Austro-Hungarian context, Radić sought Croatian national autonomy in a federally reorganized empire, the 'Danubian Alliance of States and Nations', still headed by the Habsburg Emperor, but consisting of separate states, including a Croat one covering the Empire's South Slav regions. Radić believed that this federal and democratic system of states would be the best defence for the Slav speaking peoples of central Europe against German expansionism.[5] As a pan-Slav nationalist Radić also looked, however, to 'mother Russia' as the overall protector of the Slavs.[6] What we must now ask is what was the relationship, in Radić's eyes, between the Slavs, Yugoslavs and Croats?

---

[2] The HSS argued in favour of a democratic agrarian based society that would provide economic security to the peasantry through a more equal redistribution of land. The Party was opposed to both socialism and liberalism in that it argued in favour of private property and was opposed to extensive state intervention, but also considered *laissez-faire* economics to be detrimental to social harmony and unity. See Mark Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 67-76.

[3] Elinor Murray Despalatović, 'The Peasant Nationalism of Ante Radić', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* Vol. 5, No. 1, 1978, p. 90. Also see Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 26.

[4] Banac, *National Question,* p. 104. See also Biondich, *Stjepan Radić,* p. 99.

[5] Tihomir Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države u političkoj misli Stjepana Radića* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2001), pp. 84-91. Also see Banac, *National Question*, p. 104.

[6] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies', p. 27.

This is not altogether clear, for Radić, much like Gaj and Strossmayer before him, used the terms *narod* (people/nation) and *pleme* (tribe) to simultaneously describe Slavs, 'Yugoslavs' and Croats. In an article in 1909, for example, Radić wrote that 'from an ethnic and linguistic perspective, all Slavs were actually one people and of one nationality.'[7] At the same time, there was a narrower linguistic and ethnic relationship among the South Slavs, who represented one 'tribe'.[8] The Croats were also considered, however, a separate people or nation, for they possessed a separate national consciousness.[9] As one of the party's articles in 1902 explained, 'Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – they are one tribe, but they are not one people. They are not one people, for they do not have one idea, one desire, one aspiration'.[10]

On the other hand, the Peasant Party also appears to have more or less accepted Starčević's notion that all South Slavs were in fact Croats, for in the same 1902 article, the claim was put forward that from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, 'one Croatian language' was spoken.[11] The Bulgarians, for their part, were not truly Slav for their name was 'Asiatic'; according to the Party, the Slavs – who were all supposedly of 'one blood' and whose 'ancestors had herderd sheep under one sky' – were the guardians of Europe, defending it from the 'Asiatics'.[12] The Party further recognized Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, as well as Istria, Bosnia and

[7] Quoted in Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države*, p. 39.
[8] See Antun Radić, *Sabrana djela VIII* (Zagreb: Dom, 1937), p. 7. In the second article of the first part of the party's program, it is stated that the 'Croats and Serbs are one nation'. See A. Radić, *Sabrana djela VII* (Zagreb: Seljački nauk, 1936).
[9] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* p. 39.
[10] Radić, *Sabrana djela VIII,* p. 8.
[11] ibid, p. 7.
[12] ibid, pp. 7-8.

Herzegovina as the lands of the Croats, while also adding (in the spirit of Starčević) the Slovene provinces.[13] What made one a Croat according to the Party was the will to be part of a Croatian state, centred in Zagreb, for 'who is pulled in the direction of Ljubljana, or Belgrade or even Sofia is not a Croat'.[14] The Party sought an independent Croatian state, but according to the Party's pre-1918 program, which was still accepted as the official party line in the 1930s, 'all the South Slavs were one national and economic whole, and we Croats consider Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria as our national states'.[15] Furthermore, the Slavs were supposedly only worth something in the eyes of the world due to the influence and power of the strongest Slav state, Russia.[16]

It was precisely Croatia's historic state right which Radić felt formed the cornerstone of a separate Croatian national consciousness. As a result, he was able to enter a short-lived alliance with the Frankists during the early years of the First World War, when Radić supported the Habsburg monarchy – in line with his ideas that the Empire could be reorganized on a federal basis guaranteeing equality among Germans, Hungarians and Slavs. Radić was suspicious of Serbia's nationalist aims and remained committed to an 'Austro-Slavic' solution, in the tradition of Gaj and Strossmayer.[17] Accordingly, the HSS's national ideology was constructed on four levels: Croatian nationalism, Yugoslavism, Austro-Slavism and pan-Slavism. Croatian national interests came first for Radić, but he felt that these interests could only be served in line with other interests (Slavic, Central European and so

[13] ibid, p. 9.
[14] ibid, p. 8
[15] See Radić, *Sabrana djela VII*, p. 18.
[16] ibid.
[17] Biondich, *Stjepan Radić,* pp. 115-116.

on). Radić, like Gaj and Strossmayer, tried to reconcile the different political and historical traditions of Croatian culture, and like his ideological predecessors failed in this endeavour. Radić's ideas of a federal solution to the national question in Austria-Hungary were actually politically impossible in the context of the conservatism of the ruling classes in Austria-Hungary, the dominance of the Austrian-Germans and Hungarians (who wanted to preserve their privileged position in the Monarchy at all costs) and the 'Social-Darwinist' nature of the nationalist struggles between the Empire's various nationalities.

The creation of the state of Yugoslavia

With the creation of Yugoslavia, Radić became more strident in his defence of Croatian national interests, as the Croats now faced new problems. The Peasant Party and the 'Frankists' had quite different ideas on how to deal with these problems. These differences came to light in a period when the process of Croatian national integration entered 'the third stage', whereby the greater part of the wider ethnic community becomes integrated into the nation through the national movement.[18] It was also during the inter-war period that Yugoslavism came into open conflict both with exclusive Croat nationalism and Greater Serbian nationalism and this consequently opened a window of opportunity for the Ustashe to emerge as a nationalist alternative, far less popular, however, than the HSS.

[18] Gross, 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation', pp. 221-224.

It should be noted that most Croatian political parties, apart from the Frankist Party of Right and the HSS, either openly endorsed or consented to the 'unification' of Croatia and the other Austro-Hungarian South Slavic speaking provinces with the Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro in late 1918.[19] This was due, on the one hand, to the ideology of Yugoslavism, which most Croatian political parties to some extent espoused and to the real and justified fear among the Croatian political elite that in the event of an Allied victory in the First World War, Croatia might well be partitioned between Italy, Serbia and Hungary if a common South Slav state, which would at least include all the Croat provinces, was not created.[20]

The Allies had promised Italy large portions of Austro-Hungarian territory in the secret Treaty of London in 1915 in return for Italy joining the Allied war effort. Large parts of Croatia's Adriatic coast were included in this offer. The 'Yugoslav Committee' (*Jugoslavenski odbor*), a political group of anti-Habsburg Yugoslavist Croatian politicians operating in Western Europe, led by Ante Trumbić and the famous Croat sculptor, Ivan Meštrović, soon became aware of the Treaty's provisions. The Committee was also extremely worried about the Greater Serbian intentions of the head of the Serbian government-in-exile, Nikola Pašić, who didn't want Serbia 'to drown in Yugoslavia, but to have Yugoslavia drown in her'.[21]

[19] Banac, *National Question,* p. 128. See also Trifković, 'First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', pp. 352-353.
[20] See Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* pp. 112-113. See also Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 204-205.
[21] See Banac, *National Question*, p. 132.

Already in September 1914, before the German, Austrian and Bulgarian occupation of Serbia, the Serbian government had made clear, to its allies, its intention 'to create out of Serbia a powerful southwestern Slavic state; all the Serbs, all the Croats, and all the Slovenes would enter its composition'.[22] As Banac points out, for the Serbian government, '"unification" of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes meant essentially Serb unification'.[23] In other words, the Serbs were prepared to create a Serbian run 'Yugoslav' state encompassing all the South Slavs, or if that was not possible, create instead a 'Greater Serbia' consisting of parts of the Habsburg South Slav lands.[24] Up until the fall of 1917, the Entente and the United States had no plans of dismembering the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. It was Italian intransigence to any compromise with Austria-Hungary and fears that the Dual state could possibly fall prey to Bolshevik revolution that led to a change in Allied policy toward the Habsburgs. This helped open the way for 'Yugoslav unification' to take place.[25]

Following the collapse of its closest ally, Czarist Russia, the Serbian government-in-exile felt pressured to come to some sort of arrangement with the 'Yugoslav Committee', which acted as the representative body of Habsburg South Slavs, on the future constitutional make-up of a common state. The Committee wanted a united Yugoslav 'nation-state', while the Serb government led by Pašić wanted a Serbian run state. A compromise of sorts was reached with the Corfu declaration of July 1917, which outlined the desire of the South Slavs to form an independent state that 'would be a constitutional monarchy headed by the [Serb]

[22] See ibid, p. 116.
[23] See ibid and Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, p. 221.
[24] Banac, *National Question* and Trifković, 'First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 350.
[25] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 126-127 and Lederer, 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', p. 429.

Karađorđević dynasty'; the declaration 'recognized the equality of the three "tribal" South Slav names [Croats, Serbs, Slovenes] the three flags and religions, and the two alphabets'.[26]

The preservation of Croatian statehood was not even discussed in Corfu, while in Croatia itself, most Croatian politicians were preparing for unification with Serbia. The main Serb, Croat and Slovene political parties in the Habsburg Empire that demanded South Slavic unification had founded the 'National Council of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs' in 1918, with its centre in Zagreb. For the National Council, the 'Sabor and the traditions of statehood were a relic'.[27] By 1918, the 'Croat political elite, the middle classes and most intellectuals were committed to Yugoslavist unitarism'.[28] If the Croats were 'nationally' Yugoslav, then the logical consequence of the 'modern principle of nationality' was that the Croats join a Yugoslav 'nation-state'.[29] Accordingly, the National Council sent a delegation to the Serbian regent, Aleksandar Karađorđević, in Belgrade on 30 November 1918 to sanction the unification of the Habsburg South Slav lands with Serbia and Montenegro; the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as the national state of the 'Yugoslavs' was thereby born.

The Croatian masses did not participate at all in the political processes that led to the formation of Yugoslavia. This was for simple reason that, until 1919, the Croat peasant masses had played little or no part in political decision making, due to the franchise laws that existed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which limited the right to vote to the upper

[26] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 123-124.
[27] ibid, p. 128.
[28] ibid.
[29] ibid.

echelons of society.[30] The Croatian peasant masses were also, either ignorant of, or hostile to the ideology of Yugoslavism, and to the imposition of the Serbian King, Petar Karađorđević, as their ruler.[31] This is not to imply that the Croat peasants were therefore exclusive Croatian nationalists; not only were the majority of peasants only slightly affected by political modernization before the First World War, but they possessed, as we have noted, multiple identities (regional, religious, class, ethnic), one of which could be described as 'Croatian'. The peasants might also identify with the wider 'Slav' world, but would rarely identify themselves or their language as specifically 'South Slav' (Yugoslav).[32]

Opposition to Yugoslavia on the part of the Croat masses was also partly the result of the brutal methods (including corporal punishment, which had not been in legal use in Croatia since 1869) that the Serbian army and bureaucracy used all over Croatia to secure the 'unification' of the South Slavs in the immediate post-war period.[33] The Croatian peasants bore the brunt of this policy and they were to provide the bulk of support for the Peasant Party and its leader Stjepan Radić, which moved from being a party of the periphery in Austria-Hungary to a large mass movement in Yugoslavia. Radić himself had not been in principle opposed to the formation of a Yugoslav state, but wanted to ensure Croatia's political equality with Serbia.

---

[30] In 1900, less than 2% of the population of Civil Croatia and Slavonia had the right to vote. See Despalatović, 'Peasant Nationalism of Ante Radić', p. 88 and Trifković, 'First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 352.
[31] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 130-131.
[32] Thus a Croat peasant might refer to his/her language as 'Slavic', if comparing it to a non-Slav language (especially Italian or German). See Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija,* pp. 82-83.
[33] Banac, *National Question*, p. 148.

Serbian dominance in Yugoslavia

The opposition of the Croat masses precluded the possibility of Yugoslav 'national unification'. In any case, these masses had still not been fully 'nationally integrated' into the Croatian nation. As the Croatian philosopher Albert Bazala noted in 1921, the 'national unification' of the Yugoslavs had occurred before the Croats had successfully completed their own national integration; as a consequence, 'the ideology of "tribal" unification has not yet been reconciled to the ideology of national unification on the higher level.'[34]

Nor could it be. Everyday life in the new Yugoslav state only highlighted more clearly the differences between Croatian and Serbian political and cultural traditions. The Serbs, with more than a century of political experience of running an independent state and motivated by an expansionist ideology that aimed to unite all Serbs into one state, including 'Catholicized Serbs' (i.e. štokavian speaking Croats), followed a policy of centralization.[35] The Croats, on the other hand, were historically accustomed to a federalized state system that safeguarded Croatia's traditional autonomy and wanted equality with Serbia.[36] The Croats' national aspirations were not met. No separate Croatian administrative unit existed until 1939. Croatia was divided between the *banovine* (districts) of Savska (northern Croatia), Primorska (most of the coastline) and Zetska (southern Dalmatia with

[34] Quoted in ibid, p. 352.
[35] For an overview of the Serbian based Yugoslav nationalism of the interwar Belgrade regime, see the chapter, 'Racial Messianism in Culture', in ibid, pp. 202-214.
[36] Trifković, 'First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 355.

Montenegro). Croatia was simply wiped off the map. As Noel Malcolm remarks, the use of the old Croatian term *banovina* 'was almost the only sop to Croat pride'.[37]

A wide gulf soon arose between Croats and Serbs, for the new state bore an undeniable Serbian political and cultural stamp, even if the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were apparently three 'tribes' of the same 'nation'. The state was headed by the Serbian dynasty of Karađorđević, while the new army, which had widespread martial powers in the early years of the state, was based entirely on the former Serbian army, in everything from uniforms to regulations and to its predominantly Serbian officer corps.[38] Furthermore there was an unequal tax system, which over taxed the more socio-economically advanced northern parts of the country (Slovenia and Croatia).[39] The official ideology of the 'trinomial Yugoslav nation', whereby Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were considered three equal 'tribes' of one 'people', in reality implied the Serbianization of administration and culture throughout Yugoslavia; for example, 'Serbian ekavian was pushed through as Yugoslavia's official language'.[40] Otherwise various cumbersome names were officially used to designate the 'national language' of Yugoslavia during the 1920s and 1930s, such as the 'nondescript instructional language' and the 'Serbocroatoslovenian language'.[41]

---

[37] Malcolm, *Bosnia,* p. 169.

[38] Banac, *National Question,* p. 150. There were approximately 230 generals in the Yugoslav army in April 1941. Of these there were only 21 Croats and 10 Slovenes. The remaining generals were all Serbs. See Stevan K. Pavlowitch, 'How Many Non-Serbian Generals in 1941?', *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, January 1983, p. 448.

[39] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 224-225. For example, 'land taxes on a hectare of land of equal quality were twice as high in Croatia as in Serbia'.

[40] ibid, p. 212. Also see Marko Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj državi Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1993), pp. 9-12.

[41] See Zelić-Bučan, 'The National Name of the Croatian Language Throughout History', p. 117.

The Yugoslav experiment was flawed from the start because of a 'reductionist definition' of nationhood that rested solely on the criterion of language, in other words language equals ethnicity/nation (or 'race') and this equals one nation-state.[42] As George Schöpflin writes,

> 'as a syllogism this may work, but as sociology it was poor stuff'. And…any ideology based on inadequate sociology will be faced with the choice of either abandoning its project or constructing the conditions that would justify the ideology. In the South Slav context, this meant homogenising the various different ethnicities until they really were one'.[43]

That 'homogenization' was based on a racial conception of nationhood. For example, the Bulgarians, who speak a South Slav language, were not considered really 'Yugoslav'. The Macedonians, who are linguistically and culturally closer to the Bulgarians than the Serbs, were accepted as 'Yugoslavs', because according to Serbian nationalists who coveted Macedonia, the Slav Macedonians were basically Serb, as they were ethnically 'eminently Slavic', unlike the Bulgarians, who were apparently of 'Turanian' descent.[44] The proto-Bulgars were indeed non-Slavic, but so were, in all probability, the proto-Croats and the proto-Serbs. Of course, as with all racial theorists and ideologists it was not too difficult to explain with sophistic arguments why one group should be included and another excluded.

It is a little more difficult to explain, however, why so many notable foreign observers, politicians and academics readily and sometimes enthusiastically accepted Serbian and/or Yugoslav racial ideas. Chief among them was the English novelist Rebecca West, who did

---

[42] Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power*, p. 330.
[43] ibid.
[44] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 311-312.

much to disseminate Serbophile propaganda to the West, especially with the publication of her famous book, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon,* in 1941. The book is a recollection of the journey West made to Yugoslavia between 1936 and 1938. According to West, the Serbs were the 'purest Slavs' and through the Serbs, Yugoslavia had inherited the 'glory of Byzantium'.[45] West had little patience for the demands of the supposedly Germanophile Catholic Croats, who were 'weakened by Austrian influence as by a profound malady'.[46] As Hastings noted, West expected that the Croats (and other South Slavs) would be 'culturally cleansed so that they would become fully Slav, that is to say, Serb'.[47]

Like Rebecca West, Yugoslavist ideologists, such as the Croatian Serb leader and first Yugoslav Interior Minister, Svetozar Pribićević, believed that the substantial cultural differences between the Croats and Serbs were the result of historical and geographical 'accidents'. Thus, due to geography, the Croats happened to convert to Western Christianity, while the Serbs embraced Eastern Orthodoxy; aggressive foreign influences, namely German, Italian and Hungarian in Croatia, and Turkish in Serbia, also played their part in dividing the once 'homogeneous' South Slav 'brothers'.[48] Yugoslavist intellectuals no doubt would have shared Fanny Copeland's very naïve evaluation of 'Yugoslav history', put forward in Paris in 1918: 'From the ordeal of war, pestilence, famine and persecution, the

[45] See Adrian Hastings, 'Special Peoples', *Nations and Nationalism*, 5 (3), 1999, pp. 382-383.
[46] ibid, p. 382.
[47] ibid. On the other hand, West also appears to have seen, in contradiction to her Serbophile ideas, little distinction between the Serb, 'that is to say a Slav member of the Orthodox Church' and the Croat, 'that is to say a Slav member of the Roman Catholic Church'. See Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941; London: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 41.
[48] See Banac, *National Question*, pp. 180-181.

Yugo-Slavs have emerged as one people, as homogeneous as they were when they first descended from the Carpathians'.[49]

Many Serbian nationalists came to believe that they could eventually assimilate the Croats to Serbian nationhood through the ideology of Yugoslavism, for this ideology would extinguish a separate Croatian identity, but not Serbian identity, for the Serbs were politically and numerically much stronger than the Croats.[50] In any case, both Yugoslav unitarists and Greater Serbian nationalists were in favour of a strongly centralized state, which in effect implied the supremacy of Belgrade and Serbia.[51] The leading Yugoslav unitarist was Svetozar Pribićević, whose first and foremost aim was 'to assure the equality of [Croatia's Serbs] with the Croats by destroying Croatian nationhood'.[52] Pribićević ensured that administrative and governmental posts were firmly in Serbian hands, countering Croatian claims of discrimination by arguing that 'Croats were one people with the Serbs, requiring no special protection, enjoying the same rights as the Serbs, hence there was no Croat question in relation to the Serbs'.[53]

It should be underlined that the interwar Karađorđević regime did not at all seek the physical extermination of the Croats. Jozo Tomasevich rightly stated that 'wartime Ustasha policies against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia were of a genocidal nature and

---

[49] Quoted in Cathie Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 11. Fanny Copeland was 'a passionate advocate of the "Yugoslav idea"', active at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918. See ibid.
[50] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 163-164.
[51] ibid, p. 163.
[52] ibid, p. 184.
[53] ibid, p. 185.

totally out of proportion to earlier anti-Croatian measures [in Yugoslavia], both in nature or extent'.[54] However, while Tomasevich drew attention to the 'pervasive discrimination against Croats and other non-Serbs at all levels of military and government service', he failed to mention that the Serbian royalist regime did intend, on the basis of Greater Serbian ideology, to eradicate a separate Croatian national identity, through the assimilation of the Croats to 'pure Slavic' Serbian nationhood. Yugoslavia became a state in which a 'core' or 'dominant' ethnie, in other words the Serbs, governed over the other 'peripheral' ethnies, namely the Croats.[55]

Such national inequality led Radić to effectively dismiss the idea of 'narodno jedinstvo', though not in its entirety. He refused to recognize the new 'Vidovdan' (St. Vitus' day) constitution (1921) or swear allegiance to the Serbian King (at least until 1925). Accordingly, Radić changed the party's name to the 'Croatian Republican Peasant Party' (HRSS). Having obtained the overwhelming majority of Croatian peasant votes (at first only in Croatia-Slavonia, but by 1923, also among the Croats of Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina),[56] Radić called for the establishment of a 'Neutral Peasant Croatian Republic'. Although it was meant to be part of a South Slav confederation, the new state would be effectively independent. Committed to neutrality, pacifism, minority rights and democracy, Radić believed that he could secure the backing of the West and achieve a workable compromise with the Serbs.[57]

[54] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 404.
[55] Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, p. 61.
[56] Banac, *National Question,* pp. 236-237.
[57] See Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države*, pp. 136-149.

However, the two main Serbian political parties, the Democrats and Radicals, remained committed to policies of centralism and Serbian hegemony, while Radić's appeals to the international community for support, especially to Britain and France, but also Bolshevik Russia, fell on deaf ears.[58] Radić was to continually stress Croatian national individuality throughout the 1920s, but also continued to entertain the idea that Croatia could achieve autonomy within Yugoslavia. Little came of his short-lived participation in government (1925-1927), with Radić continuing his vociferous opposition to Belgrade centralism. Although he managed to establish a coalition with the one time fanatical Yugoslav unitarist, and now democratic federalist, Svetozar Pribićević, Radić could not find any common voice with the Greater Serbian establishment in Belgrade. The end result was his assassination in 1928 by Puniša Račić, a Greater Serb nationalist MP, during a session of the National assembly (*skupština*) in Belgrade.

The assassination made Radić a Croatian national martyr and he was to be duly honoured in the NDH. Radić clearly considered the Croats as a fully formed nation with a right to an independent political existence, even if he was willing to accept a multi-national federation at times, whether a re-organized Habsburg Empire or a South Slav federation. Radić was unambiguous on the question of Croatian national individuality on political grounds – the theory of historic Croat statehood – but what of the ethnic and cultural identity of the Croatian nation? Radić held the commonplace view that nations in Central and Eastern

[58] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 21-22. In Moscow, Radić entered the HSS into membership of the Peasant International in 1924. As Kisić-Kolanović notes, this decision was motivated not only by the apathy Radić received in Western capitals, but also by the 'continuity of (his) romantic pan-Slavism'. See Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *Hebrang: Iluzije i otrežnjenja 1899-1945* (Zagreb: Institut za suvremenu povijest, 1996), p. 20.

Europe were formed differently than those in the West, namely that the 'nation' in the East was primarily an ethnic and cultural notion, formed before the founding of actual nation-states, as was the case in Western Europe; thus national identity in the East was primarily cultural, while in the West it was political.[59] In Radić's eyes, the Croats were, politically speaking, a separate nation because of their tradition of historic statehood, but ethnically they were part of the 'South Slav' nation. This notion caused a problem for Croatian aspirations for independence (or even autonomy), because once romantic ethnic nationalism became the basis of political activity in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe from the late eighteenth century onward, the only type of nation that was considered to have a legitimate right to independence was that one which was properly understood as a nation – an ethno-linguistic one.[60]

Banac argues that Radić's 'insistence on Croat political – and, therefore, national – uniqueness could not but constitute a departure from Yugoslavist unitarism'.[61] While Radić sharply rejected the idea of the 'trinomial' Yugoslav nation, the notion of the 'three tribes of one nation' was, however, widely accepted outside of Croatia. For example, sincere Western supporters of Yugoslav unification in the post First World War period such as Arthur Evans, Henry Wickham-Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson, considered a single state for the 'Yugoslavs' as completely natural and opposed Serbian hegemony in the new state because they, like the Yugoslavist Ante Trumbić, viewed it as a detriment to the 'internal harmony of a

[59] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* p. 40.
[60] Miller, *Between Nation and State,* pp. 180-181.
[61] Banac, *National Question*, p. 232.

homogeneous race'.[62] In Radić's case, his demand for Croat self-determination on the grounds of political – but not cultural or ethnic – nationhood was clearly not a convincing enough argument for either Western or Serbian ears.

The experience of living under one roof with Serbia did, to be sure, incline Radić to the belief that the Croats and Serbs were not only divided by different political traditions but also by different cultures that reflected the divide between West and East.[63] In a draft of his proposed constitution for the 'Neutral Peasant Croat Republic', Radić described the Croats as 'a nation of an age-old peasant culture, a twelve hundred year old Christian European education, an eleven hundred year old continuous state existence, a four hundred year old national written literature and a hundred year old conscious national life in the modern sense of the word.'[64] Here, Radić placed the argument for Croatian self-determination not simply on historic rights, but also on the existence of a distinct Croat culture. Radić hoped that the above argument would strengthen Croatian claims for state independence and procure international recognition.[65] At the same time, he never completely repudiated the idea of 'Slav reciprocity', although it remains unclear what he exactly meant by this idea.[66]

Despite its ambiguities over the nature of Croatian ethnic identity, Radić's party was responsible for integrating the peasantry into the modern Croatian nation. The peasantry had, as noted, been aware of its affiliation to the Croat 'ethnic community' and was therefore

[62] See ibid, p. 133. Also see Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, p. 125.
[63] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države*, p. 141.
[64] ibid, p. 145.
[65] ibid, pp. 145-146.
[66] See ibid, p. 174 and Banac, *National Question,* pp. 231-232.

able to accept, without difficulty, a basically Croat based national program, accompanied by Croatian national symbols.[67] During the period of Radić's political mastery in the villages, the Orthodox population in Croatia, for its part, fully integrated into the Serbian nation. As Stančić correctly points out, peasant Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs

> 'integrated into that nation to which they felt closer with regard to the elements of civilizational and cultural characteristics of their ethnic identities… but not because of their Catholic or Orthodox religious affiliation, but because of the effect which that religious and church membership had had in earlier stages in the formation of the modern Croatian and Serbian ethnic communities'.[68]

Slavophile pacifism

Significantly, Radić's intense pacifism precluded any consideration of a violent solution to the Croatian national question.[69] Radić's pacifism reflected his commitment to democracy, which he considered, in the tradition of the Czech intellectual František Palacký (1798-1876), a characteristic trait of the Slavs.[70] The idea that the Slavs were, unlike the Germans, by nature a peaceful and democratic people was first posited by Herder.[71] Slavophile thinkers subsequently turned the prevailing nineteenth century idea that the pacifist Slavs

[67] Radić's party popularized the use of Croatian national symbols among the peasantry. See Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 129-131.
[68] ibid, p. 130.
[69] Banac, *National Question*, p. 241.
[70] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* p. 88.
[71] ibid, pp. 75-76. Also see Kohn, *Pan-Slavism*, p. 1.

were incapable of higher organization and state building on its head, arguing instead that their pacific and democratic nature was a sign of the Slavs' greater humanity and ethical morality.[72]

Slavophile thinkers had always felt uncomfortable with a passage from the medieval Russian 'Chronicle of Nestor', which seemed to suggest Slavic inferiority and political dependence on the West. The particular passage details how Slavic tribes appealed to the Viking 'Rus' by claiming that, 'our land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come and rule over us'.[73] One of the founders of the Slavophile movement in Russia, Aleksey Khomyakov, tried to argue that the Slavs' acceptance of the Scandinavian Varangians was 'proof of the basic pacifism of the Slavs and their moral superiority'; this superiority was 'proved also by the "democratic feelings" of the Russians and their complete lack of racism'.[74] Stjepan Radić was of the opinion that,

> 'Russian czarism was, in its character, not only different but opposed to that intention from Berlin, which strives to assemble Roman organization, Hunnish rage, Christian patience and Jewish enterprise into one purpose, to…extirpate everything that does not want to speak its language and breathe its spirit'.[75]

For the Slavophile Radić brothers, 'Greco-Roman' civilization was not only alien to Croatian Slavic peasant culture, but had also given modern Western European civilization some of its

[72] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države*, p. 88-89.
[73] Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, p. 106.
[74] ibid, p. 125. Khomyakov based his arguments on the fact that Pushkin, who was of partially Ethiopian ancestry on his mother's side, was regarded 'with pride and joy [in Russia] whereas he…would not have had the right to marry the daughter of a washerwoman in Germany'. See ibid.
[75] Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države*, p. 89.

worst traits, such as 'the idea of superiority, imperialism, mechanization, megalomania, the idea of the state as an organization of power and force, [and] the system of official and aristocratic Christianity'.[76]

Stjepan Radić's successor, Vladko Maček, was equally committed to 'Slavic' pacifism and a federal solution to Yugoslavia's national question.[77] Although Maček maintained links with Pavelić during the early 1930s, he rejected any collaboration with either Fascist Italy or National Socialist Germany.[78] He eventually secured an agreement (the *Sporazum)* with the central government in Belgrade in 1939, which led to the establishment of a separate internally autonomous Croatian *Banovina* within Yugoslavia.[79] As this agreement stopped well short of full independence, the Ustashe accused Maček of having saved Yugoslavia and betrayed the Croatian national cause. It is unclear whether Maček saw the Croatian *Banovina* as a step toward full independence. His actions and statements before, during and after the Second World War seem to point to his acceptance of Yugoslavia as the appropriate state framework to accommodate an autonomous Croatia.[80] As Tomasevich noted, 'the

[76] Dinko Tomašić, 'Sociology in Yugoslavia', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 47, 1941-42, p. 61.
[77] See Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike*, pp. 78-79.
[78] Maček did initiate contacts with the Italian government in 1938, mainly in order to pressure the Yugoslav government for concessions. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution,* pp. 38-42.
[79] The agreement was possible for the government headed by the Prince Regent Pavle Karađorđević was keen to solve the 'national question' in Yugoslavia and give the Croats some concessions, thereby stabilizing the state before any possible outbreak of world war. Otherwise, the three key Serbian political forces in the state (the crown, Orthodox church and army) never had any intention of bringing 'Serbian hegemony into question'. See Jareb, *Pola stoljeća*, p. 79.
[80] ibid, p. 80.

Croatian Peasant Party did not have a precisely defined political objective for a postwar state'.[81]

Maček, who spent most of the war under house arrest and a spell in the infamous Jasenovac concentration camp, rejected co-operation with the Ustasha regime without openly opposing it; he decided that the best thing to do was to sit the war out, in the belief of an eventual Allied victory (which might well bring the HSS, as the most popular pre-war Croatian political party, to power).[82] However, Maček had agreed (under German pressure) to write a statement to be read on Zagreb radio on 10 April 1941, calling on all Croats to accept the new Ustasha authorities.[83] This gave the Ustasha regime considerable legitimacy in the eyes of many ordinary Croats and subsequently the new regime was able to rely extensively on the HSS dominated administration of the Croatian *Banovina.* The HSS's right-wing had already been leaning toward the Ustashe prior to the outbreak of war and after the establishment of the NDH a number of right-wing HSS functionaries joined the Ustasha movement (although the regime failed to incorporate the HSS en masse).[84]

Maček remained, as Jere Jareb rightly states, 'a Yugoslav federalist'.[85] The HSS had thus 'homogenized the Croatian nation on the program…that represented a solution to the "Croatian question" on the principles of federalism within the framework of the Yugoslav

[81] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 454.
[82] Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia: A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999), p. 138.
[83] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 52-53, 740.
[84] Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, p. 175.
[85] Jareb, *Pola stoljeća*, p. 78. 'Born and raised in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Maček could never shake off the Croatian political concepts from that period. The federalist concept was then well acclimatized in Croatian politics among all parties'. See ibid, p. 81.

state'.[86] Whether the broader Croatian masses were in favour of such a federal solution to the 'Croatian question' or were more inclined to favour an independent Croatian state is another (still open) question.[87] In any case, the HSS's brand of cautious, parliamentary, conciliatory, Slavophile politics was unacceptable to the proponents of Pavelić's style of uncompromising and 'untainted' Croatdom.

Before we turn our attention to the Ustasha movement and regime, it is necessary to focus a little more closely on the racial myths of Croatian pan-Slavism and its effect on the subsequent development of Croatian nationalism in the twentieth century, for the Illyrianists, Yugoslavists and the HSS had managed to successfully embed an overarching ideology of 'ius sanguinis' into Croatian political life. As Duško Sekulić explains:

> 'The myth of common ancestry where the modern Croats are regarded as direct offsprings of the Croats who came to this area in the seventh century was not only part and parcel of nationalist ideologies, but through a diffusion process became an integral part of the self-definition of Croatian people'.[88]

[86] Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, p. 131.
[87] Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković: Ministar urotnik*, p. 27.
[88] Sekulić, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Croatia', p. 463.

Chapter Five: The Croatian pan-Slavist ius sanguinis

In *De administrando imperio*, Constantine Porphyrogenitus differentiated between the migrations of Slavic groups, which had accompanied the Avars in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, and the somewhat later migrations of the Croats, who defeated the Avars in battle. Proponents of a pure Slav ideology, such as Strossmayer's party comrade Franjo Rački and the philologist Vatroslav Jagić, rejected the testimony of the Emperor because it implied that the Croats were somehow distinct from other Slavs, and argued instead that the Croats had been part of a mass Slav migration from the north and did not arrive in the South separately.[1] As Radoslav Katičić notes, for the pan-Slav ideologists, 'it was necessary that the Croats be, by reason of their origins, an internal part of the amorphous Slav ethnicum'.[2] When examining the various 'ideologems' concerning the origins of the proto-Croats, Katičić argues that the central question being posed is: 'which identity is fundamentally more significant? That based on the [Slavic/Croat] settlers and their rule derived from conquest, or the elements of continuity of ancient and glorious Roman Dalmatia'.[3]

The Illyrianists, for their part, viewed the Croats (and other South Slavs) as autochthonous to their land, even if their notion of Slavic 'aboriginality' in the Balkans was clearly not

[1] Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', pp. 156-159.
[2] ibid, p. 159. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, Croatian historiography 'was consistent in differentiating between the conquests and settlement of the Avars and Slavs, who destroyed the Roman order in Dalmatia…and the later settlement by the Croats who defeated the Avars'. See ibid, p. 156.
[3] ibid, pp. 155-156.

historical fact. For the Yugoslavists, however, the roots of the Croatian nation were somewhere far off in the expanses of northeastern Europe. This idea reflected the nineteenth century romantic nationalist confusion of 'race' (ethnicity) with language, while also emphasizing and exaggerating the question of 'primordial' origins over culture. A unique Croatian ethnic and cultural identity was, in fact, the product of a fusion of Slavic, Classical and Christian cultures along the Adriatic coast in the early Middle Ages; the cultural influences of the Frankish and Byzantine Empires were also important, as were those of the later centuries of Austrian, Hungarian, Venetian and Ottoman rulers.[4] The fusion of different cultural traditions led to a great flowering of art and literature; for example, 'the originality of Dalmatian Renaissance literature…lies in its combination of idioms and styles derived largely from Latin/Mediterranean models with a quite different Slavic linguistic morphology and social and political colour'.[5] Many elements of Croatian folklore (costume, poetry, music and beliefs), particularly among the Croats of the Dinaric mountain range, are 'inherited in part' from, or 'directly linked' with, the Illyrians.[6]

Typically among European nationalist movements, the pan-Slavists and Yugoslavists had adhered to the 'naïve and simplified notions on relations between nations and cultures, which repeatedly define the conquerors and the conquered in black and white and imagine that between them reigned a perennial antagonism, bereft of any communications and of

[4] See Rendić-Miočević's article, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History'.
[5] Robin Harris, *Dubrovnik: A History* (London: Saqi, 2003), p. 250.
[6] Marin Zaninović, 'The Illyrians on Croatian Soil in Antiquity' in Ivan Supičić (ed.) *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), p. 66.

any flow of the products of the human spirit'.[7] To be sure, the emergence of Croatian pan-Slavist fantasies was also an understandable political reaction to Hungarian and Italian expansionist nationalisms, as well as to Habsburg absolutism. The leading Croatian writer of the twentieth century, Miroslav Krleža, best expressed the pan-Slavic Croat argument when he wrote:

> 'What could we possibly say in our own defence before a Western Europe which denies us from the beginning? The very fact that we appeared in these regions and that we did not disappear is one of the proofs of our guilt. We are guilty, because Roman civilisation on the eastern Adriatic coast became Slavonic, which meant for Rome that it was destroyed. These have been the arguments of the Lateran, the Vatican, Byzantium, Venice and Italy up to this very day'.[8]

Italian nationalist judgements concerning the cultural 'inferiority' of the Slavic speaking Croats were also the product of the romanticist tripartite racial division of the Europeans; in other words, the classical heritage of Roman Dalmatia could only belong to the 'Latin' Italians, and not to the Croats who spoke a 'barbarian' Slav tongue. Italian nationalists thought of their people as 'racially' Latin, or as having 'descended from a single [Roman/Latin] stock'.[9] Of course, 'Italian civilization was not, in its origin, purely Latin',[10] for it was also influenced by Etruscan, Germanic, Celtic and Arabic cultures. Croatian

---

[7] See Kuntić-Makvić, 'Greek and Roman Antiquity', 53fn, p. 88.
[8] See Viktor Novak, 'The Slavonic-Latin Symbiosis in Dalmatia during the Middle Ages', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 32, 1953-1954, p. 20.
[9] Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, p. 69. The Italian notion of 'race' was mainly spiritual and cultural, quite different in content to the biological-anthropological idea of race expounded by the Germans, but both ideas held that the Italians and Germans were 'descended from a single stock'. See ibid.
[10] See ibid.

culture was also not purely Slavic, but in reaction to the racial claims of Italian, Hungarian and German nationalists, Croat pan-Slavists adhered to the notion that Croats were, more or less, pure Slavs.

The acceptance by the Croatian intellectual elite of the ideologies of ethno-linguistic Yugoslavism meant that any attempt to fashion a modern civic and 'Western' political Croatian nationalism was going to be very difficult. In his famous 1882 essay, *What is a Nation?*, the French historian, Ernest Renan, noted that 'no race is pure and that to base politics on ethnographic analysis is tantamount to basing it on a chimera'; he further noted that 'it would be no less objectionable to make them depend on comparative philology'.[11] What Renan further wrote about the English national character could have also applied to the Croats (or to any other nation), although only Starčević would have shared his opinion among Croat national leaders:

> 'An Englishman is certainly a type in the whole sum of humankind. Now the type of what is very incorrectly termed the Anglo-Saxon race is neither the Briton of the time of Caesar, nor the Anglo-Saxon of Hengist, nor the Dane of Canute, nor the Norman of William the Conqueror: It is the sum total of all these'.[12]

In the same manner, Starčević argued that there were no longer any 'pure-blooded Croats from the seventh century' living in the Croatia of his day.[13]

---

[11] Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?' in Omar Dahbour & Micheline R. Ishay (eds.) *The Nationalism Reader* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1995), pp. 148, 150.
[12] ibid, p. 149.
[13] Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?', p. 40.

Cathie Carmichael, for her part, writes that 'within a state's right tradition, a civic Croatian nation state should have been able to embrace non-Croats within its borders. But a strong element within Croatian nationalism regarded individuals from other ethnic groups as essentially undesirable "aliens"'.[14] The 'strong element' Carmichael has in mind was the Starčevićist brand of Croatian nationalism.[15] While Carmichael was right to claim that the Croatian state right tradition could have accommodated a civic nationalism, shifting responsibility on the shoulders of Starčević is unfair. It was the pan-Slavist and Yugoslavist nationalists, not Starčević, who taught the Croats to think in essentially ethno-linguistic/racial terms. As Ivo Banac argues, although Starčević 'identified nations with states and therefore denied the multinational character of his Great Croatia, he was nevetherless conscious of its composite nature. His Croats were a historical – indeed a moral – community, not a community of blood'.[16]

To be sure, Starčević's judgements of other cultures, such as the Serbian or German, were frequently ethnocentric.[17] Nevertheless, Starčević at least recognized that Croatian culture was not some pure homogeneous entity, even if it was distinct. In contrast, Gaj, Strossmayer and Radić sought to discover the 'true' identity of nineteenth century and early twentieth century Croats in the 'soul' of the early medieval Slavic tribes. Gaj, Strossmayer and Radić were certainly not racist in the sense that they believed in blood purity or racial superiority,

[14] Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans,* p. 55.
[15] ibid, pp. 57-58.
[16] Banac, *National Question*, p. 106.
[17] Starčević considered the Germans to be a barbaric people who had become enlightened only by studying the classical languages and French. Starčević denied that he 'hated' the Germans, claiming that he 'only held the Germans and their literature in contempt'. See Starčević', Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?', p. 26.

but they still believed in the more or less homogeneous ethnic-racial unity of the 'Yugo-Slavs', which had apparently been cemented in the early Middle Ages.

If the 'Yugoslavs' were indeed one nation, then the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes and others could be nothing other than regional or 'tribal' groups within the overarching Yugoslav supra-nation/race, no different to Sicilians or Lombards within the Italian nation. It was not enough for Gaj, Strossmayer and Radić to argue that Croatian historic state right on its own proved otherwise, because by the late eighteenth century, the 'Kingdom of Croatia' was reduced to Civil Croatia and possessed only limited autonomy. Therefore many Croat inhabited areas such as Dalmatia had been left out of the territory of the 'Kingdom of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia', despite the inclusion of the name 'Dalmatia' in the royal title. It was anachronistic to apply the concept of historic state right – a right that had only belonged to the nobility – to the modern political and socio-economic environment of Croatia in the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. For centuries there had been a 'Croatian state' in name only, but Gaj, Strossmayer, Radić (and Starčević) believed that the 'rusty weapons of historical and state right'[18] were the best resort in the struggle to preserve Croatian national and political identity because the Croat political elite 'had been conditioned by the legalistic traditions of the Habsburg monarchy', where rights and privileges were only bestowed on 'historic' nations.[19]

[18] Banac, *National Question*, p. 74.
[19] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 75.

What the Yugoslavist Croatian nationalists failed to comprehend was that their claims of Croat national distinctiveness were not to be accepted by non-Croats, especially Serbian nationalists, because they (the Yugoslavists) had actually unwittingly denied the national 'authenticity' of the Croats. This is because they promoted the 'authenticity' of the 'Yugoslav nation'. The importance of 'authenticity' cannot be overstated. As Anthony Smith explains:

> 'Since Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, popularized the idea of the genius of a nation, and since Herder's advocacy of the idea of the original and authentic spirit of a nation, authenticity has become the litmus test for any cultural, and hence political, claims. To say that an *ethnie* lacks an authentic culture and ethno-history is to deny its claim to national recognition'.[20]

A nation-state under the name 'Yugoslavia' denied the national authenticity of the Croats because the 'modern principle of nationality' or the principle of the 'self-determination for nations' called for the establishment of states for nations that were truly unique and distinct according to ethno-cultural criteria. According to the pan-Slavists and Yugoslavists, the Croats were 'politically' Croatian, but 'ethnically' Illyrian and/or Yugoslav. For Croat pan-Slavists/Yugoslavists to call for the creation of a state for the 'Yugoslav nation' on the basis of the modern principle of nationality, while at the same time arguing for the preservation of pre-modern Croatian historic state right was a contradiction in terms that was apparent to everyone else but to them. The Croatian Yugoslavists and pan-Slavists had therefore sought, as the Croatian historian Vladimir Košćak succinctly remarks, 'the affirmation of Croatdom

[20] Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, p. 66.

in its negation'.[21] By accentuating the 'national oneness' of the South Slavs, Gaj, Strossmayer and Radić actually undermined the very tradition that they were trying to preserve, namely, Croatian historic statehood. Political and cultural notions of nationhood are not so neatly divided from each other. Even a civic political nationalism still partly rests upon the cultural foundations of a 'core ethnie', such as the English within Great Britain or the Castilians within Spain, 'whose elites and monarchs forged strong states which then incorporated surrounding minority populations'.[22]

The Illyrians and Yugoslavists tried to construct a national ideology on the basis of a dual national identity: 'political Croatianism' and 'cultural Illyrianism/Yugoslavism'. The problem was that no 'Yugoslav' ethnie actually existed, which might form the core ethnie of a future nation state. It had to be created, but the Yugoslavists were unable to do so because the overwhelming majority of Slovenes and Serbs, as well as the great mass of ordinary Croats, rejected both Illyrianism and Yugoslavism. In the case of the 'South Slavs', one cannot ignore the significance of pre-modern ethnies, for although not all such entities actually survived the transition to modernity and were either absorbed by larger ethnic groups or disappeared from the stage of history, 'some ethnic ties have survived from pre-modern periods, among at least some segments of given populations, and these have often become the bases for the formation of laterday nations and nationalist movements'.[23] In the case of the 'Yugoslavs', there were at least three strong traditions of pre-modern ethnies, the Croat, Serb and Slovene.

---

[21] Quoted in Stržić, *Hrvatski portreti*, p. 56.
[22] Smith, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 61.
[23] ibid, p. 57.

The Serbs living within Croatia were also adamantly opposed to assimilation into some 'Yugoslav nation'. The main aim of Serbian Orthodox Church authorities in Habsburg Croatia was to preserve Serbian 'nationality, religion and alphabet' and they strongly opposed efforts on part of the Croatian *Ban* to rest control of Orthodox schools from their hands.[24] In order to appease the Croatian Serbs, the *Sabor* adopted a resolution in 1861 recognizing the existence of the Serbian nation in Croatia, even though Croat Yugoslavists considered the Serbs to be ethnically one and the same nation with the Croats.[25]

By the time the Croats were preparing to join ethnically 'brethren' Serbia in a new state, they were not only further away to achieving administrative union of their provinces and independent statehood than they had been in 1848, but were in danger of losing their fundamental identity – their name and language – by being transformed, on the basis of academic ethno-linguistic classifications, into 'Croato-Serbs' or 'Serbo-Croats', or 'Yugoslavs'. The nineteenth century romantic nationalist identification of language with nationhood ('race') had taken hold of the greater part of the Croatian political and cultural elite and they were reluctant to let go of this ideology. As Miroslav Krleža argued,

> '…the Croats renounced their own individuality for the sake of some higher imaginary integration. They benignly overestimated the strength of their own fantasies. They were as ridiculous and non critical as those who following the

[24] Charles Jelavich, *South Slav Nationalisms: Textbooks and Yugoslav Union before 1914* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990), p. 46.
[25] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', p. 131.

products of their own imaginations do not try to understand the discrepancies between their dreams and reality.'[26]

The Croat Yugoslavist aim to create a future federal South Slav state founded on 'brotherhood and equality' was a fantasy due to the reality of Serbian numerical and military superiority, Serbian independent statehood, the presence of a significant Serbian minority in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (25% of the population of Croatia-Slavonia, 43% of Bosnia-Hercegovina and 17% of Dalmatia)[27] and the widespread espousal of Greater Serbianism among Serbian politicians. As a result, Nikola Stojanović had envisioned the disappearance of the Croats rather than that of the Serbs, because this was 'guaranteed by their [the Croats'] inferior number, their geographical position, by the circumstance that they lived in mixed communities with Serbs, and by the process of overall evolution, according to which the Serbian idea means progress'.[28] The idea of Croatian 'inferiority' was even accepted among a sizeable number of Croatian intellectuals who viewed the Serbs as somehow more Slavic and thus less racially 'polluted' than the Catholic, 'Latinized' and 'Germanized' Croats. Among others, Ivan Meštrović and the leading writer Ivo Vojnović created works of art based on expressly Serbian historical and cultural themes.[29] On the other hand, there was no 'corresponding Croatophilia' among the Serbian political and cultural elite.[30]

---

[26] Quoted in Zelić-Bučan, 'The National Name of the Croatian Language Throughout History', pp. 104-105.
[27] See Miller, *Between Nation and State*, pp. 18, 29-30.
[28] Stojanović, 'Until Your or Our Extermination', p. 113.
[29] Banac, *National Question*, p. 103.
[30] ibid, p. 104.

To be sure, the Yugoslav experiment was not that 'outrageous' in the early twentieth century, as 'such projects of social engineering were common enough in the nineteenth century, as dominant ethnic groups sought to assimilate weaker ones through their control of the state and educational system'.[31] The biggest problem with the Yugoslav 'national' idea was that, on the one hand, its proponents simply tried to replace several nationalisms with one racial supra-nationalism, while on the other hand, the Belgrade regime sought to ensure the domination of one South Slav 'tribe', namely, the 'Yugoslav Piedmont', Serbia. In any case, the very name 'Yugoslavia' itself denied the state's multinational character because it explicitly expressed the notion that the 'South Slavs' were a unified ethno-linguistic nation. To highlight the artificiality of Yugoslavism, one could have imagined an analogous project aimed at creating a nation-state for the 'West Germanic' nation (i.e. the Dutch, Flemish, English and Germans), which might have been called 'West Germania'. Adrian Hastings has rightly argued that

> 'if Yugoslavia was ever to survive, it needed a cosmopolitan tolerance of diversity comparable to that of the Habsburg Empire at its best. In practice the 'Greater Serbia' view of Belgrade almost wholly determined the character of inter-war Yugoslavia…and providing the ideal stimulant for an alienated Croat nationalism to jump on the Fascist bandwagon…and take a horrible revenge on its Serb fellow citizens'.[32]

[31] Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power*, pp. 330-331.
[32] Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, pp. 143-144.

The Ustasha movement was not only interested in revenging the wrongs of the pre-war Belgrade regime. It also wanted to replace Croat 'Serbophilia' with a purely Croatian national agenda and create an authentic Croatian 'ethno-history'. In order to create such a history, the Ustashe would adopt the notion of a purely Croat 'ius sanguinis'. In reference to the Ustashe, Sekulić writes that

> 'the emergence of Croatian national identity where people defined themselves in primordial terms…was enmeshed with civic identity, with acquisition of political rights, with modernization of feudal society. The later transformation of nationalism into its "organic" form in the Ustasha version was realization of just one of the potentials being present in the original forms of nationalism'.[33]

Sekulić fails to note, however, that the Illyrianists and Yugoslavists had thought primarily of a Slav 'primordial' ethnic identity, whereas the Ustashe were the first national movement to insist on a purely Croat one. Before moving onto the subject of this particular Ustasha myth, we need to briefly examine the pre-war Ustasha movement, its basic structure, its political programme, its leading personality, the 'Poglavnik' Ante Pavelić, and its relations with the Fascists and Nazis, in order to fully understand the internal mechanics, including that of race policy, of the future NDH.

[33] Sekulić, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity', p. 464.

PART TWO: THE USTASHA MOVEMENT 1930-1941

Chapter Six: The Founding of the Ustasha Movement

Croatian independence and terrorism

The assassination of Stjepan Radić in 1928 and the subsequent promulgation of the royal dictatorship by King Aleksandar Karađorđević in January 1929, which banned all political parties (and officially changed the name of the state to 'Yugoslavia' in October of the same year), led to the formation in 1930 of the first terrorist political organization in Croatian history, the Ustashe (*Ustaše*). The founder of the Ustasha movement was the lawyer Dr. Ante Pavelić (1889-1959), secretary of the Frankist HSP from 1918. He was born in the village of Bradina on the border between Bosnia and Herzegovina, of Croatian parents from Lika, his father having immigrated to Bosnia after the Austro-Hungarian occupation in 1878.[1] Of peasant origin, his father became a supervisor on a number of roadworks and railroads; as a result Ante spent much of his childhood living in various Bosnian towns. The future Poglavnik later studied in the Croatian towns of Senj and Karlovac, eventually completing a doctorate in law at the University of Zagreb in 1915. The early years of his life in Bosnia had a great influence on Pavelić's subsequent political ideas. He grew to admire the Muslim population and as he recounted in his memoirs, the first school he attended was in

[1] For more on Pavelić's early life, see the first volume of his autobiography, *Doživljaji I* (1947, first published, 1968).

fact a Muslim religious school (*mekteb*), run by a Muslim cleric, the *hoca*.[2] Throughout his life Pavelić maintained an interest in Bosnian and Ottoman history, culture and Islam and shared Starčević's assessment of the Bosnian Muslims as the racially purest Croats.

Even before the assassination of Stjepan Radić, Pavelić, as a Zagreb city council representative, had made a name for himself as a staunch opponent of Serbian hegemony in Yugoslavia. He was outspoken in his verbal denunciations of Serbian policies in the *Skupština* in Belgrade, especially throughout 1927 and 1928.[3] Before he eventually moved to Italy and set up the Ustashe as a nationalist 'liberation' movement in 1930, Pavelić had also cultivated contacts with anti-Yugoslav Croatian political émigrés who resided mainly in Austria and Hungary. These émigrés consisted mostly of former Austro-Hungarian army officers, such as the former wartime military governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Baron Stjepan Sarkotić von Lovćen, and former Frankist politicians, such as Josip Frank's son Ivica. Grouped around the Vienna based organization, the Croatian Committee (*Hrvatski Komite*), these former officers and politicians provided Pavelić with his first links to 'revisionist' powers and forces, notably Hungary and Fascist Italy, each of which had territorial claims against Yugoslavia. Hungary claimed the entire Vojvodina region, which had belonged to Hungary prior to 1918, while the Italians claimed the parts of the eastern Adriatic coast promised to them by the secret Treaty of London in 1915 and also sought to extend their political and economic influence in the Balkans.

[2] See Pavelić, *Doživljaji I*, p. 93 and Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba,* p. 13.
[3] See Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, pp. 18-21.

Unlike the Ustashe, the Croat Committee members were tied to their old Habsburg allegiances and envisioned some sort of revival of the old Empire – even if under a different name – in which Croatia would be autonomous. The Committee's ideas were based on the peculiar Frankist blend of 'strident Croat chauvinism coupled with an equally fanatical devotion to the Habsburg crown'.[4] Pavelić had no interest whatsoever in ideas of Habsburg restoration – in this respect he was certainly closer to Starčević than to Frank.[5] He did find, all the same, close collaborators among the old Austrian Croat officers, notably Colonel Ivan pl. Perčević, who would be promoted to the rank of general in the NDH.[6]

Pavelić's politics offered anti-Yugoslav nationalist Croats an aggressive and more active political alternative, both to that of the Croatian Committee and the HSS. The early Frankist émigrés lacked the dynamism and new ideas that could have attracted a new generation of nationalist activists, while the HSS, committed to parliamentary tactics and pacifism, naively believed that the best tactic in the struggle against the royal Serbian dictatorship was to wait until the Belgrade regime tired of trying to dominate the Croats by force and instead sought

[4] Richard B. Spence, 'General Stephan Freiherr Sarkotić von Lovćen and Croatian Nationalism', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* XVII, 1-2, 1990, p. 148. A French scholar gave an apt description of the nineteenth century Croat Military Frontier officer, applicable to men like Sarkotić: 'They were all men born in the Service…prepared for their careers in Austrian schools, almost without fortune and especially dependent on the Emperor's benefactions; they remained Croatian patriots, but absolutely devoted to the House of Habsburg, and never separated their nation's interests from those of the Emperor'. Louis Eisenmann quoted in Spalatin, 'Croatian nationalism of Ante Starčević', fn. 8, pp. 42-43.

[5] See Jere Jareb, *Političke uspomene i rad dra. Branimira Jelića* (Cleveland: Mirko Šamija, 1982), p. 30.

[6] Perčević believed that Croat historic right was closely linked to the House of Habsburg for the Croatian nobility had itself chosen a Habsburg as its King in 1527 for 'eternity'. For more on Perčević, see Luka Fertilio, 'Kavalir i legitimista: Ivan pl. Perčević', *Hrvatska revija: Jubilarni zbornik, 1951-1975,* München-Barcelona, 1976, p. 232. Note that the abbreviation pl. is the Croatian designation for a nobleman (*plemić*).

a political compromise.[7] The Croat Committee, for its part, did set up a paramilitary 'Croatian Legion' in Hungary in 1919, but it was short lived. As Srdjan Trifković notes, 'the group around Sarkotić were too closely identified with the old pre-1914 world to be anything but part of it'.[8]

In contrast, Pavelić was willing to use terrorist methods and the help of foreign patrons to achieve Croatian independence. He sought to create a 'revolutionary' army in exile, which would spearhead the liberation of Croatia; the first Ustasha constitution, written in 1932, stated that 'the Ustasha movement has the task to liberate Croatia under foreign yoke, with all means, including an armed uprising, in order that it become a completely free and independent state on the whole of its ethnic and historic territory'.[9] The aim of national liberation was reflected in the very name that Pavelić chose for his movement, for the definition of the word 'Ustaša' is 'insurgent' or 'rebel'. The origins of the word Ustasha itself probably stretches back no further than the second half of the nineteenth century; some units of the Habsburg era Croatian Home Guard (*Domobranstvo*) went by the name 'Ustasha'.[10]

---

[7] See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 19 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution,* p. 27.
[8] Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 363.
[9] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 89.
[10] Ivan Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u drugom svjetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1992), pp. 8-11. Once in power, Ustasha ideologists were uneasy, however, with the connotations of the word 'Ustasha', namely that the word signified a 'subversive' insurgent and/or wild guerrilla fighter, hardly the image that the 'defenders of European civilization' wished for themselves. Therefore Ustasha ideologists stressed that the correct definition of the movement's name was 'a fighter for Croatian freedom'. See Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, pp. 69-70.

The first Ustasha training camp, set up on military lines, was established in Bovegno in northern Italy in 1931, with formal authority to do so given by the Fascist regime, which supported insurgent movements such as the Ustashe in order to ferment political turmoil in Yugoslavia, which, once disintegrated, would hopefully open up the whole Balkans and Danube basin to Italian political and economic influence.[11] All Ustasha recruits had to swear an oath, 'to uphold the Ustasha principles…and unconditionally carry out all orders of the Poglavnik'.[12] The term Poglavnik corresponded to the Italian 'Duce' and German 'Führer', but the term itself has a very old tradition in the Croatian language, dating back to the sixteenth century, when the Croatian lexicographer Faust Vrančić noted it as the Croat equivalent to the Latin 'princeps'.[13] Pavelić tried to use, where possible, traditional Croatian words for Ustasha military and political terminology.[14]

Pavelić had, in part, rejected parliamentary democracy in favour of terrorist methods and an alliance with Fascist Italy because the Western democracies, especially Britain and France, were firmly behind a united Yugoslav state and were sympathetic to their wartime allies, the Serbs. The formal parliamentary system in interwar Yugoslavia itself had also brought the Croats no closer to the dream of state independence. Furthermore, parliamentary politics had fatally split the Croats into different parties, thereby hindering the required 'organic'

[11] See Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 83 and Dennis Mack Smith, *Mussolini's Roman Empire* (London: Longman, 1976), p. 22. The Ustashe were to be moved to other camps from time to time. A camp was also set up in Janka Pusta, Hungary, with the consent of Admiral Horthy's authoritarian government. This camp was closed down in 1934.
[12] Cited in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* p. 90.
[13] Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, 177fn, p. 62.
[14] See ibid, pp. 63-64 and Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, p. 144.

unity of the Croats necessary for defence of the nation.[15] The 'integral' nationalism of the Ustashe found in Italian Fascism the appropriate politico-ideological framework for its concept of the nation as an organic entity.[16] Integral nationalism sought to eliminate all perceived threats, whether internal or external, to the organic unity of the nation.[17] Nationalism itself was the 'bed rock' upon which all fascisms were built.[18]

Alongside integral nationalism, opposition to liberal democracy, anti-Communism and the leader cult, the cult of violence was another significant political feature that the pre-war Ustashe shared with other fascist movements. The pre-war Ustashe were not a mass movement – one of the characteristics of European fascism[19] – and did not try to create one before the war even if they officially referred to their organization as a *pokret* (movement) from 1933, seeing themselves merely as the elite freedom fighters that would achieve Croatian independence.[20] The goal of the movement was stated to be the liberation of the Croatian people from foreign tyranny and not the victory of a particular political ideology aimed at destroying a particular political system.[21] Nationalism and racism, rather than fascism per se, formed the core of Ustasha ideology. Not all fascist movements/regimes were

[15] Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, p. 152.
[16] As Banac notes, integral nationalism 'insists on the "completeness" of the nation in question'. See Banac, *National Question,* p. 28.
[17] See ibid and Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. xii.
[18] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. xi.
[19] Fascism, like Communism wanted to 'mobilize the masses, to substitute modern mass politics for pluralistic and parliamentary government'. See ibid, p. 5. Fascism was based on the idea of 'popular sovereignty', which 'meant that, instead of representative assemblies, a new secular religion mediated between people and leaders'. See ibid, p. 2.
[20] See Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* p. 98.
[21] In a decree issued to his Ustasha recruits in 1933, Pavelić asserted that 'our army…will raise a rebellion of the whole nation against the enemy and not some revolution of one party against another within our own nation'. See ibid, p. 127.

racist, at least not initially, as in the case of Fascist Italy, where racism did not become official doctrine until 1936.[22] Italian racism, as noted in the introduction, had to be largely 'imported' from Germany.

The Ustasha cult of violence was viewed less in terms of spiritual notions of the regenerating power of violence that was common among the Italian Fascists and German Nazis,[23] and more as a practical (and indeed the only) weapon that the Croats could use to liberate Croatia from Serbian oppression. The Ustasha call to armed struggle was a significant departure from earlier Croatian political traditions and reflected the Ustasha aim to mold a new racial 'Croatian man' characterized by a 'warrior' spirit. The Illyrians, the Yugoslavists, the HSS and the HSP had never condoned violence or armed rebellion as a political tool in the struggle for Croatian autonomy or independence. Now Pavelić was advocating it as the only solution to the Croatian national question: 'the knife, revolver, machine gun and time bomb, these are the bells that will announce the dawn and resurrection of the Independent Croatian State.'[24] The Ustasha emblem was, fittingly, a burning cannonball with the Croat coat of arms displayed on it within a large letter 'U'. The Ustasha had to be ruthless, as Pavelić instructed in a May 1932 editorial in the newspaper *Ustaša*: 'He must be severe and merciless, without mercy and pardon, for his duty is to lessen the pain of the Croatian people with fire, iron and blood, to crush with force the neck of the foreign parasite and so liberate

[22] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, pp. 35-36.
[23] Jan Pakulski, *Social Movements: The Politics of Moral Protest* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1991), pp. 104-105.
[24] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 85.

his homeland.'[25] The Ustashe had a rudimentary idea of transforming a future Croatian state into a military one,[26] but had no plans for an expansionist war. In reality, the Ustashe had little opportunity to use violence directed against the Yugoslav state from a distance in Italy, where the Italian authorities had a good deal of control over their activities. The single most spectacular act of Ustasha violence was the assassination of King Aleksandar Karađorđević in Marseille in 1934. In fact, this regicide was a joint effort on the part of the Ustashe and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO).[27]

Croatian national individuality

Pavelić was not interested in competing with the Peasant Party for support among the Croat masses. He was a conspirator, more interested in recruiting a small band of followers who would be unconditionally loyal to him and completely committed to the movement. In contrast to the HSS, Pavelić was also not really interested in specific social or 'class' issues. His appeal to national unity managed to cut across class barriers. The five hundred or so Ustasha recruits in Italy were largely of peasant background (around 70%), hailing from the most impoverished regions such as the Dalmatian hinterland, Lika, and western Herzegovina.[28] In these regions the Yugoslav gendarmerie had conducted a brutal policy of

[25] ibid, p. 86.
[26] ibid, p. 128.
[27] The details of the assassination were probably arranged in Rome in 1934 at a meeting between Pavelić and the IMRO chief, Vanča Mihajlov. The actual assassin was a Macedonian, Veličko Kerin. See ibid, p. 156. The Ustashe also tried to unsuccessfully raise a rebellion in Lika in 1932. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 31-33.
[28] See the list of Ustashe and their occupations in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, pp. 564-574.

repression against 'state enemies' throughout the 1920s, especially against Croatian nationalists, leading many of the latter into the arms of the Ustashe.[29] On the other hand, supporters and members of the pre-war Ustashe in Croatia and in European countries other than Italy included many intellectuals, students and middle-class professionals.[30] No organization under the Ustasha name actually existed in Croatia prior to 1941, but there were Pavelić supporters in Croatia who had taken the Ustasha oath. The Ustashe in Croatia, numbering perhaps a few thousand people, were mainly former members of the Frankist HSP who dominated and/or headed certain institutions, such as academic/student clubs and societies (*August Šenoa, Eugen Kvaternik*) and financial co-operatives (*Uzdanica*).[31] The most prominent Ustashe in Croatia were the writer and HSP politician Mile Budak and the former Austro-Hungarian Colonel, and Josip Frank's son-in-law, Slavko Kvaternik.

Pavelić's appeal to certain sectors of the Croat population stemmed not only from his radical political methods and opposition to Belgrade centralism, but also from his unequivocal opposition to Yugoslavism. Pavelić was very clear about one issue – the Croats were definitely a nation according both to their separate political traditions *and* to their ethno-linguistic identity. In a speech made to the Belgrade *Skupština* in March 1928, Pavelić spoke of Croatia as a distinct country, 'which for a thousand years was one united whole, one

[29] Glenny, *The Balkans*, p. 434.
[30] Y. Jelinek, 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement' in S. U. Larsen, B. Hagtvet, J. P. Myklebust (eds.) *Who Were the Fascists: Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1980), p. 371.
[31] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 39-40. The number of active Ustashe in Croatia is difficult to ascertain. One estimate puts it at 2000, but this probably includes pro-Ustasha nationalists as well as sworn Ustasha members. See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 55.

ethnic, geographic and political whole'.[32] The Poglavnik subsequently laid out his national ideology very clearly in a document entitled, 'The Principles of the Ustasha Movement' (*Načela ustaškog pokreta),* which he issued in June 1933 in Italy. The seventeen principles became dogma for Ustasha members and would eventually form the core around which the legal-constitutional system (if one could call it that) of the NDH would be based.

The principles were based on two central ideas: the ethnic individuality and homogeneity of the Croatian nation (and territory) and the primacy of Croatian historic state right. The first principle began unambiguously: 'the Croatian nation (*narod*) is a self-contained ethnic unit; it is a nation in its own right and from an ethnic perspective is not identical with any other nation nor is it a part of, or a tribe of, any other nation'.[33] The next two principles dealt with the national and territorial names of the Croatian people – *Hrvat* (Croat) and *Hrvatska* (Croatia) – names that 'cannot be substituted for any other name' (p. 117). Principles five and six claimed that the Croats arrived in their present day homeland as a 'completely free' (pr. 5) and 'completely organized' people, in both a 'familial and military' sense (pr. 6) (p. 118). Principle seven stated that the Croats maintained their state 'throughout the centuries up until the end of the world war'; they therefore have the right to 'restore their own Croatian state on their whole ethnic and historic territory', with the right to use all methods (pr. 8); 'no-one who is not by descent and blood a member of the Croatian nation can decide

[32] Quoted in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 20.

[33] See ibid, p. 117. Page numbers that follow also refer to this work. The Croatian term *narod* is similar in its meaning to the German *Volk,* for it also has the definition of an ethnic-cultural nation rather than the political Western definition of 'nation'. *Narod* can be translated both as 'people' or 'nation'. See Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* pp. 32-36. For more on the term 'nation', see Banac, *National Question,* pp. 21-26. Slight changes were made to the 'Principles' after 1941.

on Croatian state and national matters' (pr. 11) (ibid.);[34] the peasantry is not only 'the base and also the source of all life, rather it itself constitutes the Croatian nation…those in Croatia who do not originate from a peasant family are, in ninety cases out of a hundred, not of Croatian descent or blood but foreign settlers' (pr. 12) (p. 118); the individual has no specific rights as he/she only counts as part of the whole, meaning the 'nation and state' (14, p. 119); and the 'moral strengths of the Croatian people lie in an orderly and religious family life, its economic strength in peasant economy, commune (*zadružnom*) life…the defensive strength in its organizational and tried and tested military virtues…the cultural progress of the Croatian people is based on the natural national genius' (16, p. 119).

The brevity of the central ideological document of the Ustashe underlined the simple idea that the movement wanted to get across: Croatia had a right to independence because the Croats were a distinct ethno-linguistic nation with their own tradition of political statehood. The theory of historic statehood was still vitally important for Pavelić, who never felt entirely comfortable with the modern Wilsonian concept of self-determination. At a meeting of HSP youth in September 1928 in Zagreb, Pavelić explained the significance of Croatian historic state right: 'after the world war, there had developed the idea of the "self-determination of nations". We Croats do not need that right, because we have our historic

[34] The Ustashe, however, did not always follow principle 11 to the letter; among the leading Ustashe were several members who, by ethnic/racial principles, were of non-Croatian descent: Narcis pl. Jeszensky (Slovak), Josip Metzger (German), Vlado Singer (Jewish). Others also had non-Croatian surnames: Vjekoslav Servatzy, Emil Lahowski.

state right and according to that right we seek that Croatia becomes free'.[35] At the same meeting, Prof. Fran Milobar expounded further on the role of Croat state right:

> 'it is a great historical lie that there is a "nation of three tribes" [i.e. the Yugoslavs]…Tribes are homeless, while the nation is a master who has his state right. Such a master is the Croatian nation, which has its thousand year Croatian right. We have to be watchful of three elements, from which the nation is consisted. These are territory, the nation itself and state right'.[36]

Despite the centrality of historic state right to their ideology, the Ustashe nonetheless felt that they had to 'prove' that the Croats were a unique ethno-linguistic nation. Clearly, historic state right on its own was not enough for the Croats to be considered a separate ethno-linguistic entity by other nations.

For Pavelić, Croatian national individuality and independence were the sacred goals that overrode all other issues. Pavelić was still insisting, in a propaganda leaflet in late 1937, that the Ustashe were not

> 'founded because and for the purpose of any ideological maxim of a general nature, but rather as a revolutionary movement for the liberation of the Croatian people under foreign lordship…It is understood of itself that the movement is characterized by a certain ideology, but that is designated in the 'Principles'. The main essence of those principles is Croatian state and ethnic individuality.'[37]

---

[35] Jareb, *Političke uspomene i rad dra Branimira Jelića*, p. 251.
[36] ibid, p. 253.
[37] See Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, 25fn, p. 299.

Specific ideological or social questions could only be addressed once Croatia was liberated, for at the moment, the Croats in the homeland were living 'politically and socially as the enemy prescribed'.[38] Pavelić concluded that Ustashism was the 'practical application of Starčevićism… and socially characterized totally by the spirit of the peasantry'.[39]

All Ustasha recruits had to learn the 'Principles' by heart. The rank and file émigré Ustashe did have their own personal ideological predispositions, for among them there were 'fascists, HSS members, democrats, liberals and socialists', but they were united by two central ideas – that of an independent Croatian state and loyalty to the Poglavnik.[40] Apart from studying the 'Principles', the recruits were subject to little specific ideological indoctrination, especially after 1934. Following King Aleksandar's assassination, the Italians (who were blamed by Yugoslavia for bearing the ultimate responsibility for the Serbian King's death) interned the rank and file Ustashe in camps on the islands of Lipari in southern Italy, where they lived a miserable existence, cut off from the world around them until 1941. Pavelić himself spent two years in a Turin jail and then lived under house arrest in Siena, corresponding with his followers by letter.[41] According to the postwar testimony of Ante Moškov, the later commander of the elite 'Poglavnik's Bodyguard' division, there were never any 'lectures' on 'ideological-political or economic-political currents' in Croatia or outside it,

[38] ibid, 25fn, p. 300.
[39] ibid.
[40] Ante Moškov cited in Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 19.
[41] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 37-38.

for the recruits were told that the Ustashe will 'order the homeland as it best corresponds to our nation and its traditions.'[42]

In Croatia itself, those 'national traditions' were propagated in the journal *Hrvatski narod* ('The Croatian Nation'), which the Ustasha writer Mile Budak started in Croatia in 1939. Budak had returned from Italy in 1938, following a rapprochement between Italy and the Yugoslav government of Milan Stojadinović, who issued an amnesty to any Ustashe in Italy who wished to return to Croatia; half of them (about 250 men) did so from 1937 to 1939.[43] There were also other nationalist groups on the right in Croatia – including clericalists, the rightwing of the HSS and the Croatian National Socialists – that shared some basic ideas with the Ustashe and appeared to act in collaboration with them. The Croat National Socialists, led by the labour activist Slavko Govedić and former HSP politician and lawyer Stjepan Buć, also propagated the ideas of Croat state independence and national individuality, but argued for a completely pro-German foreign policy orientation and did not look kindly on Pavelić's close ties to Fascist Italy, which coveted Croatia's Adriatic territories.[44]

[42] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 202. Moškov claimed that neither Pavelić nor Budak ever propagated fascism as an ideology before the war. The emphasis was always on the argument that the Croats had their own 'traditional forms of social life' and that as far as fascism was concerned, 'not every boot fitted every foot'. See Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, p. 199.

[43] Pavelić welcomed the prospect of greater Ustasha activity in Croatia itself, for his organization in Italy had, after Aleksandar's assassination, become completely passive. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 40.

[44] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 51.

Ustasha supporters in Croatia also tended to sympathize more with Germany rather than Italy, the latter having been the wartime enemy of Austria-Hungary and Germany.[45] Pavelić, however, was well aware that Nazi Germany supported Yugoslavia's territorial integrity for it wanted to dismantle the defence pact known as the 'Little Entente', consisting of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania. German policy aimed at isolating the Czechs by cultivating ties with the other two members, both important to Germany due to their rich mineral (Yugoslavia) and oil (Romania) resources.[46] Pavelić nevertheless tried to cultivate ties with the Nazis. Links were established between the small number of Ustasha émigrés in Germany and individual Nazi officials, such as Alfred Rosenberg, head of the Party's Foreign Section.[47]

The racially based nationalism of the Ustashe brought them ideologically closer to the central National Socialist idea that the nation stood above the state. Thus, for the Nazis, it was principally the nation rather than the state that was the chief object of secular worship. In other words, the race or *Volk* created the state and not the other way around, as the Italian Fascists argued.[48] Italian Fascism remained within the 'framework of the nation' while German National Socialism extended beyond its national frontiers because of its racism.[49] Here the Ustashe differed from the Nazis, for the former certainly had no racial-imperialist aims, unlike the German aim to extend the appeal of National Socialism to the Nordic-Germanic peoples. The *völkisch* nationalism exhibited by the Ustashe was not the

[45] ibid, p. 57.
[46] Glenny, *The Balkans*, pp. 435-436.
[47] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, pp. 26-27.
[48] Mosse, *Nazism*, pp. 92-93.
[49] ibid, p. 93.

product of direct National Socialist influence, but rather, as Broszat pointed out, a particular national type of the 'East-central European exclusivist national-tribal (and anti-Semitic) culture-and-soil ideology', so predominant in the political and social life of nineteenth and early twentieth century Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe.[50]

The future NDH education minister Mile Budak expressed this *völkisch* type of nationalism clearly when, in 1934, he made a similar distinction between state and nation (which he called the 'Homeland') in his essay, 'Some Thoughts on the Organization of the Free and Independent Croatian State':

> 'We build the state…to correspond to our views and aspirations, our wishes and needs…The state consists of all laws, statutes and institutions…while the Homeland consists of centuries of tradition, memories, events and songs, together with our land, which is filled with the sap and bones of our great-grandfathers, upon which every clot is drenched with the blood of our ancestors, the land which will receive our bones and those of our descendants.'[51]

[50] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 178.

[51] M. Budak, 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države' in Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978), p. 367. The 'objects' of nationalist devotion, in general, are the nation itself, the 'holy land…with its memories, heroic exploits, monuments, and the resting places of ancestors', the 'glorious past' and the 'sacrifice' of the nation's fallen. See Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, pp. vii-viii.

'Better some sort of Croatia than no Croatia at all': Pavelić and Fascist Italy

How could Pavelić's espousal of *völkisch* nationalism be reconciled to his subservience to Italy, which also displeased many of his own supporters? This subserviance was, in reality, little different to the Habsburg loyalism of the Croatian Legitimists, since 'Fascism, in essence, replaced dynastic loyalty'.[52] Pavelić's first memorandum to the Italian government in 1927 (handed to a member of the Fascist Grand Council, Roberto Forges D'Avanzati) appealed to Italian support for Croatian independence. In return Pavelić was willing to acknowledge 'Italian dominance of the Adriatic'; this implied that the Croats would 'adjust themselves to the sphere of Italian interests, politically and economically, and also from the military point of view'. Thus Pavelić was prepared to renounce the right to form a navy.[53] Dalmatia was to be part of Croatia, together with Croatia-Slavonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but Pavelić made it clear in his memorandum that he would be willing to allow Italy the right to establish military bases along the Croatian coast.[54]

Pavelić had to continually reassure his followers and sympathizers that Mussolini had no territorial claims against Croatia and that he (Pavelić) had not promised any future territorial concessions to the Italians; the Poglavnik claimed that Italy was sincerely committed to having Croatia as a loyal ally and that talk of Italian expansionist aims toward Croatia was

[52] Spence, 'General Stephan Freiherr Sarkotić von Lovćen', p. 152.
[53] See Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* pp. 13-16.
[54] ibid, pp. 14-15.

Serbian propaganda.[55] Pavelić himself was well aware of Italian irredentist territorial claims against Croatia, but thought that he could exploit Fascist Italy's enmity toward Yugoslavia for his own interests. As Stevan Pavlowitch writes,

> 'Pavelić needed the financial and military support of Fascist Italy to realize his own dream of the biggest possible independent Croatia. How much of the Croatian coastline Italy would take and how much control she would exercise over the Croatian state were issues which were perforce glossed over for as long as possible'.[56]

What the Ustashe, and Pavelić in particular, were interested in, were the trappings of formal independence, which could at least form the basis for real economic and political independence at a later stage. Ustasha terrorism aimed, then, to achieve at least the formal reality of an independent Croatian state – a separate army, official flags and coats of arms, a foreign service, a national currency and so on, if necessary, under Italian tutelage. As the Ustashe were wont to argue, it was better to have 'some sort' of Croatia than no Croatia at all, for one could eventually secure full independence if one had a quasi-independence.[57] For Pavelić, the choice was simple: either Croatia was to remain a part of Yugoslavia, subject to Serbian hegemony, or it could achieve statehood in co-operation with Italy.

---

[55] See Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, pp. 171-172. Ustasha recruits generally accepted Pavelić's explanation. See Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, p. 152.
[56] S. K. Pavlowitch, *Unconvential Perceptions of Yugoslavia, 1940-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 107.
[57] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija,* p. 99.

Pavelić's conception of independence was the product of centuries of political tradition, which was characterized by the struggle to preserve historic state right. Miroslav Krleža best described the ideology of the national conservative Croatian right, when he wrote, in 1933 (in reference to the creation of Yugoslavia):

> 'As a nation…the Croats have lost all the attributes of their statehood. These attributes…were falsely decorative, but…they were preserved as relics and symbols of a certain liberty, which, though a negation of every democratic liberty, was not entirely devoid of political reality: the crown as the mark of sovereignty, banners, arms, army, autonomy…From any current Croat conservative aspect, it cannot be proved to the Croats that in Austria they did not live in the Kingdom of Croatia'.[58]

The Ustashe did not, of course, want to live in Austria, but in an independent Croatian state. They also wanted to live in an ethnically homogeneous state, for Croatia could not be truly free, so reasoned Pavelić, if it was not a 'Croatia for the Croats' and only those of 'Croat blood and descent' would be able to qualify as 'citizens' of the future NDH. The emphasis on 'blood' was not unique to the Ustashe in the political arena of Eastern and Southeastern Europe of the 1920s. This region was full of territorial and ethnic claims and counter claims based on ethnic-racial arguments. The proponents of Yugoslavism also justified their political aims on the basis of ethno-linguistic/racial nationalism. Any Croatian nationalist opponent to Yugoslavism in the 1920s could not have combated this ideology without resorting, to at least some extent, to racial and ethno-linguistic arguments to the contrary.

[58] Quoted in Banac, *National Question,* p. 260.

The Ustashe would, however, take the logic of their racial arguments to a new shocking extreme during the 1940s, even for the violent political life of the Balkans. It is necessary now to elaborate on Ustasha race theories, especially their origins in the immediate post-World War One period.

Chapter Seven: Ustasha Race Theory

Race and civilization: the theories of Ivo Pilar and Milan Šufflay

In his first political pamphlet as an émigré in 1929 Pavelić did not go much further than his Frankist colleagues in finding the basic cultural difference between Croats and Serbs to be the cultural divide between Western and Eastern Europe.[1] *Uzpostava hrvatske države, trajni mir na Balkanu* ('The Establishment of the Croatian state, continual peace in the Balkans') referred, for example, to the Serbs as 'pure Byzantine bred' and the 'sworn enemies of the West and Catholicism'.[2] Concerned with policies of Serbian economic exploitation and cultural assimilation, Pavelić wrote of the Serbian attempt to force the teaching of Serbian history in Croatian schools, so that Croatian history textbooks were full of pages dealing with the 'bandit lives of Serbian *hajduks* whose bloody and barbaric deeds are presented as models for Croatian children'.[3]

Pavelić made an interesting reference in the above publication to the 1918 work of a certain L. von Südland, *Die südslawische Frage* ('The South Slav Question'). Pavelić cited it as a requisite text for understanding the Serbs, and from which the reader would come to the

[1] For the Frankist perspective, see the interview given by Ivica Frank to the Italian newspaper, *Il Popolo di Trieste* in May 1929 in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* pp. 60-66.
[2] A. Pavelić, 'Uzpostava hrvatske države, trajni mir na Balkanu', in Petar Požar (ed.), *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), p. 39.
[3] ibid.

conclusion that it was 'impossible for anybody to live in a common state with Serbia'.[4] Historians have ignored this small piece of information, but this little-read book undoubtedly had a marked influence on Pavelić's ideas on Croat-Serb relations, and the significant role that 'race' played in shaping that relationship. L. von Südland was the German pseudonym of the Croatian sociologist and historian, Ivo Pilar (1874-1933).[5] It would be useful to explore what Pilar had to offer as a socio-historical answer to the 'South Slav Question', considering the intellectual legitimacy his ideas were to provide the Ustashe.

Pilar's answer to the problem of Croatian-Serbian relations revolved around the two connected questions of race and religion. Although Pilar did not argue that the Croats were of non-Slavic origin (as Ustasha ideologists would later do), he believed that the Croats had preserved the 'Nordic-Aryan' heritage of their Slavic ancestors far more than the Serbs, who had interbred, to a large degree, with the Balkan-Romanic Vlachs.[6] The Croats had also, according to Pilar, assimilated some Vlachs, but much less so than the Serbs.[7] The Serbs, on the other hand, had apparently inherited their predominant physical features of black hair, dark eyes and dark skin from the Vlachs and Pilar thought that these traits were, in turn,

[4] ibid, p. 40.
[5] Pilar's work was originally published as L. von Südland, *Die südslawische Frage und der Weltkrieg: übersichtliche Darstellung des Gesamt-Problems* (Vienna, 1918). A full Croatian translation was not available until 1943; a reprint appeared in 1990 and I have relied on this publication, L. von Südland, *Južnoslavensko pitanje: Prikaz cjelokupnog pitanja*, Translated by Fedor Pucek (Varaždin: Hrvatska demokratska stranka, 1990).
[6] Pilar wrote that the 'old Croats' had been a 'Slavic-Aryan people of pure Aryan type: fair-haired, blue-eyed, tall and with dolichocephalic heads'. See Pilar, ibid, pp. 19-20, 121-122.
[7] ibid, p. 170.

probably the result of Vlach admixture with Gypsies.[8] Furthermore the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were the descendants of a mixture of immigrant 'Bulgars, Orthodox Albanians, Greeks, Gypsies, remarkably very many Vlachs, pastoral Aromuns, and a certain percentage of Serbs'.[9] Additionally, in Bosnia-Herzegovina large numbers of Catholic Croats had converted to Serbian Orthodoxy, due to the lack of Catholic priests and the favouritism shown toward the Orthodox Church by the Ottoman authorities.[10] The only thing that held these disparate peoples together was their adherence to the Serbian Orthodox Church, which eventually led to their cultural assimilation as Serbs.[11]

Pilar considered the Vlachs, as the core of the Serbian people, to be a detriment to the social harmony and progress of states in which they lived. They were a race of destructive pastoral nomads and bandits; the Vlachs had, for example, made up the largest part of the brutal irregular forces of the Ottoman armies that had invaded Croatia.[12] He also noted that the Serbs were accomplished traders and argued that this talent was closely connected to their Vlach nomadic heritage.[13] In contrast, the Croats were characterized by the values and virtues of their nobility, which was the only hereditary aristocracy in the Balkans: 'Croatian

[8] See ibid, pp. 108, 121-122. Pilar calculated that approximately 64% of Serbs consisted of 'dark types'. See p. 316.
[9] ibid, p. 27. *Aromuni* is the name the Vlachs used for themselves. See Banac, *National Question,* p. 42. When Pilar used the term Serb, he referred to ethnic Serbs from Serbia.
[10] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, pp. 116-117. The Ottoman state had indeed shown favour toward the Orthodox Church, largely because the religious head of Orthodoxy resided in the Ottoman imperial capital, while the head of Catholicism was seated in Rome, and the two greatest enemies of the Ottomans were Catholic states – the Habsburg Empire and the Venetian Republic. As far as conversions to Orthodoxy are concerned, many Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina did indeed convert to Serbian Orthodoxy during the seventeenth century. See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 71.
[11] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. 27.
[12] ibid, pp. 112, 187.
[13] ibid, p. 188.

fidelity, Croatian hospitality, highly advanced sense for aesthetics and love for art and theatre, and on the other hand a weak sense for the realistic side of life'.[14]

The negative characteristics of the Serbs were further exacerbated by Byzantine influence. Pilar devoted a large part of his book to exploring the differences between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, which he considered to lie chiefly in the difference between the Roman-Germanic culture of Western Europe and the Greek-Slavic heritage of Byzantium.[15] Pilar quoted extensively from the work of the German scholar Jacob Philip Fallmerayer, who had been a strong critic of nineteenth century West European Philhellenism. Fallmerayer argued that the modern Greeks of his day were primarily the descendents of Slavs and Albanians, 'for not a single drop of real pure Hellenic blood flows in the veins of the Christian population of modern Greece'.[16] In the manner of Fallmerayer, Pilar took a disparaging view of the Greeks and Byzantine culture. The Greeks were a 'worthless people of mixed bloods' – a mix of 'pre-Balkanic, Slavic, Germanic and especially Near Eastern (Syrian-Semitic) peoples' – who didn't have the 'material and moral strength' to inherit the mantle of successor to the Roman Empire.[17] The Eastern Church was morally corrupt due to the Church's subjection to the Emperor, which meant that it was subject to the higher, and often amoral or immoral, aims of the state and politics.[18] In contrast, the conflict between the

[14] ibid, pp. 95-96 & 317.
[15] ibid, pp. 128-136.
[16] Quoted in J. V. A. Fine Jr., *Early Medieval Balkans,* p. 59.
[17] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. 129.
[18] Pilar also noted that the Greeks were 'never a very moral people'. See ibid, p. 142.

Western Church and Holy Roman Empire had seen to the separation of church and state and coupled with 'Germanic individualism', had ensured the development of freedom.[19]

The Serbs had inherited the heritage of Byzantium, because at the beginning of their history they were weak (like the Greeks) and needed an idea (Orthodoxy) to compensate for that weakness.[20] Not so the Croats, thought Pilar, for 'the ruling instinct of the Croatian noble race' was strong enough to create its own state and society, without needing the aid of Byzantine mysticism.[21] The Serbs were left with hatred for the Latin-Germanic West and the Catholic Church, which they had inherited from their one-time Byzantine masters.[22]

Pilar also touched on the language question, noting the differences in dialects between Croats and Serbs, although stating that the contemporary standard languages of both peoples were more or less the same, even if he saw a drifting apart into two separate languages in the future.[23] He did claim, however, that the language was the same due to the mixture of Croatian (here meaning the čakavian dialect) and the Slavicized (or rather Serbianized) language of the immigrant Vlachs.[24] Pilar also did not neglect to emphasize the importance of state traditions for the development of separate South Slav nations, and in the tradition of

[19] ibid, pp. 133-135.
[20] ibid, p. 150.
[21] ibid, pp. 149-150.
[22] ibid, pp. 150-156.
[23] ibid, pp. 318-324.
[24] ibid, pp. 320-323.

Starčević, argued that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims were racially Croatian.[25] The latter argument was also confirmed by anthropological studies that showed that in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 'there are more than two times the number of fair, Nordic types among the Catholics and Muslims than among the Orthodox', the latter being predominantly of 'some other dark, pre-Aryan type'.[26]

Pilar had also viewed the role of the Vlachs in Croatian history within the context of the racial conflict between the Croats and the Latins along the Adriatic coast, for both the Latin Dalmatians and Vlachs were 'Romans' (i.e. Latin speaking). Pilar argued that the small, but economically and culturally powerful, Latin communities in the Dalmatian towns could have potentially – in alliance with the Papacy and Venice – culturally assimilated the Croats living along the Adriatic.[27] The Croats had, however, elected a Hungarian King from the Árpád dynasty in 1102, thus having acquired a powerful foreign patron to protect them from the 'Romans'. In other words, the Croats had discarded their statehood 'to save their nationality', for the Hungaro-Croatian kings encouraged the further immigration of Croats into the formerly Roman dominated Dalmatian towns.[28] Medieval Croatia had in fact been threatened by both the urban Romans along the coast and by the highland pastoral Romanic Vlachs, who vied for control of land with Croat noblemen.[29] Consequently, the Croatian

[25] Pilar was particularly interested in their religious development, beginning with their conversion, in the Middle Ages, to the neo-Manichean sect of Bogomilism, prior to their conversion to Islam with the arrival of the Ottoman Turks. See ibid, pp. 7-10, 96-105.
[26] ibid, p. 122.
[27] ibid, p. 18.
[28] ibid.
[29] ibid, p. 106.

nobility became one of the most powerful enemies of the 'Romanic race' in the Balkans.[30] Dalmatia had managed to preserve its Croatian character throughout the centuries, but there were still 'Romans' who regarded Dalmatia as Italian. Pilar was angered by the open favouritism the Habsburg authorities had shown toward the very small Italian minority in Dalmatia during the period of Austrian rule.[31]

Pilar was more concerned specifically with the Vlachs rather than with the Italians, however. With his ideas on Serb-Vlach inferiority and degeneration, Pilar followed, to some extent, in the footsteps of Starčević, whom Pilar acknowledged as having been the earliest figure to put forward the 'Vlach question' into the public arena.[32] Pilar pointed out that the 'Vlach problem' had not yet become the 'subject of scientific enquiry' and as a result, the 'problem' was vilified as 'politically tendentious'.[33] In the spirit of the times, Pilar needed academic and scientific proof for his nationalist and racial claims and his principle 'sociological' conclusion was that,

> 'the dangerous traits of the traditions and aspirations of the Serbo-Byzantine Church stumbled upon, in the Serbian people, an unusually efficacious supplement for the penetration of the Balkan-Romanic nomad blood, which with its innate racial appetite for usurpation, its anti-social tendencies, its mania for

[30] ibid, p. 169.
[31] ibid, p. 18.
[32] ibid, p. 183.
[33] ibid.

destruction…has made the Serbs a first class danger for neighbouring peoples and states'.[34]

Pilar wrote his 'opus' at a time when the 'Roman-Germanic' Austro-Hungarian Empire was coming to its historical end and the victory of the 'Slavo-Byzantine' Greater Serbian/Yugoslav idea seemed imminent. Pilar was desperate to promote a Croatian voice in the West with regard to the 'South Slav Question', but he was well aware that his 'voice was a cry in the wilderness',[35] for most academics and politicians in Europe either viewed the Croats as Slav 'ethnographic raw material' or 'just Serbs really', while Croat Yugoslavists busied themselves with the political goal of liberating and unifying the 'Yugoslav nation'. During the 1920s and 1930s, Pilar's voice would, nonetheless, be accompanied by a growing chorus of Croat nationalist intellectual voices raised in protest against the Yugoslav race idea.

One of the most prominent of these intellectuals and an important influence on Pavelić was the internationally renowned Croatian historian, Prof. Milan pl. Šufflay (1879-1931). A member of Croatia's petty gentry, Šufflay was the chief ideologist of the inter-war HSP and became a national martyr in 1931 after being brutally murdered by a Yugoslav government agent for his opposition to the Karađorđević regime.[36] Šufflay attributed an elevated mission

[34] ibid, p. 189.
[35] ibid, p. 2.
[36] He was hit on the head by an iron rod in Zagreb in broad daylight. His murder prompted an international outcry, led by Albert Einstein and Heinrich Mann, who wrote a memorandum in protest to the International League for Human Rights in Paris. For a summary of Šufflay's political activity and ideas, see Banac, *National Question,* pp. 266-269 and I. Banac, 'Zarathustra in Red Croatia: Milan Šufflay and His Theory of Nationhood', in Ivo Banac & Katherine Verdery (eds.), *National Character*

to Croatian nationalism, arguing that since Croatia was situated on the border between Europe and Asia, Croatian nationalism was different in nature to the nationalism of a 'non-Frontier' nation.[37] In Šufflay's words from 1928, 'Croatian nationalism did not just mean local patriotism, but loyal service to the whole white West'.[38] It was for this reason that Šufflay defended Croatian nationalism as something 'absolutely positive', because there were higher 'ethical motives' to Croat nationalism, namely, the defence of Western civilization.[39]

Although Šufflay was adamant in his conviction as to the Croats' firm Western cultural affiliation, he also pointed to the decisive influence of the Slavic heritage, which the Croats had brought with them from beyond the Carpathian Mountains to the shores of the Adriatic. For example, the sedentary nature of traditional Slavic life from ancient times evolved, in the Croatian context, into 'fidelity to the soil of the homeland', while 'Slavic toilsomeness' became a 'feeling of loyalty', which found its full expression in the centuries long Croatian struggle for freedom fighting the Ottoman Turks.[40] Šufflay noted that the Slavic Croats had mixed extensively with 'Illyrian/Vlach blood' (particularly in the southern parts of Croatia) and with 'Turanian/Avar blood' (mostly in northwest Croatia and Lika).[41] The admixture with Vlach blood, which he described as 'this dark, pastoral blood, very foreign to the Slavic

---

and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995).

[37] See M. Šufflay, 'Značajke Hrvatske nacije' in Dr. Milan Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999), pp. 40-41.

[38] ibid, p. 41.

[39] ibid.

[40] ibid, pp. 37-38.

[41] This 'Illyrian blood' had formed the Dinaric racial type, found among the inhabitants of Dalmatia, Herzegovina and Montenegro. See ibid.

element', had apparently been even more pronounced among the Serbs.[42] Šufflay was especially keen to highlight Serbian race mixing with the Cincars, a group of Greek-speaking Vlachs. In this respect, he was particularly satisfied by the work of the Serbian historian Dušan Popović, who readily admitted the heavy Cincar contribution to Serbian culture and ethnic make-up.[43] Šufflay felt confident enough to state that the Serbs of his day were still affected by the 'Cincar blood, which was formed throughout the centuries in a Byzantine-Turkish retort'.[44]

The only way that the Croats could successfully resist 'Byzantine-Ottoman' Serbian hegemony was to fight it with the weapons of Croatian historical memory. According to Šufflay, memory of the past was situated at the basis of every nation, which was an entity formed by history, and only an historical idea could give the nation strength. Šufflay was critical of the internationalist tendencies in the ideology of the Croatian Peasant Party, both its pan-Slavism and ideas on international peasant solidarity, and its concentration on the future rather than the past for 'whoever today wants his nation to be fresh and powerful must not destroy national memory, because he thereby destroys its egoism.'[45] Šufflay further noted that, unlike the Peasant Party, the HSP

[42] See 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja' in M. Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999), pp. 32-33.
[43] In his 1927 essay, 'Cincarska krv' ('Cincar blood'), Šufflay reviewed the study *O Cincarima, Prilozi pitanju postanke naše čaršije* by the Serbian historian D. Popović. See M. Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999), pp. 48-51.
[44] ibid, p. 51.
[45] See 'Radić, Bethlen i Mussolini' in M. Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999), p. 27.

> 'is thinking about its chauvinistic neighbours, who pump their strength only from their past, against whom the future cannot successfully enter into a struggle…It thinks about the power, the historically alive power of Dušan's Empire. Against the crown of St. Stephen, against the Serbian imperial diadem, against Roman imperialism, the idea of Tomislav's state must not be dead.'[46]

Šufflay was calling on Croats to remember and nurture their history – specifically the memory of the Croatian historical state - for the nation had no future without it. Šufflay also stressed that history itself repudiated Yugoslavism:

> 'Those who are acquainted with history know that the Yugoslav idea is not sufficiently dynamic. This idea is young and fragmentary. It is as nothing in comparison with the mighty Serb national consciousness…And in Croatia itself, the Yugoslav idea is but a fragile, thin crust, under which boils the Croat national volcano'.[47]

The significance of Pilar and Šufflay to Croatian nationalist ideology was their ability to synthesize cultural, historical, political, social, racial and religious arguments into an over-arching idea of Croatian uniqueness and distinction vis-à-vis the Serbs. In an age of nationality, where every nation was supposed to have its own state, Croatian nationalists had to prove to the wider world that they were indeed a nation in every sense of the word and in an age of science, they needed firm academic arguments to convince doubters (even among

[46] St. Stephen's crown referred to the symbolic sovereignty of Hungary, Dušan to the medieval Serbian emperor, Stefan Dušan, and Roman imperialism to Fascist Italy, thus to the enemies of Croatian independence. Tomislav was (probably) the first King of Croatia. See ibid, p. 28.
[47] Quoted in Banac, *National Question*, p. 266.

their own people). As a result, the question of race played an increasingly important role for nationalists such as Ante Pavelić. The idea that the 'Yugoslavs' were a homogeneous race was more widespread throughout Europe, as was the idea that the Serbs were the 'most representative Balkan Slavs' and the 'South Slav Piedmont', and this impelled a new breed of exclusive Croatian nationalists to prove otherwise.[48]

Western racism and the Balkans

Identifying the Croats as a separate and unique ethno-linguistic nation also corresponded to the growing nationalist classification of the Croats as a more or less pure European-Aryan people. With the growing acceptance, from the late nineteenth century onward, among a sizeable number of historians, archaeologists and philologists of the theory that the proto-Croats were of non-Slav origin, Croatian nationalists (and not only the Ustashe) began to popularize these findings in journals, books and newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s.[49] In 1935, an article appeared in the German review, *Nordische Welt,* entitled 'The Gothic Descent of the Croats', written by the main proponent of this theory, the nationalist Catholic

[48] The names 'Serb' and 'Yugoslav' were often interchanged, since the Croats (and other South Slavs) were thought to be ethnically Serb, or more specifically, the 'Western' or 'Catholic' branch of the 'Serbian race'. Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood,* pp. 125, 136.

[49] The Czech historian, Konstantin Jireček, was the first scholar to claim that the proto-Croats were of Iranian origin in 1911. This hypothesis relied heavily upon the late nineteenth century discovery of two names inscribed in Greek (Horoathos and Horovathos) on two tomb tablets, dated to the second and third centuries AD, at the mouth of the river Don in the Sea of Azov. This may well mark the first appearance of the Croat name in recorded history. See Vladimir Košćak, 'Iranian Theory of the Croatians' Origin' in Neven Budak (ed.) *Etnogeneza Hrvata* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1995), p. 233.

priest, Kerubin Šegvić.[50] The 'Gothic theory' was in some respects a product of its time, when all things 'Germanic' had great prestige among many academic and political circles in Europe and North America. The Croatian 'Gothic theory' was also partly derived from a medieval mythological tradition in Croatia, which had associated the Croats with the Goths. From the late fifth to the mid sixth centuries AD, the Croat lands had been part of the Ostrogothic Kingdom and two of the three oldest accounts of early Croatian history, the 12th century Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea and the 13th century *Historia Salonitana* by Thomas Archdeacon of Split, had identified the Croats as Goths.[51] Such medieval racial myths were quite common in Europe. The aristocracies of France and Spain, for example, justified their rule over the lower classes by tracing their origin to the Germanic 'conquerors' (Franks and Visigoths) that had established the first medieval kingdoms in Europe.[52]

Among the eminent scholars of the 1920s who sought ancient links between the Croats and Germans was the Viennese art historian, Josef Strzygowski, who put forward the thesis that the pre-Romanesque/early Croatian art and architecture of medieval Dalmatia was Nordic-Germanic in origin. Strzygowski claimed that the Croats had been artistically influenced by their Germanic neighbours in their proto-homeland of northeastern Europe rather than by

[50] Šegvić argued that the name 'Croat' was derived from the Gothic root, 'Hrothi' (meaning 'glorious'), which had a variety of forms, such as 'Hruat' and 'Chrout'. See Cherubin Segvić, 'Die gotische Abstammung der Kroaten', *Nordische Welt* (Berlin: Verlag Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1935), p. 35.
[51] See Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', pp. 151-155. The Goths are, however, also synonymous with Slavs in the two accounts by Docleas and Thomas Archdeacon.
[52] See Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, pp. 11-36.

the classical-Roman heritage of Dalmatia.[53] As Radovan Ivančević notes, 'in the context of the racist ideology of the late 1920s, this should have read – and the majority of readers took it as such – that the Croats had not learned from the Italians, but from the Germans'.[54]

The espousal of racial theories by Croat nationalist intellectuals during the 1920s and 1930s was also the product of the bitter years of Serbian hegemony in the Yugoslav Kingdom. Greater Serbian policies aimed at assimilating the 'inferior' Croats had radicalized many a Croatian nationalist and in a desire to conclusively prove Croat national individuality, racial theories had become increasingly popular. Even once convinced pan-Slavists came to the conclusion that Croats and Serbs were divided by more than just Church affiliation. In conversation with a French journalist in 1935, the former Yugoslavist Ante Trumbić expressed the hope that the Frenchman was,

> 'not going to compare…the Croats, the Slovenes, the Dalmatians whom centuries of artistic, moral and intellectual communion with Austria, Italy and Hungary have made pure occidentals with these half-civilized Serbs, the Balkan hybrids of Slavs and Turks. They are barbarians, even their chiefs, whose occidentalism goes no further than their phraseology and the cut of their clothes'.[55]

---

[53] Radovan Ivančević, 'The Pre-Romanesque in Croatia – A Question of Interpretation', in Ivan Supičić (ed.) *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 422-423.

[54] ibid. Interestingly, around the same time, Strzygowski also postulated that the medieval art and architecture of Croatian Dalmatia were Persian in origin, although he did not claim that the Croats were themselves of Iranian origin. The Croat historian Luka Jelić had already made similar claims in 1912. See Košćak, 'Iranian Theory of the Croatians' Origin', p. 233.

[55] Trumbić in conversation with Henri Pozzi, quoted in Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, p. 35.

As with Trumbić, a good deal of the Croatian intellectual opposition to Yugoslavism in the 1920s and 1930s stemmed from an acceptance of Western ethnocentric and racist tenets concerning the 'nature' of the Balkans, to which Serbia and Yugoslavia as a whole were said to belong. Croatian nationalists were uncomfortable with the Western perception that Croatia too belonged to the backward, uncivilized and 'Asiatic' Balkans. As Maria Todorova has highlighted, by the 1930s, there was an embedded stereotype both in academic and popular circles on both sides of the Atlantic of the Balkan peoples as 'cruel, boorish, unstable and unpredictable'.[56] These peculiarly 'Balkan' traits were further associated with 'Oriental' traits, for the Balkans were regarded as belonging more to Asia than Europe. Among these Oriental traits were 'filth, propensity for intrigue, laziness, superstitiousness and inefficiency'.[57] These anti-Balkan prejudices started to evolve at the time of the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, which were accompanied by a great many atrocities committed by all the warring sides, Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Montenegrins and Ottoman Turks.[58] The extraordinary violence that seemed so pervasive among the Balkan peoples led Milan Šufflay to conclude in 1924 that

> 'the Western Catholic Croats have nothing to look for in the Orthodox Balkans. Today it is the domain of the Serbs, who are adapted to this region through numerous generations. Even were Dušan's empire to break apart and a federation to be formed, it would be a purely Balkan creation. In it the Croats would lose that

[56] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 119-120.
[57] ibid, p. 119.
[58] ibid, p. 121.

which is best about them, in the opinion of the Party of Right and in the opinion of Radić. They would lose a sense for Western civilization and for – humanity'.[59]

These views were shared, to a degree, by some eminent public figures in the West. Šufflay's brutal murder in 1931 at the hands of the Karađorđević regime prompted Albert Einstein and Heinrich Mann to send a letter of protest to the International League for Human Rights in Paris, in which they called for the Croatian people, 'this small, peaceful, enlightened nation', to be protected in the face of the 'absolutist regime of the King of Serbia'.[60] Although the Serbs had their admirers in the West, they were more often portrayed, especially in Germany and Austria, as barbarians, a view affirmed by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 by the Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip and even earlier by the brutal murder of the Serbian King Aleksandar Obrenović (and his wife, Queen Draga) by Serbian army officers in 1903. The latter act caused considerable outrage in the Western (especially royalist) public.[61] In 1914, Kaiser Wilhelm II claimed the Serbs were 'not a nation in the European sense, but a band of robbers'.[62] This view was to be little modified by Nazi racism and 'reflected a negative stereotype that was pervasive in German society, namely that European civilization ended with the boundaries of the old Austro-Hungarian empire

[59] See 'Radić, Bethlen i Mussolini', in Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike*, p. 29.
[60] See Strižić, *Hrvatski portreti*, pp. 330-332.
[61] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 118.
[62] Christopher R. Browning, 'Germans and Serbs: The Emergence of Nazi Antipartisan Policies in 1941' in Michael Berenbaum (ed.), *A Mosaic of Victims: Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), p. 64.

and that the Orient began in Serbia'.[63] The assassination of Radić in Belgrade in 1928 only added to the negative 'Oriental' stereotype of Serbian political and cultural behaviour.

During the interwar period, Westerners began to add racial prejudices to their cultural stereotypes of Balkan peoples: 'the racial verdict over the Balkans began with a more open rendering of the formerly subdued and nonjudgmental motif of racial mixture'.[64] Western travellers to the Balkans had long taken note of the 'Tower of Babel' phenomenon in the region, and by the 1920s, the once detached observation of racial differences began to 'produce feelings of revulsion and impurity'.[65] Racially minded Western observers began to identify the typical Balkan racial traits as consisting of high-cheek bones, a dark complexion, a broad face, thick lips and a broad nose, traits opposite to the Western ideal of the white European of classical Greek appearance.[66] 'Balkan' racial features were apparently found among all the peoples of the peninsula, including modern Greeks, although the Balkan racial type was often referred to specifically as the 'Slav type'.[67] Fallmerayer had already noted these supposedly typical Balkan/Slav physical features a century earlier among the Greek people, 'a population with Slavonic facial features and with bow-shaped eyelashes and sharp features of Albanian mountain shepherds'.[68] The Slavs in general, and the Russians in particular, were often held by West Europeans to be of partially 'Mongol' or 'Asiatic'

[63] ibid, p. 65.
[64] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 123.
[65] ibid, p. 124.
[66] ibid.
[67] ibid.
[68] Fine Jr., *The Early Medieval Balkans,* pp. 59-60.

descent.[69] The inhabitants of the Balkans were thus regarded as belonging to an intermediate racial type, comprising a 'blend of various Indo-European and Asiatic tribes'.[70]

In light of the close connection between the terms 'Balkan' and 'Slav' in Western European racial discourses, the Ustashe were to find themselves trying to prove that Croats were neither racially 'Slavic' nor 'Balkan' in any cultural, geographic or racial sense. The Ustasha idea of Croatian national individuality would be wedded to an idea of European or 'Aryan' racial identity. Anti-Yugoslav Croatian nationalists felt that 'Balkan' could in no way be related to the Croats, for until the 1920s, Croatia had usually not been considered part of this region. It was indeed only in the late nineteenth century that 'Balkan' began to acquire its present day geographical connotation.[71] This region was traditionally known in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as 'European Turkey'.[72] For example, in 1875, Arthur Evans wrote that 'for all intents and purposes', the Sava river boundary between Habsburg Croatia and Ottoman Bosnia separated Europe from Asia.[73]

Despite not geographically considered part of 'Asia', the Croats were not exempt from the general contempt that German-Austrians (and other West Europeans) held for the 'lesser' peoples of the Habsburg Empire – particularly the South Slavs and Romanians/Vlachs.[74] To be sure, the reputation that the Croats gained for bravery and loyalty throughout centuries

---

[69] Dinko Tomašić, *Politički razvitak Hrvata: Rasprave i eseji* (1938; Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 1997) pp. 163-164.
[70] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 123.
[71] Mazower, *The Balkans*, pp. 1-2.
[72] ibid, p. 2.
[73] ibid, p. 9.
[74] Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, pp. 96-98.

of warfare against the Ottoman Turks earned them a fair amount of praise and respect from the Austrians.[75] All the same, to the civilized Austrian the Croats still belonged, more or less, to the 'exotic' South Slav world, full of interesting 'noble savage' types – 'Dalmatian Morlachs, Bosnian begs and Montenegrin highlanders'.[76] Furthermore, to the Habsburg authorities of the nineteenth century, the Croats and Serbs were 'confessional nations', divided from each other only by religion.[77]

The racial identification of the Croats as 'Balkan Slavs' could hardly sit comfortably with an important part of Croatian aristocratic proto-national ideology, namely, the mythology of the Croatian *antemurale christianitatis*, the Croatian bulwark of Western Christendom. Despite the traditional appeal of pan-Slavism for the greater part of the Croatian intellectual elite, no Croatian public figures would proudly claim a link to a purported 'Turanian' or 'Asiatic' heritage, as was the case with an intellectually influential interwar Russian émigré group known as the 'Eurasian movement'.[78] Even pan-Slavist Croatian leaders such as Gaj or Radić definitely saw the Croats, and Slavs in general, as Europeans, especially in contrast to the non-Indo-European speaking Hungarians.[79] Furthermore, once the national integration of the Croats was more or less complete by the late 1920s, the proto-national ideology of the

[75] ibid.

[76] Robin Okey, 'Austria and the South Slavs', in Ritchie Robertson & Edward Timms (eds.) *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p. 52. 'Morlach' (meaning 'Black Vlach') was the name applied to the inhabitants of the Dalmatian hinterland, whether Catholic or Orthodox. See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 77-78.

[77] See Okey, 'Austria and the South Slavs', p. 48.

[78] Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, pp. 126-127. The 'Eurasians' felt that 'the Russians ought to admit without false shame that they were just as much Turanians as Slavs or Aryans'. See ibid, p. 127.

[79] In the spirit of the times Radić occasionally used terms such as 'Aryan'. In 1906, for example, he remarked that 'we cannot and must not allow any Jew, whether a Semite or Aryan, to be our national representative and leader'. It is not clear, however, how a 'Semitic' Jew could be 'Aryan'. See Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 53.

Croatian nobility became an integral part of modern Croatian nationalism (albeit a less important part for the HSS than for the Frankist HSP and Ustashe), and with it the conviction that Croatia was a cultural and historical part of Western Europe, not 'European Turkey'.

Yugoslavist racism

The nationalist ideology of Croatian Occidentalism, based largely on the myth of the *antemurale Christianitatis,* was able to easily accommodate the notion of Aryan racial descent. In 1935, Miroslav Krleža criticized anti-Yugoslav Croat nationalists who wanted to reduce the Croatian national question to

> 'some sort of racial, blue-blooded, noble isolation from the plebeian, primitive, Balkan, schismatic reality. This is the inertia of the Austrian Eastern Marches, the Military Frontier, Viennese waltzes, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Western European prejudices, which…isolate the Western South Slavic lands [i.e Croatia and Slovenia] from the "Balkan gypsies"'.[80]

Such racist notions also emerged, however, from the inter-war Yugoslav political culture in which Yugoslavist and Greater Serbian ideologists propagated ideas of Yugoslav and/or Serbian 'superiority' and 'purity' for their respective ethnic groups, ideas, which especially in the case of Greater Serbian nationalism, were anything but benign.

[80] Krleža quoted in Goldstein, *Granica na Drini*, p. 117.

Furthermore, while anti-Yugoslav nationalists could indeed be described as having internalized 'Western European' racial prejudices about 'Balkan gypsies', one could also argue that Yugoslavist Croats such as Ivan Meštrović had internalized a counter racial mythology of the supposedly heroic 'Yugoslav race' when he created sculptures of Serbian folk heroes such as Prince Marko Kraljević. In Meštrović's own words, 'proud Marko' was a 'fighter for justice and humanity…He does not tolerate foreign misdeeds and humiliations and prefers to die rather than submit to injustice. This Marko is our Yugoslav people with its gigantic heroic and noble heart'.[81] Meštrović, who like his fellow Dalmatian Ante Trumbić later became an anti-Yugoslav Croatian nationalist, made the above remarks in 1916. A year later he discovered that there was another side to this Yugoslav 'gigantic heroic and noble heart'. In conversation (alongside Trumbić) with the Serbian politician Stojan Protić, the latter 'enlightened' the two Croats as to the future Serbian policy toward the Bosnian Muslims:

> 'When our army crosses the Drina, it will give the Turks twenty four or even forty eight hours to return to the faith of their ancestors. Those who are unwilling will be struck down as we have done on other occasions in Serbia…In Bosnia with the Turks one cannot use European methods, but must use ours'.[82]

Similarly to Greater Serbian nationalists such as Protić, Yugoslav ideologists also belittled the culture of Slav Muslims or 'Turks' as they called them. In 1924, the Yugoslavist novelist Ivo Andrić wrote a 'bitterly anti-Muslim treatise on Ottoman Bosnian culture', in which he

[81] Quoted in ibid, p. 204.

[82] Quoted in Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, p. 31. Although the Karađorđević regime did not carry out Protić's specific threats, after the Serbian army entered Bosnia in late 1918, hundreds of Muslim villages were burned and hundreds of civilians killed by local Bosnian Serbs and/or the Serbian army. See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 162-163.

concluded that 'the effect of Turkish rule was absolutely negative…The Turks could bring no cultural content or sense of higher mission, even to those South Slavs who accepted Islam'.[83]

This sort of anti-Muslim prejudice was not isolated in Serbian intellectual circles in the 1920s and formed the most important part of Greater Serbian ethnocentrism and racism. Among the principal reasons for Serbian anti-Islamic prejudice was that Serbs looked at Ottoman rule in Serbia and Bosnia as an unfortunate episode best rejected, or better still, best forgotten.[84] For the Orthodox Serbs and Montenegrins, the Bosnian Muslims were the descendants of 'Slav traitors', who had betrayed the ancestral Christian faith for that of the infidel. This attitude was best expressed in one of the major works of nineteenth century Serbian/Montenegrin literature, *Gorski vijenac* ('The Mountain Wreath'), written by the Prince-Bishop of Montenegro, Petar Petrović II Njegoš, a work which recounted the slaughter of Montenegrin Muslims in the early eighteenth century.[85] One Bosnian Serb author called for 'social deislamization' in 1926 on the grounds that the Bosnian Muslim character was marked by 'inertia, every kind of indolence, mendacity, fatalism and sensuality', the latter characteristic referring to the supposedly greater predilection of Muslims for homosexuality.[86] 'Deislamization' implied either that Muslims should intermarry with Serbs or if that failed, 'there remains only one solution; short, clear, and

[83] Quoted in Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 100. Andrić won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1961.
[84] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 362-363.
[85] Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, pp. 23-25.
[86] See Banac, *National Question*, p. 372.

inexorable. The singer of folk songs has foretold it and sung about it…We shall not repeat it here, because we all know it'.[87] The author was speaking, of course, about 'ethnic cleansing'.

In short, the Muslims were viewed as 'Asians',[88] the group in Yugoslavia most alien to the 'Yugo-Slav' race. For Yugoslav unitarists, the 'Yugoslavs were one blood community' and the 'superior vital strength of our race overcame the tendencies of others to fragment, crumble and denationalize us Slavs of the South, to Mongolize, Germanize and Latinize us'.[89] During the 1920s, Yugoslavist ideology engendered typically East-Central European forms of *Blut und Boden* ('blood and soil') nationalism that were essentially anti-Western in nature. As Banac explains,

> 'among the Serbs especially, the idea of "Yugoslavist culture" was seen as a redeeming alternative to the "Faustian rationalism" of Western Europe, but in the hands of Orthodox philosophers like Nikolaj Velimirović and Justin Popović it became a vehicle for the assertion of Orthodox superiority'.[90]

Croatian ethnic and historic identity

Ustasha 'blood and soil' nationalism, for its part, was not so interested in asserting Croat superiority over other South Slavs as it was in claiming a distinct and unique ethnic-racial

[87] ibid.
[88] ibid, pp. 371-372.
[89] Quoted in Goldstein, *Holokaust,* p. 55.
[90] Banac, *National Question*, p. 208.

origin. Although the Ustashe would at times claim Gothic origins for the Croats, they more often popularized the theory that the proto-Croats were in fact of Iranian origin, for this had sounder philological and archaeological arguments in its favour.[91] While admitting that Croats were of partly Slavic origin, Ustasha ideologues argued that it was primarily the Iranian racial 'component' that had given the Croats their state building 'talents'.

A leading Ustasha intellectual, the German based Mladen Lorković, wrote in his 1939 publication, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata,* that the proto-Croats had been the non-Slavic (i.e. Iranian) stratum which had 'organized the Slavic masses' in the proto-homeland of the Croats in present day southern Poland as well as in the Adriatic region.[92] This Caucasian-Iranian military and political ruling class intermarried with the more numerous Slavs, whereby the Iranian Croats were linguistically assimilated.[93] Furthermore, once the Croats reached the Adriatic they subsequently intermarried with the remnants of the Romanized Illyrians and Celts, Romans, Avars and Goths left in the former provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia after the fall of the Western Roman Empire.[94]

The head of Croatia's foremost cultural institution, *Matica hrvatska* (from 1928 to 1945), the conservative nationalist Prof. Filip Lukas, also noted in 1938 that the Croats had interbred with the same groups, and furthermore, that even the proto-Croats had intermarried with

[91] See p. 49 of this thesis.
[92] M. Lorković, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata,* p. 43.
[93] ibid, p. 41.
[94] ibid, pp. 43-45.

Caucasian, Tatar-Mongol and Germanic tribes, such as the Antes, Avars and Goths.[95] He explained that as a result of all this mixing, 'the Croats, regardless of how much they belong to the Slavic group by their language, have become racially closer to some neighbouring tribes, than to the Slavic Russians'.[96] By neighbouring tribes, Lukas had in mind those of the so-called Dinaric race. According to Lukas, the dominant racial type among the Croats was the Dinaric, followed by the Alpine, found mainly in the lowlands of northern Croatia, while there were also some Nordics – 'who merging with the old inhabitants gave our culture many beautiful contributions' – and those of Mediterranean race, the latter found along the coast.[97] We will return a little later to the 'Dinaric race theory', suffice to note here that Lorković's ideas contributed to a wider Croat nationalist project aimed at creating a new Croatian 'ethno-history'.

Lorković's book was the most ambitious intellectual undertaking of the pre-war Ustasha movement. His work attempted to trace the ethnic history of the historical Croatian lands and the history of ethnic Croat communities on all continents; it was replete with statistical data on the ethnic make-up and population growth of the Croatian regions. Lorković's study was, in the main, a reaction to the establishment of the Croatian *Banovina,* which according to the Ustashe had 'unnatural' borders leaving out most of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and thereby

[95] F. Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture' (1938) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 251. Lukas himself never became a member of the Ustasha movement, but he was 'an ideologue of Croatian nationalism with a pronounced anti-Serbian and anti-Communist attitude'. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 39. Lukas continued to head *Matica hrvatska* after the Ustashe attained power and although he did not agree with aspects of Ustasha policies, his works certainly gave the regime considerable intellectual legitimacy.
[96] ibid, p. 252.
[97] ibid, p. 251.

the majority of 'Islamic Croats'. As Kisić-Kolanović remarks, the book was, by its 'expansionist nationalism, to a large degree, a spiritual production of its time'; furthermore the work was a 'political choreography for the creation of the Croatian state'.[98]

Lorković had definite ideas on the territories that were the patrimony of the Croatian 'national community' (*narodna zajednica*). These included the core territories of the pre-1918 Triune Kingdom as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina. Istria was claimed as Croatian ethnic, but not historic territory, as was the Muslim Slav populated region of Southwest Serbia known as the Sandžak; the Muslims here were claimed as Croats due to their close cultural and ethnic links to the Bosnian Muslims.[99] Lorković also argued that the Croats had greatly contributed to the ethnic make-up and medieval history of the Slovenes and Montenegrins; the land of the latter was once known as 'Red Croatia' (*Crvena Hrvatska*).[100]

From time to time during the 1930s, the Ustashe did lay claim to ethnically and historically non-Croat territories as part of a future independent Croatian state. An Ustasha map illegally distributed in Croatia in 1940 included Slovenia and Montenegro, as well as the Sandžak and northeastern regions of Bačka and Baranja – part of Vojvodina and home to large numbers of ethnic Croats – as part of Croatia.[101] However, these areas (apart from the Sandžak) were

[98] Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković,* p. 30.
[99] Among other cultural/historical factors, Lorković noted that the Sandžak Muslims spoke the ijekavian (i.e. Croatian) sub-dialect. See Lorković, *Narod i zemlja*, pp. 195, 244.
[100] ibid, pp. 24-37.
[101] Mario Jareb, 'Planovi i koncepcije ustaško-domobranskog pokreta od početka tridesetih godina do travnja 1941. o opsegu i granicama buduće nezavisne hrvatske države' in Stjepan Matković (ed.) *Hereditas rerum Croaticarum* ad honorem Mirko Valentić/Buczynski/Aleksander (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2003), p. 306.

separated from 'historic' Croatia on the map by marked boundaries, and the word 'self-determination' was written next to the name of the province, implying that these areas would have the choice of joining the future Croatian state or becoming independent.[102] In general, though, the Ustashe were consistent in claiming that they only wanted to include the 'ethnic and historic' Croatian regions in their future state: Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.[103] The Adriatic areas under Italian rule in the interwar period (Istria, the cities of Zadar and Rijeka and a few islands) were not 'officially' claimed by Pavelić, as for example in talks with Italian government officials[104], but Dalmatia as a whole was considered undeniably Croatian by the Ustashe; during the NDH, the regime would also make an official claim to Zadar, Rijeka and (eastern) Istria. It is clear, therefore, that the Ustashe did not wish to assimilate the 'South Slavs' in a manner similar to Starčević. Slovenia and Montenegro were claimed as having belonged to the medieval Croatian kingdom, but the Ustashe were quite certain that Slovenes and Montenegrins were not ethnically Croat. Indeed, in his 1927 memorandum to the Italians, Pavelić had expressed his 'absolute disinterest' in Serbia, as well as the other non-Croat South Slav speaking lands.[105]

Of central importance to Lorković's work as a whole was the 'recognition' of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims as Croats. Lorković called for their history to be treated as an integral part of the history of the Croatian people.[106] He noted with pride the influence that 'Islamic Croats' had wielded in Constantinople during the sixteenth century, when the

[102] ibid.
[103] ibid, p. 305.
[104] ibid.
[105] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 15.
[106] Lorković, *Narod i zemlja*, p. 56.

Croatian language was regarded as a second official language at the Ottoman court.[107] Just as the Catholic Croats had been the 'bulwark of Christianity', the Islamic Croats were portrayed as the vanguard of Islam.[108] Lorković concluded, accordingly, that 'a people of weak blood, of a hybrid breed, of a small land and tiny numbers could not have given evidence of that vital force and real greatness which the Croats of both faiths gave, fighting on two sides of the world barricade.'[109]

Lorković wanted to convince his readers of the antiquity and greatness of the Croatian nation, of the fact that the 'Croatian national and state name was one of the most ancient and honourable among the nations of Europe'.[110] Rather than view Croatian history through the 'prism of pure Slavism' – in other words, in accordance with the view that the Croats had started to evolve as a separate ethnic community out of the 'non-descript Slavic masses' only from the late eight century AD – the 'genesis' of the Croat nation was found, according to Lorković, to be much older and more complex than once thought.[111] Lorković located the 'first Croatia' (*prva Hrvatska*) in the second to fourth centuries AD between the Caucasus Mountains and Russian lowlands, the presumed homeland of the Iranian Croats; the 'second Croatia' was the later state of 'White Croatia' in southern Poland, as described by

[107] ibid, p. 54.
[108] Lorković argued that the Islamic Croats were, as the Western most branch of Islam, in many respects the most culturally advanced branch of the Islamic world. See ibid.
[109] ibid, p. 58.
[110] ibid, p. 41.
[111] ibid, pp. 5-6.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and the 'third Croatia' was the present day 'Adriatic Croatia'.[112]

Furthermore, Lorković wanted to underline that the ethno-linguistic boundary between Croats and Serbs was fairly clear: 'the ethnic border between Croats and Serbs flows until the end of the 12th century parallel with the border of ekavian speech; the štokavian-ekavian region is Serbian, while the ikavian and ijekavian, kajkavian and čakavian region is Croatian.'[113] This boundary had changed considerably during the mass migrations of Orthodox Vlachs at the time of the Ottoman invasions. This resulted in the presence of large numbers of ethnic non-Croats in historic Croatia, which Lorković estimated at 37, 3% of the population.[114] Most of these non-Croats were Orthodox Serbs, but they were not, in the majority of cases, of ethnic Serb descent. Similarly to Pilar, Lorković claimed that the autochthonous Croatian Serbs were actually the descendants of three main groups: 1) nomadic Orthodox immigrants of Vlach origin, who had arrived in Croatian lands serving as irregular troops in Ottoman armies; 2) ethnic Serbs who had arrived into northern Croatia during the so-called great migrations of ethnic Serbs after 1690; and 3) Catholic Croats who had been pressured to convert to Orthodoxy during the seventeenth century under the Ottomans, who favoured the Orthodox over the Catholic Church.[115] As a result, the only

[112] ibid, pp. 16-17.
[113] ibid, p. 38.
[114] ibid, p. 259.
[115] ibid, pp. 83-88. Lorković used ethnological facts to buttress his argument that a large number of Orthodox Serbs in historic Croatia were of Croatian origin. For example, many of these Orthodox Christians had typically Croatian surnames (e.g. Jurić, Lovrić, Margitić, Martinović, etc.). See ibid, p. 86.

thing that held these disparate groups together was their Serbian Orthodox faith, and it was this faith that was to provide the subsequent basis for a Serbian national identity.

The Vlachs were the descendants, Lorković believed, of one of the two social layers of 'Romans' that had remained on Croat territory after the arrival of the Slavicized Iranian Croats in the early Middle Ages.[116] The first 'socially privileged' Roman group consisted of the urban Romans in the Dalmatian cities, while the second 'socially degraded' group were the pastoral, nomadic Vlachs.[117] While the Roman Dalmatian towns had been thoroughly Croatized during the late Middle Ages, assimilation in the case of the Vlachs was only partially successful. Some Catholic Vlachs, mainly in Lika and the Dalmatian hinterland, had been thoroughly Croatized in medieval times through linguistic assimilation and intermarriage with Croats, and their numbers had not represented a threat to the unity and ethnic character of the Croatian lands.[118] In contrast, the arrival of larger numbers of nomadic Orthodox Vlachs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from Montenegro into the depopulated Croat lands thoroughly transformed the ethnic character of much of 'historic' Croatia.[119]

Although Lorković did not make any suggestions of how to deal with this Serb minority in historic Croatia in his study, he did note that the number of ethnic Croats living outside of Croatia roughly equalled the number of ethnic non-Croats in the country itself: 'According

[116] ibid, pp. 43-44.
[117] ibid, p. 44.
[118] ibid, p. 50.
[119] ibid, p. 83.

to its economic and social level and structure, Croatia in 1931 offered enough space for 6 million inhabitants. However, as there are over 2 million non-Croats in it, this means that 1¾ million Croats have to live outside of Croatia.'[120] In conclusion, Lorković called for a halt to Croat emigration and for unity among the six million Croats worldwide, for Croatia could not 'renounce a quarter of its organism.'[121] Lorković calculated that there were 3,660,000 Catholic Croats and 900,000 Islamic Croats in historic Croatia itself. Together with the number of Croats living outside of Croatia, the Croats 'did not fall among the small, but rather among the medium sized European nations', such as the 'Portugese, Greeks, Bulgarians, White Russians and Serbs'.[122] The Ustashe were keen to dispel the argument of the Illyrians, Yugoslavists and HSS that the Croats were a 'small' nation that needed the protection of other Slavs.

With the publication of Lorković's study in 1939, a coherent elaboration of a purely Croatian national ideology was finally put before the Croatian public. The Croatian *banovina* was not an acceptable solution in any way. The only acceptable and logical conclusion for the Ustashe was the establishment of the 'Independent State of Croatia'. Lorković would claim in April 1941 that his book had indeed been a 'suitable preparation' for the proclamation of an independent Croat state.[123]

[120] ibid, p. 259.
[121] ibid, p. 260.
[122] ibid, pp. 274-275.
[123] Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, pp. 30-31.

The Dinaric race

Although relying on racial arguments, Lorković was cautious, as other Ustasha ideologists were, not to exaggerate race as the most important factor of Croatian nationhood. Culture, language and history were considered just as significant, if not more. 'Race' was simply one more added argument to prove Croat national individuality. The question of race was also used to square accounts with the Illyrianist and Yugoslavist ideologies, for the Ustashe, and other pro-Ustasha circles, increasingly used racial arguments to explain why the Illyrians and Yugoslavists had abandoned, so to speak, the Croatian national name in favour of two artificial ones. This racial argument was most comprehensively presented in the essays of Filip Lukas, who also propagated the notion of the Croatian 'Dinaric' racial type.

Commemorating the fortieth anniversary of Starčević's death in 1936, Filip Lukas took the opportunity to explain the 'genetic contrasts' between Starčević and his chief political opponent, Strossmayer, which 'explained' their political rivalry.[124] Starčević was, according to Lukas, 'a distinct racial type, born of peasants amongst the mountains of Lika.'[125] Although a highly educated man, Starčević politically rejected everything that was not part of his Croatian racial and cultural inheritance, including the Illyrian and Yugoslav ideologies.[126] In contrast, Strossmayer (who was of non-Croat origin) could 'not experience the past of the Croatian people', because he had not 'inherited' that past, either through his blood or

[124] F. Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', (III knjiga), in Lukas, *Za hrvatsku samosvojnost: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha; eseji, govori, članci* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), p. 22.
[125] ibid, p. 19.
[126] ibid, p. 26.

heritage.[127] Strossmayer was connected to Croatian culture through what Lukas termed a 'horizontal tie', that is, as the descendent of an immigrant from the West (a German-Austrian) he shared common Western cultural traits with the Croats, but did not share the 'vertical' link of common blood and spiritual ties.[128] Strossmayer was therefore motivated by universal ideals (Christianity, Yugoslavism, pan-Slavism) and not by the 'inherited' knowledge possessed by Starčević, namely, that the Croats were a distinct 'cultural and historical-psychological type'.[129] Unlike Starčević, who was born in a mountainous area, which like a 'fortress' preserves the purest racial types, Strossmayer was born in the wide, fertile plains of Slavonia, which 'opens far reaching gazes and like the sea stimulates an expansion of the spirit'.[130]

A year later, Lukas stressed that through his work, education and life, Starčević had managed to 'unite the two sides of Croatian culture', the village and the city.[131] For Lukas, the peasantry was a biological reservoir for the nation, for the city was prone to 'biological decadence' and a lower birth rate; furthermore, the population in the cities was more open to foreign cultural influences, which led to citizens straying from the 'national community.'[132] However, the city was also the home of great cultural creations, indeed of all high culture; 'where', Lukas asked, 'would our Croatian culture be' without the cities and

[127] ibid, p. 22.
[128] ibid, pp. 22, 78.
[129] ibid, pp. 22-23.
[130] ibid, pp. 19, 23.
[131] ibid, p. 53. Lukas wrote that, although Starčević considered the peasants as the most important Croatian class, he saw the population of the villages and cities as 'children of the same nation.' See ibid, p. 55.
[132] ibid, p. 55.

towns of Split, Zadar, Hvar, Trogir, Senj, Dubrovnik, Varaždin and Zagreb and without the great cultural figures of Croatia's past, all of whom were from towns or cities (such as Marko Marulić).[133] No 'estate' or class of the Croatian nation stood on its own for they were 'mutually bound by the national soul, which was common to all of them.'[134]

Lukas was critical of those Croats, particularly in the HSS, who claimed that only the 'autochthonous' (i.e. peasant) Croatian culture was worth preserving.[135] All national cultures were full of cultural elements that had originated from somewhere else; indeed, foreign cultural elements enriched one's own culture, so as long as those elements were moulded according to the unique national 'spirit'.[136] It was the national spirit or soul that was truly unique to every nation. National 'spirit' or consciousness was one of the 'pillars' of European civilization, along with the heritage of antiquity, Christianity and the natural sciences.[137] The Croatian 'spirit' was characterized by 'idealism' and 'ethics'. Lukas asserted that idealism separated the Croats from their Mediterranean neighbours, while ethics separated them from the other Slavic peoples. For example, Serbs and Slovenes were both marked by 'realist-materialist' traits.[138]

---

[133] ibid, p. 54.
[134] ibid, p. 50.
[135] See Filip Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao' (knjiga II) in *Za hrvatsku samosvojnost: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha; eseji, govori, članci* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), p. 195. This book consists mainly of essays from the 1930s.
[136] ibid.
[137] ibid, p. 191. According to Lukas, the concept of a common universal 'humanity' was an abstraction, because recorded history was the history of distinct peoples. In fact, the idea of universal humanity had originated with self-conscious nations. See ibid, p. 194.
[138] ibid, pp. 195-196.

Lukas was keen to debunk the myth of Slavic unity. Although admitting that some biological and psychological traits were common to the Slavic peoples, the Croats, with their own peculiar racial traits and racial mixture, were an individual ethnic group.[139] The Croats had passed through a particular 'historical-cultural development', which separated them from every other nation and that peculiarly developed 'cultural type' could not be replaced or removed by the abstract notion of Yugoslavism.[140] Lukas did not reject the Slavic heritage of the Croats. On the contrary, he noted with pride how the Croats had given the Slavs many ideologues of 'Slavic solidarity'.[141]

The Croats' cultural uniqueness was attributable to their position as a 'Western-Eastern' people, that is, as a bridge between the West (understood as the Latin-Germanic world) and the East (the Slavic world).[142] Lukas stressed that the racial and psychological ties of the Croats were stronger with the 'East', but that these characteristics had been successfully adapted to Western culture, from which the Croats had received their faith, notions of law, art, literature and philosophy.[143] On the other hand, the Croats had also preserved their autochthonous patriarchal culture, best expressed in the beautiful epic folk songs of the Croatian Muslims.[144] According to Lukas, this strong autochthonous character and spirit of Croatian culture had ensured that the Croats had not 'lost' themselves and their originality completely into Western culture (as had happened to the Slovenes); at the same time, in

[139] ibid, p. 194.
[140] ibid, pp. 194-195.
[141] ibid, p. 130.
[142] ibid, pp. 96, 125.
[143] ibid, pp. 124-125.
[144] ibid, p. 127.

having accepted Western culture as a framework, the Croats had ensured their place in the world as a 'cultured nation'.[145]

The heterogeneous nature of Croatian culture, namely the socio-economic and climatic differences between the Mediterranean, Central European and Balkan Croatian regions, and the contrasting influences of Italian, Germanic and Oriental cultures, resulted in the emergence of distinct Croatian 'geo-psychic' types – the three most important being the Mediterranean, the Pannonian-Alpine, and the 'Dinaric' type.[146] The Dinaric area included the Dalmatian hinterland and Lika, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina.[147] Lukas asserted that 'this patriarchal part of our nation, unmusical, hard, frugal, serious, persevering and warlike, represented the purest type of our people'.[148] Here Lukas was referring to the 'Dinaric race'.

The Dinaric race theory, which was to be wholeheartedly adopted by the NDH, had been accepted since the late nineteenth century, among many writers, politicians, sociologists and anthropologists, as an explanation for the peculiarities of South Slavic life and culture, beginning with the Greater Serbian nationalist geographer, Jovan Cvijić.[149] Cvijić argued that the Dinaric man, whose best type was supposedly the Serb, had many fine qualities, especially bravery in war and love of freedom.[150] Leading German race theorists, such as Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1968), also had a high opinion of the Dinarics for these same

---

[145] ibid, p. 101.
[146] ibid, pp. 96-100, 198.
[147] ibid, p. 198.
[148] ibid.
[149] Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans,* pp. 96-100.
[150] Jovan Cvijić, 'Studies in Jugoslav Psychology' in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 9, 1930-31, pp. 377-378.

qualities, and for their apparent physical similarities to the Nordic race, such as great height and a long face, although the Dinarics were said to be broad rather than long headed and usually had dark hair and a darker pigmentation.[151] Günther argued that the Dinaric race was (together with the northern 'Phalic' race) second only to the Nordic race in Europe in terms of its 'mental gifts'.[152]

The propagation of the Dinaric theory by Ustasha and pro-Ustasha ideologists further distanced the movement from the HSS. The ideologists of the inter-war HSS, notably the Croatian sociologist Dinko Tomašić, had, in contrast, stressed the ethical and moral superiority of the democratic and collectivist culture of the Slavic *zadruge* (communes) found in the Pannonian lowlands of northern Croatia.[153] Tomašić claimed that the tribal and patriarchal culture of the Dinaric mountain areas was, on the other hand, 'based on an egocentric and competitive foundation', where individuals vied for power and social relations were based on hierarchic principles.[154] Tomašić argued that both the Pannonian 'communal culture' (*zadružna kultura*) and the Dinaric 'tribal culture' (*plemenska kultura*) were the two basic types of autochthonous Croatian cultures, in contrast to the Western civilization of the Croatian nobility and bourgeoisie, but he clearly stressed the 'communal culture' as the preferred basis for the socio-economic re-organization of a future peasant

[151] Hans. F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (München: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1935), pp. 224-226. See also Tomašić, *Politički razvitak Hrvata*, pp. 142, 150-152.
[152] Günther, *Rassenkunde*, p. 226. The Dinarics, he claimed, were thus superior to the Alpine, Eastern Baltic and Western/Mediterranean races. Günther classified the Croats as predominantly Dinaric. See ibid, p. 351.
[153] Tomašić, *Politički razvitak Hrvata*, pp. 112-114.
[154] ibid, p. 113.

Croatia.[155] Tomašić's cultural types were based on ethnographic and geographical rather than racial factors. He was very critical of racial theories as an explanation of human behaviour and in particular attacked as untenable the Greater Serbian notions of 'Dinaric' racial superiority and Croatian theories of 'Gothic' racial identity.[156] Tomašić saw 'aggressive' Dinaric culture as the socio-cultural basis for authoritarian political systems in the Balkans.[157]

The link Tomašić made between Dinaric culture and authoritarian Balkan politics is not surprising when one considers the fact that Cvijić's ideas of 'Serbian Dinaric' racial superiority had a great influence on a whole generation of Serbian political and cultural leaders in the first half of the twentieth century, who used the theory to justify Greater Serbian hegemony over other South Slavs (and non-Slavs such as the Albanians).[158] In contrast to Tomašić, Cvijić described the Croats of the northern lowlands as being of the 'inferior' Pannonian racial type, which was much weaker than the Serbian Dinaric due to the 'corrupting' historical influences of feudalism, German culture and Catholicism.[159] According to Cvijić, the Dinaric man was the biological product of an admixture of 'paleo-

[155] ibid, pp. 110-113.
[156] See ibid, pp. 175-188.
[157] Tomašić was cautious, however, to point out that not all individuals from the Dinaric areas possessed the typical spiritual characteristics of the 'Dinaric warrior'. See ibid, p. 114.
[158] Tomašić, 'Sociology in Yugoslavia', pp. 53-57. Serbian racists were particularly scathing in their 'evaluation' of the Kosovo Albanians, who, according to the Serbian statesman Vladan Djordjević, were similar to the 'pre-humans who slept in trees, to which they were fastened by their tails'. Quoted in Banac, *National Question*, p. 293.
[159] Tomašić, 'Sociology in Yugoslavia', p. 55.

Balkanic' groups and Slavs and was able to 'impose' his political, cultural and economic authority on the other South Slavs.[160]

The Croatian 'Dinaric' race theory was in many respects a reaction to Serbian claims of racial superiority. However, unlike the Serbian proponents of the Dinaric racial theory, who wanted to justify Serbian domination over other South Slavs, nationalists such as Lukas were not really interested in proving some sort of Croatian racial superiority over Serbs (although the idea was often implicit), but most importantly, proving that real ethnic-racial differences existed between Croats and Serbs in order to demolish the notion of South Slav racial unity. In this regard, Lukas relied heavily on the work of the contemporary Swiss anthropologist, Eugène Pittard.

Pittard was critical of ideologists and academics who confused language with race. He noted that it was unfortunate that 'even today we hear of "the Latin", "the Germanic" or "the Slavonic" races in current speech, in any number of textbooks and in journalistic parlance', despite the fact that no such categories in an anthropological sense existed.[161] Pittard noted various cases of peoples speaking a language that had no correlation to their 'race'. In the United States, for example, millions spoke the same English language regardless of the varied racial make-up of the Amercian population.[162] As far as pan-Germanism, pan-Slavism and all

[160] ibid, pp. 54-55. The Yugoslavist ethnographer Vladimir Dvorniković argued in 1939 that the Dinaric man was 'the prototype of the male warrior, perhaps the most outstanding amongst all the white races'. Cited in Yeomans, 'Militant Women, Warrior Men and Revolutionary Personae', p. 698.
[161] Eugène Pittard, *Race and History: An Ethnological Introduction to History* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Turner & Co., Ltd, 1926), pp. 46-48.
[162] ibid, pp. 47-48.

the other ethnic-racial 'pan-isms' were concerned, these were nothing more than the academically devised groupings of intellectuals and politicians that had no relation to the actual ethnic/national consciousness of peoples.[163] As Pittard wrote, 'Pangermanism and panslavism may be linguistic formulae in which political desires are enwrapped; they are not expressions of race'.[164] Pittard was well aware of the danger of the political manipulations of 'linguistic generalizations' that could be used to advance 'imperialist notions'.[165]

Pittard was fairly certain that Croats and Serbs were 'racially' distinct, even if both nations may have been one people 'north of the Carpathians' prior to their immigration to the Balkans.[166] According to Pittard, the Croats belonged predominantly to the tall, dark and broad-headed Dinaric race, which was very different to the predominant racial type of the northern Slavs (Poles and Russians).[167] This led Pittard to claim that, in all probability, the Croats (along with the Bosnians and Slovenes) were a 'Slavonized folk' that had no real anthropological relationship to Russians and other Slavs in the northeast.[168]

As far as the ethnic relationship between Croats and Serbs was concerned, Pittard found that according to the preliminary anthropological research that had been done so far on both groups, the Serbs were often found to be tall, but were more dolichocephalic in head form than the predominantly brachycephalic Croats; Pittard reasoned that there was probably a

[163] ibid, p. 48.
[164] ibid, p. 49.
[165] ibid.
[166] ibid, p. 287.
[167] ibid, pp. 258-260.
[168] ibid, pp. 258.

closer racial relationship between Serbs and Bulgars.[169] The Serbs were also, therefore, quite distinct from their 'racial brethren' in Russia and Poland, but they also clearly did not belong to the same race as the Croats.[170] Furthermore, the Serbs were clearly different from the Bosnian Muslims, who Pittard referred to as 'Islamized Dinarics'.[171] On the other hand, the Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia were distinct from the Serbians of Serbia, for the former were 'much more brachycephalic'.[172] The apparent racial distinction between Croatian and Serbian Serbs sometimes led the Ustashe in the early 1930s to hope that the Serbs of 'historic Croatia' would see that 'their place is with the Croats and not with their "brother" Serbs, with whom they have nothing in common: neither racial, nor cultural'.[173]

Lukas used the findings of Pittard to substantiate his claims of Croat ethnic individuality. Although the Serbs spoke more or less the same language as the Croats, they had, argued Lukas, assimilated, and intermarried with, other ethnic groups, which had given them a different 'biological type'.[174] During the Middle Ages, the Serbs had interbred with Romanized Thracians, Vlachs, Dacians and Illyrians, while during the long period of Ottoman Turkish rule, the Serbs had also been subject to a great deal of racial mixing with various immigrants from Asia Minor and the Middle East.[175] Pittard had clearly shown, noted Lukas, that the Dinaric race was much more representative of the Croats than of the Serbs (of Serbia), while the 'Serbian Dinaric race' did not exist, for there was no such thing as

[169] ibid, pp. 285-286.
[170] ibid, p. 287.
[171] ibid, p. 284.
[172] ibid, p. 286.
[173] Quoted in fn. 66, Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, p. 376.
[174] Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture', in F. Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, p. 252.
[175] ibid.

a 'national race', but only a variety of racial types that can be found within any given nation.[176] Lukas was cautious to stress that race and nation were not synonymous terms. A nation was not a 'natural-scientific phenomenon' as race was, but a 'psychic-cultural collectivity'.[177] No nation belonged to the one and the same race, but there was, in every nation, a dominant racial type that contributed to shaping a unique national character.[178] Lukas pointed out, in fact, that the most 'important question' in Croatian history was that of Christianity, for through conversion to Catholicism, Croatia had entered the 'universal West' and had thus become a civilized nation.[179]

Muslim-Catholic Croatian unity

Islam was clearly another important question in Croatian history. The 'Islamicized Dinarics' of Bosnia-Herzegovina held an important place in Ustasha ideology. Pavelić's 'cultural model' for a future Croatia was to be based on the old heroic patriarchal culture of the 'Dinaric' Croats, best expressed in the epic exploits of chivalrous Catholic and Muslim knights (known as *vitezovi* and *junaci*) who had fought duels with each other along the old Military Frontier during the days of Habsburg-Venetian-Ottoman conflicts.[180]

[176] ibid. Also see Lukas' 1938 essay, 'Zašto je Dubrovnik bio velik' in F. Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost,* Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 226.
[177] See Lukas' 1925 essay, 'Geografijska osnovica hrvatskoga naroda' in F. Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 108.
[178] Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture' in ibid, p. 261.
[179] ibid, pp, 253, 258.
[180] In his memoirs, Pavelić recounted how he used to read folk poems from the 18th century collection of the Croat Franciscan bard, Andrija Kačić-Miošić, to the Muslims *begs* (nobles) in a tavern in the

Unfortunately, the noble culture of chivalry and honour, common to both Catholic and Muslim Croats, had had to contend with the unwelcome presence of the despised criminal, mercenary Vlach Frontier colonists, who had not conducted war in the same honourable manner as the Croats.

Ivo Pilar had already described this chivalry of the Croatian 'noble race' in *Die südslawische Frage,* when he posed the rhetorical question: 'Where in the Slavic South, do we come across such an unbreakable race, which even in the moment of death prides itself on its privileges, on its noble land and on its chivalry? Only among the Croats!'[181] Lorković had noted in *Narod i zemlja* that the sessions of the Croatian *Sabor* in the sixteenth century were full of accusations against the Vlachs and *martolosi*, the latter said to be responsible for plundering raids, the burning of homes and the abduction of people for Ottoman slave markets. In 1586, the *Sabor* duly passed a resolution whereby every captured *martolos* was to be impaled as an example to the others.[182] Significantly, as Lorković remarked, no such decisions were ever taken by the *Sabor* against the 'Croat' Muslims.[183]

For Lorković, the bloody and futile religious wars of the sixteenth century had eventually shown the peoples of Europe that national loyalty should come before religion. It was not

---

Bosnian village where he spent the early years of his life. The *begs* would listen with great attention and excitement to the tales of old, which recounted the adventures of knights, dukes, *begs*, pashas, *bans* and heroes. As Pavelić remarked, the Bosnia of his time still lived in the 'spirit of the romantic heroic age'. See Pavelić, *Doživljaji 1.*, pp. 95, 115.

[181] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. 95.

[182] Lorković described the *martolos* raids as being of 'Chetnik' nature. Lorković, *Narod i zemlja*, p. 84. Pilar noted that the Bosnian *begs* also used similar punishments against their Vlachs whenever the need arose. See Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. 118.

[183] Lorković, *Narod i zemlja*, p. 84.

unusual for 'renowned nations' to have fought for two opposing universal ideas: 'how much French and German blood flowed in the religious wars of the sixteenth century! Unhappy is only that nation, which, when the clamour of weapons becomes silent, no longer finds the path to unity.'[184] It was now time for Croatian Catholics and Muslims, so the Ustashe argued, to find that unity and declare a 'final war of extirpation' against the Serb-Vlachs, who had benefited too long from internal Croatian conflicts.

Most ordinary Bosnian Muslims in the 1930s were certainly not yet ready for 'unity' with Catholic Croats, for the majority viewed themselves as Bosnian or simply Muslim.[185] All the same, there was a sizeable minority of Muslims who considered themselves ethnically Croat. We have already noted the historical presence of 'Muslim Croats' in both the former Ottoman ruled areas of Croatia as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the 'overwhelming majority of the first generation of university educated Muslims considered themselves Croats'; many Muslims were educated at the University of Zagreb where they fell under the influence of Starčevićist ideas.[186] For example, one of the leading Muslim poets, Savfet-beg Bašagić, was a self declared Croat and a follower of Starčević. In 1931, Bašagić published a book entitled, 'Famous Croats – Bosnians and Herzegovinians – in the Turkish Empire'.[187] Although there were also Bosnian Muslims who considered themselves Serbs, the strong anti-Islamic prejudice of mainstream Serbian

[184] ibid, p. 58.
[185] Banac, *National Question*, p. 366.
[186] ibid, p. 365. Also see Nada Kisić-Kolanović, 'Muslimanska inteligencija i islam u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 36, br. 3, 2004, p. 905.
[187] Banac, *National Question*, 9fn, p. 363.

nationalism precluded the wider assimilation of Muslims to Serbian nationhood.[188] The Muslims, led by their main political party, the Yugoslav Muslim Organization (*Jugoslavenska muslimanska organizacija*, JMO), tended to side with the Croats during the struggle against Serbian centralism during the 1920s and 1930s, while still trying to maintain a separate Bosnian Muslim identity and the territorial unity of Bosnia-Herzegovina.[189] Muslim landowners had been badly affected by the agrarian reforms of the Yugoslav regime, which had abolished serfdom and parcelled out the land to the mainly Orthodox serfs. Having received some concessions later from Belgrade, including some compensation for former landowners, the JMO was also keen not to antagonize the Belgrade regime too much.[190]

The fact that Bosnian Islam held a key place in Ustasha ideology from the beginning and that many leading Muslims felt ethnically Croat long before 1941, means that Ustasha attempts to assimilate Bosnian Muslims in the NDH were not based on momentary political needs or based on some 'fictionalization and manipulation of Moslem history'. The Ustashe were earnest about integrating Bosnian Islam as a 'Croatian religion'. This task was made easier by the fact that there was little 'Yugoslav' sentiment among the Muslim masses, which therefore could 'offer space for the appearance of anti-Yugoslavism'.[191]

Accepting Islam into the Croatian national body also implied that there was little or no room for political Catholicism in the Ustasha movement. The Ustashe were in fact suspicious of

[188] ibid, pp. 362-363.
[189] Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 165-166.
[190] ibid, pp. 164-165 and Banac, *National Question*, pp. 373-376.
[191] Enver Redžić, *Muslimansko autonomaštvo i 13. SS divizija: Autonomija Bosne i Hercegovine i Hitlerov Treći Rajh* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1987), p. 22.

Catholic clericalist circles, for the main interwar clerical party, the Croatian People's Party, had supported the Yugoslav idea, wishing to wed it to Catholicism (even if many Yugoslav unitarist nationalists considered Roman Catholicism as opposed, by its very nature, to Slavdom, unlike the 'national' Serbian Orthodox Church).[192] Furthermore, the most fervent proponents of Croat Yugoslavism in the nineteenth century had been Catholic clergymen (Strossmayer, Rački). The Ustashe accepted Catholicism as an integral part of Croat national culture, but certainly did not equate Croat national identity with the Roman Catholic Church. In this, the Ustashe were merely following the general trend of Croat national ideologies, whether one is speaking of Starčević's or of Strossmayer's nationalism.[193] As Banac rightly argues, 'the ideologists of Croat nationhood, almost to the last practicing Catholics, resisted the equation of Catholicism and Croatdom'.[194]

By the late 1920s, with Serb-Croat relations worsening and especially after the imposition of King Aleksandar's dictatorial rule, most Catholic lay groups began to identify with a purely Croatian nationalism. Along with the more conciliatory attitude toward the Church by Vladko Maček, in contrast to his predecessor Radić,[195] and the growing political rift in Europe between Left and Right, especially during the Spanish Civil War, the Church began to move closer to the HSS, while other clericalists joined or co-operated with the Ustasha

[192] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 349-351, 411-413. Also Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 80.
[193] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 75.
[194] Banac, *National Question*, p. 108.
[195] Although Radić consistently upheld Christian ethics, his party 'contested clericalism because people's politics opposed the submission of the peasantry to any elite, including the clergy'. The clergy, for its part, considered Radić to be a socially dangerous radical demagogue. See Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, pp. 80-82. Radić used to make the following cry at his political rallies: 'Praise be to Jesus and Mary, down with the priests!' See Banac, *National Question*, p. 227.

organization in Croatia.[196] The Ustashe welcomed the growing nationalistic stance of many clericalists, but their aims remained completely secular.

The Ustashe had little interest in theological disputes and were more interested in showing how the religious differences between Croats and Serbs reflected deep cultural differences between West and East. In his 1934 political treatise, 'The Croatian Nation in the Struggle for a Sovereign and Independent Croatian State', Mile Budak argued that the Byzantine Orthodox world represented a danger for European civilization and also noted that the religious division between the West and East was primarily of a cultural and not 'dogmatic' nature.[197] In any case, the Croats formed a unique part of Western Christendom for they were, in Budak's view, the only Catholics to have received the privilege of conducting mass in their own language and not Latin.[198] The Croats were the 'guardians' of Europe and had defended the ancestral Catholic faith, but they had also 'preserved the racial and blood characteristics of their ancestors'.[199] For Budak, the Bosnian Muslims were 'the racially purest Croats', with 'very few Asiatic admixtures'.[200]

Similarly to Pavelić and Lorković, Budak was more concerned with highlighting the supposedly inherent warrior spirit of the Croats and not their Christianity. This was a

---

[196] See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', pp. 80-81 and Sandra Prlenda, 'Young, Religious and Radical: The Croat Catholic Youth Organizations, 1922-1945' in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), pp. 94-95.
[197] Mile Budak, 'Hrvatski ustaški pokret' in Petar Požar (ed.), *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), p. 115.
[198] ibid, p. 117.
[199] ibid.
[200] Quoted in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 197.

significant departure from Radić's Slavophile pacifism and humanistic Christian beliefs. In Budak own words, the Croats were better as soldiers than as believers, for the Croats 'had not given many saints…but we gave an immense number of excellent army commanders, and hundreds of thousands of non-commissioned officers who were insanely brave and millions of soldiers whose actions are legendarily famous!'[201] Those millions of soldiers included both Catholic and Muslim Croats, united by the 'racial and blood characteristics of their ancestors'.

[201] Budak, 'Hrvatski ustaški pokret', p. 117.

Chapter Eight: Ustasha Anti-Semitism

The Croatian peasant and Jew

As well as calling for Muslim-Catholic unity and the removal of the 'Vlachs', the Ustashe also began to take an increasing interest in the 'Jewish question' during the course of the 1930s. This was not just due to the growing political influence of Nazi Germany. In their quest to destroy the idea of Yugoslavism, the Ustashe had defined the Croats as authentic white Europeans or 'Aryans' and identified the greater part of the Balkan Serbs as 'Asiatics'. In doing so, they had developed an exclusivist racial ideology that allowed no room for certain minorities. Consequently, they began to identify other non-European 'Asiatic' racial minorities living in Croatia. Foremost among them were 'Semites'. Alongside the 'nomadic' Balkan Serb-Vlach, the 'nomadic', rootless, cosmopolitan and mercantile Jew provided another visible 'counter-type' to the ideal type of the noble European, warrior and peasant Croat. Counter-types were vital for racism because it was 'through the counter-image', as the Nazis argued, that 'we obtain the greatest clarity of what our own ideals should be'.[1] Before long, the Ustashe would begin to merge their stereotypes of Jews and Serbs together, and during the period of the NDH, these stereotypes would be firmly welded into the overall counter-type of the 'Bolshevik-Asiatic' Other (which would also include Gypsies).

[1] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. 49.

As far as the Aryan ideal was concerned, not all members of the racial community 'possessed all the Aryan characteristics, but all Aryans possessed at least some of them and together they formed an ideal type'.[2] The Jews provided a perfect counter-type for Aryan racists, including the Ustashe, because they were (alongside Gypsies) the most conspicuous minority living on the European continent. As Mosse remarked, 'Jews were the only sizeable minority living in Europe who, before emancipation – and in Eastern Europe until much later – dressed differently, spoke a different language…and whose religious practices seemed chaotic and mysterious'.[3] In Croatia, the urban Jews, the dark-skinned Gypsies and Orthodox 'Vlachs' were the most obvious 'counter-types' to the peasant warrior Catholic and Muslim Croat.

As with all European 'Aryan' nationalists, the Ustashe held the peasantry as the group closest to nature and hence it represented the roots of the race.[4] The ideology of Aryan racism was obsessed with the search for 'roots', for it sought 'to fulfil a longing for immutability and certainty in a world of rapid change, to help get one's bearing and to prove one's superiority'.[5] The rapid industrialization and modernization of nineteenth century European society led to an intellectual Romanticist revolt, which idealized nature, rootedness and the 'natural' and 'uncorrupted' peasantry.[6] Consequently, as European Jews had no homeland of their own and were concentrated in the cities and the mercantile professions, racists came to

[2] George Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1961), p. 360.
[3] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. 63.
[4] Mosse, *Culture of Western Europe*, p. 44.
[5] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. xiv.
[6] Mosse, *Culture of Western Europe*, pp. 359-360.

regard them as not only foreign, but also as somehow 'unnatural', for the Jew had no ties to the soil. These same ideas would also colour Croatian anti-Semitism.

The Jewish population of interwar Croatia was quite small, consisting of somewhere between 36,000 to 39,000 people, concentrated in several northern towns and cities, above all Zagreb. Apart from the long established Sephardic communities found in Dalmatian ports (Split, Dubrovnik), the Jewish minority had a fairly recent history of settlement in Croatia, the first Jew having obtained permission to live there in 1786 (in Zagreb).[7] Once Jews received full civic rights in Croatia in 1873, however, not only did the immigration of Jews to Croatia greatly increase but Jewish participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the country also grew rapidly. In northern Croatia, the professions of doctor and lawyer became typically 'Jewish professions', while many other Jews excelled as architects and businessmen.[8] Most Croatian Jews were of Hungarian and/or German-Austrian extraction.[9]

As German or Magyar speakers, the Jews were at first considered an alien element by the Croat masses.[10] Although linguistic assimilation among Croat Jews proceeded fairly rapidly, the Jews were still considered outsiders because of their 'chaotic and mysterious' religion; religious anti-Semitism was common among Catholic Croats, who still prescribed to the

[7] See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 24. Jewish settlement in Croatia was facilitated by Emperor Joseph's 1782 'Edict of Toleration'. There were, nevertheless, several restrictions on Jewish movement and participation in trade until the second half of the nineteenth century.
[8] ibid, p. 25.
[9] ibid, p. 27.
[10] ibid, p. 29.

traditional Christian doctrine that Jews were collectively responsible for Christ's death.[11] Jews were also sometimes targeted for socio-economic reasons. As the centre of Croatian Jewish life was concentrated in the towns and cities in the early twentieth century, the HSS began to view the Jews as alien to Croatian peasant national culture. Stjepan and Antun Radić identified the Jews, collectively, with the worst social and political aspects of urban life. Among these were socialism and capitalism. For Stjepan Radić the Jews were attracted to these two ideologies, because they could not comprehend the 'fundamentals of every civilization: property and state'.[12] Having no homeland of their own meant that the Jews espoused either socialism because it was internationalist, and therefore argued in favour of collective property ownership, or capitalism, because the Jew would rather have money than property.[13]

The Radićes anti-Semitism was mainly economic and social in its nature and was never a central part of HSS ideology. The Radić brothers, in fact, claimed that they were not anti-Semitic, meaning that 'we are not for a struggle and fight against the Jews…we work alone, without the Jews'.[14] In any case, most of the Radićes anti-Semitic (or 'a-Semitic') remarks were confined to the Austro-Hungarian period; after 1918, Stjepan Radić was too busy with resisting Serbian domination to worry about the Jews. The 'a-Semitism' espoused by Radić 'stemmed primarily from his Christian views'.[15] Radić liked to point out that he did not

[11] ibid, pp. 27-29.
[12] Quoted in Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 53
[13] ibid, pp. 53, 76.
[14] See 'Židovi u Hrvatskoj' in Antun Radić, *Sabrana djela X* (Zagreb: Seljačka sloga, 1938), p. 47.
[15] Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 53.

support racial anti-Semitism, for although Jews were 'amoral, materialistic and irreligious', the Croats could not, in his view, 'be anti-Semites like the Germans'.[16]

Although their Christian conscience made the Radićes uncomfortable with racial anti-Semitism, they were equally uncomfortable with the thought of Jewish assimilation. The Jew was tainted because he belonged to the city, not to the countryside.[17] The Radićes aversion to assimilating Jews was most apparent in their hostility towards the HSP leader Josip Frank, whose politics they rejected. No matter that Frank had converted to the Catholic faith for the 'Jew remains a Jew'.[18] As Mark Biondich observes, the Radićes felt that to argue in favour of assimilating the predominantly urban and capitalist Jews, 'would have meant bolstering capitalism and liberal ideology, both of which undermined the vital interests of the Croat peasantry'.[19]

The Radićes' anti-Semitism was also closely linked to anti-Hungarian sentiments. The Croats, who had long struggled against aggressive Magyar nationalism, tended to view the Jews as natural allies of the Hungarians. The Hungarian Jews were particularly well assimilated into Hungarian bourgeois society and had led the economic modernization of Hungary in the second half of the nineteenth century; many were fervent Hungarian nationalists, and as a result, were viewed by non-Hungarians, especially Croats, Slovaks and

[16] ibid.
[17] ibid, p. 77.
[18] Antun Radić was also opposed to Jews adopting 'nice, old and honourable' Croatian surnames. See ibid.
[19] ibid.

Romanians, as the vanguard of the Magyarizing policies of the Hungarian government.[20] The HSS also identified the Jews with the nationalism of the Hungarian ruling classes, which it viewed as 'Magyaro-Jewish rule', which 'is in many ways Asiatic, that is, barbaric, despotic'.[21] Mile Budak made a similar identification of Jews and Magyar nationalism in his pre-war novel *Ratno roblje* ('War Slaves'), based on his experiences as an Austro-Hungarian POW in Serbian captivity during the First World War. Budak devoted a separate chapter to the Hungarian Jews, of whom he wrote: 'Of the Hungarian Jews one cannot have a good thought. Something more aggressive, unscrupulous and selfish I have not seen in my life'.[22] Budak equated Hungarian attempts to gain hegemony in the Empire as, in reality, Jewish attempts to gain predominance.[23]

The Ustashe adopted the HSS's 'a-Semitism' and would transform it into a full-blown racial anti-Semitism. The opposition of the Jew and the Croatian peasant appeared in Ustasha literature early on, as in, for example, Budak's aforementioned 1934 essay entitled 'Some Thoughts'. In that essay, Budak called for the restructuring of the economy in a future Croatian state to be based on the peasant *zadruge* (communes) as the basic unit of economic

[20] Through the policy of assimilation, the Hungarian establishment felt that it would gain a useful ally in the Jews for the maintenance of Hungarian predominance over non-Magyar minorities and in the industrialization of the country. See Robert S. Wistrich, 'The Jews and Nationality Conflicts in the Habsburg Lands', *Nationalities Papers,* Vol. 22, No. 1, 1994, pp. 130-132.
[21] Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 110. Strossmayer had also been critical of what he saw as the negative influence of 'Magyar-Jewish' power on Croatian political life. See Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 594, fn4, & p. 710.
[22] Mile Budak, *Pripovijetke, Ratno roblje* (1941-1942; Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1995), pp. 108-111.
[23] ibid, p. 110.

organization.[24] Budak even pleaded for the return of the old peasant dress, instead of modern Western clothes, for everyday use.[25] Standing in complete opposition to the Croatian peasant way of life were the two systems that Budak rejected as alien to Croatia – capitalism and Communism, two systems that were opposite to one another, but similar in that they both enslaved 'man's soul, freedom, pride and honour' and he associated both systems with world Jewry.[26] As Budak argued:

> 'It is in the nature of every man, and especially every Croat, to have his own home, his own freedom, for only in that way can a man be strong, independent and the master of himself and his will. Capitalism and Communism go – each on their own path and way – to take away exactly that, and make him a slave of a foreign will'.[27]

Budak went on to explain that the leaders of both Communism and capitalism were the same; 'They are not, to be sure, the same people, but the blood is the same, the same descent, the same race, which has its aspirations and aims…according to the decrees of their blood'.[28] Budak was clearly referring to Jews, for in the following paragraph he stated that 'the only difference is that one Rockefeller or Stern is replaced by some Trotsky, who was called Bronstein before, and now works the same as before, only under a new firm'.[29]

In contrast to 'Jewish' capitalism, the *zadruga* was based not on the principle of individual private property, which according to Budak was an idea inherited from old Roman, not

[24] See Mile Budak, 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države' in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* p. 371.
[25] ibid, pp. 374-375.
[26] ibid, p. 368.
[27] ibid.
[28] ibid.
[29] ibid.

Croatian law, but on communal private property, the latter offering a better chance of prosperity than small plots of previously *zadruga* held land, parcelled out into individual private property, which were open to the vicissitudes of the free market.[30] As Sadkovich notes, the *zadruga* system endeavoured to keep property within bloodlines and would protect the Croat, who was 'defined by his blood and his family plot', from the negative effects of the 'individualism of capitalism' and the 'impersonal collectivism of communism'.[31]

Ustasha anti-Communism: internationalism as the 'negation of blood ties'

Ustasha anti-Semitism was closely linked to the movement's anti-Communism, for Communism was associated with international Jewry. Since the Ustashe would also associate Communism with Yugoslavism, the 'Marxist' Jews could also be viewed as supporters of the Yugoslav state. The pre-war Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička partija Jugoslavije*, KPJ) and the Ustashe shared the same enemy – the royalist Belgrade regime – but the two were ideologically poles apart. Throughout most of the inter-war period, the Yugoslav Communists were warmly in favour of a united Yugoslav state. The Yugoslav Communists were, paradoxically, adherents of both the racial supranational ideology of Yugoslavism and the opposite Marxist notion of internationalism.[32] This contradiction was somewhat lessened by the fact that both Yugoslav unitarists and the Comintern called for

[30] ibid, p. 370.
[31] Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, pp. 153-154.
[32] Banac, *National Question*, pp. 333, 337-338.

the establishment of a strong centralized (Yugoslav) state.[33] The identification of Yugoslavism with Communism by the KPJ gave the Ustashe a specific 'Croatian' reason for hating 'Jewish' Communism.

In 1938, Pavelić outlined in detail (in his fluent Italian) the Ustasha standpoint regarding Communism in a short book entitled, *Orrori e Errori* ('Horrors and Errors').[34] Communism was a criminal and monstrous system that negated the natural order of life – it was opposed to family, religion, private property and the nation. The family, 'the oldest and most natural human society', was an obstacle to Bolshevism's attempt to 'negate the worth and importance of blood ties, for blood ties are a negation of internationalism and non-nationhood.'[35] The family was a barrier to the uncontrolled power of the Soviet state, which wanted to reduce man to a 'simple number', without any ties to family.[36] Pavelić noted the same Bolshevik desire to reduce man to purely material matter with respect to Communism's war against religion and spirituality altogether.[37] The collectivization of peasant farms was meant to deprive the peasant of his freedom, to turn him into another 'factory worker' without roots, owning nothing and at the mercy of the Marxist power holders.[38] Pavelić contrasted the darkness of the Soviet Union with the light of the greatness of ancient Rome, which was founded on agriculture, on private property and in particular, the small

[33] ibid.
[34] The book was published in Croatian in 1941 under the title *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu.*
[35] Ante Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (Madrid: Domovina, 1974), pp. 81-82.
[36] ibid, pp. 82-83.
[37] ibid, pp. 91-97.
[38] ibid, p. 71.

landholder; it was from this class that the great Roman army, which conquered the known world, was recruited.[39]

Pavelić saw the spirit of ancient Rome living in the contemporary world, for the 'land of Cato, Cicero and Caesar had to give a Mussolini' in the struggle against the insane 'errors' of Bolshevism, which had declared war on culture and civilization itself.[40] As Pavelić argued, one of the errors of Communism was the idea that art and science were international in character; art and science could be international, but only in the sense that the art and science of a particular nation could be exported to, and used by, another nation, but that did not make the cultural product in question any less national.[41] Indeed, the Europe of the nations had 'created European enlightenment and civilization', while international Bolshevism was only interested in a hateful destruction aimed at materializing everything.[42]

The materialism and internationalism of the Communists was easily 'understood' if one looked at the racial origins of the 'overwhelming majority of the intellectuals and followers of Marx'. These were, according to Pavelić, naturally, the Jews. Marx was noted as a 'Semitic-Easterner', a descendent of the East, the home of the 'bizarre and exotic, fantastic dreams of promised lands, rivers of life, phoenix birds and nirvana, classical and hyperbolic

[39] Pavelić noted that until the peasant soldiers in the Roman army were replaced with mercenaries, 'there was not a power in the world' that could have stood in Rome's way. See ibid, pp. 74-75.
[40] Ante Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (Zagreb: Croatiaprojekt, 2000), p. 250.
[41] Pavelić wrote that 'for twenty centuries the most distant nations have warmed themselves upon the old Latin enlightenment, and yet it has still remained nationally Latin, just as bananas and other tropical products are eaten in Sweden and Norway, even though they are not, and cannot be, the products of Swedish or Norwegian agriculture.' See *Strahote zabluda* (1974 edition), p. 170.
[42] ibid, p. 171.

spectacles of Prophets and Messiahs'.[43] Pavelić had a specific 'Croatian' reason to attack Marx, who had made several disparaging comments about the Croats because *Ban* Jelačić had sided with the Habsburg 'reactionaries' against the liberal nationalist Magyar government of Lajos Kossuth during the 1848 revolution. For the Ustashe, Marx's anti-Croat comments were proof of Communist, and therefore Jewish, antipathy to the Croatian national cause. Marx had indeed had nothing but contempt for the demands and rights of small East-central European peoples that he felt stood in the way of general progress, which the large nations (such as the Germans and Hungarians) would supposedly help bring about.[44] The nationalist Catholic priest Ivo Guberina (who joined the Ustasha movement in 1940 and became a leading NDH ideologist) published a brochure in 1937 entitled, *Komunizam i hrvatstvo* ('Communism and Croatdom'), in which he explained that Marx's hatred of the Croatian people derived from the Jewish materialism and violence of his Communist ideology, which was incompatible with the idealistic, civilized, Western, Catholic culture of the Croats, who in turn were devoted to ethical principles, freedom, the defence of the West and Christianity.[45]

The great tragedy of Bolshevism was, in Pavelić's eyes, that a 'race who for two millennia were neither workers, soldiers or peasants', but merchants and speculators, now saw themselves as 'the representatives of workers, soldiers and peasants.'[46] There was a

[43] ibid, p. 16-17.
[44] Both Marx and Friedrich Engels regarded the Austrian South Slavs as 'nothing more than the "ethnic rubbish" of a complicated "thousand-year evolution"'. See Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians: 1000 Years of Victory in Defeat* (London: Hurst & Company, 2003), p. 235.
[45] Ivo Guberina, *Komunizam i hrvatstvo* (Zagreb: Hrvatska omladinska biblioteka, 1937).
[46] Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda* (1974 edition), p. 115.

conviction on Pavelić's part, however, that the racial state of National Socialist Germany, 'which had shaken off the infections of Bolshevik racial promiscuity' would soon 'crush the head' of Communism.[47] Only fascism, Pavelić argued, was up to this challenge, which was in fact its main mission. The liberal democracies such as Britain and France were simply incapable of containing the Red menace. Pavelić believed that Britain and France suffered from a weakening of the national consciousness. This was in large part the result of accepting non-white colonial migrants.[48] The penetration of racially foreign blood into Western Europe (especially France) was destroying 'the national resistance against internationalism and against Bolshevism, for with the dilution of blood comes the dilution of tradition and the characteristics of the race, and so there begins not only the physical but also the spiritual deformation of the individual and the nation.'[49] Pavelić asked, in the case of non-white immigrants to France, 'from where did the national consciousness come in the blood of those…who never possessed that consciousness…from where the love for the achievements of culture in those whose grandfathers ate human flesh and who always lived in barbarity and a half-animal life'.[50] He further noted that the negative effects of race mixing were best observed in the socially chaotic and politically anarchic way of life that characterized the racially mixed societies of Central America.[51]

Despite the open clarity of Pavelić's racist anti-Semitism in the preceding passages, a specific hatred of Jews did not figure as a significant plank of Ustasha ideology during the interwar

[47] ibid (2000 edition), p. 254.
[48] ibid (1974 edition), p. 192.
[49] ibid.
[50] ibid.
[51] ibid, p. 193.

period. Ustasha 'ideological hatred' was directed first and foremost against the main enemy, Serbia.[52] Ante Moškov claimed that Pavelić spoke little of the Jews prior to the war and that only Budak discussed the topic to the Ustasha recruits in the Italian camps. Budak made a distinction between the 'honourable' Jews who identified as Croats and with the Croatian struggle on the one hand, and the Jews who were 'usurers, profiteers and exploiters' and the allies of the Belgrade regime on the other.[53] The Ustashe did indeed make such distinctions – there were for example, a handful of sworn Ustashe who were of Jewish origin (two of whom, Vlado Singer and Ljubomir Kremzir, were among Pavelić's most trusted subordinates).[54] Croatian nationalism had certainly attracted its fair share of assimilated Jews or half-Jews (Josip Frank, his son Ivica, and his close colleague Vladimir Sachs), while many of the leading Ustashe, including Ante Pavelić himself, Slavko Kvaternik and Ivan Perčević, had wives of Jewish or partly Jewish origin.[55]

Although the Ustashe were capable of making a distinction between 'good' native Jews and 'bad' foreign Jews, Ustasha anti-Semitism was moving, from an early period, increasingly toward a racial and away from a traditional religious/socio-economic basis, such as that espoused by the HSS. For example, in his essay 'Some Thoughts', Budak noted that the present (1934) commercial laws in Croatia/Yugoslavia were 'a collection of shams and

[52] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 94.
[53] Interestingly, Moškov also claimed that when some new Ustasha recruits arrived in Italy from Germany and began to spread anti-Semitic propaganda, the Ustasha leadership issued a sharp rebuke against individual political agitation (including anti-Semitism) on the part of Ustasha members, since that was the sole task of the Poglavnik. See Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, pp. 206-207.
[54] Both Kremzir and Singer had converted to the Catholic faith. See ibid and Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 619-623.
[55] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 593-594.

swindles of international capital, created for baptised and non-baptised Jews.'[56] The Ustashe would, all the same, attempt to continue to make the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' Jews in the NDH by offering a very small number of 'good' (or indispensable) Croatian Jews the status of 'honorary Aryans'.

In any case, Croat nationalists of Jewish origin identified completely with Croatia and did not even think of themselves as Jews, especially those that had converted to Catholicism. Furthermore, there were only a very small number of Jews within radical nationalist ranks.[57] In his post-war memoirs, Pavelić tried to explain this absence of Jews; pro-Serbian immigrant Jews had supposedly taken over the leadership of the Croatian Jewish community in the 1920s, as well as taking over much of Croatian banking and industry, and had began to take an oppositional stance toward the Croatian liberation struggle and subsequently enforced this view on all Jews, including native Croat Jews.[58] The pro-Belgrade sympathies of individual leading Croatian Jewish businessmen, such as the wealthy Alexander brothers, probably helped reinforce Pavelić's negative stereotype of most Jews.[59]

Ustasha anti-Jewish ideas were also the product of a growing anti-Semitic political environment in Europe, reflecting the rise of National Socialism in Germany. The Ustashe

---

[56] Budak, 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države', p. 373.
[57] The initial collaboration between Pavelić and Frank and Sachs (who lived, respectively, in Hungary and Italy) in the 1930s did not last for long. See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 619.
[58] Ante Pavelić, *Doživljaji II* (Madrid: Domovina, 1998), p. 94. Pavelić noted that 'in our party [the HSP] in the past there were always Jewish members, but after the "unification" with Serbia they all quickly distanced themselves'. See ibid.
[59] Most of northern Croatia's commerce was 'controlled by Jewish commercial houses'. See Banac, *National Question*, p. 409.

were not the only political group in the interwar Yugoslav state that espoused anti-Semitism. It was particularly visible in the late 1930s, mostly in newspaper articles, during the period of close economic and political relations between the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the German Reich.[60] There were Yugoslav nationalist groups, such as *Jugoslavenska akcija* ('Yugoslav Action') and *Mlada Jugoslavija* ('Young Yugoslavia'), which, in accordance with their racialist notions of a 'Yugoslav race', regarded Jews as non-Slav 'foreigners'.[61] The leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church also expressed open admiration for Nazi anti-Semitism.[62] In September and October 1940, the Yugoslav government decided to introduce two anti-Semitic decrees, which restricted Jewish business activities and the number of Jewish students in universities (*numerus clausus*).[63]

Identifying the 'enemies' of the Croatian people

By the late 1930s, the Ustashe had thus identified the main 'enemies' of the Croatian independence struggle – Serbs, Jews, the liberal democracies (or 'Freemasons') and Soviet led Communists. Pavelić attempted to link the four enemies into a diabolical conspiracy aimed at enslaving the Croatian people in his first memorandum to the German government

[60] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 63-65.
[61] ibid, pp. 55-56.
[62] In 1935, the Orthodox episcope of Žič (in Serbia), Nikolaj Velimirović, sent his 'respects' to the 'German leader' and claimed that 'we are the children of God, people of Aryan race, to whom fate has assigned the role to be the bearer of Christianity in the world'. The Serbian patriarch, Varnava, gave an interview to the Nazi daily, *Völkischer Beobachter,* in 1937, in which he expressed his admiration for Adolf Hitler. See ibid, p. 62.
[63] ibid, pp. 73-74.

entitled, *Die kroatische Frage* ('The Croatian Question'), sent in late 1936. The memorandum tried to appeal to German revisionist policies of overturning the Versailles Treaty, which among other things had facilitated the creation of Yugoslavia.[64] According to Pavelić, this state had 'inherited the traditional enmity' of the Serbs toward Germany.[65] The memorandum deserves some closer attention, for it provides a good example of how Pavelić sought to defend his ideology of Croatian national individuality in a document intended for foreign eyes. Naturally, some of the points were exaggerated to curry favour with the Nazis. Pavelić's memorandum also needs to be seen in a wider context. In October of 1936, Mussolini had proclaimed a new 'Axis' binding Germany and Italy and Pavelić was moving in tandem with his Italian patron. The ideas expressed in Pavelić's document are, nevertheless, more or less consistent with other Ustasha ideological texts of the 1930s and are not simply propaganda intended for German eyes.

Of central importance for Pavelić was the need to show the artificiality of the Yugoslav idea: 'With the exception of a small part of the intelligentsia, mostly of foreign blood, the Croatian people, above all the Croatian peasantry, determinedly rejected Yugoslavism'.[66] Unlike the 'foreign' intelligentsia in Croatia, Pavelić argued that, among the Croat masses,

> 'there has never existed a general Slavic consciousness that could seriously oppose the Croatian national consciousness. The masses never considered themselves members of Slavdom…That irrefutable fact offers us further evidence that the

[64] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić,* pp. 235-245. The German Foreign Ministry did not, however, receive the memorandum until April 1941.
[65] ibid, pp. 243-244.
[66] ibid, p. 237. By 'intelligentsia of foreign blood', Pavelić had in mind, like Lukas, the likes of Gaj and Strossmayer, ironically both of German descent.

> Croats generally are not of Slavic, but of Gothic descent, an argument that has already been seriously discussed'.[67]

Pavelić accused the Habsburgs of having supported Strossmayer's pan-Slav efforts in order to seduce the Serbs to join the Habsburg South Slavs into one state, bringing Serbia under the rule of Vienna (which aimed to extend its power in the Balkans).[68] Pavelić noted that talk of Croat nationalists wanting a Habsburg restoration were completely unfounded – only an independent state could secure the progress of the Croatian people.[69] These assertions by Pavelić were not without basis, for the Ustashe were certainly opposed to plans of a Habsburg revival, while it was also no exaggeration to claim that Yugoslavism never had any real appeal for the majority of Croatian peasants.

In their struggle to free themselves from the artificial Yugoslav state the Croats faced four principle enemies, 'the Serbian State Government, International Freemasonry, Jewry and Communism'.[70] Although Pavelić did not explicitly state that the Serbs as a whole were the enemy, the Ustashe had often made little distinction in their propaganda between the regime in Belgrade and Serbs per se. In an editorial, from February 1932, in *Ustaša*, Pavelić made the following argument regarding the Serbs and their monarch:

---

[67] ibid.
[68] ibid.
[69] ibid, p. 244. There is no doubt that Pavelić also counted on Hitler's hatred for the 'anational' Habsburgs when he made the accusations against the latter. Despite this rejection of the Habsburg legacy, Pavelić did, however, want to remind the Germans that during the First World War, the Croats had, as soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army, 'fought shoulder to shoulder with their German comrades' until the end. See ibid, p. 240.
[70] ibid, p. 240.

> 'Whoever thinks that a common existence of Croatia and Serbia in the one and same state is possible and that there is anyone among the Serbians who thinks of Croatia and the Croatian people differently from the present bloody dictatorial regime in Belgrade, that person through thirteen years of "liberation and unity" has learnt nothing…they [i.e. the Serbs] became more insolent, until the Gypsy king proclaimed himself dictator and on the greatest mockery and shame of the Croatian people, proclaimed himself its "leader"'.[71]

The Ustashe referred to Aleksandar Karađorđević as a 'Gypsy' because of his black hair and dark complexion (the jibe was also aimed at his ancestor, the early nineteenth century Serbian rebel leader Karađorđe or 'Black George', so named because of his dark eyes, hair and skin). The conspicuously dark features of leading Serbian political leaders were often pointed out by Croatian nationalists as evidence that the Serbs were not only different by ethnic origin to the Croats, but were also racially less European. The very swarthy Svetozar Pribićević was once referred to in a HSP organ in 1919 (by a Bosnian Muslim) as 'a refugee from the mountains of Black Wallachia' and definitely not of 'pure Slavic blood'.[72] The Gypsies were another very small 'Asiatic' minority that the Ustashe would officially identify as 'non-Aryan' once in power.

---

[71] ibid, p. 85. It is not entirely clear, however, whether Pavelić, by the term *Srbijanci* ('Serbians'), has all Serbs in mind, for *Srbijanci* usually refers only to the Serbians of Serbia proper. Pavelić had in fact earlier claimed in his propaganda pamphlet 'Uzpostava hrvatske države' from 1929, that the Serbs of Croatia had historically professed themselves to be Croatian. See Pavelić, 'Uzpostava hrvatske države, trajni mir na Balkanu' in P. Požar (ed.) *Ustaša*, p. 29.

[72] Quoted in Banac, *National Question*, p. 372.

Pavelić also accused (in *Die kroatische Frage*) the Karađorđević dynasty of being the 'supreme patron' of Yugoslav Freemasonry, while the Freemasons, who led the liberal democracies, had been behind the very creation of Yugoslavia.[73] International Jewry, which was allied to the Freemasons, had also welcomed the establishment of Yugoslavia, for it is in 'multi-national chaos in which lies Judah's empire'; the monetarily powerful Jews had received the favour of the Belgrade regime, due to the corruption of political life in Serbia, ensuring that Yugoslavia became a new 'Eldorado' for the Jews.[74] This situation would not be tolerated in an independent Croatian national state, built upon 'healthy nationalist principles'.[75]

According to Pavelić, the Communists were avid supporters of a multi-national state such as Yugoslavia because it was in line with Communist dogma on internationalism.[76] In addition, Pavelić argued that Communism was especially popular in Serbia among both the intelligentsia and wider Serbian masses because of poor socio-economic conditions in Serbia,

---

[73] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 240-241. Pavelić noted that the pro-Yugoslav British journalist Wickham Steed was a Freemason. To be sure, 'in Croatia, as in Yugoslavia in general during the interwar period, most Freemasons supported the unity of the Yugoslav state'. The largest Freemason organization was the 'Grand Lodge Yugoslavia', which 'included a sizeable proportion of the intellectual elite of Croatia and Serbia – leading artists, university professors, high government officials, politicians, lawyers, physicians, bankers, and businessmen'. Ivan Meštrović was also a Freemason. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution,* p. 554.

[74] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 241.

[75] ibid. Pavelić also noted that the Jews saw an enemy in Croatian nationalism because Ante Starčević had been 'an outspoken opponent of Jewry'. Although Starčević spent little time discussing the Jews, he did make anti-Semitic comments from time to time. Starčević had claimed in the late 1880s, for example, that the French revolutionary parliament had made a mistake in recognizing the Jews as citizens, for the Jews were a 'breed' (*pasmina*) that, apart from some exceptions, was 'without any morals and without any homeland'. Nevertheless, Starčević felt that the Jews were less of a danger for the French (or any other nation) than the pernicious 'slavoserbs'. See Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, p. 635. In any case, Starčević chose the Jewish convert Josip Frank as his successor to lead the HSP.

[76] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 242.

which made the country open to Communist agitation, and the traditional Serbian orientation toward Russia (whether Czarist or Bolshevik).[77] In contrast to Serbia, Croatia was, by its European traditions, called to be the defender of the West against Eastern Bolshevism.[78]

The 'internationalist' Jews were also open to Communist influence and vice-versa. Pavelić claimed that the Yugoslav army was open to Communist influence through the large number of young Serbian officers married to Jewish women – this was somewhat hypocritical, given Pavelić himself was married to a half-Jewish woman, Mara neé Lovrenčević.[79] Pavelić had already made a tenuous link between Serbs and Jews in his 1934 political novel dealing with the Ustasha 'struggle' for Croatian independence, *Liepa plavka* ('The Beautiful Blonde'). Although not explicitly referring to Jews, several characters with overtly Jewish sounding surnames, such as Blum, Rosenfeld and Morgenstern, are presented as easily recognizable avaricious 'Semitic' stereotypes; the Jews in Pavelić's book are either very rich or swindlers.[80]

By linking Serbs with Jews, Gypsies and Russian Communists, the Ustashe wanted to distance the civilized, racially European Croats from the barbaric Balkan Serbs, thereby creating an ideal Croat type as well as a Serbian-Jewish-Gypsy 'Asiatic' counter-type. Through such an ideological construction, the Ustashe hoped to destroy the ideology of Yugoslavism. The 'conspiratorial link' between 'Gypsy' Serbs, Jews, Communists and

[77] ibid.
[78] ibid.
[79] ibid, pp. 242-243.
[80] See Goldstein, *Holokaust,* p. 97.

Freemasons continued to be a central theme for Ustasha propagandists in the NDH. Now we must turn to the subject of the Ustasha state itself, its political and legal system, how the regime defined the Croats and the NDH in racial terms and racist Ustasha policies toward Serbs, Jews and Roma. In other words, we chart the development from theory to practice.

PART THREE: THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA, 1941-1945

Chapter Nine: The Ustasha State

The German Reich recognizes its southern 'Gothic' neighbour

The Ustashe were installed in power by Nazi Germany in April 1941. They rapidly proceeded to construct their vision of a 'harmonious' state, based primarily on the racial idea of the *narodna zajednica*, which directly corresponded to the German *Volksgemeinschaft.* The Ustashe did not have absolute power. They were obliged to take into consideration the military, political and economic interests of Germany and Italy. Although the NDH was never truly independent, 'a political entity', as Jozo Tomasevich noted, 'calling itself the Independent State of Croatia did exist from April 10, 1941 to May 8, 1945'.[1] By late 1942 it had been completely reduced to a satellite state of the German Reich. Nevertheless, the Croatian 'state' did have its own police and armed forces (but under German operational command), education system and significant control over policies toward minorities.

The historical significance of the Ustasha regime lies in the fact that during the Second World War, it 'occupied', as the Croat historian Dušan Bilandžić concludes, 'the first place

[1] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution,* p. 272.

among the anti-Yugoslav forces according to its resolve and explicitness'.[2] He further notes that the

> 'inveteracy of that option [i.e. Ustashism] among the Croats was not small…the armed forces of the Independent State of Croatia were equal in number to the Croatian Partisan pro-Yugoslav army until the final day of war and they only capitulated seven days after the Wehrmacht had done so'.[3]

Ustasha anti-Yugoslavism was closely connected to the alliance with the German Reich, precisely because Germany had destroyed Yugoslavia, while the Allies were committed to its restoration, and because Hitler shared the Ustasha view that the Croats were racially distinct from the Serbs. The Ustashe willingly accepted German tutelage. At the very least, it gave them the opportunity to ethnically 'purify' the NDH. Afterall, the regime was also interested in re-defining what it meant to be Croatian, which they did along racial lines. It was not enough that Croatia simply become an independent state; it had to be a state for 'Aryan' Croats only. As a result, the Ustashe received valuable material and 'moral' support from Nazi Germany.

Partnership with Fascist Italy, on the other hand, jeopardized the NDH's core interests. Italy annexed large parts of Croatia's Adriatic coast and would aid the anti-NDH Serbian Chetniks in their quest to create a Greater Serbia. We need to now briefly examine the political relationship between the NDH and its German and Italian allies and the basic political and

[2] Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999), p. 190.
[3] ibid.

legal organization of the state in order to fully understand the nature of Ustasha 'nationalizing policies' toward the NDH's minorities.

Hitler had taken little interest in Croatia prior to 1941. His geo-political interest lay in the expanses of Soviet Russia, where he aimed to find *Lebensraum* for the German *Volk*. The Mediterranean-Balkan area was really Italy's *spazio vitale*. The Germans had already tried to assure their Italian allies in 1938-1939 that they only had economic interests in Yugoslavia and that the country politically belonged to the Italian 'zone of interest'.[4] At the same time, Germany was adamant about protecting its mineral and industrial interests, and by the time Germany was preparing to invade the Soviet Union in 1941, Hitler wanted to bring Yugoslavia completely into the German/Axis orbit. Yugoslavia was pressed to join the Axis pact, which it did on 25 March 1941, on the condition that Yugoslavia was not expected to contribute militarily.[5] Two days later, however, a group of pro-British Serbian officers carried out a coup d'état aimed at removing the regent, Prince Pavle Karađorđević, and his government.[6] Hitler, furious at the action, decided to destroy Yugoslavia, not wanting to leave anything to chance on Germany's southern flank in the coming war against the Soviet Union. On 27 March, in conference with military advisors to discuss the events in Belgrade on that day, Hitler counted on the likelihood of the Croats helping any subsequent German invasion of Yugoslavia; in return, Germany would offer the Croats 'an according political

[4] Jozo Tomasevich, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (California: Stanford University Press, 1975), p. 91.
[5] Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1936-1945: Nemesis* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 362.
[6] These Greater Serb nationalist officers were not merely opposed to Yugoslavia joining the Axis pact, but also to Pavle's compromises with Maček, which had included the establishment of the Croat *Banovina*. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 43.

treatment (autonomy later on)'.[7] After the German armed forces had quickly overrun Yugoslavia, beginning on 6 April, with little resistance from the Yugoslav army, Hitler issued a series of directives on 12 April, one of which declared that 'Croatia within its ethnic frontiers will be an independent state'.[8]

The 'Independent State of Croatia' had itself been proclaimed on 10 April on Zagreb radio – in Pavelić's name and by the 'will of our ally' (i.e. Germany) – by the unofficial head of the 'homeland Ustashe' (*domovinske ustaše*) in Croatia, Slavko Kvaternik.[9] Kvaternik had done so with the aid of an emissary of the German foreign office, Edmund Weesenmayer.[10] With Mussolini's approval, Pavelić and 250 of his Ustashe duly returned to Croatia from their long sojourn in Italy on 13 April 1941. Pavelić had met with Mussolini in late March, and appears to have agreed to conceding parts of the Adriatic coast in return for his installation as leader of a Croat state.[11] At first, Weesenmayer was reluctant to accept the pro-Italian Pavelić as the head of state, and the Italians were greatly worried that Croatia would fall under

[7] Quoted in Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 40. At the same conference Hitler had also commented that the 'the Serbs and Slovenes had never been friendly to the Germans'. See ibid, p. 39.
[8] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration*, p. 48. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia appear not to have been included by Hitler 'within Croatia's ethnic frontiers'; they were to be left to 'Italian political decision'. See ibid, pp. 48-49.
[9] A few days earlier, Kvaternik and other leading 'homeland' Ustashe had drawn up a resolution with the aid of Edmund Weesenmayer, calling on the German Reich for assistance in the establishment of a Croat state. The resolution designated Croatia as comprising the territories of historic Croatia with Međimurje, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croatian part of the Vojvodina. See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 67. Slavko Kvaternik was the son-in-law of Josip Frank and his non-Jewish wife Dora Martini, having married their daughter Olga.
[10] Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika,* pp. 28-29.
[11] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 46-47.

German dominance.[12] As Hitler was himself reluctant to interfere in an area designated part of the Italian sphere of influence, the Germans soon accepted Pavelić.[13]

It was clear from the outset, however, that Croatia would be under greater German influence. Pavelić himself, though loyal to his pre-war protector Mussolini, was quite aware that the 'proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia followed the result of talks between the Ustasha group in Zagreb and German representatives', in which Italy had played no role.[14] When he first met Weesenmayer in the town of Karlovac, south-west of Zagreb, on 13 April, Pavelić was keen to impress upon the German with SS rank his own pro-German sentiments, claiming that the Croats were of Gothic origin and had been loyal allies of Germany in the First World War and would be so now.[15] Hitler himself seems to have been at least partially sympathetic to the establishment of a Croatian state due to the 'Gothic theory'. Hitler's racial prejudices did play a significant role in the Wehrmacht's brutal policies against the Serbian civilian population in German occupied Serbia, and partially justified his support of the even more brutal Ustasha anti-Serb measures in the NDH. Although Hitler made very few references to the Croats prior to 1941, he may have read various 'racial scientific' literature, such as Hans F. K. Günther's studies, which characterized the Croats as belonging predominantly to the more superior 'Dinaric' racial type. Hitler's wartime 'Aryanization' of the Croats also probably stemmed from the positive

[12] ibid, pp. 52-53. Mussolini spoke of Pavelić as 'our only pawn on the Balkan chessboard'. See Srdjan Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy in Croatia, 1942-1943', *The Historical Journal*, 36, 4, 1993, p. 880.
[13] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 62 and Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 45.
[14] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 50.
[15] Rudolf Kiszling, *Die Kroaten: Der Schicksalsweg eines Südslawenvolkes* (Graz-Köln: Verlag Hermann Böhlaus Nachf., 1956), pp. 172-173.

and negative stereotypes, common in his Austrian homeland, of the Croats as brave and loyal soldiers and the Serbs as uncivilized 'bandits' and conspirators.[16]

After the coup d'état in Belgrade in March 1941, Hitler was determined to smash what he saw as the 'Verschwörerpack' ('conspiratorial pack') in Serbia, which he believed was responsible for both the outbreak of the First World War and now the 'betrayal' of 1941.[17] In contrast, the Croats were to be rewarded with allied and 'Aryan' status. In a meeting with the newly appointed German Plenipotentiary General in Zagreb, the Austrian Edmund Glaise von Horstenau, on 12 April, Hitler commented that although Croatia belonged to the Italian 'sphere of interest', the Croats were 'racially much, much better than their western neighbours' (i.e. the Italians).[18] When Glaise joked to the Führer, at a second meeting on 17 April, that the Croats were trying to have themselves 'appointed' as 'Germanen' (Teutons), Hitler replied in a serious tone that there were indeed real racial differences between the Croats and Serbs, since the 'racial foundations' of the Croats were different to those of the 'Orientals'.[19] Hitler felt that this apparent racial difference between Croats and Serbs (the latter identified as being of the 'Oriental' race) was 'surety for the permanent cleft' between

---

[16] In conversation with NDH Foreign Minister Mladen Lorković in 1941, Hitler claimed that he, 'as an Austrian by birth, who in his youth had so often associated with the people from the close-by southeast…was particularly interested in the Croatian state'. See Vol. XIII, 'The War Years: June 23 – December 1941' in Series D (1937-1945) of *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 866.

[17] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 39. Before his attack on Yugoslavia (which included the brutal bombing of Belgrade), Hitler had spoken on German radio of the 'serbischen Verbrecherclique' (the 'Serbian criminal clique'), and the 'same creatures' that 'plunged the world into an unspeakable calamity in 1914 through the assassination in Sarajevo'. Quoted in ibid, p. 51.

[18] Hitler quoted in Peter Broucek (ed.), 'Band 3: Deutscher Bevollmächtigter General in Kroatien und Zeuge des Untergangs des "Tausendjährigen Reiches"'in *Ein General im Zwielicht: Die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaises von Horstenau* (Wien-Köln-Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1988), p. 82.

[19] See ibid, p. 89.

the two previously politically united peoples.[20] Hitler made similar remarks in early July 1941, when he claimed that 'the Croats are certainly more Germanic than Slav'.[21] The fact that the Croats were Slav speaking did not alter this assertion, for as Hitler explained, 'language is not the immovable monument on which a people's characteristics are inscribed…In the time of the great migrations, the tribes were the product of ceaseless mixtures. The men who arrived in the South were not the same as those who went away'.[22] The Ustashe certainly agreed with Hitler in connection with the importance of 'mixture' and the relative role of language in the ethnic-racial identity of a people.

Other leading Nazis shared Hitler's positive evaluation of the Croats' racial value. In early June of the same year, the chief of the SS Main Office, SS-Gruppenführer Gottlob Berger, a close associate of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, confidently 'informed' the Ustasha police chief Eugen 'Dido' Kvaternik, Slavko's son, that the Führer had remarked to him (Berger) a few days previously that 'he believed that there would be '"ein deutschsprachiger Stamm der Kroaten" ['a German speaking tribe of Croats'] within a few generations'.[23] Around the same time, a group of 'SS intellectuals', led by SS Brigadeführer Walter Stahlecker (who was to head Einsatzgruppe A in the first mass exterminations of Jews in the

[20] ibid.
[21] Quoted in Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944*, Translated by Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1953), p. 8.
[22] ibid.
[23] Quoted in Eugen Dido Kvaternik, *Sjećanja i zapažanja 1925-1945*, p. 26. In late October 1941, Hitler told an audience including Himmler, that, 'if the Croats were part of the Reich, we'd have them serving as faithful auxiliaries of the German Fuehrer, to police our marshes. Whatever happens, one shouldn't treat them as Italy is doing at present. The Croats are a proud people. They should be bound directly to the Fuehrer by an oath of loyalty. Like that, one could rely upon them absolutely'. See *Hitler's Table Talk*, p. 95.

East), baldly told their friend, the first Croatian envoy to Berlin, Dr. Branko Benzon, that the Führer would not have recognized the NDH if the 'Croats had not been Goths'.[24] The fervently pro-Ustasha German envoy to Croatia, the SA Obergruppenführer Siegfried Kasche, explained in a 1942 letter to the head of the German military-administrative staff in occupied Serbia, Harald Turner, that the Croats were 'a people who cannot be reckoned among the Slavic peoples at all' and that this was one of the 'main reasons' for the 'Führer's consent' to the recognition of the Independent State of Croatia in 1941.[25]

Hitler appears to have had some vague notions of eventually Germanizing the Croats after the 'final victory', but until Italy's capitulation in September 1943, the Independent State of Croatia was in practice, 'an Italian-German quasi protectorate'.[26] The Ustashe had indeed 'seized' power through the Nazis and Fascists, but one should not overlook the positive response of wider sections of the Croatian population to the events of April 1941, even if public opinion at this time is hard to gauge. As Kisić-Kolanović argues:

> 'To the proclamation of the NDH one cannot deny the assumption of legitimacy or say that this act occurred without national will. In that moment the Croats spontaneously felt as nationalists, which does not mean that Pavelić and the Ustashe had total support of public opinion'.[27]

[24] According to Luka Fertilio, the NDH press attaché in Berlin (1941-1945). See L. Fertilio, 'Poslanici N. D. H. u Trećem Reichu: Branko Benzon', *Hrvatska revija*, XXV, 1, March 1975, p. 50.
[25] Kasche quoted in Enver Redžić, *Muslimansko autonomaštvo*, p. 43.
[26] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 233-302.
[27] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 48.

For example, many citizens of Zagreb, and other Croatian towns, warmly greeted the invading German troops, who happened to arrive at the same time that the NDH was proclaimed and were therefore welcomed as liberators from Serbian rule.[28] The majority of Croats, who had voted for the HSS before the war, sincerely welcomed the prospect of an independent state.[29] Maček had also allowed his address, calling on the Croats to accept the new authorities and co-operate with them, to be read on Zagreb radio straight after Colonel Kvaternik's proclamation of the NDH. Kvaternik had felt relieved by Maček's address because it had given his own proclamation a measure of legality.[30] Subsequently, the Ustashe were able to assume authority without difficulty due to the assistance of the HSS dominated administration of the Croatian *banovina*.[31] Within a month, the Ustasha movement had swelled to 100,000 members.[32] Furthermore, the Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, also welcomed the establishment of the NDH and met with Slavko Kvaternik on 12 April and then with Pavelić on 16 April.[33]

The public pronouncements of acknowledgement and recognition from the leader of the most popular pre-war political party and the head of the predominant religion in Croatia gave the new regime widespread support in the first weeks of the NDH. The much lauded

[28] ibid.

[29] Although Maček himself probably wanted to achieve wide autonomy for Croatia within Yugoslavia, it is unlikely that most Croatian voters held the same view and were more in favour of an independent Croatian state. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, p. 27.

[30] Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 30. Maček explicitly mentioned in his address that 'Colonel Kvaternik…has proclaimed a free and independent state of Croatia in the whole historical and ethnic area of Croatia'. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 53.

[31] The HSS's 'Peasant and Civic Guards' also helped to disarm the remnants of the Yugoslav army. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 54-57 and Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, pp. 30-31.

[32] Goldstein, *Croatia*, p. 134.

[33] Stella Alexander, *The Triple Myth: A Life of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 60.

'Ustasha revolution' of April 1941 had actually been a rather smooth transfer of power. Some Serbian officers were killed in April 1941, but beyond that there was little bloodshed. In fact, the circumstances surrounding the NDH's birth had not been to Pavelić's liking at all. In line with his long standing ideas of freeing Croatia through 'fire, iron and blood', Pavelić would have preferred to see himself at the head of an armed incursion, supported by the invading Italian army.[34]

Italy itself had long coveted the eastern Adriatic coast of Croatia, and now with their protégé in power, felt that the time had come to cash in on their long-standing support of Pavelić's Ustashe. In proclaiming the NDH, however, Kvaternik had included the entire 'historic and ethnic territory' of Croatia, including Dalmatia. On 11 April, Kvaternik had sent a proclamation to the Dalmatian Croats, in which he called on them to 'stand firm under the Ustasha banner of a free and independent state of Croatia'.[35] The following day, Kvaternik, as head of a provisional government in Zagreb, sent a telegram to Berlin pleading for the Reich's recognition of Croatia; no such telegram was sent to Rome. When Kvaternik met Pavelić in Karlovac on 13 April, he asked Pavelić whether he had any obligations to the Italians with regard to territorial concessions; Pavelić lied by telling him that Mussolini had no territorial aspirations against Croatia and only sought temporary occupation of a few ports and islands.[36] The 'homeland Ustashe' certainly did not expect the shock of the Rome agreements that sanctioned the Italian annexation of large tracts of the Dalmatian coast a

[34] Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 31. Pavelić was also dismayed that he had not proclaimed the NDH himself.
[35] Quoted in Požar (ed.), *Ustaša*, pp. 134-135.
[36] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 49.

month later. Nevertheless, the pro-German Kvaternik was loyal to his Italophile Poglavnik and trusted in his apparent good judgement, even while the latter knew that the political price for obtaining power in Zagreb was paying his debts off to his pre-war Italian patrons. Pavelić could not have left Italy without Mussolini's approval, while, at the same time, he could not have gained German acceptance without the Italians insisting that their protégé become head of state in a country that was in the Italian political 'sphere'.[37]

Pavelić's patrons were inspired by the belief that Fascist Italy was heir to the glories, and territories, of the Roman and Venetian Empires,[38] and therefore laid claim to the entire eastern Adriatic coast and initially only thought of allowing the Croats sea access if they agreed to a monetary and customs union.[39] Istria and the Adriatic cities of Rijeka and Zadar, as well as the islands of Cres, Lošinj and Palagruža, had already been occupied by Italy after the First World War and Pavelić was willing to accept Italian demands for a even larger part of the Croatian coast. At the same time, Pavelić wanted to retain Croat sovereignty over the main ports of Split, Trogir and Dubrovnik and was hoping for German support on this issue; though the Germans did not agree in principle with Italian claims to Dalmatia, they were not prepared to openly dispute the claims of their principal ally Italy.[40]

---

[37] Mussolini was so worried about possible German ambitions in Croatia that he insisted on meeting with his Balkan 'pawn' for a second time on 11 April 1941. At the meeting, Mussolini laid claim to the towns along the eastern Adriatic with an expressly 'Italian character'. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 50-51.

[38] The Italian Foreign Minister Count Ciano claimed that Fascist Italy must once again reclaim the position of Rome and Venice. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 284fn, p. 88.

[39] See ibid, pp. 88-91.

[40] Among other reasons, Split had historically been a major centre of Croatian art and literature. See ibid, pp. 89-90. Also see Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 62-63.

In the end, Pavelić signed three sets of agreements with Italy in Rome on 18 May 1941. The first agreement gave Italy sovereignty over the littoral and hinterland of northern and central Dalmatia (including the ports of Šibenik, Trogir and Split) and most of the Dalmatian islands (except Pag, Brač and Hvar).[41] Croatia was left with the most economically underdeveloped parts of the northern and southern Adriatic coast. The second and third agreements specified that the Ustasha government was not to erect any military installations in its area of the Adriatic, was not permitted to build or keep a navy – although the Ustashe would issue a law allowing the establishment of a Croatian navy – while the 'Kingdom of Italy' was declared to be the guarantor of the 'political independence of the Kingdom of Croatia and its territorial integrity'.[42]

Alongside the humiliation of reducing the NDH to a protectorate of Italy, Pavelić had also formally agreed to the installation of King Vittorio Emanuele's nephew, Aimone di Savoia Aosta, the Duke of Spoleto, as the 'King of Croatia'. This had probably been the idea of Foreign Minister Count Galeazzo Ciano, who always aimed to bring about a 'personal union' between Croatia and Italy, and Pavelić seems to have accepted it in order to appease the Italians and perhaps hope that they would be satisfied with less territorial concessions.[43]

---

[41] According to initial agreement, Split and the island of Korčula were to enjoy some autonomy (e.g. joint Croatian-Italian administration), but the Italians never respected this agreement and these areas were to be ruled like any other occupied part of Croatia. Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 103.

[42] ibid, pp. 102-103.

[43] As Stevan Pavlowitch writes, the idea behind the installation was 'in all probability…part of a deal between Pavelić, Mussolini and Ciano, left deliberately vague so that it could be concluded urgently. Pavelić wanted to achieve the independence of a greatest-ever Croatia under the protection of the Axis…As far back as the end of 1939, there had been talk in Ustasha circles of Croatian independence being attained in return for a deal with Italy, entailing some sort of protection, including a dynastic

Pavelić had done his best to lessen the importance of the 'installation' by ensuring that the new 'King', who was to be named Tomislav II after the first medieval Croatian king, was to be head of state in name only, without any real political power, and was to be installed when the Croats decided the time was right.[44] Aimone never did ascend the throne and this certainly never bothered Pavelić or any other Ustasha. The Ustashe never referred to their state as the 'Kingdom of Croatia', but only as the NDH.[45]

Try as he did to explain his actions, by arguing that the sacrifice of Dalmatia was the price to pay for the NDH's existence, Pavelić lost much of the support he had gained from the Croat masses, who had initially regarded him as a national liberator.[46] The regime tried to draw attention to the fact that despite losing parts of the coast the NDH had acquired Bosnia and Herzegovina.[47] The Ustashe argued that Croatia 'could live as a body without a limb [i.e. Dalmatia] but we cannot live without Bosnia-Herzegovina, because Bosnia-Herzegovina is our body and heart'.[48] Pavelić also vainly tried to reassure the public that the culture and ethnic identity of the 350,000 or so Croats in Italian annexed areas would be protected under Italian rule, and that these Croats would remain an 'integral part of the Croatian nation'.[49]

---

link and something about Dalmatia, but Pavelić was trusted to achieve it all in the best interests of Croatia'. See Pavlowitch, *Unconvential Perceptions of Yugoslavia,* p. 123.

[44] ibid, p. 108.

[45] ibid, p. 112.

[46] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 238.

[47] Mussolini agreed to Croatian sovereignty over Bosnia, because he was probably aiming to compensate the Croats for their territorial losses along the Adriatic. See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 64.

[48] Cited in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 100.

[49] Cited in Požar, *Ustaša*, p. 186. Officially speaking, Italian authorities referred to Croats in occupied Dalmatia as 'pertinenti', something akin to a citizen. In May 1942, Rome recognized the right, in principle, of Croat 'pertinenti' to acquire NDH citizenship. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 104, 127.

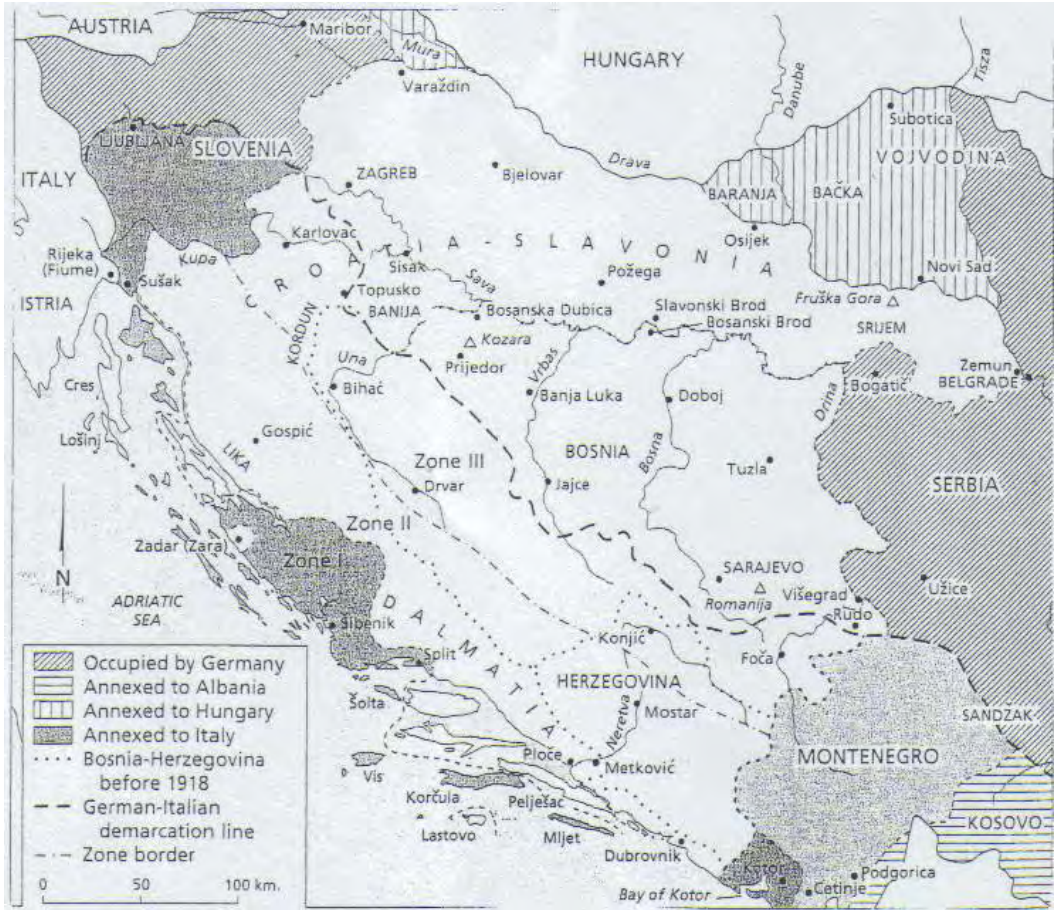
Despite the humiliation inflicted on their Croat 'allies', Italian successes were more apparent than real. Importantly, Croatia successfully resisted joining a monetary and customs union with Italy, as Ciano would have liked, for Mussolini did not push the issue with the Poglavnik; the Duce was more interested in the visible political success of having 'conquered' Dalmatia.[50]

The territories officially encompassing the NDH (following the Rome agreements) included Croatia-Slavonia, the Croatian Littoral, Bosnia-Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia. Hungary annexed the small northwestern corner of Croatia, the Međimurje, and occupied it until the end of the war, although unlike the Rome agreements, Pavelić and the Ustashe never officially recognized the Hungarian annexation.[51] The NDH had a population of approximately six and a half million inhabitants: 30% were comprised of Orthodox Serbs (around 1,845,000); there were also around 150,000 ethnic Germans, close to 40,000 Jews and just over 750,000 Bosnian Muslims.[52] Thus, ethnic Croats made up a little over half of the population of the NDH, but as the Bosnian Muslims were all declared to be ethnically Croat, the number of Croats was officially around four and a half million.

[50] Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy', p. 885.

[51] Despite a strain in relations, the NDH maintained full diplomatic relations with Hungary. The Ustashe were unwilling to antagonize Hungary for they had their hands full with the Italians along the Adriatic. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 65-66. The Ustashe nonetheless insisted that the people of Međimurje were among the 'racially purest' Croats. See 'Naše neosporno pravo na Medjimurje', *Hrvatski narod*, 12 July 1941, p. 1.

[52] The figures for the population of the NDH and the make-up of nationalities were deduced on the basis of population statistics from 1931; different authors give somewhat different figures. See Jareb, *Pola stoljeća*, pp. 87-88, Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 106 and Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 113, 161.



Map 4. The Independent State of Croatia (Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia: 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration*, p. 236).

The clash of German and Italian interests in the NDH

Italy gained little from the 'new order' in the Balkans. First of all, the Italians had minor influence in Zagreb and the north of the NDH, which was the economically most advanced part of Croatia. North Croatia was within the so-called German 'zone of influence'. The Italians had agreed to a division of the Balkans into German and Italian 'zones' of influence – in reality, occupation – on 21-22 April, 1941, when Ciano and German Foreign Minister

Joachim von Ribbentrop had consented to a demarcation line between German and Italian armies (see map 4). Furthermore, Germany ensured its economic primacy in Croatia through the 'Confidential Economic Protocol' signed on 16 May 1941, which granted the Reich 'special account of its economic interests' in the NDH, as well as substantial concessions, notably the 'unlimited exploitation of industrial materials'.[53] German influence and control increased on 21 June 1941, when Pavelić recognized the legal status of the large ethnic German minority (*Volksdeutsche*) in northeastern Croatia, which was now organized as *Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Kroatien* ('The German National Group in Croatia').[54] By October of the same year, the ethnic Germans had received complete cultural and political autonomy, including education in their own schools and self-government in areas where they formed the majority.[55] By mid 1942, they were serving in their own Waffen-SS division (*Prinz Eugen*).

The Italians, for their part, tried to weaken the NDH as much as possible. For example, by August 1941, the Italian army was to take full control of the civil and military administration of a large area of their zone (the so-called 'zone two'), extending their power to Herzegovina and the region of Lika.[56] The Italians also gave substantial material aid and protection to anti-Croatian Serbian Chetnik groups throughout their entire zone of occupation (see

[53] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 100-101. The Italians, unaware of the above agreement, had themselves granted the Germans an important concession when they agreed to German control of the bauxite mines in Herzegovina, in the Italian zone. See Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy', p. 885.

[54] Norman Rich, *Hitler's War Aims: The Establishment of the New Order* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 1974), p. 279.

[55] ibid and Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 97.

[56] The Italians began to decrease the number of their troops in zone 2 and 3 only in June 1942, when much of the area was in Partisan hands anyway. Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, p. 52.

chapter ten). Although Pavelić personally felt rather constricted in the level of his own opposition to Italian measures designed to weaken the NDH, many other leading Ustashe, notably the young Foreign Minister, the pro-German Mladen Lorković, led, what Kisić-Kolanović describes as, 'a parallel diplomatic war with the command of the [Italian] second army, the Italian General Chief Staff and the diplomatic representatives of the Italian government in Zagreb'.[57] The Ustashe could at least try to approach the Germans to ease the pressure from the Italians; 'the Ustasha leadership diplomatically vacillated between the Italians and Germans and this probably prevented Mussolini behaving in Croatia as he did in Albania'.[58]

Many Nazis were sympathetic to Croat grievances against the Italians, but Berlin had

> 'no master plan, in the Balkans, or beyond, for the European "New Order"…Post-war planning was a major theme in various elements of the Nazi power structure; but all they had in common was a vague notion of the "rings" of control, radiating from the centre and mainly extending east- and southeastwards'.[59]

Although Croatia was not initially thought to belong to the immediate 'first ring' of German influence (which was comprised of the Reich, the occupied territories and the entire Danube valley), the Germans were adamant that the resources of the 'loosely defined second and third rings of dominance', including Croatia, must 'be at the disposal of the Reich'.[60] The Germans would therefore not allow the Italians to push their claims to political primacy in

[57] Admittedly, Lorković and the others could do little more than protest and obstruct Italian wishes as much as possible. See ibid, p. 48.
[58] See Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 49.
[59] Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy', pp. 882-883.
[60] ibid, p. 884.

Croatia too far, in other words to the point of harming German strategic and economic interests, despite all their assurances to the Italians to the contrary.[61]

In the military sphere too, the Germans became responsible for the effective organization, training and arming of the NDH armed forces, in both the German and Italian zones.[62] Croatian soldiers also served in separate Wehrmacht regiments and divisions on the Russian front and in Croatia itself; by 1944, there were three such divisions.[63] In 1943, the SS also began to expand its *modus operandi* in Croatia; in March/April of that year, Himmler set up a German-Croatian SS police and gendarmerie division that was effectively outside of the control of Croatian authorities and also created a Bosnian SS division made up predominantly of Muslims.[64] Even prior to this, in November 1942, all Croatian army units operating in the field with the Wehrmacht were to henceforth formally operate under 'unlimited' German command and all Croat civilian personnel in so-called *Operationsgebiete* ('areas of operation') were also subject to German authority.[65] German military and political controls would further tighten after Italy's capitulation in September 1943. Although the Germans would allow Pavelić to officially tear up the Rome agreements and declare Croatian

[61] As Trifković writes, 'Italian zone of interest or not, in economic terms the NDH was treated as an integral part of the 'South-East' by everybody who mattered in Berlin and Vienna'. See ibid, p. 884.
[62] The Croats avoided any close military collaboration with the Italians. Croat officers and soldiers received German training at the military academy of Stockerau near Vienna. See Ivan Babić, 'Military History: The Croatian Army and its Enemies in the Second World War (1941-1945)' in Vol. 1 of Francis H. Eterovich (ed.) *Croatia: Land, People, Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 155. Also see Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 86.
[63] Altogether 8,250 Croat 'Legionnaires' served on the Russian front and apart from the 1,250 Croats serving in an Italian army unit, all the remaining troops fought as part of the German armed forces (including the Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine). See Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u drugom svjetskom ratu*, p. 254. The three divisions were titled the 'Devil', 'Tiger' and 'Blue' divisions. Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 267.
[64] ibid, p. 292, 496-501.
[65] ibid, pp. 274-279. Also see Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy', pp. 893-894.

sovereignty over entire Dalmatia, the Germans took over the military administration of formerly Italian occupied Dalmatia and would not allow the Croats to annex any part of the Istrian peninsula.[66]

The 'Independence' of the NDH

Thus, from the end of 1942, the NDH would effectively lose what limited sovereignty it had possessed in 1941. Even before late 1942, the NDH had been a 'quasi-protectorate' of Germany and Italy, for the 'diplomatic representatives and military missions' of those two countries 'acted far beyond the scope of standard diplomatic and military missions, and their troops behaved like armies of occupation'.[67] The Ustasha regime was never able to implement independent economic policies for it had to take the economic interests of Germany and Italy into consideration.[68]

Nevertheless, between April 1941 and November 1942, the Ustashe possessed something that could be described as a semi-independent status, particularly within the German zone of influence. For one thing, the Germans aided the Ustashe in establishing Croat rule in the German zone, at least for the first year, whereas the Italians did what they could to weaken

[66] Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, p. 281.
[67] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 269.
[68] The NDH had to provide for the supplies and costs of both the German and Italian armies on its territory. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 101-103.

Ustasha authority in theirs.[69] Secondly, although the Germans were 'often as contemptuous as the Italians [toward the Croats]', the former 'made a great effort not to affront Ustasha officials and Croatian army officers, and German military authorities issued special orders to ensure appropriate treatment of Croatian officers and soldiers by German officers and non-commissioned officers.'[70] The German military would behave in a decidedly less friendly manner toward the Croats in 1943 and 1944, when Germany was sliding toward defeat and large numbers of Croats were joining the Partisans, but initially at least, the Germans were interested in having a loyal and stable ally in the South-East.[71] Therefore, the policies conducted toward Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in the period between April 1941 to November 1942 – which included the promulgation of the race laws, mass progroms, the establishment of concentration camps, etc – occurred under more or less complete Croatian control, albeit under and with vital German supervision and support.

The Ustashe had succeeded in achieving their aim of formal independence: the NDH had its own official flag, coats of arms, currency, armed forces, police and foreign office. Apart from Germany and Italy, the NDH also received diplomatic recognition from Japan, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania, Spain, Finland, Denmark and Manchuria (thus all Axis or Axis-friendly states). It obtained de facto recognition from Switzerland, with which it signed a

[69] ibid, p. 70.
[70] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 243.
[71] The Germans were keen to have as few troops in the NDH as possible for they were needed on the Russian front. While the Italians had 24 divisions on the whole territory of former Yugoslavia in 1941, the Germans had only four in the entire area, although the number of German troops would significantly increase during the course of the anti-Partisan struggle. See Nigel Thomas & Krunoslav Mikulan, 'Axis Forces in Yugoslavia 1941-45', *Men-at-Arms* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 1995), pp. 6-12.

trade agreement, and the Vatican, which sent a papal legate to Zagreb. The NDH also joined several international organizations such as the International Postal Union and was a signatory to some international agreements, such as the Geneva Convention on POW's.[72]

Despite its subservience to German and Italian political interests, the NDH could be described as a 'political regime' that aspired 'to control a potential Croatian state territory and authority'.[73] Accordingly, Croatian political scientists have made a distinction between the concepts of a 'political regime' and a 'political system'; the former relates to the organization and functioning of a state, while the latter refers to all the factors that influence a state.[74] Right until the end of the war, the Ustashe were desperate to establish legitimacy for their 'political regime'. For example, a camp for Allied POW's was set up near Zagreb on 5 April 1945 in order to 'enhance the sovereignty of the Croatian state'.[75] Prior to November 1944, the Croat authorities would hand over any Allied soldiers captured in the NDH to the Germans. A Croat expert in international law wrote a memorandum in November 1944, urging the NDH government to set up camps for Allied POWs, for 'should prisoners of war continue to be turned over to the Germans, then the reproach of the enemy side would be justified that the sovereignty of the Independent State of Croatia is not complete'.[76] The aims and policies of the Ustashe certainly converged with those of the German Reich, to which it acted in a subordinate role, but Ustasha aims and policies were not identical with those of the Nazis, while 'the marriage of Italian fascism and Croat ultra-nationalism could only be

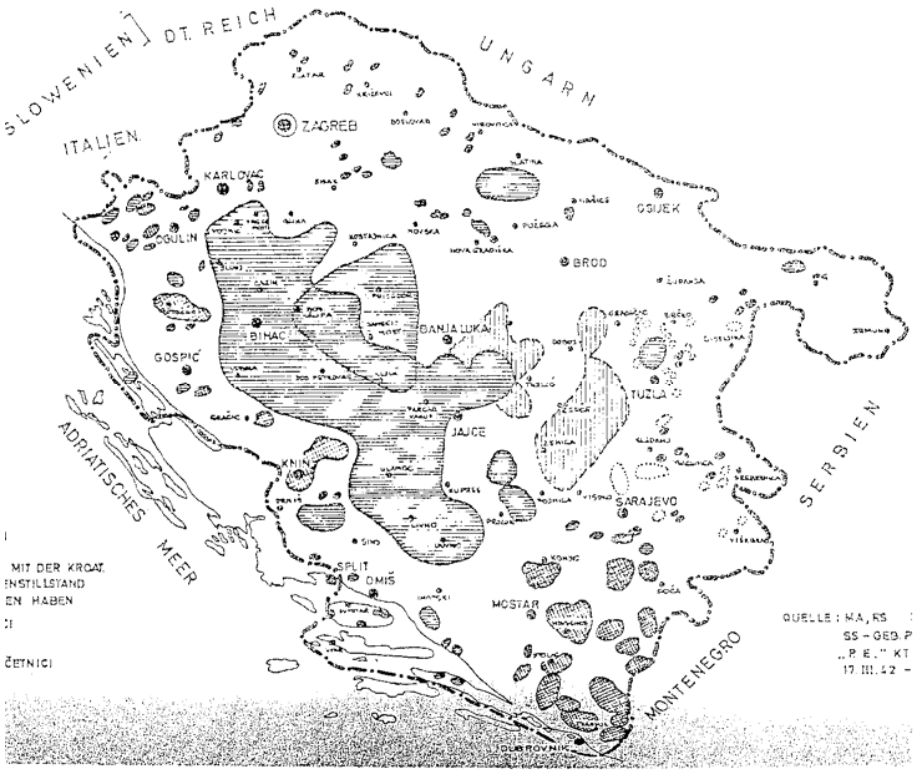
[72] See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 54-55 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 272.
[73] See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', p. 696.
[74] ibid.
[75] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 273-274.
[76] ibid, p. 273.

one of convenience'; despite Pavelić's personal connections to Italy and fidelity to the Duce, the Fascists and Ustashe were locked in the state of a cold war.[77]

The NDH was never effectively independent and was strictly speaking not even a state, for the Ustasha regime had to vie with the Croatian Partisan movement, another 'political regime', for 'control of the potential Croatian state territory and for control of the state authority'.[78] Even as early as the summer of 1941, large areas of the NDH were under Partisan (and Serbian Chetnik) control. In fact, the Partisan movement in Croatia created a real political alternative for Croats opposed to the Ustasha regime, especially with the establishment of ZAVNOH ('The State Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Croatia') in 1943 in the substantial area of the NDH under Partisan rule. Although autonomous for a short period under the leadership of Andrija Hebrang, the Croatian Partisan movement was an integral part of the wider Yugoslav AVNOJ ('The Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia'). Therefore, ZAVNOH was committed to the restoration of (a federal) Yugoslavia. The Croatian Partisan leadership also recognized the political equality of the Serbs in Croatia and subsequently a 'Serbian club' of councillors of ZAVNOH was set up.[79] However, with the exception of the Italian annexed parts of

[77] S. Trifković, 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy', p. 880. The wartime commander of the Italian 2nd army, General Mario Roatta, remarked that 'it must not be forgotten that, during the time in Yugoslavia, our real, natural and irreconcilable enemies were the Croats and not the Serbs'. Quoted in Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 128.
[78] Kisić-Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', p. 696.
[79] Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, p. 170.

Croatia, the Partisans made little headway among the wider Croatian masses until late 1942, when there began a steady flow of Croats to the Partisans.[80]



Map 5. The military situation in the NDH in spring 1943 (The three Chetnik groups outlined in the map's legend are: Chetniks who have arranged a truce with the NDH; Italian allied Chetniks; and rebel Chetniks. See Holm Sundhaussen, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Kroatiens im nationalsozialistischen Großraum 1941-1945: Das Scheitern einer Ausbeutungsstrategie*, p. 384).

A large segment of the Croatian population accepted the NDH as a Croatian national state and remained loyal to it until the very end, even if many of these Croats did not agree with all aspects of the Ustasha regime's internal and foreign policies. Even as late as the fall of 1944, there were 76,000 men fighting in the ranks of the elite (and largely volunteer)

[80] ibid, pp. 141-143.

Ustasha Militia alone.[81] As the Croat historian Hrvoje Matković argues, the NDH was 'undoubtedly an attempt to solve the *Croatian question* with the establishment of one's own, independent Croatian state. Nevertheless, one must not neglect the time of its appearance and the influence of the environment in which it originated'.[82]

The NDH was the product of the Ustasha mentality that 'any Croatia was better than no Croatia at all'.[83] Belief in the importance of the trappings of statehood, including the word 'Independent' in the state's title, led the Ustashe to the illusion that they could achieve eventual full independence within the framework of Hitler's 'New Order', and even the eventual return of Italian occupied Dalmatia.[84] Pavelić had defended his actions on Dalmatia by arguing that a nation without a state, 'could never have the possibility of returning any lost region', while a nation with its own state could wait for an opportune moment to return any lost part of the homeland.[85] Pavelić's public excuses for ceding large parts of Dalmatia to Italy were, to be sure, accepted by many Croats, even ones from Dalmatia, as the lesser evil to not having a formal state. Although the Ustashe were generally unpopular among the Croats in Italian occupied areas, many leading Ustashe, including state officials, diplomats,

[81] See ibid, p. 171-172 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 431.
[82] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 9.
[83] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 99.
[84] Much hope was placed in Germany to support the return of Dalmatia to Croatian sovereignty. One Croatian sailor noted in a letter written in mid 1942: 'My struggle will not be in vain for Greater Germany will satisfy our wishes and Dalmatia will one day be Croatian, as it was always ours already from the time of the rule of the Croatian King Tomislav'. Quoted in ibid, 427fn, p. 126.
[85] Pavelić quoted in ibid, p. 100.

propagandists and army commanders, such as Branko Benzon, Ivo Bogdan, Danijel Crljen, Šime Cvitanović, Ante Moškov and Bruno Nardelli were in fact Dalmatian Croats.[86]

It was, of course, a delusion to think that the Nazi-Fascist 'New Order' would allow the Croats, as Tomasevich wrote, the 'scope for the maintenance, let alone further development, of their political, cultural and economic individuality'.[87] The Ustashe believed, however, that a formally independent state in the Nazi 'New Order' was more preferable to a Yugoslav state in which the Serbs were much stronger than the Croats, in terms of population size, military strength and political clout. The establishment of the Croatian *Banovina* had also been a completely unacceptable solution for the Ustashe. The Ustashe basically felt that they were faced with more or less the same problem that the Croats had been faced with in the 1840s, namely, that of either 'co-operating with the Serbs and accepting a subordinate role or opposing them and facing the consequences'.

Long before 1941, Pavelić had made the choice of 'opposing the Serbs and facing the consequences'. Of course, the Poglavnik had made the choice of subordinating Croatia to Germany and was even willing to admit this. In his meeting with Weesenmayer in April 1941, Pavelić told the German envoy that he (Pavelić) 'knows that the freedom of Croatia is thanks exclusively to the power of the Führer, the Reich and Europe…[Pavelić] does not

[86] NDH envoy Benzon was instructed by Slavko Kvaternik to convince Berlin that it was in its interest to support and strengthen the NDH because of, a) the important transport links to the Balkan South-East (and Middle East) that ran through Croatia and b) the 'historical friendship' between Croatia and Germany. In short, Kvaternik advised Benzon to convince the Reich that Croatia was an important ally in order to 'paralyse' the influence of Italy. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 145.
[87] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 779.

even intend to direct some sort of foreign policy, for that is promulgated by the Führer'.[88] Pavelić entertained the idea that the NDH would be able to achieve the widest possible 'independence' within the German 'New Order', as the Reich's chief ally in Southeast Europe.

As far as relations with Italy were concerned, Pavelić was well aware that by 1941, Italy had suffered terrible military defeats in Greece and North Africa and was now completely subordinate to Germany. Therefore, the NDH might be able to receive better treatment from the Reich if it proved more 'faithful' and 'capable' than Italy and the other Axis partners (e.g. in co-operating with the Germans in the 'Final Solution', sending Croatian troops to the Russian front, etc.).[89] This was wishful thinking, but it was not necessarily irrational. Other Axis leaders were also prepared to submit their countries to German tutelage in order to 'save' them from an even possibly worse fate. In October 1941, Mussolini told Ciano that after a German military victory, Italy would become a vassal state of Germany, or more precisely, 'a confederated province'. According to the Duce,

> 'we must accept this state of affairs because every attempt at reaction would cause us to be demoted from the status of a confederated province to something worse

[88] Cited in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 422.

[89] One of the leading Ustasha journalists, Mijo Bzik, wrote in 1944: 'and today the Croat as a soldier carries that glory and with great sacrifices participates in the final struggle in the construction of the new Europe, in which only with that struggle and with those sacrifices will Croatia win its place'. See M. Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi 1928-1941-1944,* p. 24.

than a colony. Even if they ask for Trieste tomorrow for the German vital space, we would have to bow our heads'.[90]

The Ustashe preferred the prospect of Croatia being a 'confederated province' within a German Europe than a Croatia 'drowned' within Yugoslavia. In any case, the Ustasha regime felt that it could at least boast of having its own armed forces. As Marcus Tanner points out, the NDH was not 'an insignificant military power'.[91] The Ustasha Militia was, as is highlighted in this chapter, the only real effective force capable of militarily matching the Partisans. Hitler himself was interested in bolstering the Ustasha regime for he viewed the NDH as 'the best guarantee against the resurgence of Yugoslav programmes by "young Serb fanatics", which would threaten to block – yet again – Germany's passage to the south-east'.[92]

The Ustashe certainly feared the possibility of future attempts of Nazi 'Germanization' of the Croats, but held assimilation into some amorphous Slav or Yugoslav mass was a far more disagreeable prospect. Ustasha attitudes on the issue of assimilation by stronger nations came down to an argument once made by the Czech author Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821-1856): 'if the Czechs have to lose their nationality, then it is all the same whether they become Germans or Russians'.[93] Unlike pan-Slavist Croats, the Ustashe did not view the Second

[90] Quoted in Farrell, *Mussolini*, p. 353. Mussolini noted that the defeated states would be 'genuine colonies'. See ibid.
[91] Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 153.
[92] Trifković, 'Rivalry between Germany and Italy', p. 890.
[93] Quoted in Lukas, 'Ante Starčević', F. Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 184.

World War as a continuation of some sort of historical struggle between the 'Teuton' and 'Slav', in which the Croats had to be on the side of the latter. On the contrary, the Ustashe saw the alliance with Germany as the logical continuation of the 'centuries long' German-Croatian *Waffenbrüderschaft* ('brotherhood-in-arms'), sealed in 1527 when the Croatian nobles had elected the German prince, Ferdinand Habsburg, as their king. In this respect, Nazi propagandists would also hail Croatia as 'the oldest ally of the German Reich'.[94]

While Tomasevich was correct in pointing out that many German officers and Nazis had a contempt for the Croat armed forces – 'and thus indirectly for Croatian political and military leaders and in the final analysis for the whole Croatian nation' – he failed to mention that Hitler had also often favourably compared the Croats in terms of their 'racial value' to other European nations, including the Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Russians, Czechs and even, as noted, the Italians.[95] German military leaders, for their part, had high praise for the Croatian 'Legionnaires' fighting on the Eastern front, while the large Croatian labour force in the Reich, comprising some 180,000 workers by 1944, was also considered highly in comparison to labour from other countries by the Germans; the 'Arbeitscharakter' ('work character') of the Croatian worker was classified as 'only somewhat weaker' to that of the

[94] Robert Edwin Herzstein, *When Nazi Dreams Come True: The Third Reich's Internal Struggle over the Future of Europe after a German Victory: A Look at the Nazi Mentality 1939-45* (London: Abacus, 1982), p. 152.

[95] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 779. When referring to the performance of the large Romanian army on the Eastern front in 1942, Hitler remarked, 'what a pity they can't instal Croats instead of Rumanians!' See *Hitler's Table Talk*, p. 338. For Hitler's negative attitude of the supposedly philo-Semitic Hungarians, see Kisić-Kolanović, 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića' in *Mladen Lorković,* pp. 286-287.

German worker.[96] The Nazis certainly did not consider the Croats as 'Aryan' as the Dutch or Norwegians, but neither did they consider them to be some sort of inferior 'sub-Mongolian' race, as they did the Russians for example. In a meeting between Slavko Kvaternik and Hitler on 21 July 1941, the latter claimed that '70 to 80% of the Russian people' were Mongols, the Bolsheviks having exterminated, according to the Führer, the original Slav population.[97]

Tomasevich also somewhat exaggerated when he asserted that

> 'since the South Slavs, and indeed Slavs in general, were threatened with obliteration during the Second World War, it was natural that some political group [i.e. the Yugoslav Partisans]…would try to recast this idea [Yugoslavism] in a new fashion and use it as a unifying and defensive ideological tool during the war'.[98]

While the Wehrmacht and SS did indeed commit a number of atrocities against the civilian Croatian population during the course of its anti-Partisan struggle in the NDH (especially in 1944), the Croats also generally fared better at the hands of the German military than the Serbs, Poles, Russians and Ukrainians, who suffered many more massacres and deprivations. As far as Nazi attitudes to the 'Slavs' are concerned, the National Socialists actually argued, at

---

[96] General von Mackensen told the Croat liaison officer with the 369th Croatian regiment on the Russian front, Colonel Adolf Sabljak, that 'unsere Kroaten sind ausgezeichnete Soldaten' ('our Croats are excellent soldiers'). See Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 239. On the Croatian workers in Germany, see Holm Sundhaussen, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Kroatiens im nationalsozialistischen Großraum 1941-1945: Das Scheitern einer Ausbeutungsstrategie* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), p. 190 and Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 106-107.

[97] Andreas Hillgruber (ed.) *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler: vertrauliche Aufzeichnungen über Unterredungen mit Vertreten des Auslandes 1939-1941* (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1967), p. 613. Hitler once said of Slavko Kvaternik: 'When I have Kvaternik standing in front of me, I behold the very type of Croat as I've always known him, unshakeable in his friendships, a man whose oath is eternally binding.' See *Hitler's Table Talk*, p. 95.

[98] Tomasevich, *The Chetniks*, p. 195.

least in theory, that in an anthropological and racial sense, there was no such thing as a 'Slavic race'.[99] Although many Nazis referred to the Slavs generically in racial terms, they also 'subscribed to the notion of racial variations among the Slavs'.[100] The term 'Slav' originated, as a report of the SS intelligence service, the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*), in 1940 stated, 'from linguistics. The racial picture [among the Slavic peoples] corresponds to linguistic affinities to a far lesser extent than is the case with Germanic peoples'.[101]

Hitler made the same argument to Pavelić at their first meeting in Berchtesgaden on 6 June 1941, when the latter claimed that the Croats were of Gothic origin and that 'the pan-Slavic idea had been forced upon them as something artificial':

> 'The Führer replied that there was of course no uniform Slavic race, as the obvious difference between Poles, Czechs, Dalmatians, etc, clearly showed, whereas on the other hand the Germanic peoples, as for example embodied in the Germans and English, presented an absolutely uniform picture'.[102]

The 'race war' conducted in the East by the Nazis was not directed at the 'Slavic race', but at the expense of those Slav speaking peoples that happened to stand in the way of the planned German *Lebensraum,* that is the Poles, Russians, White Russians and Ukrainians.[103] Even these peoples were not, however, necessarily destined for extermination in the same manner

---

[99] John Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs: From Racial Theory to Racist Practice', *Central European History*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1999, pp. 16-17.
[100] ibid, 118fn, p. 26. As Connelly notes: 'In the case of the Slavs Nazi ideology gradually adapted to the contours of conventional racial theory, though it was never officially codified'. See ibid, p. 26.
[101] ibid, 82fn, p. 17.
[102] See Vol. XII, 'The War Years, February 1 – June 22, 1941' in Series D (1937-1945) in *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 980.
[103] Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', p. 21.

as the Jews. As John Connelly rightly points out, 'because the Nazis did not understand the Poles or the Russians – let alone the Slavs – as a race, there could be no policy of complete eradication'.[104] The Nazis also did not understand the 'South Slavs' as a race or nation and therefore no such policy of 'extermination' against them could exist either.

The Ustashe therefore felt that they had no reason to fear the Germans any more than the Serbs in terms of the possibility of 'losing their nationality'. The Ustashe had in fact found 'understanding' from the Nazis in their desire to prove that there was no such thing as a 'Slavic' race or 'Yugoslav' nation. In short, Pavelić was a Croatian nationalist who was convinced that Germany would win the war and that Croatia needed to remain at Germany's side in order to secure its formal independence, or at least the widest possible autonomy, and in order to destroy the idea of Yugoslavism. He was equally convinced that an Allied victory would restore the 'prison' of the Croatian people, Yugoslavia. Pavelić had made the choice of 'opposing the Serbs and facing the consequences' and the methods the Poglavnik chose in this respect were the most shocking imaginable.

Pavelić was adamant that he could use the outbreak of world war and the alliance with Germany to solve what he saw as the three principal 'questions' or 'problems' of Croatian history, in other words, the 'Serb/Vlach question', the 'Muslim question' and the 'Dalmatian question', alongside solving the 'Jewish and Gypsy racial questions'. In the end, all Pavelić

[104] ibid, p. 27. Nazi race theorists such as Günther argued that the proto-Slavs were probably of Nordic race. A Nazi party brochure for the 1938 Nuremberg rally proclaimed the early Slavs as part of the 'Indogermanic' (i.e. Indo-European) peoples. See ibid, pp. 12-13.

managed to accomplish in four years of rule was to leave, as Biondich points out, 'a painful legacy for the peoples of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina'.[105]

Dictatorship: the rule of the 'best of the nation'

In order to solve the above racial 'problems' in the NDH, the Ustashe wasted no time in the organization of a state modelled on Nazi Germany. The construction of a state based on the rights of the *narodna zajednica* could not have been established on democratic and civic values. Pavelić himself acknowledged this in late 1941, when he sought to explain the significance of the 'national community':

> 'Today when we, the Croatian people, have come to new ideas, and rejected individualistic and democratic ideas, the whole people become one family, what the Germans today call: the Volksgemeinschaft. Individuals…cease to be of worth, expect as members of the national community.'[106]

Only the Croatian national community had exclusive rights to the territory that encompassed the NDH, despite the sizeable number of non-Croats on this territory. It was Croatian by historical right.[107]

---

[105] Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State": Nationalism, Myth, and Memory', p. 62.

[106] Pavelić quoted in Prof. Aleksandar Seitz, *Put do hrvatskog socializma* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1943), p. 45. For more on the German notion of the 'Volksgemeinschaft', see Walter Laqueur, *Fascism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 24.

[107] The only concession was made to the sizeable ethnic German community. This did not, however, stop continual disputes between Ustasha and *Volksgruppe* officials in ethnically mixed areas in northeast Croatia over matters of jurisdiction (in all areas, such as military conscription). See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 152-153.

In order to transform what General Glaise called a 'Völkerstaat' (a multi-national state),[108] into an ethnically homogeneous nation-state, the Ustasha regime set up a one-party state in which extra-legal state forces were free to deal, in whatever manner seemed fit, with 'enemies of the state'. Like the German Reich, the NDH had no constitution.[109] The legal system was constructed upon the 'Ustasha principles' from 1933, upon a succession of decrees issued by the Poglavnik and other decrees of a constitutional-legal nature.[110] As Eugen pl. Sladović, the leading legal theorist in the NDH, argued, the Independent State of Croatia was the culmination of the 'state-legal aspirations of the Croatian people, who before 1400 years ago, as an organized people, conquered the territory on which it formed its new homeland and within it, its own powerful state'.[111] Therefore, Sladović added, the 'Croatian state idea and the NDH, which has again been resurrected, are not the fruits of the momentary political state and condition, nor imperialism, nor is Croatia an accidental state creation, but a historical, state-legal and cultural necessity'.[112]

The Ustashe viewed the establishment of the NDH both as the natural outcome of the centuries long struggle of the Croatian people to achieve independence and as part of the wider European 'revolution' intended to 'correct' the inequities of the Versailles Treaty and capitalize on the 'crisis' of the liberal state. Ustasha belief in the legitimacy of the alliance with Germany sprang from the conviction that Germany had 'created a counter-balance to

[108] Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia', p. 1028.
[109] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 67. Also see Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 77.
[110] Prof. Dr. Eugen Sladović, 'Ustavni temelji hrvatske države', *Spremnost*, 26 April 1942, p. 2.
[111] ibid.
[112] ibid.

the Versailles system' since it supposedly offered smaller nations such as Croatia the opportunity to attain state independence.[113]

The NDH was built on the negation of liberal-democratic and Communist ideas. As Sladović explained, the NDH 'includes within itself' the fundamental ideas of nationalism and patriotism, solidarity, the social obligation of work, socially tied private property and estate corporatism.[114] There was much discussion and debate among Ustasha ideologists during the NDH on the possibility of forming a corporatist system, although the idea never went further than the largely administrative establishment of the 'Main Alliance of Estate Formations' (*Glavni savez staliških postrojbi*) headed by the Ustasha Aleksandar Seitz and consisting of, for example, the 'Alliance of Peasants', 'Alliance of Workers' and so on.[115] This organization had little influence on the actual running of the state economy.[116] Seitz in fact denied that the creation of the organization that he headed was an indication that the NDH was actually to be organized on the basis of estates or classes.[117] As Seitz pointed out, the NDH and the Ustasha movement 'were founded on the principle of leadership'.[118] The emphasis on the idea of estates was, as Seitz insisted, the result of the need to oppose the class system of both capitalism and Communism with an idea of an organic society and the

[113] Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, p. 37.
[114] Eugen Sladović, 'Družtvovno-politički sustav Hrvatske', *Spremnost*, 3 May 1942, p. 2.
[115] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, pp. 155-157.
[116] ibid, p. 157.
[117] Seitz, *Put do hrvatskog socializma*, p. 20.
[118] ibid.

need to maintain continuity with the long tradition of 'estates'.[119] What was of utmost importance was the 'building of the national community'.[120]

The Croatian national community was best protected, so argued Seitz, within the ideological and organizational framework of 'Croatian socialism', or 'social nationalism', which was very different to the socialism propagated by 'international Bolshevism'.[121] 'Croatian socialism' included concern for all classes of the nation, for the role of the state was to harmonize and bring together all classes to work for the greater good of the national community.[122] The term 'national community' was an alien concept to both Marxists and capitalists, because the former knew only of classes, while the latter knew only of free markets (p. 32). Seitz noted that the concept of the 'national community' was a new one devised by Adolf Hitler (p. 180). The national community was not the same as a nation, for the latter, encompassing a 'group of people tied together through consciousness of a common affiliation on the basis of a common origin', had historically been split up into mutually hostile estates and classes (ibid.). The task of the national community was to bring these opposing classes together into a harmonious whole (pp. 180-182). As with German National Socialism, Croatian 'social nationalism' contained 'no consistent economic or social theory' and Pavelić, like Hitler, 'referred only to the Volksgemeinschaft'.[123] The Croatian economic system was a state

[119] ibid, pp. 21-22.
[120] ibid, p. 22.
[121] ibid, pp. 38-39.
[122] ibid, p. 32. Page numbers that follow in the text also refer to this work.
[123] Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure and Consequences of National Socialism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 411.

directed capitalism in which the government was allowed to intervene freely in economic life.[124]

All the same, the Ustashe saw 'Croatian socialism' as part and parcel of the European revolution that was opposed to both 'Americanism' and Bolshevism, two ideologies that sought the 'levelling' of all human cultures.[125] In contrast, the European identity was founded on 'unity in diversity'.[126] The Ustashe saw in German National Socialism and Italian Fascism kindred ideologies, but were cautious to point out that each movement was an expression of the particular national cultures and traditions. The Ustasha 'revolution' was therefore a specific Croatian phenomenon related to general European political and socio-economic trends. As Pavelić explained, the new Croatian state was to be

> 'organized upon the foundations of the traditions of the Croatian people and on the most modern principles, which have shown amongst our great friends and allies that in today's time these are the only ones capable of creating order, offering work, providing bread and establishing a normal life'.[127]

Among the 'modern principles' that the Ustashe adopted was the *Führerprinzip*. All authorities in the NDH were answerable to the Poglavnik, while he answered only to 'history and his own conscience'.[128] Authority, for the Ustashe, was 'the only principle for

---

[124] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 100.
[125] Seitz, *Put do hrvatskog socializma*, p. 29.
[126] ibid.
[127] Quoted in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH,* p. 150.
[128] Slaven Ravlić, 'Glosarij' in Darko Stuparić (ed.), *Tko je tko u NDH*: *Hrvatska 1941-1945*. (Zagreb: Minerva, 1997), p. 477.

the ethical recovery of the nation'.[129] In contrast, the 'democratic principle…almost ruined the world by abolishing distinctions between good and evil', in other words, democracy was held responsible for moral relativization.[130] The Ustashe also used 'ethno-psychological' arguments to prove that the predominantly peasant Croats, and especially the Croats of the patriarchal Dinaric areas, were naturally well disposed towards authoritarian rule. Mile Budak compared the relationship between the Poglavnik and the nation with the relationship between the grandfather of Croatian patriarchal peasant society and his commune (*zadruga*).[131] According to Budak, the peasant Croatian people 'draws consciously and subconsciously upon the memories and traditions of the great domestic *zadrugas*, in which the grandfather (*did*) governed wisely – authority without objection and appeal'.[132]

Within the limits prescribed by the Axis, Pavelić did indeed wield the absolute authority of a patriarch in a racial 'commune' (i.e. the NDH). As Dinko Tomašić wrote in 1942, 'the *Ustaša* state is conceived as an enlarged family of the patriarchal type in which the whole authority is vested in the hands of the patriarch and in which all members are supposed to work under his direction for the benefit of the whole'.[133] Pavelić was prepared to concede some positions in the government to non-Ustashe, such as former members of the main pre-war Bosnian Muslim party, the JMO, who were pro-Croatian, and to pro-Ustasha right wing members of the HSS. However the most important positions remained in the hands of pre-

[129] Prof. D. Žanko, 'Etička osnova ustaštva', *Ustaški godišnjak 1943*, p. 187.
[130] ibid.
[131] See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 58.
[132] ibid.
[133] Dinko Tomašić, 'Croatia in European Politics', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. 2, 1942-1943, p. 80.

war Ustashe. Slavko Kvaternik became Commander-in-chief (*Vojskovođa*) and Minister of the Croatian Home Guard (*domobranstvo*), Mile Budak Minister of Education, Mladen Lorković Foreign Minister of the NDH, Pavelić's close Herzegovinian confidant Andrija Artuković Interior Minister and Eugen 'Dido' Kvaternik, chief of all police and security forces.

The NDH was constructed as a 'dual state', in the same manner as National Socialist Germany, and to a lesser extent, Fascist Italy.[134] Thus, alongside the actual state administrative organs and government, there existed the Ustasha party (or 'movement') and it organizational structures, which in reality exercised the real power in the state. The Ustasha secret police, the *Ustaška nadzorna služba* (Ustasha Supervisory Service, UNS) and the party army, the *Ustaška vojnica* (the Ustasha Militia) were the two most important Ustasha party structures, as the former was chiefly responsible for the elimination of all real or imagined enemies of the Ustasha state, while the Militia was the only real effective fighting force Pavelić possessed in his war against the Communist Partisans and Greater Serbian Chetniks.[135]

Pavelić had made clear from the very beginning that this state was to be an Ustasha state, which allowed no room for the 'enemies' of the Croatian 'national community'. On 17 April 1941, Pavelić issued the *Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države* ('Legal decree for the defence of the nation and state'). This decree authorized the death sentence for 'whoever in

[134] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 75-76. Also see Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914-1945* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), p. 180.
[135] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 76.

whatever way acts or has acted against the honor and vital interests of the Croatian people or in any way endangers the existence of the Independent State of Croatia or state authority, even if the act is only attempted'.[136]

This retroactive decree was 'loosely worded' in order that it could be applied and interpreted broadly.[137] The decree allowed the Ustashe to 'legally' persecute anyone considered a threat to state and national security and/or anyone not considered a member of the Croat 'national community'. This decree was also the basis for the 'extra-ordinary people's courts' set up on the same day (17 April), which had wide-ranging authority to deal with state enemies. Each people's court had five judges, three of whom were Ustasha functionaries.[138] In June, the regime set up a mobile courts martial, which had jurisdiction on the whole territory of the NDH; these courts allowed no right of appeal and the death sentence was carried out three hours after the cessation of court proceedings.[139] The retroactive legislation, executed by 'legal institutions' such as a 'people's court', that served as a basis for the subsequent mass murder of ethnic and racial minorities and political opponents in the NDH, had strong parallels with the legislation introduced by the National Socialist regime in Germany on 3 July 1934, after the SA (the *Sturmabteilung* or 'Brownshirt') leadership was murdered by the SS (*Schutzstaffel*) on the 'Night of the Long Knives'. The new retroactive law declared that 'the measures taken on 30 June and 1 and 2 July to strike down the treasonous attacks are

[136] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 383. Also see Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 154.
[137] ibid.
[138] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 155-156.
[139] S. Ravlić, 'Glosarij', *Tko je Tko u NDH*, p. 478.

justifiable acts of self-defence by the state'.[140] As Karl Dietrich Bracher points out, this new law led to the 'formal erosion of the legal system' and set a precedent for the eventual extermination of 'political enemies, Jews and "inferiors"'.[141]

The parallels between Ustasha and Nazi persecution of 'enemies of the state and people' were not lost on Hitler. When Slavko Kvaternik met Hitler on 21 July 1941, the Croatian army Commander-in-chief sought to reassure the Führer that the Ustasha government had a 'sufficiently hard fist' with which to deal with Communist partisans and 'untrustworthy races', to which the German leader replied that such hard actions against enemies of the state and 'anti-social criminals' were necessary, or as he put it, 'to act energetically in the very beginning, so as to avoid much greater bloodshed later'.[142] Significantly, Hitler referred to the action that he took against the SA in 1934 as an example of such 'necessity'.[143]

The decree of 17 April confirmed the Ustasha rejection of 'European and American traditions, by which the foundation of a state was accompanied by legislation that conferred certain rights and liberties on citizens'.[144] As the first Justice Minister in the NDH, Mirko Puk, told the Croatian *Sabor* in 1942:

> 'The authoritarian state rejects the past legal theories, that all people, already according to their very nature, are equal, but [instead] accepts the other principle of differentiation and selection of mankind…The authoritarian state, the state of

[140] Quoted in Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, p. 302.
[141] ibid, p. 303.
[142] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, pp. 495-496.
[143] ibid, p. 496.
[144] Djilas, *Contested Country*, p. 116.

> the new order, is not a despotat or a satrapy, but a state [ruled] by a Leader, as the best of the nation, in cooperation with the remaining good and best members of the community of one nation'.[145]

According to Puk, the Ustasha elite was not 'an aristocracy of blood' or 'of property', but 'an aristocracy of a superior spirit', akin, in the words of Mile Budak, to a 'religious brotherhood' or 'holy order'.[146] The authoritarian state this 'holy order' sought to create was one that contained the entire nation, and from the 'principle of one leader' there 'logically' followed the principle of 'one nation' that ruled in one state.[147] The democratic principle of political and legal 'equality' was invented by the Jews, who had, as Dr. Vladimir Cicak argued in 1943,

> 'abused the Christian tenet of the equality of all people before God, therefore in the transcendental order, and had begun to seek the equality of all people in individual states and among individual nations, thus in the natural order, even if all living nature is the best proof that such equality in the natural order does not and cannot exist'.[148]

The principle of 'selection' was clearly expressed in the 'Legal decree on citizenship' issued on 30 April 1941. The regime made a distinction between a 'citizen' (*državljanin*) and a 'state national' (*državni pripadnik*). A 'state national' was 'a person who stood under the protection

[145] 'Probitak zajednice kao vrhovni zakon', *Hrvatski narod*, 26 February 1942, p. 1.
[146] ibid. For more on Budak, see Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 351.
[147] 'Probitak zajednice kao vrhovni zakon'.
[148] Dr. Vladimir Cicak, 'Europa u borbi protiv boljševizma', *Ustaški godišnjak 1943*, p. 213.

of the Independent State of Croatia'.[149] A citizen, on the other hand, was 'a state national of Aryan origin who by his actions has shown that he did not work against the liberation aspirations of the Croatian people and who is willing to readily and faithfully serve the Croatian people and the Independent State of Croatia'.[150] As Tomasevich noted, 'with this formulation not only Jews, Serbs and Gypsies, but also Croats who did not agree with the Ustashas could, by administrative fiat, be denied Croatian citizenship'.[151]

The 'Croatian SS': the Ustasha Militia

The NDH thus became, as Holm Sundhaussen argues, an 'Ustascha-Staat' in a similar manner to the way the 'Third Reich' was a 'SS-Staat'.[152] The Ustasha Militia and police were as important for Pavelić's position of power as the SS (both the Allgemeine and Waffen or armed SS) was for that of Hitler's. As Hans Buchheim has pointed out, the SS carried out the political aims that were central to Hitler's ideology: 'preservation of his own power, demographic policy, the policy for the occupation of conquered territory and persecution of all actual and supposed opponents of the regime'.[153] While not interested in the occupation of foreign territory, the Ustasha party army and police were also committed to the preservation of Pavelić's power, 'demographic engineering', and the elimination of real or imagined enemies of the nation and state.

---

[149] 'Zakonska odredba o državljanstvu', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 May 1941, p. 2.
[150] ibid.
[151] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 384. Also see Sundhaussen, 'Der Ustascha-Staat', pp. 522-523.
[152] See Sundhaussen, 'Ustascha-Staat', p. 532 and Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 86.
[153] Buchheim quoted in Bracher, *German Dictatorship*, p. 436.

The Ustasha Militia consisted mostly of young volunteers, 'indoctrinated in ultranationalistic Ustasha ideology, proud of belonging to the party's armed elite, and, like their commanders, completely loyal to Pavelić and the Ustasha Party'.[154] The politicized nature and fanaticism of the Militia often put it at odds with the regular Croatian army, the Home Guard (*Domobranstvo*). The Home Guard was modelled on the separate Croatian Home Guard that existed within the Austro-Hungarian armed forces from 1868 to 1918.[155] The new army in the NDH followed, to a great extent, in the footsteps of its Austro-Hungarian predecessor, which although part of the Emperor's army was nonetheless a separate Croatian armed force that the NDH regime felt could serve as a more recent precedent for the new Croatian army.[156] For one thing, the higher officer corps of the NDH Home Guard consisted mainly of former officers of the Austro-Hungarian army, such as former Colonel (now Field Marshal) Slavko Kvaternik, former Major General Vladimir Laxa and former Colonel (now General) Slavko Štancer.[157] The uniforms were also patterned after the old Austro-Hungarian army, while *Domobran* officers were permitted to wear Austro-Hungarian medals on their uniforms.[158] Pavelić tolerated, but was little impressed, by all of this. He did not share the nostalgia of his Legitimist colleagues for the old Empire.

---

[154] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 431.

[155] After the *Ausgleich* of 1867, the Austro-Hungarian army was divided into the Imperial Austrian army and the Royal Croatian-Hungarian army. The Croatian Home Guard was part of the latter. It recruited its soldiers, however, only from Croatia-Slavonia, which was part of the Hungarian half of the monarchy, while Croats from Dalmatia and Istria served in the Imperial Austrian army.

[156] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 83.

[157] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 425.

[158] Kiszling, *Die Kroaten,* p. 180. Ustasha Militia soldiers usually wore both Italian and German style uniforms. Due to the constant shortage of provisions, Home Guard (and Ustasha) soldiers often wore a variety of different uniforms (including Czech, French and old Yugoslav ones). See Thomas & Mikulan, 'Axis Forces in Yugoslavia', pp. 19, 45.

Pavelić and most other Ustashe actually blamed the Habsburgs for permitting the influx of Orthodox Vlachs into Croatia in the first place.[159] Indeed, Pavelić's principal heroes from the past were not so much the loyal Croat officers of the Military Frontier but the nobles Petar Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan, who had conspired against the centralizing policies of the Habsburg Emperor Leopold I in the 1660s and had, as a result, lost their heads at the hands of the Emperor for treason. On the anniversary of their execution, on 30 April 1941, the Ustasha daily newspaper, *Hrvatski narod*, eulogized the two noblemen as 'the protagonists of the struggle for the realization of full Croatian statehood', while the Habsburgs were attacked for having found allies among the 'Eastern-Orthodox Balkan elements' that had fled to Croatia before the advancing Ottomans.[160] Furthermore, 'the great European' Adolf Hitler was praised as having 'avenged' Zrinski and Frankopan, for through his recognition of the NDH, the Führer had 'condemned' the policies of 'Leopold Habsburg'.[161]

It was not only the lingering Habsburg legacy of the *Domobrani* that distressed Pavelić. The Home Guard, although large in size (in 1943, it numbered 135,000 soldiers), was 'never a well-functioning, dependable and efficient fighting force'.[162] As early as mid 1942, the Home Guard command had to contend with the reality of either increasing desertion to the Partisans on the part of many *Domobran* recruits or mass refusal to follow the draft.[163] Desertion became widespread from early 1943, when it became clear that Germany was

[159] Kiszling, *Kroaten*, p. 180.
[160] 'Zrinsko-frankopanski dan godine 1941', *Hrvatski narod*, 30 April 1941, p. 3.
[161] ibid.
[162] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 424. On figures of troops, see Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, p. 149.
[163] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 424-425, 428-431.

losing the war; in any case by this stage, many Croats saw the NDH as an Axis puppet and were not willing to fight for it.[164] Furthermore, Ustasha Militia troops were given more privileges and treated better by the regime than were *Domobran* soldiers, who were often poorly equipped and fed.[165]

Pavelić and the Militia had little trust in most of the *Domobran* officer corps, especially the large number of officers who came originally from either the former Austro-Hungarian army or the interwar Yugoslav army. The former were considered too old and out of touch with modern military matters, while the latter were considered poorly trained and often politically unrealiable, in other words, they were politically 'Yugoslav' (which in many cases was true).[166] Militia troops, on the other hand, although often undisciplined, were 'tough combat soldiers'.[167] Apart from German troops in the region, the Militia was the only force that could match the well-organized Communist led Partisans in battle.[168] In contrast, most Croatian army units (with the exception of some Home Guard mountain brigades and the Wehrmacht Croatian 'Legions'), as well as Serbian Chetnik units, ended up becoming 'an important recruiting pool for the Partisans'.[169] Even many Italian soldiers in Croatia also ended up joining the Partisans after Italy's capitulation; an estimated 40,000 Italians fought in Yugoslav Partisan ranks.[170] Although there were instances of the desertion or surrender of

[164] ibid, p. 428.
[165] ibid, p. 424.
[166] ibid, pp. 425-426. Also see Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 40.
[167] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 431.
[168] Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, p. 157.
[169] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution,* p. 431.
[170] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 389.

Ustasha soldiers to the Partisans, these were very rare.[171] Indeed it was much more common for Ustasha soldiers to commit suicide rather than surrender to the enemy.[172]

The fanaticism of the Ustasha Militia stemmed from the ideological indoctrination the troops received and only this could match the equally fervent ideological convictions of the Communist Partisans; both sides recognized this fact. In 1944, Ustasha Colonel Tomislav Sertić argued that on the territory of the NDH there exist 'only two martial religions: Ustashism and Partisanism, and the bearers of these religions will fight to the final victory'.[173] Josip Broz Tito, the Yugoslav Partisan leader, told a Reuter's reporter in May 1944 that 'the Ustashe are the best enemy soldiers'.[174] This was to be expected since anyone wishing to join the Militia had to prove that he was 'a Croat of steel', willing to 'subject himself to Ustasha regulations and the strictest Ustasha life'.[175] This 'strict Ustasha life' was similar to the one Ustasha recruits in Italy had been indoctrinated into in the 1930s; in other words, the Ustasha had to be 'severe and merciless' in order to 'lessen the pain of the Croatian people through fire, iron and blood'. As part of the Ustasha oath, all recruits and members of the movement had to swear that they were 'ready, like the Croatian heroes and knights of old, to give their lives for the Poglavnik and the Independent State of Croatia'.[176] Militia troops were ready to 'struggle for the NDH until death' on Germany's side because they sincerely believed in the inevitability of a German victory and also realized they had no

[171] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 431.
[172] Milovan Djilas, *Wartime* (London: Martin, Secker & Warburg, 1977), pp. 197, 330.
[173] Quoted in Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 329.
[174] Quoted in Jareb, *Pola stoljeća*, 120fn, p. 96.
[175] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 82.
[176] See Požar (ed.), *Ustaša*, p. 287.

other choice; the NDH was created at the mercy of the Reich and could not possibly survive an Allied victory, for the Allies were committed to the restoration of Yugoslavia.[177] Without the fanaticism and ideological commitment of the Ustasha Militia and police, Pavelić could never have carried out his policy of removing the 'unwanted' minorities and political opponents of the NDH. He needed an organization similar to the SS to do so.

Therefore, soon after 'seizing' power, Pavelić and the Ustasha police chief, Eugen Kvaternik, sought SS instructors for the Ustasha police and the elite Ustasha 'Poglavnik's Bodyguard' division (*Poglavnikov tjelesni sdrug* – PTS). Accordingly, SS-Untersturmführer Scheiber arrived in Zagreb in 1941 to help train the Poglavnik's elite PTS division and, for his services, received NDH citizenship (along with the Croatian surname of Grodić) and became an Ustasha officer.[178] In early June 1941, an agreement was reached between the younger Kvaternik and the aforementioned SS Major General, Gottlob Berger, whereby approximately one hundred young Ustasha recruits would be sent to Germany to train with the SS, in order to provide a future source of talented leaders.[179] Eugen Kvaternik also enjoyed a close working relationship with the first German police attaché in Zagreb, SS-Obersturmbannführer Willy Beissner.[180] Another important link between the Ustashe and

[177] Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, pp. 168, 182.
[178] Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, pp. 71-72. Scheiber was killed by the Partisans sometime in 1944 or 1945. See ibid, 194fn.
[179] ibid, p. 71. German envoy Kasche was opposed to this agreement on the grounds that the Croats 'are not a Germanic people' and therefore a close relationship between the SS and the Ustashe was not particularly suitable. In reality, Kasche's opposition stemmed mainly from his longstanding feud with Himmler. As a former member of the SA (and having almost been killed in 1934, on the 'Night of the Long Knives') Kasche was keen to keep Pavelić away from SS influence. Hitler disagreed with Kasche on this issue and agreed to allow the Waffen-SS to train the young Croats. See ibid.
[180] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 266.

the SS was the Croatian police attaché in Berlin, Branko Buzjak, a close friend of Berger and an important source for the procurement of arms for the Ustasha police and Militia.[181]

To be sure, the SS and the Ustashe were often critical of each other's aims and policies. As far as the SS was concerned, the Ustasha Militia was 'Catholic, undisciplined and badly trained'.[182] The Ustashe, on the other hand, objected to SS interference in Croatian internal affairs (such as the recruitment of Bosnian Muslims for the SS). There were also many structural differences between the two organizations. Nevertheless, the fanaticism of the Militia, the large number of men under arms and its combat effectiveness does call for a comparison to be made between the Waffen-SS and the Ustasha Militia. The Militia was certainly more similar to the Waffen-SS than to the Italian Blackshirts, for example, as the latter did not have the same autonomous position as the SS or Militia and were generally poor and unreliable troops.[183] Although a German naval report from the NDH in early 1944 argued that it would be 'false' to compare the Ustashe with the German SS, at the same time, the author of the report noted that the Militia militarily represented 'the best element amongst the armed Croatian power and the most reliable troops for the security of the state.

[181] Berger was Buzjak's best man at the Croat's wedding to the German actress Herta Thiele. See 'Branko Buzjak' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 61. Berger was also president of the 'German-Croatian Society' in Berlin. See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića' in *Mladen Lorković*, 48fn, p. 281.
[182] See 'Schreiben des SS-Brigadeführers und Generalmajors der Waffen-SS, Ernst Fick, an den Reichsführer, Heinrich Himmler, über die kroatischen Züstande (16. März 1944), in Karl Hnilicka, *Das Ende auf dem Balkan 1944/45: Die militärische Räumung Jugoslaviens durch die deutsche Wehrmacht* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1970), p. 292. Fick called for the disbanding of the Ustasha Militia, but also felt that a third of all Militia soldiers should be attached to the SS. See ibid, p. 293.
[183] The Blackshirts were incorporated into the Italian army. See Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism*, p. 387.

The Ustashe fight for principles that largely agree with our National Socialist ones (the totalitarian state, the racial question)'.[184]

Towards the end of 1944, Pavelić began, with Hitler's approval, to 'Ustashize' the Croatian armed forces, which involved having the Militia absorb the Home Guard.[185] Ustasha commanders had long been displeased with the performance and personal backgrounds of a number of army officers; among the most important objections was that many Home Guard officers had Serbian or Jewish wives, while a few officers were themselves ethnic Serbs, Slovenes or Russians by birth.[186] With the war's end in sight, the last minute administrative changes Pavelić made in the armed forces had little practical value. The 'Ustashizing' of the army merely reflected the fanaticism of Pavelić and his determination to remain by Germany's side to the bitter end. The leading positions in the new armed forces were taken over by the most radical Ustasha commanders, among them Rafael Boban, Ante Moškov, Vilko Pečnikar, Tomislav Rolf and Tomislav Sertić.[187] Pavelić's unwavering loyalty to the alliance with the Reich was recognized by Hitler, who informed his army commanders in the Southeast in September 1944, that 'the Ustashas form the political foundation of the Croatian state and therefore also of the Croatian armed forces. All German Wehrmacht staffs

[184] See 'Lagebeurteilung und Tätigkeitsbericht des Marineverbindungsstabes Kroatien für die Zeit von Anfang Dezember 1943 bis Ende Januar 1944 (7. Februar 1944)' in K. Hnilicka, *Das Ende auf dem Balkan*, p. 277.
[185] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 456.
[186] ibid, p. 436.
[187] ibid, p. 458.

in Croatia must clearly and without compromise adopt a pro-Ustasha course and support it'.[188]

Reflections on Ustasha rule: marching with Germany to the end

In spite of Pavelić's dictatorial style, the NDH never completely became an 'Ustascha-Staat' in the same manner that the German Reich was dominated by the SS. There were attempts among officers and generals of the Home Guard, pro-Ustasha nationalist conservatives (such as Prof. Filip Lukas) and even more moderate members of the Ustashe (Mladen Lorković for example) to create a less arbitrary and more 'legalistic' state, with an efficient administration. For example, in early 1942 Pavelić felt it opportune to re-institute the Croatian parliament, the *Sabor*, in order to legitimize increasingly unpopular Ustasha rule, 'demonstrate love for and attachment to the Croatian past' and attract other non-Ustasha Croats (particularly members of the HSS) to the regime.[189] The *Sabor* could not bring into question the supreme executive position of the 'Poglavnik', who remained 'the source of all authority in the NDH'.[190] Indeed, Pavelić made the decision as to who was eligible to become a deputy in the *Sabor*. The NDH *Sabor* could not make new laws, which remained the prerogative of the Poglavnik. Pavelić himself explained to the *Sabor's* first session in February 1942: 'Friends, I do not have a circle in the execution of the duties and rights of leadership, but I nevertheless

[188] ibid, p. 330.
[189] Yeshayahu Jelinek, 'An Authoritarian Parliament: The Croatian State Sabor of 1942', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 22:2, June 1980, p. 262.
[190] Nada Kisić-Kolanović, 'Hrvatski državni sabor Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1942', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 32, br. 2, 2000, p. 559.

felt that it is necessary to have such a circle and that is why I have called the Croatian State Sabor'.[191]

Nonetheless, a few deputies attempted 'to check the arbitrariness and rule of violence which characterized the Ustasha regime' by sending petitions of protest to Pavelić.[192] In November 1942, a group of deputies (including the speaker of the *Sabor*, the pre-war Ustasha Marko Došen, and the Ustasha Muslim Ademaga Mešić) sent a petition to the Poglavnik criticizing, among other things, the 'extermination' of ethnic Croats in Italian occupied parts of Croatia and calling for the 'return of full legal security in the country and the protection of the freedom, life and property of citizens without distinction'.[193] These petitions achieved little in practice, for Pavelić continued to enforce his rule of terror in Croatia. Any semblance of parliamentary politics was ultimately an irritation for Pavelić; he was to convene the parliament only three times (all in 1942). Pavelić knew that his support among the wider masses was either weak or passive, but would not resort to any political means that might threaten his monopoly of power.

To the end, Pavelić always relied heavily on the so-called Ustasha *ras* to maintain his grip on power and to terrorize his opponents and persecute non-Croat minorities.[194] The Ustasha *ras*, or *rasovi* (in Croatian), were a group of Militia colonels who often acted independently of

[191] Quoted in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 88.
[192] Jelinek, 'An Authoritarian Parliament', p. 268.
[193] See ibid, pp. 269-270 and Kisić-Kolanović, 'Hrvatski državni sabor', pp. 562-563.
[194] *Ras* was the title of an Ethiopian chieftain. The word was adopted by the Italians to refer to powerful Fascist regional bosses such as Italo Balbo.

the government and administration, but with Pavelić's full support. The *rasovi* had, as Kisić-Kolanović writes, the

> 'mentality of fanatical warriors and used all methods – murders and assassinations – if they served the interests of the Ustasha state. Pavelić considered them the strongest link in the chain of authority. In reality, the *rasovi* represented a closed and aggressive group that corroded the state from within'.[195]

The main *rasovi* were Eugen Kvaternik and the powerful Ustasha Militia colonels, Rafael Boban, Jure Francetić, Ivo Herenčić, Erih Lisak, Vjekoslav 'Maks' Luburić, Ante Moškov, Vilko Pečnikar and Vjekoslav Servatzy.[196] These men had little patience for Ustasha intellectuals such as Mladen Lorković, whom they had always regarded as a 'salon Ustasha', who foolishly 'thought that they can arrive at their aims through foreign policy and other means'.[197] Pavelić and his *rasovi* believed that only the use of force and the 'unity of leadership' could quell internal revolts and opposition.[198]

Lorković himself was to be murdered at the close of the war (presumably) by the *rasovi*, for having attempted, together with the Ustasha Minister for the Armed Forces, Ante Vokić, to broker an arrangement with HSS representatives in mid 1944, whereby power in the NDH would be handed over to the HSS and the Home Guard, who would then (it was hoped)

---

[195] Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, p. 41.
[196] See Ravlić, 'Glosarij' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 479. Note that Colonel (*pukovnik*) was the highest rank in the Militia.
[197] Unlike the Ustasha *rasovi* who had spent the interwar years in Italian training and internment camps, Lorković had lived in Germany, where he acquired a university education (and a German wife). Also, unlike most of the pre-war Italian based Ustashe, Lorković came from a well-to-do Zagreb bourgeois family. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, p. 20 and Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 45.
[198] Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 45.

arrange an armistice with the Western Allies.[199] This plan to preserve Croatian state independence had virtually no chance of success considering the fact that the Allies were committed to the restoration of all pre-war states (including Yugoslavia) that had been dismembered by Axis occupation policies. Allied support for the restoration of Yugoslavia was made perfectly clear at the Yalta conference in February 1945. The Ustasha press attacked the conference for apparently disregarding the principle of the self-determination of nations; in contrast Germany had, the Ustashe argued, recognized the NDH.[200] Although he sometimes entertained the hope, like Hitler, that there would be a falling out between the Western Allies and the Soviets (perhaps enabling Germany and Croatia the opportunity to join the West in a war against Communism), Pavelić was also well aware that the NDH's existence depended solely upon German support and therefore on the continued existence of the Nazi Reich, the state that the Allies had sworn to destroy.[201]

Pavelić placed even higher hopes on the rumours of Germany's 'miracle weapons'. The development of the V-1 and V-2 rockets (as well as the earlier brilliant victories of the Wehrmacht) convinced Pavelić and most other Ustashe that Germany could never lose the

[199] Although formerly one of the most prominent Germanophile Ustashe, by 1944 Lorković was convinced that Germany had lost the war and that the Ustashe had to let the HSS take power and even tried to convince Pavelić of the validity of such a course. Lorković never repudiated the Ustasha movement and ideology as such, but rather, pragmatically felt that the time had come for the changing of the political guard. The principal aim of the Ustashe was, as Lorković saw it, the attainment and preservation of state independence at all costs. Lorković and Vokić were arrested and then killed sometime in April 1945 (although the circumstances of their deaths remain unclear), along with a number of leading HSS members and Home Guard officers. Pavelić also accused his personal enemy, the conservative and mildly anti-Nazi Glaise von Horstenau, of having made defeatist comments to Lorković (who was a close friend of Glaise) and succeeded in having the General recalled to Germany. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, pp. 72-98, 103-106. Also see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 422-423.

[200] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 435.

[201] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 328-329.

war.[202] The alliance with Germany was also an alliance based on ideological affinity. In a public speech made in January 1944, the Poglavnik explained that

> 'this great war…is an ideological war…on the one side Europe with the Führer at its head fights for a new healthy order and life, while on the other side is tattered democracy…worn out and tattered together with the darkest system of Bolshevized Communism. And here, in this struggle…we stand on the side of the Führer, we stand on the principles of nationalism, National Socialism, Ustashism'.[203]

Pavelić had indeed waged an ideological war for four years, even at the expense of the NDH's internal political, social and economic security. Pavelić had founded a state based on a totalitarian system of government, where rule was to be solely in the hands of the 'Poglavnik' and his political elite, in other words, the Ustasha 'spiritual aristocracy'. For Pavelić such a system was necessary, for only through the rule of a true elite – which would flinch from nothing – could Croatia attain and maintain state independence and purge the Croatian land of the alien elements that had threatened its national distinctiveness. Unlike the preceding generations of supposedly weak, pacifist and vacillating Croatian political leaders, who had envisioned a nation of peaceful democratic Slav farmers playing tamburitza guitars, Pavelić sought to 'reawaken' the 'true' Croats, the warriors who had vanquished the Avars centuries ago, had supplied the armies of the Habsburg, Venetian and Ottoman

[202] ibid. Also see Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 428.
[203] Quoted in Bogdan Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 1 (Zagreb: Globus, 1983), p. 265.

Empires with the best soldiers and officers in the world, a cultured people that could be counted amongst the oldest state building nations of Europe.

In accordance with the ideological tenets of the Ustasha movement, the NDH regime sought to 'legalize' the supremacy of the historic and natural rights of the Croatian nation to its territory at the expense of the 'anti-national' and 'anti-social' minorities (Serbs, Jews and Gypsies) living within Croatia. In order to successfully carry out the 'purification' of the Croatian land, the regime undertook a massive propaganda campaign through the media and mass public rallies, especially from May to July 1941, in order to create an atmosphere of intolerance toward the 'enemies of the Croatian people'. Through such propaganda, the regime sought to educate the wider Croatian masses on the 'true' identity of the non-Croatian minorities and why their presence was no longer welcome. Before we explore how the 'Asiatic-Balkan' Serbo-Jewish-Gypsy countertype was defined (legally and otherwise) by the regime – and the policies executed against these anti-national minorities as a result – we will examine the regime's definition and representation of the Croat 'Aryan' ideal type. Both the regime's ideal type and countertype were primarily the product of a fairly coherent pre-war ideology that sought to provide a Croatian 'authentic ethno-history', rather than the product of a straightforward imitation of German National Socialist policies or an incoherent 'anti-Serb fit of rage'.

Chapter Ten: The Nation of Wolves and Lions – the NDH as the Bulwark of the White West and the Bridge to the Orient

The 'Croatian spiritual revolution' and the 'new Croatian man'

The Ustashe were fond of describing their accession to power in April 1941 as the beginning of a 'Croatian revolution'. The principal meaning of this particular 'revolution' was somewhat different to the use of the word by the German National Socialists and Italian Fascists. The latter two movements talked of the revolution that would bring about the 'new man', who in many respects was simply a stereotype of the ancient Teuton or ancient Roman heroes.[1] The Nazis had a clear idea of the physical stereotype of the racial 'Nordic man', while the Italians focused on moulding a modern 'fascist man' of action informed by the eternal Roman past.[2] For the Nazis, 'the man of the future had always existed, even in the past, for the race was eternal…while the ideal man of Italian fascism created new values'.[3] Otherwise, the Nazis and Fascists shared the vision of the 'new man' being masculine, athletic, brave, spartan and spiritual, 'the very opposite of muddleheaded, talkative, intellectualizing liberals and socialists'.[4] The Ustashe too, spoke of creating the

> 'new man in the new order. The new Croatian man, which means the Ustasha, must be a man of duty, responsibility, work, struggle, honesty, heroism…This new

[1] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, pp. 31-32.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid, p. 32. The 'future' Italian Fascist man was thus to be moulded by 'training, experience and education'. See Payne, *History of Fascism*, pp. 208-209.
[4] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, pp. 30-31.

man, the Ustasha, must in his work and in his public and private life connect the new virtues of Ustashism with the virtues of the old Croats, the eternal fighters and warriors'.[5]

There was an important difference, however, in the case of the Ustashe. Both the Germans and Italians could look to well-established cultural traditions that glorified the Germanic or Roman past in order to create the 'new man'. Although the myth of Roman glory 'was constantly appropriated from the Italians by their neighbours…it never ceased to be the special attribute of the Italian people'.[6] The Nazis, too, were able to appropriate the myth of Teutonic purity and virtue dating from the Renaissance discovery of Tacitus' *Germania,* in which the ancient Germans were described as a simple but heroic people of 'pure blood'.[7] In the Croatian case, however, all the national movements before the Ustashe, apart from Starčević, had stressed a 'Slav' or 'South Slav' ethnic/racial/cultural stereotype that was not specifically Croatian. Although Starčević had tried to fashion a stereotype of the 'master' state building and noble Croat, he had also often included all the other South Slavs (except the Bulgars) as 'Croats' and therefore had not clearly and unambiguously differentiated Croats from Serbs.

The task of a creating a truly Croatian ethnic/racial/cultural stereotype that could serve as the basis for moulding the Croatian 'new man' was enthusiastically taken up by the Ustashe, who had already constructed a fairly coherent vision of the 'Croatian man' during the 1930s.

[5] Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi*, p. 21.
[6] Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, p. 54.
[7] ibid, p. 80.

Once in power, the Ustashe sought to imbue the Croatian people with the racial ideal of the 'true' Croatian man. Like Nazi racism, Ustasha racism rested on both 'spiritual' and 'scientific' arguments. This chapter will explore how the 'new Croatian man' was defined in a 'spiritual' sense, and how the NDH itself was defined according to a racial idea of geo-politics, with Bosnia and its Muslim population forming an important part of that new Croat man and state. The next chapter will deal with Ustasha pseudo-scientific racism.

The task of creating a new Croat man was clearly spelled out soon after the Ustashe set up government. In an article in *Hrvatski narod*, in late April 1941, under the title 'The Meaning of the Croatian Spiritual Revolution', the author, the writer and journalist Ivo Lendić, sought to explain how the enemies of Croatia had tried to systematically destroy the Croatian 'spirit'. Spirit, Lendić noted, was the 'source of strength' for individuals and communities and that is 'why all those who have wanted to enslave men and nations seek to enslave the soul, for he who has preserved inner freedom, the freedom of one's soul, is not a slave'.[8] The enemies of the Croats had sought to destroy the Croatian spirit or soul by plundering and appropriating the cultural wealth of Croatia. As Lendić argued,

> 'we had our own Old Croatian language, our own Old Croatian alphabet, our own Old Croatian Glagolitic literature, as no other so-called Slavic people did. However, we Croats were not allowed to be proud of this. Along came Czech, Serbian, Russian and Yugoslav scholars who proclaimed that language as the Old

[8] Ivo Lendić, 'Smisao hrvatske duhovne revolucije', *Hrvatski narod*, 26 April 1941, p. 8.

Slavic one, the Glagolitic literature as Old Slavic literature, the Glagolitic alphabet as the Old Slavic alphabet'.[9]

Lendić noted how the Serbs, 'a people without a cultured tradition', even wanted to claim the old Croatian city of Dubrovnik as Serbian, this despite the fact that the Ragusan Republic had actually forbidden any Orthodox inhabitant the right to live within its city walls.[10] The Republic of Dubrovnik therefore felt 'insecure' by the very presence of a single Orthodox Christian ('Vlach') residing within the city. For Lendić, this 'political wisdom of Croatian Dubrovnik must be a model for us in this respect'.[11] Accordingly, 'no-one else has, and cannot not have, rights to Croatia save only the Croat!'[12] For not only the Serbs, but also the 'Jews, Slovenes, Czechs and Communists' had all tried to 'poison' the Croatian people with the ideologies of 'Illyrianism, pan-Slavism, Yugoslavism and Marxism'.[13] With the arrival of the NDH, however, the 'lordly spirit of the noble Croatian nation has been awaken'.[14] Lendić explained that in this part of Europe, the Croat

'is a gentleman, whether he is a peasant, a worker, a craftsman or an intellectual. A gentleman here is a moral-ethical concept in contrast to the concept of the

[9] ibid.
[10] ibid. It is indeed a fact that the Republic allowed no Orthodox churches to be built in Dubrovnik and that the prerequisite for Ragusan citizenship was adherence to Catholicism. Before Napoleon occupied Dubrovnik in 1808, there were only a few Orthodox believers (who were referred to as 'Morlachs', in other words, Vlachs) in the city. See Banac, 'The Confessional "Rule" and the Dubrovnik Exception', p. 452.
[11] Lendić, 'Smisao hrvatske duhovne revolucije'.
[12] ibid.
[13] ibid.
[14] ibid.

slavoserb, with which dr. Ante Starčević denoted a man without moral qualities, a man of…slave disposition'.[15]

The 'Ustasha spirit', meaning the 'spirit of Croatian freedom and individuality', continued Lendić, 'must imbue the entire Croatian nation', so that in the NDH there is only word of the 'Old Croatian language and literature' and not the 'Old Slavic language and literature' and only word of the 'Croatian language' and not the 'Serbo-Croatian language'.[16] In short the Ustasha 'spiritual revolution' would be simply about the extolling of all things 'spiritually' Croatian, and not all things 'Slavic', 'Illyrian' or 'Yugoslav'. The 'essential characteristics of the untainted Croatian national character' or national spirit were 'threefold' as Dr. Ivan Krajač explained in 1943: 'The first is the feeling of honour, honesty and the straight path, which is completely contrary to the typical characteristic of the Orient. The second is military heroism, bravery and capability. The third is cultural ability'.[17]

The above traits were, according to the Ustashe, racially inherent to the Croats and therefore were signified as having a great affect on the actual organization and running of the Croatian state itself. In a 1942 article in the Ustasha journal *Spremnost,* under the title of 'The Organizational Ability and Strength of the Croats', one of the leading Ustasha propagandists, Prof. Danijel Crljen, argued that the Croatian 'organizational spirit' would be 'one of the most important conditions for the stability, vigour and orderliness' of the NDH and that is

[15] ibid.
[16] ibid.
[17] Dr. Ivan Krajač, 'Kulturna sposobnost Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 6 June 1943, p. 9.

why the Poglavnik had mentioned this characteristic in the sixth article of the 'Ustasha principles'.[18] These 'organizational' skills were not only inherent to the Croats but to all 'conquering' and 'warrior' nations. As Crljen claimed, during the 'Great Migration of Peoples' (*Völkerwanderung*) following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the migratory peoples could be divided into two groups, 'the conquerors and rulers' who founded states and the slave-like peoples that served the conquerors.[19] The 'conquering' peoples, such as the Croats, had 'ordered mutual relations, a formed family tribal and national hierarchy', while 'patriarchal discipline…was the main characteristic of the constructiveness of the whole nation'.[20] It was only upon such foundations, argued Crljen, that 'the enterprising and warrior spirit of the old Croats could come to full expression…Only to the strength of its organization can the Croatian nation give thanks that it didn't disappear in the hurricane [of the *Völkerwanderung*]'.[21]

The 'conquering' Croats were thus able to 'reign over the submissive Slavs' and create a state.[22] In a slight departure from Lorković, Crljen argued that the NDH was the 'third' Croatian state in recorded history, the first being not in the 'Iranian proto-homeland', but along the Wistula (i.e. 'White Croatia') and the second being the medieval Kingdom of Croatia along the Adriatic.[23] In short, as a 'historic nation', the Croats had proven themselves capable of creating a state, and this had been achieved primarily through the use of arms. As

[18] Prof. Danijel Crljen, 'Organizatorna sposobnost i snaga Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 19 April 1941, p. 3.
[19] ibid.
[20] ibid.
[21] ibid.
[22] ibid.
[23] ibid.

Field Marshal Kvaternik told the Croatian *Sabor* in February 1942, 'only warrior peoples possess a creative spirit, because only they have created the greatest and most worthy social community, and that is the state'.[24] The Croats were indeed to be found among those nations that had 'conquered Europe through sword and blood', for they had managed to establish their rule for centuries over the (Adriatic) territory that even 'warrior peoples' such as the Avars and Goths had only held for a short while.[25] This 'creative warrior spirit' would provide, Kvaternik noted, the 'line of direction and guidance' to those building the new Croatian army.[26]

This 'creativity' of the Croats was considered a racial rather than a cultural trait, carried chiefly through the centuries by the *natio croatica*, which had struggled to preserve Croatian state right.[27] Nonetheless, all Croats were possessed of the warrior spirit that had created and preserved that historic state right.[28] Not surprisingly, in its directive issued on 7 May 1941, the Croatian army command declared that,

> 'service in our Croatian army represents an honour for every racially pure Croat. So that our army may be the reflection of our Croatian peculiarity and the main bearer of our Croatian movement, it is indispensably necessary that all the best and healthiest forces be gathered into it'.[29]

---

[24] Quoted in 'Hrvati – ratnički narod', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 February 1942, p. 3.
[25] ibid.
[26] ibid.
[27] Ivo Bogdan, 'Povjestni značaj ustaške revolucije', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, p. 3.
[28] ibid.
[29] Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 106.

In theory, the 'best and healthiest' did not, naturally, include Jews and/or Serbs. However, the Croatian Home Guard did accept 'a certain number' of Serbs, mainly former officers of the Austro-Hungarian army; also accepted were some Slovenes, while 'several dozen Jewish physicians served in the Army Medical Corps'.[30] In general, though, the great majority of the NDH's Serbs were to be excluded from service in the NDH armed forces, apart from those Serbs drafted for military labour service.[31]

Despite the tension that existed between the Home Guard and the Militia, the command of the former was quite clear about the 'spirit' that had to be inculcated into the new 'racially pure' army recruits. In December 1941, Kvaternik issued a booklet entitled, 'The Education and Character of the Croatian Home Guard', in which the Croatian Field Marshal argued against the values of both liberalism and Bolshevism.[32] He noted that the war of the 'Germanic world' against Bolshevism was a 'struggle for the victory of the ideal of humanity against unbending materialism'.[33] Both Kvaternik and Pavelić were firm supporters of the German invasion of Russia and, accordingly, Pavelić wrote to the Führer immediately after the beginning of 'Operation Barbarossa', in late June 1941, offering the Reich Croatia's military assistance. In that way, asserted Pavelić, 'the old German-Croatian brotherhood-in-arms, which had been confirmed for centuries on all the battlefields of Europe, could once again come to life'.[34]

---

[30] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 418.
[31] ibid.
[32] Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, pp. 37-38.
[33] ibid, p. 38.
[34] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 491.

The decision to send Croatian soldiers to fight the 'Asiatic Bolshevik hordes' clearly highlighted the Ustasha aim of moulding a new type of 'racial' Croat, an antithesis to the peace loving Slav as imagined by the Russophile Radić brothers.[35] Although the number of Croat soldiers fighting on the Eastern front was quite small in comparison to the troops sent by other Axis countries, the Croatian 'Legions' had great propaganda value for the NDH, especially because of the 'capable performance' of the soldiers, sailors and pilots sent there.[36] Pavelić was keen to be seen as an equal to the other Axis partners by sending troops to Russia and was also keen to receive German recognition for the efforts of his soldiers, something that would add to his regime's prestige.[37] The bravery of the Legionnaires was important to the stereotype of the ideal Croat that the regime was trying to impress both upon the Croats themselves and to foreigners. Kvaternik was no doubt pleased when Hitler told him (at their meeting in July 1941), that he was 'convinced' that the Croats were a true *Soldatenvolk* ('nation of soldiers') and therefore believed that the Croats would feel quite at home among German soldiers.[38] At their first meeting in Berchtesgaden, Pavelić had brought gifts to the Führer, including a Prussian flag having once belonged to King Friedrich II and some of the King's chess pieces, which had apparently been plundered by the famous Austrian commander Baron Trenk and his Croatian troops during the Seven Years War

[35] Although only 'pure Croats' were in principle to be admitted into the Croat Legions, Ukrainians and Russians living in the NDH were also allowed to join. See Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 167.
[36] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 267.
[37] During a visit to Croatian troops in the Ukraine in 1942, Pavelić was told by the Commander of the German sixth army, General Friedrich Paulus, that the Croats were the best soldiers among the Germans' *Hilfsvölker* (allies); after the Croats 'came the Slovaks and the Romanians and in last place the Hungarians and Italians'. See Kiszling, *Kroaten*, p. 188.
[38] See Hillgruber (ed.) *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, p. 612.

(1756-1763).[39] Part of Pavelić's reason for offering the gifts was to 'stress' to the Germans 'the soldierly spirit of the Croats'.[40]

That 'soldierly spirit' was to now serve not only Croatian interests but also those of the 'Aryan' West. After his meeting with Hitler at the Berghof, Pavelić was able to officially confirm by decree (7 June), that the eastern border of the NDH now ran along the river Drina separating Bosnia and Serbia.[41] Two days later, Josip Milković, the Ustasha Director for 'National Enlightenment', wrote of the meeting between the Führer and the Poglavnik as the meeting of 'two revolutions, equally having sprung from blood and soil, which with its mysticism continually propels the life forces of nations of faith, ideals and honour'.[42] Unlike Germany, the 'false democracies' had, as Milković argued, tried to 'build bridges on the Drina, in order to link the incompatible…They forgot…that the Drina throughout history has not been ordinary water, but blood, the blood of the West, the blood of the Croats'.[43] Now that Bosnia was free, the 'Croatian Ustasha and the Croatian soldier will stand with a Croatian rifle on the Drina so that in the execution of his duty toward justice, humanity, to one's land and the West, he will perform the mission of Croatdom'.[44]

Milković ended the article by quoting Šufflay's famous remark from 1928, namely, how Croatian nationalism was also 'loyal service given to the whole white West'.[45] The Ustashe now saw the real opportunity to put Šufflay's words into practice. In other words, the regime

[39] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 161.
[40] ibid.
[41] ibid.
[42] 'Drina – Hrvatska vjera i ustaška stvarnost', *Hrvatski narod*, 9 June 1941, p. 1.
[43] ibid.
[44] ibid.
[45] ibid.

truly desired to be recognized as the *antemurale* of the white or Aryan West. A day after returning to Croatia in 1941, Pavelić told Italian journalists that the border on the Drina separated the West and East and that

> 'today's restoration of Croatian independence has its foundation in historical and ethnic factors. The pan-Slavist movement spread the belief, throughout the entire world, that we are one people with the Serbs. This is not true as the Croats are racially not Slavs but rather are Croats by their origin and nothing else. Without repeating the known differences in religion and culture, the two nations are differentiated ethnically even in a somatic sense'.[46]

The Ustashe therefore defined the 'West' in both a racial and cultural sense. The greatest cultural achievements of the 'white race' were associated specifically with Western Europe. Croatia was, as Ivo Bogdan, a leading Ustasha ideologist, noted, a land situated 'on the eastern rim of the European West', close to 'the centres of civilization and progress of the white man' and the Croats were also 'members of the white race, we live in Europe and there is no doubt that in this region, the European West gave that which is the greatest and most beautiful'.[47] Alongside belonging to and defending the white race, the Croats were also, culturally speaking, a 'Western-Eastern' people. The Ustashe envisioned the Croatian nation as both the *antemurale* of the West and a bridge to the Islamic 'Orient'.

The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina

[46] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 140.
[47] I. Bogdan, 'Povjestni značaj ustaške revolucije', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, p. 3.

The Ustasha regime imagined the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina as the decisive link between the European West and the Islamic world; at the same time, the 'Croats of Islamic faith' were basically 'Western' (i.e. white Europeans) according to their race and noble history.[48] Bosnia and Herzegovina – or now 'central and eastern' Croatia – was regarded as the 'backbone' of the NDH itself.[49] Without Bosnia-Herzegovina, argued the Ustashe, there would be 'a mortal abyss between the two extended arms of Croatia'.[50] Obviously, incorporating Bosnia-Herzegovina into Croatia made geo-political sense, but there were other important cultural and ideological reasons for the great deal of pro-Muslim propaganda on the part of the Ustashe. Historians tend to, however, portray the Ustasha courting of the Bosnian Muslims as being primarily an example of *realpolitik*, the need to attract the Muslims to the Croatian side not only in order to secure an ally against the Serbs, but also a Croatian numerical majority in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Serbs were in a relative majority (44%) before the war.[51]

In reality, the attempt to 'Croatize' the Muslims reflected the obsession the Ustashe had with the question of 'race'. The Bosnian Muslims were Croatian because of their 'blood' and this was more important than the question of religion. Although Islam was part of the 'Balkan'

---

[48] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 140. The 'Western spirit' of the Muslims had also been preserved through the European feudal hereditary aristocracy of Ottoman Bosnia (the only one of its kind in the Ottoman Empire). This nobility was also considered part of Croatia's historic state right tradition. See 'Zavjet Stjepana Radića', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 August 1941, p. 3.

[49] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 140.

[50] ibid.

[51] See for example, Francine Friedman, *The Bosnian Muslims: Denial of a Nation* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), p. 123. For population statistics see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 480-481.

and 'Oriental' world that the Ustashe so despised, the Bosnian Muslims were only part of that world in a religious sense. In other words, the Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina had accepted Islam but had not racially mixed with Turks or other 'Oriental' or 'Near Eastern' peoples. In contrast, the Ustashe argued that the opposite had occurred among the Serbs, for they had rejected Islam but had intermarried with various 'Asiatic' immigrants during the long period of Ottoman rule. The Ustashe, as the following pages highlight, regarded the policy of assimilating Bosnia's Muslims as one of their most important aims. The Bosnian Muslim was an essential component of the 'new Croatian man'. The attempted assimilation of Bosnian Islam was definitely not 'fictionalized' or 'arbitrary' in any way, but part and parcel of the regime's aim to turn the NDH into an 'Aryans-only' state. Furthermore, when it came to wooing the Muslims, the Ustashe were also following in the ideological footsteps of Starčević.

The Ustashe had made their desire to recognize Islam as a 'Croat religion' immediately clear after proclaiming the NDH. In a separate address to Bosnia-Herzegovina's Muslims, Slavko Kvaternik called on his 'brother Muslim Croats' to see in the Poglavnik, 'the greatest pledge for the happy and secured future of Islam and Croatdom in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for he faithfully executes the vow of the father of the homeland dr. Ante Starčević, who saw in you Muslims the best part of the Croatian people'.[52] To symbolically confirm his commitment to the future of Islam within the NDH, Pavelić even had himself photographed wearing a fez (with the Ustasha symbol attached to it).[53] Ustasha ideologists praised Islam with having

[52] Quoted in Požar (ed.), *Ustaša*, p. 135.
[53] See the photograph in Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 119.

preserved the Croatian national spirit and 'Croatian blood' in Bosnia throughout centuries of foreign rule. Despite the social disruptions caused by the Ottoman occupation,

> 'the course of Croatdom was not interrupted, but rather was continued in the new spirit of Islam, and it remained preserved even more purely, because the faith saved the spirit of the past…This Bosnianness is nothing other than preserved Croatdom…fencing itself off even from its Islamic brothers in the East'.[54]

Ideas of blood 'purity' occupied an important place in Ustasha propaganda aimed at winning over the Muslims to the Croatian nation. The predominant physical traits of the Bosnian Muslims were described as 'mellow [i.e. light] pigmentation, blue or brown eyes, and fair or at least brown hair', features denoted as characteristic for the Croats as a whole.[55] In a 1942 study on Bosnian geography and history, Filip Lukas noted that the 'largest percentage of fair types' among the peoples of Bosnia-Herzegovina was found among the Muslims, closely followed by the Catholic Croats, while the smallest percentage was to be found among the Orthodox Serbs.[56] As Lukas argued, 'this was one more argument that confirms the instinctual thinking of dr. Ante Starčević, that the Bosnian Muslims are the ethnically purest preserved part of the Croatian people'.[57] In short, 'blood, language and history' clearly showed that the Bosnian Muslims were Croats; for example, the majority of Muslims spoke

[54] Quoted in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH,* p. 197.
[55] 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih Muslimana: zvjerstva Srba nad Muslimana', *Novi List*, 8 May 1941, p. 7.
[56] Filip Lukas, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', in *Povijest Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463* (1942; Sarajevo: Hrvatsko kulturno društvo Napredak, 1998), p. 68.
[57] ibid.

the Croatian ikavian sub-dialect.[58] As already noted, the Ustasha notion of the 'West' was as much racial as it was cultural or religious, thereby being able to include the Muslims. At a rally in the town of Slavonski Brod in June 1941, the Education Minister Mile Budak stated that the 'guard on the Drina river can only be kept by the Bosnian, whether Muslim or Catholic', for both were of 'pure Croatian blood'.[59]

Pavelić was also personally keen to stress the importance of 'blood' when referring to the Muslims. In a speech to the *Sabor* in February 1942, Pavelić remarked that foreigners often asked him about the 'Muslim question' in the NDH, which he denied existed:

> 'No, we do not have a Muslim question. States that have colonies have a Muslim question. In these colonies there are peoples of Muslim faith that are not the same blood and body as the people in the mother country. The Muslim blood of our Muslims is Croatian blood. It is a Croatian faith, for in our land its adherents are Croatian sons'.[60]

Pavelić had, from an early age, possessed great admiration for the Bosnian Muslims and was keen to show his pro-Muslim sentiments at any opportunity. When meeting Muslim leaders, he was always accommodating to Muslim forms of courtesy and took a personal interest in preparations for any official Muslim religious ceremonies during the NDH.[61] When Pavelić

[58] See 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih Muslimana'.
[59] See 'Poglavnik je uvijek imao pravo, on će urediti ovu državu', *Hrvatski narod*, 16 June 1941, p. 16.
[60] Pavelić quoted in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 91.
[61] Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, pp. 290-291. For example, when meeting Muslims Pavelić would use the greeting 'selam', which means 'peace'. See ibid.

took the oath of office on 15 April 1941, he did so before a Catholic priest, Vilim Cecelja, the Evangelical bishop Michael Becker and the mufti of Zagreb, Ismet Muftić.[62]

One of Pavelić's most important acts concerning the Muslim population in the NDH was the building of a mosque in Zagreb, completed and opened in 1944. This was not a mere propaganda stunt. Pavelić's 'act angered both Catholics and art-lovers' for he had not only chosen to erect a mosque in a predominantly Catholic city that had never fallen to the Ottoman Turks, but also chose to convert an inter-war art gallery built by the Yugoslavist Ivan Meštrović into the new mosque.[63] In 1942, Pavelić answered his critics by highlighting the 'Yugoslav' symbolism of Meštrović's art gallery and the need to publicly demonstrate the NDH's embrace of Islam:

> 'This temple of art carries on itself the brand of our slavery. I cannot erase this brand more honourably than by turning this temple into a mosque…for the Muslims disappeared in Serbia when the last mosque was destroyed. As a mark that they will not disappear in the Croatian nation, their mosque will be erected in the capital city'.[64]

Of equally symbolic significance was Pavelić's plan to have the future capital of the NDH moved from Zagreb to the northwestern Bosnian city of Banja Luka. Preparations for this

[62] Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 53.
[63] Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', p. 202.
[64] Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 91.

included moving some government offices to Banja Luka.[65] There were socio-cultural as well as geo-political reasons for such a move. At his first meeting with Hitler in June 1941, Pavelić informed von Ribbentrop of his plan, arguing that it would be difficult to govern the NDH from the peripheral location of Zagreb and that he would move the capital to Banja Luka out of 'consideration' for the Muslim population.[66] Zagreb was also a little too 'cosmopolitan' for the *völkisch* tastes of the Ustashe. It was considered open to urban moral corruption as well to the useless talk and intellectualizing common in the city coffee-houses, where 'gentlemen' and 'intellectuals', as Pavelić told the *Sabor* in 1942, criticized the regime, although they had no idea or did not seem to care that Croat peasants in eastern Bosnia and eastern Herzegovina had to 'live day and night with a gun, to live without bread and without family, as they were slaughtered by Chetnik criminals'.[67] In contrast to Zagreb, Banja Luka lay in the 'Dinaric' heartland of Croatia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where 'the purest type of Croatian from the point of view of blood, feelings and intellectual capacity lives'.[68] Zagreb remained, all the same, the capital city of the NDH until the end of the war.

Initially, a large number of Bosnian Muslim intellectuals, politicians and businessmen found the Poglavnik's overtures to them appealing and were well disposed toward the Ustashe; pro-German Muslim sentiments dating from the Austro-Hungarian period also made the

[65] For example, the vice-presidency of the government under the Muslim Ustasha Osman Kulenović was moved to Banja Luka (although it was returned to Zagreb by the end of 1941). See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 66.
[66] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 486.
[67] Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, pp. 95-96.
[68] Quoted in Tomašić, 'Croatia in European Politics', p. 81.

Bosnian population more willing to support Germany's new ally, the NDH.[69] In his study of Bosnia-Herzegovina during the Second World War, Jelinek concludes that 'various archival sources leave the distinct impression that at least half the Moslems living in the territory of the independent state [of Croatia], and perhaps more, sided with it from the outset'.[70] The religious head (*Reis ul-ulema*) of inter-war Yugoslavia's Muslims from 1938-1942, Fehim Spaho, was, for example, a self-declared Croat and in the early period of the NDH, 'strongly pro-Ustasha'.[71]

There were two main Muslim political groups that supported or joined the Ustashe. The first included pre-war Muslim Croat nationalists, such as Hakija Hadžić, Alija Šuljak and Ademaga Mešić who basically saw themselves as Croats first and Muslims second, while the second (noticeably larger) group included former JMO politicians and members, such as Džafer Kulenović, who saw themselves as Muslims first, Croats second.[72] The latter group was more interested in protecting particular Bosnian Muslim interests, while the first group were sincere believers in the Ustasha credo that any attempt to separate the Bosnian Muslims as a particular or special group 'would not be useful either for the state or for the

[69] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 490-491, 495.
[70] Yeshayahu A. Jelinek, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War: Relations Between Moslems and Non-Moslems', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1990, p. 279.
[71] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 490. It should be noted that Fehim's two brothers, Mehmed and Mustafa, did not share their brother's national affiliation. Mehmed refused to call himself Serb or Croat, while Mustafa was a self-professed Serb. See Banac, *National Question*, p. 375.
[72] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 491. Kulenović was nevertheless a 'modern Muslim' who accepted the Western principle of the separation of church and state and believed that the acceptance of the Croatian nation-state was the surest way forward for Bosnian Muslims with regard to progress and modernity. See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Muslimanska inteligencija i islam u NDH', p. 908.

Croatian Muslims'.[73] In accordance with such views, police chief Eugen Kvaternik issued instructions to all government offices in March 1942 that any conflict between Catholic and Muslim Croats had to be avoided, and in the case of such conflict, 'energetic and drastic measures' were to be taken to suppress it.[74]

To be sure, Muslims were generally underrepresented in government offices,[75] which does not, however, imply that they did not occupy important positions in the regime. Hakija Hadžić, for example, was Ustasha 'Commissioner' (*povjerenik*) for Tuzla in eastern Bosnia and Alija Šuljak had the same position for eastern Herzegovina in early 1941.[76] Mehmed Alajbegović, scion of a noble Muslim family from Bihać, was NDH Consul to Munich (1942-1943), Minister for 'Welfare for the Affected Areas' (1943) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (1944-1945). Historians tend to view, quite wrongly, the low number of Muslims in government as evidence that Pavelić's overtures toward the Muslims were mere 'tokenism'.[77] There were three main reasons for the relatively small number of Muslims in the upper echelons of Ustasha government: firstly, there were just over three and a half million Catholics compared to 750,000 Muslims in the NDH; secondly, many Bosnian Muslims saw themselves as Muslims first and therefore were not necessarily willing to collaborate with a

[73] Redžić, *Muslimansko autonomaštvo*, p. 14.
[74] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 493.
[75] See ibid, pp. 489-490, 505.
[76] Ustasha 'Commissioners' had the important role of organizing Ustasha administration throughout the NDH in the early months of 1941. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 68-69. Hadžić was also NDH envoy to Budapest in late 1944. See 'Hakija Hadžić' in *Tko je Tko u NDH*, p. 148.
[77] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 489.

Croatian nationalist regime; and thirdly, Muslims were traditionally reluctant to enter politics.[78]

The Ustashe were opposed to any form of separate autonomy for Bosnia-Herzegovina, but they were certainly not anti-Islamic. The regime wanted Muslims to start seeing themselves primarily as 'Croats of Islamic faith', not as Bosnian Muslims.[79] The problem for the Ustashe was that the majority of Muslims saw themselves, in the tradition of their ancestors under Ottoman rule, as Bosnians.[80] Pavelić thought that the best way to quash any movement for Bosnian autonomy was to erase the territorial and administrative divisions between Bosnia-Herzegovina and the rest of Croatia. Consequently, Pavelić had the NDH divided into 22 'great districts' (*velike župe*). A 'župa' was the old Croatian (and old Slav) tribal-territorial division and Pavelić's decision to restore this administrative term reflected his historicism; in a speech in June 1941, Pavelić argued that he wanted to

> 'link the traditional, historical role of the župa with the contemporary demands of an organized and ordered administration in the state…This fact will serve to document our long and great past, that we Croats in our homeland were already administratively organized in times when many other nations still generally didn't have an ordered state life'.[81]

In line with this state organization, the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina was included into 12 *župe*, although only 6 of these consisted solely of Bosnian-Herzegovinian territory; the rest

[78] As Jelinek notes, during the war 'the Moslems as a whole followed their traditional practice of not committing themselves to any particular party'. See Jelinek, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War', p. 280.
[79] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 494.
[80] See Banac, *National Question*, p. 41.
[81] Quoted in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 105.

were joined with Croatian territory.[82] In the same way that the Ustashe refused to treat Bosnia-Herzegovina differently from the rest of the NDH, so too was Islam simply considered another 'Croatian religion' that required no special status. Therefore no special constitution for the Islamic religious community was promulgated in the NDH, despite calls from Islamic religious leaders. Again, the Ustashe were against any policy that might 'free the Moslems as a religious group from total dependence on the state'.[83]

Certainly, the centralizing policies of the Ustashe were not popular with the Muslims who were more concerned with protecting particular Bosnian interests. Ustasha racial and ethnic policies were also not popular with many Muslim religious leaders, who were keen to preserve the tradition of relative tolerance between the different religious and ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina; these religious leaders were further worried about a possible anti-Muslim backlash from the Serbian Chetniks. Bosnia-Herzegovina itself was to become the scene of some of the greatest atrocities of the war on the territory of the former Yugoslav state, involving the mass murder of Orthodox Serbs by the Ustashe and the Chetnik massacre of Muslims and Croats. For all of the preceding reasons, important Muslim political leaders, particularly those grouped around the Muslim society, *El-Hidaje*, began to distance themselves from the Ustashe. Even as early as August 1941, Muslim religious leaders in several Bosnian towns sent resolutions to the Ustasha authorities protesting the persecution of Serbs and Jews and the arbitrariness of Ustasha rule.[84] Furthermore, the Ustashe seemed incapable of protecting Muslim civilians from Chetnik attacks, especially in eastern Bosnia.

---

[82] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 490.
[83] Jelinek, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War', p. 283.
[84] See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 186, Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 185 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 492-493.

By late 1942, Bosnian Muslim autonomist groups began to seek direct German support for their efforts to separate Bosnia from the NDH.[85] The Germans refused to encourage any such moves, for the NDH was an ally of the Reich and Germany was committed to its territorial integrity.

The Germans were, however, interested in exploiting Muslim manpower. Himmler set out to establish a Muslim Waffen-SS division in 1943, believing that the 'Dinaric' Bosnian soldiers of *jihad* were better suited to the SS than the supposedly 'softer' Christian Croats.[86] The Ustashe were not at all pleased with such an arrangement because they were opposed to any attempt to treat the Muslims as separate from other Croats. Although they could not stop the establishment of the division, the Ustashe tried to ensure that it had a Croatian character. A compromise was reached whereby the division was officially titled the '13th Waffen-SS Mountain Division *Handžar* (Croatian no. 1)', outfitted in Waffen-SS uniforms together with a fez but also with the Croatian coat of arms on the left sleeve and with a small Catholic contingent in the predominantly Muslim division; soldiers would also be required to give oaths to both the Führer and the Poglavnik.[87] In practice, Himmler was little interested in protecting Croat sovereignty over the Muslims, while Ustasha authorities did what they could to dissuade Muslims from joining.[88]

---

[85] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 495-496.
[86] ibid, p. 496. Also see Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, pp. 158-159.
[87] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 497-499. Also consult George Lepre, *Himmler's Bosnian Division: The Waffen-SS Handschar Division 1943-1945* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1997), p. 48.
[88] Lepre, *Himmler's Bosnian Division*, pp. 17-31 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 498.

The SS tried to use ideological arguments to defend the establishment of a non-Germanic division. According to Gottlob Berger, the establishment of such a division would enable a link to be forged between Islam and National Socialism, as the Bosnian Muslims would be 'racially guided from the North and ideologically-spiritually guided from the Orient'.[89] Berger felt that Islam and National Socialism shared the same enemies, 'Jewry, Anglo-Americanism, Communism, Freemasonry and Catholicism'.[90] The Nazi feeling of camaraderie with the Arab Islamic world was strengthened by the arrival in Berlin in 1941 of the anti-Zionist and anti-British Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj emin el Husseini; the Mufti was given a SS guard and allowed to broadcast anti-Allied radio propaganda aimed at the Arab world.

In contrast to Berger and Himmler, German envoy Kasche felt that the Poglavnik's principled opposition to a separate Muslim division was more in line with National Socialist thinking, for

> 'while Pavelić…placed the Muslim question in Bosnia-Herzegovina on a national basis, proclaiming the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina as Croats, Himmler, with the help of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, El Husseini, conducted a pan-Islamic policy among them [i.e. the Bosnian Muslims]'.[91]

Pavelić's ideas were thus based on nationalism, not religious preference. In other words, the Bosnian Muslims were first and foremost Croats and should therefore be treated as such.

---

[89] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 159.
[90] ibid, p. 158.
[91] See the testimony of the German police attaché in Zagreb, Hans Helm, in HDA, Arhiv Hansa Helma, kutija 26: Broj 1521 ('Kasche, Siegfried/istražni materijal'), p. 4.

Hitler agreed with Pavelić; as the Führer told Mladen Lorković in November 1941, 'he was particularly happy to learn that the Croats were able to shift their development away from denominations and toward the racial idea, for after all the Christian and Mohammedan Croats were one race'.[92]

Although the Ustashe wanted the Muslims to behave as Croats first, they were certainly keen to strengthen ties with the Islamic world. As NDH envoy to Berlin from late 1941 to mid 1943, Mile Budak was eagerly interested in furthering political links with the Turkish ambassador Rizvanbegović and Grand Mufti el Husseini.[93] The Mufti, for his part, supported the NDH and told the Croatian envoy in Rome, Stijepo Perić, that 'the Arab nation and the whole Muslim world will never forget the particular fatherly attention of the Poglavnik toward our Muslims'.[94]

Despite the fact that most Bosnian Muslim religious and political leaders shied away from close collaboration with the Ustashe, many ordinary Muslims served in the 'Croatian Armed Forces' (whether in the Ustasha Militia or the Home Guard).[95] Indeed, during 1941 and 1942, Muslims made up 85% of the most ruthless Ustasha unit, the 1st Sarajevo Ustasha regiment or 'Black Legion' (*Crna Legija* – so named because of the unit's black uniforms), led

[92] Quoted in Vol XIII, 'The War Years: June 23 – December 1941', Series D (1937-1945), *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, p. 866.
[93] See Jere Jareb, 'Prilog životopisu dra. Mile Budaka', *Hrvatska revija*, God. XL, Sv. 2, June 1990, p. 321. Rizvanbegović was himself of Croatian descent.
[94] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 369fn, p. 274.
[95] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 491 and Jelinek, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War', pp. 281, 286.

by one of the most capable Ustasha commanders, Jure Francetić.[96] Francetić appointed one of the most learned and prominent Muslim religious leaders from Bosnia, Akif Handžić, as the Islamic 'spiritual father' for the Black Legion's Muslim soldiers.[97] There were also 'considerable numbers of Muslims' who volunteered for the Croatian Legion sent to the Russian front in 1941.[98] Muslim soldiers in the Home Guard and Militia wore fezes, and all Muslim members of the Ustasha movement made their oaths to the Poglavnik and the NDH before the Koran, two candles and a knife and pistol; Catholic recruits made their oaths before the same objects, except in place of the Koran, there was a crucifix.[99]

The Ustashe even attempted to increase the number of Muslims in the NDH by trying to annex the Sandžak region, home to some 200,000 Muslims. In May 1941, an Ustasha battalion was sent from Sarajevo to the Sandžak, but the Italian occupation authorities in the area had no wish to see Ustasha rule there and annexed the Sandžak to Italian ruled Montenegro.[100] Pavelić managed to secure the support of some Muslim notables from the Sandžak and expressed his wishes to annex the area to Ribbentrop in June 1941, although the area never did become a part of the NDH.[101] Count Ciano described the Ustasha attempt to annex the Sandžak as the typical policy of newly independent national states, which 'begin

[96] Admittedly, after Francetić's death in late 1942, the new commander R. Boban was unable to halt a decline in Muslim recruits, who only made up 5% of the Legion after 1942. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 83. One of the founders of the Black Legion was a Muslim Croat nationalist, Bećir Lokmić.
[97] See 'Akif Handžić' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 149.
[98] Jelinek, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War', p. 281.
[99] Požar (ed.), *Ustaša*, p. 288.
[100] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 106.
[101] See the article 'Muslimani Sandžaka žele ući u sastavu Bosne i Hercegovine', *Hrvatski narod*, 2 May 1941, for the names of the Sandžak Muslims wishing to join the NDH and on the Pavelić-Ribbentrop meeting, see Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 486.

to toy with imperialism',[102] but it is significant in terms of Croatian national integration. Half a million ethnic Croats were living under Italian occupation and subject to policies of forced Italianization, while the Ustashe sought to bring almost one million ethnic Muslims (if one includes both Bosnian and Sandžak Muslims) into the NDH in order to 'Croatize' them. Pavelić needed the Bosnian Muslim population in order to find the position in the 'new order' in Europe, 'which corresponds to our work and our strength as a nation of six million'.[103]

Interestingly, in contrast to the earlier propaganda that continually praised the Drina as the boundary of the 'White West', in late 1944, Pavelić toyed with the idea of granting Serbia (under the puppet regime of General Milan Nedić) some territorial concessions in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina, in order to find some sort of *modus vivendi* with the Serbs.[104] Pavelić still aimed to retain most of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but more importantly, his vague plans of granting some territory in the East to Serbia would have included population transfers of East Bosnian (and Sandžak) Muslims to Croat territory and Serbs to Serbian territory; therefore Pavelić did not intend to lose the Muslim population.[105] In any case, up until late 1944, the Ustashe had been serious about maintaining their hold on territory to the Drina, as made evident, for example, by the military operations of the Black Legion against the

[102] Count Galeazzo Ciano, *Ciano's Diary 1939-1943* Malcolm Muggeridge (ed.)(London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1947), p. 364.
[103] Pavelić quoted in Požar (ed.), *Ustaša,* p. 171.
[104] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 333.
[105] See 63fn, p. 134 in Krizman, *Ustaše i Trećí Reich*, Vol. 1.

Chetniks in early to mid 1942, when the Legion managed to successfully secure much of the Bosnian border with Serbia.[106]

By thoroughly 'Croatizing' all Bosnian Muslims and securing Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Ustashe vainly hoped to be able to solve the 'Dalmatian problem' as well – in other words, put an end to Italian expansionism along Croatia's eastern Adriatic coast. Pavelić felt that only a militarily strong, racially pure Croat state centred in the Dinaric 'heartland' of Bosnia and allied closely to Germany could preserve Croatian independence, and only after such a state had been established and secured could Croatia aim to recover Dalmatia. We have already noted the political tension that existed between Italy and the NDH. Now it is time to turn our attention to how the question of 'race' also coloured the 'Dalmatian problem'.

The Dalmatian question: Latin 'civilization' and Croatian 'barbarism'

The Ustashe continually argued that Dalmatia had been sacrificed in order to achieve the aim of an independent Croat state. The 'Dinaric' Croats were considered to be the backbone of the NDH, while Bosnia-Herzegovina was its 'heart'. Therefore, the first national priority was to secure the eastern border with Serbia. As Pavelić told Ivan Meštrović in 1942, 'I am also sad and angry [i.e. with the Italian annexation], but I gritted my teeth and accepted the misfortune, only so that we can keep this and settle things here, and then we will throw the

[106] On 9 April 1942, the Legion's commander, Jure Francetić, sent a telegram to Pavelić, in which he announced that 'from today Croatian Ustasha guns and Ustasha cannons protect our historical border'. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 285.

Italians into the sea'.[107] Pavelić was no doubt trying to delude Meštrović, and presumably himself, for he had no actual plan of action whatsoever to reclaim Italian occupied Dalmatia (let alone Istria), but the Ustasha ideal remained the NDH in its entire 'historical and ethnic' borders. Despite his signature on the Rome agreements, Pavelić reckoned that he could somehow retrieve Dalmatia through accepting the Duke of Spoleto as 'King of Croatia'. This was implicit in the 'Crown of King Zvonimir', which was offered to Aimone, for Zvonimir, the King of Croatia and Dalmatia from 1075 to 1089, 'had united the coast and the islands with the hinterland'.[108]

The Poglavnik felt that the Dalmatians Ante Trumbić and Ivan Meštrović had made a fatal error thinking that the 'brother Yugoslavs' would protect them from Italian expansionism. Pavelić was of the opinion that Trumbić exaggerated the threat of Italian imperialism and consequently had, in 1918, 'sold the whole of Croatia to Serbia just so he could save Dalmatia from Italy'; Pavelić accused the anti-Italian Dalmatian Croat nationalists of being 'territorial separatists', meaning that they were only concerned with protecting their particular region,

---

[107] Ivan Meštrović, *Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1969), p. 322. The Ustashe considered Meštrović a traitor because of his previous Yugoslavist political activities and he spent four months in an Ustasha jail. At the same time, the regime could not close its eyes to his artistic talents and worldwide fame (with which no other Croat artist could compete) and therefore eventually released him from prison and allowed his works to be exhibited in Croatia and in other Axis countries. In 1944, Meštrović moved to Geneva. He later lived in the United States. See 'Ivan Meštrović', *Tko je tko u NDH*, pp. 266-268.

[108] Pavlowitch, *Unconvential Perceptions of Yugoslavia*, p. 124. Pavelić issued the 'Law decree on Zvonimir's Crown', which was said to represent the sovereignty of the NDH, on 15 May 1941. Among the highest military medals in the NDH was the Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir. The Ustashe entertained the hope that the Duke of Spoleto might become a 'patriotic Croat' once 'King'. Eugen Kvaternik claimed that Aimone had told him, during a meeting in June 1941 in Rome, 'that once I step on Croatian soil, from that moment begins the struggle for the return of Dalmatia. I do not wish to be a King without the sea and a navy…Tell your father that from the moment I step on Croatian soil, I will be a bigger Croat than the Poglavnik'. See Kvaternik, *Sjećanja i zapažanja*, p. 167.

but neglected the rest of Croatia.[109] Pavelić himself, however, could also be described as a 'regionalist' of sorts for he was primarily interested in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the other Dinaric regions, where the best Croats were supposedly found. Other Ustashe also shared Pavelić's regional preferences. Colonel Tomislav Sertić stated in 1944 that, generally speaking, only 'the Dinaric type' of Croat was 'nationally constructive' (*državotvoran*).[110]

Pavelić's conception of Croatian geo-politics necessitated the temporary sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of Dalmatian Croats to the mercy of the Italian Fascist occupiers. Such a callous disregard for the fate of his own people was natural to a man who would otherwise be responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Pavelić's seeming indifference to the suffering of Dalmatians was also probably a reflection of his belief that the 'Mediterranean' Croats were not as 'nationally constructive' as the Dinarics. Although most Dalmatian Croats were also considered to be of Dinaric physical type, the Poglavnik nonetheless felt that the Mediterranean climate of Dalmatia and centuries of Italian (Venetian) rule had moulded a type of Croat that was very different in temperament to Croats from other regions. For Pavelić, the supposedly hot-blooded Dalmatian Croats were generally a 'politically unstable' people, responsible for having delivered all of Croatia to Belgrade's rule in 1918.[111]

Despite having himself lived in 'Mediterranean' Italy for twelve years (where he learnt to speak fluent Italian) the Poglavnik basically rejected the values of the West to which Croatia

[109] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 135.
[110] ibid, p. 58.
[111] See ibid, pp. 100, 135, 138.

was supposed to belong; he valued, above all, the 'virtues' of 'Dinaric' aggressiveness, ruthlessness and military heroism, as well as 'Oriental' political shrewdness and slyness, in other words, the ability to outwit an opponent by any means available. Tomislav Sertić claimed that the 'Dinaric man knows what he wants and therefore proceeds toward his goal unscrupulously and consistently'.[112] In conversation with Slavko Kvaternik sometime in 1941 or 1942, Pavelić remarked that his greatest joy as a youth in Bosnia had been to listen to the tales from Bosnia's Ottoman past, told by shepherds at night by a fire, to 'the stories of agas, pashas, the harem…of the sultan and viziers, of the raya and rebels. Of their mutual trickery…deceits and ambushes, of their rule, their way of thinking…This was my great school of life'.[113] Pavelić was adamant that the NDH had to be led by the Dinaric 'spirit' of Ottoman Bosnia-Herzegovina. Pavelić's obsession with Bosnia led him to neglect the vital interests of Croats from other regions. In exile in Argentina after 1945, the former police chief Eugen Kvaternik accused Pavelić of having pursued his political aims according to a 'regional particularism'.[114] Thus the Poglavnik, born and raised in 'Oriental' Bosnia-Herzegovina where the memory of hundreds of years of Ottoman rule was still fresh, viewed politics from the perspective of a Bosnian Croat and therefore was able to 'so easily sacrifice the greater part of Dalmatia'.[115]

---

[112] ibid, p. 58.
[113] Pavelić quoted in Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 163.
[114] See Kvaternik, *Sjećanja i zapažanja,* p. 240. Eugen was removed from office in 1942 (see 107fn, p. 387, chapter twelve). After the war, a more 'reformed' Kvaternik wrote several critical articles attacking Pavelić's wartime dictatorial rule. He even referred to Pavelić as 'an Oriental despot', comparable to the Ottoman sultan Abdülhamid II (1842-1918). See ibid.
[115] ibid, pp. 239-240.

Pavelić and his Ustashe had clearly betrayed their own people, but they never ceased to regard Dalmatia as solely Croatian by ethnic and historic rights. The Poglavnik himself offered rather weak opposition to the imperialist policies of the country that had offered him sanctuary prior to 1941, but other leading Ustashe were more open than Pavelić with their (largely baseless) threats to remove the Italian presence along the eastern Adriatic. The Commander of the Ustasha Youth (*Ustaška mladež*), Ivan Oršanić, told the Ustasha command in Dubrovnik in May 1942, that the Ustashe would 'triumphantly return to all Croatian towns to uproot the Serbian weeds and the worms, only in Dubrovnik of which there are 3000'; by the '3000 worms in Dubrovnik', Oršanić had in mind the Italian soldiers and officers stationed in the city.[116] Ustasha Colonel Tomislav Rolf, for his part, could not contain his hatred for the Italians during a reception at the Italian embassy in Zagreb in early 1942, at which he openly belittled the Italian army and attacked its collaboration with the Chetniks. Under pressure from the Italians, Pavelić stripped Rolf of his rank and expelled him from the Ustasha movement, although the Colonel was fully rehabilitated after Italy's capitulation.[117]

Ordinary Ustasha soldiers were generally bolder than their superiors in their display of contempt for the Italians. They would, for example, refrain from saluting and/or making way for Italian officers in the street, while in some towns Croatian girls who were seen publicly 'strolling' with Italian soldiers and officers were 'arrested immediately by the Ustaša, taken to their headquarters, had [their] hair shorn as punishment, and [were] then thrown out

[116] Cited in Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 192.
[117] See ibid, p. 192 and 'Tomislav Rolf', *Tko je tko u NDH*, pp. 349-350.

onto the street'.[118] Hundreds of Croats, including uniformed Ustashe, demonstrated on Zagreb streets on Christmas day 1941, calling for the return of Dalmatia.[119] One of the most popular Ustasha marching songs was *Naprijed mornari sa plavog Jadrana* ('Forward Sailors from the Blue Adriatic'), which although officially banned in the NDH at the insistence of the Italians (until 1943) was defiantly sung in public by Croatian soldiers.[120] The Italians were particularly angered by the Croatian decision to send a naval legion to the Black Sea as part of the German navy (*Kriegsmarine*). The Italian Foreign Ministry rightly concluded that 'the creation of the nucleus of the Croatian navy on the Black sea does not only mark the wish for a Croatian navy, but is also a conscious protest against the agreement with Italy'.[121]

The Italians did not counter Croatian 'impertinence' simply by having nationalist songs banned. They introduced a brutal occupation policy in their quest to Italianize annexed Dalmatia.[122] As part of that policy, the Fascists armed and supported around 20,000 Serbian

---

[118] See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 192 and Zvi Loker, 'The Testimony of Dr. Edo Neufeld: The Italians and the Jews of Croatia', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1993, p. 73. There were also infrequent armed clashes between Croatian and Italian soldiers. In 1941, for example, an Ustasha fired upon an Italian unit in the north Adriatic town of Bakar, wounding several Italian soldiers. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 192.

[119] Although E. Kvaternik wanted to use police force to stop the demonstration, Pavelić opposed this. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 136-137.

[120] See ibid, p. 370. The main chorus runs: 'Forward sailors from the blue Adriatic, alongside you stands the Poglavnik and the whole of Croatia!' In June 1943, Croatian recruits returning from training in Germany even marched down Zagreb streets, singing, 'Istria is not Italian, she is Croatian! Out with them, out with them!' (i.e. 'out with the Italians'). See ibid, p. 369.

[121] ibid, p. 125. The Croat naval legion eventually consisted of about 1000 sailors. See Thomas & Mikulan, 'Axis Forces in Yugoslavia', p. 18. The first commander of the Croatian navy, Admiral Đuro Jakčin, believed that, not only would Germany aid Croatia in the eventual return of Dalmatia to Croatian sovereignty, but would also occupy Trieste for itself. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 126.

[122] As part of the policy of forced Italianization in annexed Dalmatia, the Fascists closed Croatian schools, changed Croatian street names, and tore down statues of Croatian national heroes. When a Croat professor by the name of Ćiro Gamulin told his students on the first anniversary of Italian rule

Chetniks in their zone of the NDH. These Chetniks carried out their own policies of brutal ethnic cleansing aimed at carving out a future ethnically homogeneous Greater Serbia; they murdered tens of thousands of Croatian and Muslim civilians in the Dalmatian hinterland, Herzegovina, Eastern Bosnia and the Sandžak region in late 1941 and throughout 1942.[123] As the Fascist governor of Dalmatia, Giuseppe Bastiannini, stated in his secret instructions to his prefects at the end of 1942; 'our success lies in the destruction of the ethnic attributes of the nationalities, and this is facilitated by the clash of the two groups [i. e. Croats and Serbs]. Today our enemy is the Catholic [Croat] part and we must direct it against the Orthodox'.[124] While the Chetniks terrorized the Croatian and Muslim civilian population of Italian 'zones' 2 and 3, the Italians interned between 30,000 and 40,000 Croats in camps in Italy, as part of their policy of ethnically cleansing annexed Dalmatia of Croats. Thousands of Croats (and Slovenes) died from starvation in Italian concentration camps located on a number of Dalmatian islands, the biggest on the island of Rab.[125] By agreement between Italy and the NDH, Croat internees in Italy began to be repatriated to Croatia from the beginning of September 1943.[126]

---

in Split that this day was 'a day for tears', he was arrested and beaten to death by Fascist police. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 130-131.

[123] Although these actions were, to some extent, revenge for Ustasha atrocities, the genocidal actions of the Chetniks were also the result of plans, drawn up by Dr. Stevan Moljević in June 1941, for a 'homogeneous' Greater Serbia covering almost the entire territory of interwar Yugoslavia. See Tomasevich, *Chetniks*, pp. 166-170, 256-261. In total, the Chetniks murdered 32,000 Croats and 33,000 Muslims in Croatia and Bosnia. See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Muslimanska inteligencija i islam u NDH', 58fn, p. 919.

[124] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 129.

[125] See ibid, pp. 186-187 and James Walston, 'History and Memory of the Italian Concentration Camps', *The Historical Journal*, 40, 1, 1997, pp. 174-178.

[126] See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 187.

On 10 September, Pavelić officially announced (with Hitler's approval) the annulment of both the 1941 Rome agreements and the installation of Aimone as 'King of Croatia' and proclaimed the establishment of Croatian state authority along the Adriatic.[127] Formerly annexed Dalmatia became part of the NDH in name only, however, for much of the region was already in Partisan hands in September 1943. The Ustashe had few troops to spare to send to Dalmatia and therefore had to rely on the German army, which was able to secure control of much of the former Italian annexed areas from the Partisans by late 1943 and early 1944; the Germans, and not the Ustashe, exercised the real power in south Croatia during this period.[128]

The Ustashe now began an all out anti-Italian campaign in the press, rightly accusing the Italians of having supported the anti-Croat Chetniks and having done everything otherwise possible to weaken the NDH.[129] Italy's capitulaton and withdrawal from the eastern Adriatic was heralded in the Ustasha press as 'the completion of the final period of the thousand year struggle between the Romanic and Croatian elements on the Adriatic'.[130] The Italian nation had shown itself, wrote the NDH Education Minister (from late 1943 to 1945), Julije Makanec, 'excessively lightweight on the scales of history' and due to the 'moral softness of the nation', Italian unity had been 'destroyed under the pressure of powerful foreign

[127] The Ustasha regime recognized Mussolini's new Italian Social Republic in northern Italy and set up a Croatian embassy in Venice, but the new Fascist regime refused to send an envoy to Zagreb in protest at the Ustasha regime's anti-Italian measures. See ibid, p. 409.
[128] Goldstein, *Croatia*, p. 149.
[129] The Ustashe also falsely accused the Italians of having secretly aided the Partisans. See M. Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, p. 44.
[130] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 269.

enemies'.[131] The regime began to emphasize that the NDH was not only a Western bulwark against Eastern Bolshevism, but was also a Central European bulwark against Italian imperialism. The Croats were 'a weir against influences from the East, just as they are a weir against inroads of the Mediterranean-Italian penetration into the Central European space, in other words, into the European Southeast'.[132] The Germans were regarded as Croatia's only true allies. Italian and Serbian atrocities against Croat civilians along the Adriatic only confirmed the Ustasha view that the 'most dangerous national enemies' of the Croats were (as a Croatian Foreign Ministry report stated in September 1944) the Serbs and Italians, 'who both have pretentions to our land and threaten the life of our nation'.[133]

Furthermore, despite the close cultural links between the two, Western, Catholic nations, the Ustashe viewed the Italians and Croats as racially different. As Filip Lukas argued, the Croats of the Eastern Adriatic coast were predominantly of Dinaric race, with 'very few representatives of the Western, so-called Mediterranean race'.[134] The Dalmatian Croat 'Dinaric' was characterized by the virtues of 'pride, stubborn struggle for rights, idealism, optimism, extraordinary unselfishness, self-sacrifice and ethics', these 'Croatian' traits being quite separate, noted Lukas, from those of the 'Mediterraneans on the Apennine

[131] Julije Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici: Nacionalno-politički eseji*, p. 88.
[132] According to an internal report of the NDH Foreign Ministry. See Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 2 (Zagreb: Globus, 1983), p. 148.
[133] See ibid, p. 167. In 1941, Pavelić had unsuccessfully tried to convince the Italians that a part of the Serbian population in Dalmatia should be sent to Italy or one of the Italian colonies for labour duties. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, pp. 138-139.
[134] Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', p. 123. During a reception at the Italian embassy in Berlin in 1941, NDH envoy Benzon, and his press attaché, Luka Fertilio, told their Italian hosts that the Dalmatians St. Jerome and Emperor Diocletian had been 'of our blood, not yours'. The Croats also explained that their surnames, Benzon and Fertilio, were Italian translations of older Croatian surnames. See L. Fertilio, 'Izlet bez iluzija', *Hrvatska revija*, Vol. 4 (40), 1960, p. 629.

peninsula'.[135] Much as Muslim Bosnian Croats were supposed to be culturally similar, but racially different, to the Islamic peoples of Asia Minor and the Middle East, so too were Catholic Dalmatian Croats culturally akin to, but racially distinct from, the predominantly short, dark and dolichocephalic Italians.

The Ustashe had hardly been unaware that Mussolini's Fascists generally thought of the Croats as little better than the other 'barbarian Slavs', despite all the official rhetoric on both sides of Italo-Croatian 'friendship'; an editorial in a Trieste newspaper from May 1942, for example, even described the 'Yugoslavs' as falling below 'the most obscure tribes of central Africa'.[136] Croatian theories of Gothic racial descent certainly did not render the Croats dear to Italian nationalists, who traditionally regarded the Goths as uncivilized barbarians.[137] Ciano noted in his diary in November 1941 that 'the Duce is indignant with Pavelić, because he claims that the Croats are descendants of the Goths. This will have the effect of bringing them into the German orbit'.[138] The new 'Caesar' shared the anti-Slav prejudices of his countrymen, but was apparently 'gracious' enough to promise the Croats, during a conversation with Hitler in 1941, 'some autonomy' in Split, where 'they would be able to

---

[135] Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', p. 123. According to Nazi race theory, the physically short, dark and long-headed Mediterranean lacked 'creative power, patience and steadiness'. The Western/Mediterranean man 'acted more by feeling than by reason'. See Fritz Brennecke (ed.) *The Nazi Primer: Official Handbook for Schooling the Hitler Youth*, Translated by Harwood L. Childs (1938; New York: Ams Press, 1966), pp. 23-26.

[136] See Walston, 'History and Memory of the Italian Concentration Camps', p. 181.

[137] See Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, pp. 55-57. The Nazis felt terribly insulted by the claims of Fascist 'Mediterraneanist' racists such as Giacomo Acerbo who viewed the Nordic-Germanic tribes as culturally inferior peoples 'whose aim was not the creation of States but only pillage and plunder'. See Meir Michaelis, *Mussolini and the Jews: German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy 1922-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 325-326.

[138] Muggeridge (ed.) *Ciano's Diary*, p. 392.

make use of their barbarian language' (although this promise was never kept by Mussolini).[139]

The Ustashe were not, however, necessarily ashamed of the 'barbarian' tag and this was something they shared with the Nazis. The latter, like the Ustashe, also raved on about their 'historical mission' of defending Western European culture. As the German historian Albert Brackmann argued in 1939, 'for centuries [the Germans] constituted a barrier in the East against lack of culture and protected the West against barbarity. They protected the borders from Slavs, Avars, and Magyars'.[140] On the other hand, the Nazis also took pride in their 'barbarian' ancestors as described by Tacitus: the simple, brave and honourable Teutons as compared to the urban, decadent and civilized Romans. The Nazi ideal of a Nordic-Germanic *Volksgemeinschaft* was essentially an antithesis to the idea of Western civilization.[141] The Nazi Reich had in fact, as Neal Ascherson remarks,

> 'hardened the fashion [of barbarity] into a full cultural dogma. It is enough to remember the project for mausolea to commemorate the SS dead…artificial mountains of earth towering over the steppe in the manner of Scythian or Sarmatian *kurgans*…the barrows of a barbarian warrior caste'.[142]

The Nazi self-identification with barbarity had a 'practical' as well as a cultural motive, for the appeal to 'barbarity' no doubt gave very well educated and outwardly civilized Nazis

[139] Meštrović, *Uspomene*, p. 319.
[140] Cited in Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', p. 13.
[141] Laqueur, *Fascism*, p. 24.
[142] Neal Ascherson, *Black Sea: The Birthplace of Civilisation and Barbarism* (London: Vintage, 1995), p. 109.

such as SS chief Heinrich Himmler and his close associate Reinhard Heydrich part of the justification for the war of annihilation they unleashed in the East. As Ascherson continues:

> 'To proclaim oneself a barbarian can amount to a licence for acts of unspeakable savagery. But at the same time, it is to state that one is not, in fact, a barbarian, but a "civilised" person who is borrowing costumes from civilisation's theatre-wardrobe of counter-values in order to make some point about the decadence of the times'.[143]

The Ustashe were also trying to make a point about the 'decadence' of their times, but they were partly trying to counter Italian claims of 'Latin' cultural superiority with the notion of Croatian 'barbarism'. The Ustashe liked to conjure up the image of a 'barbarian' warrior race by often describing the Croats as a nation of 'wolves and lions' (*vuka i arslana*). Croatian folklore often referred to its heroes and knights as brave 'wolves' and 'lions' and the Ustashe wanted to reinvent these stereotypes, common particularly to the folk culture of the 'Dinaric' Croats.[144] For example, when faced with falling morale among *Domobran* troops in late 1941, the command staff of the second Home Guard division in the northwest Bosnian town of Bihać tried to convince the soldiers that their Partisan and Chetnik enemies consisted mainly of 'a poorly armed rabble of bandits, originating from the lowest strata of

---

[143] ibid.

[144] Andrija Kačić-Miošić introduced his famous collection of folk poems, *Razgovor ugodni naroda slovinskoga* ('Pleasant Conversation of the Slavic [Croat] People', Venice, 1756), with the caution that 'these songs will not be to everyone's taste, for there is little variation among them, all of them containing the same words, such as: hero, knight, horseman, galley slave, serpent, dragon, wolf, lion, falcon…etc'. See epithet of Bracewell, *Uskoks of Senj*. Interestingly, the Ustashe liked to use the Turkish word 'arslan' rather than the Croatian 'lav', for 'arslan' was more common to the Dinaric Croats of the formerly Ottoman ruled areas.

our society', while 'in the hands of Vuk Mandušić every gun is deadly and the Croatian mother has always given birth to brave wolves, not cowardly sons'.[145] Vuk Mandušić was a folk hero of the Dalmatian hinterland, a warrior chief famous for his military exploits during the Cretan War between Venice and the Ottoman Empire (1645-1669). The Croat soldiers were thus told that they carried the blood of Vuk Mandušić, and as born 'wolves' should have no reason to fear the enemy.

Among the other favourite folk heroes from Croatian history for the Ustashe were the 'Uskoks', the sixteenth century military order from the north Adriatic town of Senj.[146] The Uskoks had fought not only the Ottomans on land, helping to defend the Croatian Military Frontier, but had also fought the Venetians at sea, where they attacked Venetian ships like pirates. Here was a Croatian military order that could act as the perfect historical precedent for the Ustashe. In the 1942 'Ustasha Annual', one Žarko Brzić described the Uskoks, 'the descendents of wild wolves and enraged lions', as the 'first Ustashe and Croatian revolutionaries'.[147] Although written before Italy's capitulation, Brzić was open about praising the Adriatic Sea (which the Italians liked to refer to as part of *mare nostro*) as 'the turning point of our history, the key to our resistance and vitality, our eternal fate'.[148] He further extolled the 'proud conqueror Domagoj', the ninth century Croatian duke who had successfully battled the Saracens and Venetians. Hatred saw the Venetians refer to him as 'dux pessimus Sclavorum' ('the worst Slavic duke'), which Brzić significantly changed in his

[145] Cited in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 289.
[146] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 347-348. The word 'Uskok' signified a fugitive or runaway, as many of the Uskoks were refugees from Ottoman held areas.
[147] Žarko Brzić, 'Vizija prošlosti', *Ustaški godišnjak 1942*, pp. 210-211.
[148] ibid, p. 209.

article to 'dux pessimus Croatorum'.[149] Although Brzić did not refer to the Venetians or Italians by name, he explained that they called Domagoj 'the worst' out of jealousy and frustration, because 'he was a hero who only knows of victory and not of retreat, for whom fearlessness is a jugular vein and blood his daily bread'.[150] Brzić noted with pride that the Croats were not ashamed of the barbarism,

> 'which knew how to preserve the sacredness of the homeland and hearth, which did not shrink from death when the highest ideals and the highest sacred objects were in question. We will once again be modern barbarians, barbarians who boundlessly love, save and protect only what is theirs'.[151]

'Barbarism' for the Ustashe meant not only opposing the decadent Italians, however. It also implied the rejection of the pacifist scruples of HSS politicians, who did not seem to understand that the nation's existence was in question. For the Ustashe, the ethnically half-Slovene and pacifist Maček was the antithesis of the new Croatian 'barbarian', unlike the Poglavnik, who was 'the progeny of the purest Croatian blood' and who, like Starčević, hailed from Lika, 'the Croatian Sparta', which 'gave birth to healthy, firm people, heroes and men of character'.[152] Maček, and the HSS in general, belonged to what one author noted in 1942 as the 'Slavic blood component' of the Croatian people, while Pavelić and the Ustashe obviously belonged to the other 'Iranian component', for the former was characterized by 'peacefulness' (pacifism in other words) and by the nature of 'compromise', while the latter

[149] ibid.
[150] ibid.
[151] ibid, p. 210.
[152] See Ivo Bogdan, 'Poglavnik – vodja hrvatskog naroda – odvjetak najčišće hrvatske krvi i odraz nepatvorene hrvatske sredine', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, p. 2.

was denoted by a 'warlike spirit' and 'state-building talents'.[153] Both racial components were united within one 'national soul', but it was important that there be balance between the two, for it would 'fateful' if the Slavic component completely ruled the 'Croatian soul'.[154]

The Ustasha regime and the Catholic Church

Catholicism was also considered a 'component' part of the Croatian national heritage, but Catholic doctrine itself was of little interest to the Ustashe. A brief examination of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Ustasha regime is now in order, due to the continual insistence by some historians that the NDH was characterized more by Catholic clericalism than by Nazi style racism. This section shows that a closer historical analysis does not speak in favour of such a view.

There is no doubt that the Ustashe tried to win the favour of the Catholic Church in Croatia (and the Vatican) because of the prestige and legitimacy that the Church could offer in a predominantly Catholic country.[155] For its part, the Church welcomed the establishment of the NDH, where in contrast to its inferior position vis-à-vis Serbian Orthodoxy in Yugoslavia, Catholicism would be the dominant religion and also because it sincerely

[153] Z. K. 'Hrvatska povijest je proizvod hrvatske narodne duše', *Ustaški godišnjak 1942*, p. 122.
[154] ibid, p. 123.
[155] Jelinek, 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement', pp. 372-373.

welcomed the prospect of an independent Croatian state.[156] The Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, was a fervent anti-Communist, like his superior Pope Pius XII, and although he certainly disliked Pavelić and the Ustashe (and vice-versa), he more or less accepted the NDH as a Croatian national state, as did the heads of the Evangelical Church in Croatia and the Islamic Religious Community.[157] The Ustashe, for their part, continually suspected the Archbishop of 'Yugoslav' tendencies, given he had joined the 'Yugoslav Legion' (made up of Austro-Hungarian POWs and deserters) in 1918.[158]

Much of the lower Catholic clergy supported the Ustasha movement.[159] These priests had, like many clericalists, moved close to anti-Yugoslav nationalist circles during the late 1930s. Furthermore, as the Catholic Church, generally speaking, initially regarded Fascism/Nazism as the lesser evil to atheistic Soviet Communism, most Croatian priests definitely preferred the NDH to Tito's Partisans. In 1942, Archbishop Stepinac sent a circular in which he claimed that 'the whole civilized world is fighting against the terrible dangers of communism which now threatens not only Christianity but all the positive values of humanity'.[160] On the other hand, there were also Croat Catholic priests (albeit a much smaller number, but not insignificant) who saw Nazism and Fascism as the greater threat and

---

[156] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 562. Also Pedro Ramet, 'From Strossmayer to Stepinac: Croatian National Ideology and Catholicism', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, XII, I, 1985, pp. 133-134.
[157] See Alexander, *Triple Myth*, pp. 88-89. The head of the Evangelical Church, Bishop Dr. Philipp Popp was subsequently executed by Tito's regime after the war, as was the mufti of Zagreb, Ismet Muftić. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 573-574. For Stepinac's post-war fate, see 'Epilogue' in this thesis.
[158] See Vilim Cecelja, 'Moja sjećanja na uzoritoga kardinala Stepinca, zagrebačkog nadbiskupa', *Hrvatska revija*, God. XL, Sv. 4 (160), December 1990, pp. 705, 731. Also see 'Alojzije Stepinac' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 367 and Banac, *National Question*, pp. 121-123.
[159] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 111-112.
[160] Alexander, *Triple Myth*, p. 88.

joined or collaborated with the Partisans.[161] Any churchman found co-operating with the Partisans could also expect the full force of Ustasha terror to come down on him; between April 1942 and February 1943, seven Slovene Catholic priests serving in the NDH were sent to the Jasenovac concentration camp, where they were executed, for suspected collaboration with the Partisans.[162]

All in all, the Church had little political influence on the regime. The 'Ustasha principles', which acted as a 'constitution' for the NDH, contained not a single reference to Catholicism and only one reference to religion; principle 16 merely stated that the Croatian nation's 'moral strength comes from its ordered and religious family life'. Admittedly, there were Ustashe who were close to Catholic and Clericalist circles, such as Mile Budak and Ivan Oršanić.[163] However, as Siegfried Kasche pointed out in defence of Mile Budak, who had been accused by some Germans of being pro-Italian and pro-Vatican, having a positive attitude toward Catholicism did not necessarily imply 'dependence' on the Vatican.[164] Both Budak and Oršanić were first and foremost Croatian nationalists and the fatherland's interests definitely came before those of the Church. Oršanić, for example, as head (until 1944) of the Ustasha Youth did not propagate any sort of political Catholicism to young Ustashe. In fact, the Ustasha Youth leadership declared that 'to organize our youth on the

[161] Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), p. 137.
[162] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 571.
[163] See ibid, p. 371.
[164] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 145-146.

basis of religious affiliation would be unreasonable and is contrary to the basic principles of the uniformity of the nation'.[165]

Serious differences arose between the regime and the Church over Ustasha racism. Tensions simmered after Stepinac attacked racist ideology in unequivocal terms in several sermons in St. Stephen's cathedral in Zagreb during 1942 and 1943. During two sermons in late October 1943, for example, Stepinac declared that 'the Catholic Church has always condemned and condemns today as well every injustice and every violence committed in the name of the theories of class, race or nationality'; furthermore, 'the Catholic Church knows nothing of races born to rule and races doomed to slavery…for it the negro of central Africa is as much a man as a European'.[166] Julije Makanec made the following reply to Stepinac in the press:

> 'If man is the image of God, then European man is so to a special degree; he is without doubt more so than a negro of central Africa. A Gothic cathedral surely reflects eternity in a more intense and more sublime manner than a negro's filthy hut or a gypsy's tent; and the Ninth Symphony is certainly nearer to God than the howling of a cannibal tribe in Australia'.[167]

The Ustasha regime had always shied away from seeking too close a relationship with the Church because the aims of the Ustashe were fundamentally secular. In conference with high-ranking officials of the Ustasha movement in September 1943, Pavelić claimed that there existed three categories in Croatian political life, the 'Starčevićites', 'Clericalists' and

[165] Zdenko Blažeković, *Mladež i država* (Zagreb: Tipografija, 1944), p. 123.
[166] Alexander, *Triple Myth*, p. 99.
[167] ibid.

the 'Slavoserbs', and only 'Starčevićism', Pavelić maintained, 'is the bearer of Croatdom…Starčevićism is a racial matter, only it carries Croatdom and the state idea'.[168]

In 1942, an article in the party newspaper *Ustaša* explained why the (Christian) Ustashe made their oaths before the crucifix, alongside a knife, pistol and two candles:

> 'The crucifix encourages the Ustasha to keep his honourable word, which he pledged to the Poglavnik and the Ustasha movement. On the cross was hung the God-man, who sacrificed himself for others. And the Ustasha too has the duty to work and save others, to liberate them, to enlighten them, so that they start on a new path, the path of honour, battle-tested Croatian consciousness, struggle and victory'.[169]

For the Ustashe, the crucifix was important for its symbolism, as it was 'used by nations during sacred and serious acts'.[170] The article further noted that 'we Croats are not particularly devout, we are not hypocritical bigots, but nor are we atheists or unbelievers. A nation that stood and stands on the bulwark of Western culture cannot have, it is clear, as many saints as it has warriors'.[171] The Ustashe were indeed neither 'particularly devout' Catholics, nor at the same time were they pagan Nazis, but simply Croatian ultra-nationalists who used 'race' and not religion to 'prove' Croatian national individuality and justify the elimination of 'non-Aryans' in the NDH.

---

[168] Quoted in Jere Jareb, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća 1943-1945 iz ostavštine dra Lovre Sušića, *Hrvatska revija*, *Jubilarni zbornik 1951-1975*, München-Barcelona 1976, p. 161.
[169] Cited in Požar (ed.) *Ustaša*, p. 265.
[170] ibid.
[171] ibid.

Chapter Eleven: Aryan Racial Identity and Croatian National Individuality

The Ustasha race laws

Having explored how Ustasha racism defined the Croats in a 'spiritual' sense, in other words, as a 'state-building' and 'warrior' nation defending the 'White West', it is now time to turn our attention to how the Ustashe defined the Croats in a physical or anthropological sense. In line with its pseudo-scientific racism, the Ustashe promulgated racial decrees, which served as the legal basis for limiting NDH citizenship to 'Aryan' Croats and for persecuting 'non-Aryan' minorities. The racial decrees did not mention the NDH's Serbs at all, for they were not 'non-Aryans' in the same sense as the Jews or Gypsies. Racist Ustasha propaganda often lumped Serbs together with Jews and Gypsies, for a large portion of Serbs were defined as having 'Gypsy' or 'Near-Eastern' blood, but many Serbs were also thought to be of 'Croatian blood' and therefore the 'Serb question' was considered a much more complex problem requiring a different approach. As far as a solution to the 'problem' of the Jews and Gypsies was concerned, the Ustashe could look to Nazi Germany for a model and so the

Ustasha racial decrees were patterned after the 1935 Nuremberg race laws.[1] The Ustashe had, however, identified the Croats as a more or less pure European-Aryan people long before April 1941. This identification had little or nothing to do with overt Nazi influence. The pre-war Ustashe had already sought to replace the pan-Slav racial myths of the Illyrianists, Yugoslavists and HSS with a self-serving Aryan racial mythology.

The new legal concept of the 'Aryan race' was introduced into Croatian public life on 30 April 1941 with the promulgation of the 'Law decree on racial affiliation' and the 'Law decree on the protection of the Aryan blood and honour of the Croatian nation'. The first decree stated that 'an individual is of Aryan descent who descends from ancestors who are members of the European racial community or who descends from ancestors of that community outside of Europe'.[2] An individual could prove his/her 'Aryan descent' by way of birth and marriage certificates of one's parents and grandparents, while for 'members of the Islamic religious community who are unable to offer the cited documents, written testimony of two credible witnesses, who knew their ancestors and that there were no individuals of non-Aryan descent among them, is necessary'.[3]

[1] As Raul Hilberg writes, 'the Croat authorities dutifully followed, and even improved upon, the original Lösener definition'. Dr. Bernhard Lösener was one of the authors of the Nuremberg laws. See R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 454.
[2] See 'Krv i čast hrvatskog naroda zaštićeni posebnim odredbama', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 May 1941, p. 1.
[3] ibid.

This decree also stipulated who was legally a Jew. Individuals were Jewish if they had at least three Jewish grandparents; quarter-Jews (one Jewish grandparent) were identified as Aryan.[4] Certain half-Jews could also acquire Aryan status. A half-Jew was considered non-Aryan if he/she was: a) a member of the 'Mosaic faith' on or after 10 April 1941; b) married to a full or three-quarter Jew; c) had married an individual with two or more Jewish grandparents after the promulgation of the race laws, and/or was the descendant of such a marriage; d) the illegitimate child of a full or three-quarter Jew and was born after 31 January 1942; and e) was classified as a Jew by the decision of the Ministry for Internal Affairs by recommendation of the Racial-political Commission.[5] Non-Croatian Jews, including half-Jews, living in the NDH were also defined as non-Aryan, as were illegitimate children born of a Jewish woman, and individuals marrying Jews in contravention of the race laws after 10 April 1941.[6]

The first Law decree also defined the Gypsy as an individual who had two or more grandparents who were Gypsies by race.[7] Interestingly, the sixth article of the decree gave the head of state the right to grant Aryan status to all individuals who had 'showed themselves meritorious for the Croatian people, especially for its liberation' before 10 April 1941.[8] Thus a very small number of Jews were allowed to become 'honorary Aryans' in the NDH (see chapter thirteen). The second Law decree banned marriages between Aryans and

[4] ibid. A grandparent was Jewish if he/she was identified as being of 'Mosaic faith'. For an English translation of the Ustasha race laws, see Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 454.
[5] 'Krv i čast hrvatskog naroda zaštićeni posebnim odredbama'.
[6] ibid.
[7] ibid.
[8] ibid.

Jews and also stipulated in what circumstances a special licence was required for certain marriages (e.g. a marriage between a half-Jew and an Aryan).[9]

Although modelled on the Nazi race laws, the Ustasha racial decrees were nevertheless in line with pre-war Ustasha ideological tenets. On 3 May 1941, an article in *Hrvatski narod*, entitled 'Interpretation of the racial law decrees', stated that 'the NDH was a national state and only Aryans had the right to occupy responsible positions in it and direct its fate'.[10] A nation, the article claimed, was 'a group of people with a common tradition, common spiritual goods and the will for the common advancement of those goods', while a race was 'a group of people who correspond in essential hereditary characteristics'.[11] The nation was said to have a unique spirit, and 'spirituality has its source in the psyche of the individual, which was to a large degree the expression of his hereditary spiritual characteristics' and consequently, the 'spiritual essence of the nation is therefore mainly a function of its racial structure'.[12] Thus, 'only members of the racial community who form part of the nation can successfully participate in the building up of the original cultural goods of the nation', and 'only they can faithfully serve the nation and decide its fate'.[13]

As Fedor Pucek, the translator of a 1943 Croat edition of Ivo Pilar's *Die südslawische Frage*, had noted, the 'problem' of Croatian history was 'the mutual assimilation of all components

[9] ibid.
[10] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi', *Hrvatski narod*, 3 May 1941, p. 7.
[11] ibid.
[12] ibid.
[13] ibid.

and values, which contribute to the internal homogeneity of the national whole'.[14] Limiting Croatian citizenship to members of the 'Aryan racial community' was meant to overcome internal dissensions and create national cohesion, by ridding the NDH of unassimilable 'anti-social' elements. The Ustashe were convinced that their nation faced three anti-social and anti-national internal enemies, the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. As Mosse pointed out, 'Aryan' racism has always been more concerned with the 'internal enemy' rather than with foreign enemies outside of the nation's borders.[15] This is because, unlike nationalism, racism requires a 'counter-type', for nations, as Mosse continued, may go to war against each other, but 'because of the fluid relationships between nations it was often impossible to conceptualize them in racist terms – they could, after all, be tomorrow's allies'.[16]

The racist obsession with the 'enemy within' can be partly traced to the beginnings of European racism, for as Benedict Anderson writes, 'the dreams of racism actually have their origin in ideologies of class, rather than in those of nation: above all in claims to divinity among rulers and to "blue" or "white" blood and "breeding" among aristocracies'.[17] The Ustashe argued that the 'state-building creativity' of the Croats was a racial trait, carried mainly throughout the centuries by the Croatian aristocracy or *natio croatica*. In order to include all Croats in the modern *natio croatica*, it was necessary to argue that all Croats possessed the same warrior 'spirit' which had preserved Croat historic state right, and 'spirit' was essentially a 'function of racial structure'.

---

[14] See Pucek's introduction in Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. xxv.
[15] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. 65.
[16] ibid.
[17] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), p. 136.

Croatian national individuality was distinguished by its unique 'warrior' and 'state-building' spirit and now that spirit was 'legally' wedded to the idea of Aryan racial identity. As the article on the racial decrees explained, any nation 'that wishes to preserve its national individuality cannot give the same rights to individuals foreign by race, which its gives to individuals who are of the same origin and racial structure', and only those of Aryan race (regardless of their country of origin) can assimilate into another Aryan nation.[18] The article identified two minorities as being 'essentially different' to the Croatian nation in terms of their 'racial components': the Jews, who were socially privileged, and the Gypsies, who were on the lowest rung of the social ladder.[19]

The motivation for the race laws, as the regime claimed, was not to promote the idea that one race was superior to another and, therefore, the race laws were not in conflict with one of the 'foundations of Croatian spiritual culture', that is, the Catholic faith.[20] Although the Ustashe were not 'particularly devout' Catholics, they were also not 'atheists' and so the statement that the race laws were not in conflict with Catholicism was meant to assuage the concerns of pious Catholic Croats. In any case, Ustasha racism was indeed more concerned

[18] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi'.

[19] ibid. The Ustasha regime also identified the following peoples as legally non-Aryan (even though few individuals of these races actually resided in the NDH): Tatars, Kalmucks, Armenians, Persians, Arabs, Malays and Blacks. The Finno-Ugric peoples (Hungarians, Estonians and Finns) were said to belong to the 'Aryan community' as were Albanians and the 'greater part of the Turks'. See 'Utvrdjivanje rasne pripadnosti', *Hrvatski narod*, 6 June 1941, p. 12. It is likely that most Turks were racially acceptable to the NDH because the Ustashe had argued that many Turks were the descendants of Muslim Croat immigrants. See Lorković, *Narod i zemlja*, pp. 54, 253. Although modern Persians were racially unacceptable, the Ustashe regarded the ancient Iranians as a pure Aryan people. The name 'Iran' is derived from the ancient form, 'Eryana', which means 'Land of the Aryans'. See Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, p. 44.

[20] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi'.

with stressing racial differences rather than claiming racial superiority. Of course, the idea of racial superiority was implicit in the claim that Croats were more or less pure white Europeans and defenders of noble Western culture, while Serbs were uncivilized 'half-breed' Asiatics. The Ustashe were cautious to argue that every human race was biologically equal, but that every race also had its own particular environment, and therefore it was not right that a foreign racial minority such as the Jews in Germany should 'arrogate for itself leadership in the [German] culture and economy'.[21] The Ustashe attempted to justify the race laws as 'only an expression of the aspiration that the Croatian state, its fate, and spiritual and economic culture be administered in the national spirit and to the exclusive welfare of the Croatian nation'.[22]

The 'Nordic-Dinaric' race

The above article admitted that the race laws were adapted from the Nuremberg laws, but noted that whereas the Germans used the term *deutsches oder artverwandtes Blut* ('German or related blood'), the Croats used the term *arijsko porijetlo* ('Aryan descent') for 'blood in a biological sense had actually no connection with heredity'.[23] Furthermore there was no such thing as a separate Croatian race, 'for the Croats, as generally all European nations, were a

[21] ibid.
[22] ibid.
[23] ibid.

mixture of the Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Baltic and Mediterranean races with small admixtures of other races'.[24]

Although the Croats exhibited traits of all the European races, Ustasha ideologists in the NDH, building upon the pre-war Dinaric race theory, often specifically praised the Dinaric and Nordic races as the best Croatian racial types. According to race theorists such as Günther, the two races were related, and this 'fact' allowed Ustasha ideologists to both exalt the great Dinaric race as predominantly Croatian and emphasize the racial links between Croats and Germans. The Dinaric race itself was said to be the likely product of an admixture that had occurred in the Western Balkans in the Stone Age between Nordic immigrants and the 'Armenoids', the latter being a 'dark Near Eastern race'.[25] A large part of Croatian territory, one 'stretching from the north Adriatic, through Lika and central Bosnia to the Drina', was inhabited, according to the Croat ethnographer Mirko Kus-Nikolajev (himself not an Ustasha), by people of Dinaric race with 'a strong admixture of the Nordic racial element'.[26] As Kus-Nikolajev argued in 1942, 'racial psychology gives the Dinaric race a high life and cultural worth. The strengthening of the Nordic element in the Dinaric race would also mean the strengthening of the positive features in our nation'.[27] Kus-Nikolajev was of

[24] ibid.

[25] See Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao', pp. 143-144 and Lukas, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', p. 67. Also see Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata: nordijske primjese pojačavaju i onako visoku životnu i kulturnu vriednost hrvatskog naroda', *Spremnost*, 12 July 1942, p. 5.

[26] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata'. Although he was not a member of the Ustasha movement, Kus-Nikolajev did work in the library of the NDH's 'Main Directorate for Propaganda' and wrote several articles for various Ustasha newspapers. See 'Mirko Kus-Nikolajev' in *Tko je Tko u NDH*, p. 222.

[27] ibid.

the opinion that the Nordic element among the Croats probably originated from the Illyrians and/or Celts, although he also identified the early 'Iranian Croats' as Nordic.[28]

Kus-Nikolajev pointed out, however, that although the Croats were predominantly Dinaric, other races also existed among them, mainly the 'visible' number of Mediterraneans along the central and southern Adriatic, particularly in the coastal towns, and the 'strong' presence of the Alpine race in northern Croatia.[29] Furthermore, he was cautious (as were Ustasha ideologists) not to exaggerate the significance of 'race' as the most important factor of Croatian nationhood, for climate, the environment and history also played vital roles in the life of nations.[30] All the same, the Dinaric race theory gave the Ustashe a heightened sense of the supposed uniqueness and greatness of the Croatian nation. As Lukas pointed out, because of the largely mountainous terrain of the Dinaric areas of the NDH, 'there was not a region in Europe where the old original culture would be better preserved than among us', for mountains act like 'fortresses', keeping the nation relatively pure from outside influences.[31] It was indeed in mountainous central Bosnia, among the Croatian Catholics and Muslims, where the highest number of 'fair Dinarics' were supposedly found.[32]

---

[28] ibid. Also see Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Nordijsko podrietlo starohrvatskog pletenca', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, p. 7. In this article Kus-Nikolajev expressed his support for Strzygowski's 'Nordic thesis' on the origins of medieval Croatian art.

[29] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata'. Kus-Nikolajev stressed, though, that the Mediterranean racial influence was not 'decisive' in the Croatian racial make-up. Also see Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', pp. 231-232.

[30] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata'.

[31] Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao', p. 143.

[32] Lukas, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', p. 67.

The fair hair and light pigmentation of a sizeable number of Dinaric Croats was apparently another indicator of the close relationship between the Dinaric and Nordic races.[33] The dark 'Armenoid' racial strain among the Croats was actually quite small, according to a 1942 article by the Ustasha journalist and student leader Milivoj Karamarko; he calculated that approximately 65% of Croats were of Dinaric race, 20% were Alpine, 10% of Nordic race, while only 5% were of Armenoid type, 3% of the East-Baltic race, 1% Mediterranean and another 1% were of 'Mongoloid and some other Near Eastern race'.[34] Karamarko concluded that, with regard to the physical characteristics of the Dinaric race, the Croats could be 'completely satisfied, because it is a healthy, strong race, very tenacious…while the share of the Nordic race, which is the closest to the Dinaric, to a considerable measure strengthens these values and characteristics'.[35] Dr. Mirko Košutić, a representative in the Croatian *Sabor*, also remarked in the same year that the Croats were a 'trustworthy, dependable and honest' nation in part because they had 'received into their blood strong admixtures of the ethical Nordic race'.[36]

Hitler, for his part, also considered the Croats to be predominantly Dinaric and 'for that reason', argued in May 1942 that 'the germanization of the Croats would be welcome from the racial point of view'.[37] The Führer had earlier noted in November 1941 that, 'here and

[33] Milivoj Karamarko, 'Dinarska rasa i Hrvati: osebujne naše značajke i pozitivni prinos nordijske rase', *Spremnost*, 22 November 1942, p. 7.
[34] ibid.
[35] ibid.
[36] Dr. Mirko Košutić, 'Ništetnost državnih čina od 1918', *Spremnost*, 15 March 1942, p. 1.
[37] Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', p. 17. Hitler noted, however, that 'from the political point of view it [i.e. the Germanization of the Croats] is out of the question', because Croatia was formally within the Italian sphere of influence. See ibid and also see Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, pp. 277, 315.

there one meets amongst the Arabs men with fair hair and blue eyes. They're the descendants of the Vandals who occupied North Africa. The same phenomenon in Castile and Croatia. The blood doesn't disappear'.[38] German academics also shared Hitler's assessment. In his 1944 study *Kroatien in Südslawien* ('Croatia in Southslavia'), Emil Robert Gärtner noted that the 'racial genotype' separated the *nordisch-dinarischen* ('Nordic-Dinaric') Croats from the *vorderasiatisch-ostischen* ('Near Eastern-Eastern') Serbs.[39] A sizeable percentage of the German population, particularly in Bavaria and Austria, was classified as 'Dinaric' by German race theorists, and this enabled Ustasha ideologists to further stress the racial links between Croats and Germans.[40] Thus Lukas could point out that the Croats were racially closer to the Dinaric population of Bavaria and the Tyrol than they were to the Slavic speaking Russians.[41]

The Ustashe thus had the 'good fortune' of belonging to a nation that was thought more racially valuable by the Nazis in comparison to most other East and South-East Europeans, but the question of racial identity for the Ustashe was not simply one of trying to win favour with their distant German 'cousins'. For although Pavelić, for one, exaggerated the 'Gothic theory' in conversation with leading Germans during the first months in power, the Ustashe were generally consistent, both before and after 1941, in arguing that the Goths were *one* of the peoples that had contributed to the racial make-up of the Croats. The Ustasha movement

[38] See *Hitler's Table Talk*, p. 110.
[39] See Emil Robert Gärtner, *Kroatien in Südslawien* (Berlin: Junker und Dürmhaupt Verlag, 1944), p. 7.
[40] H. F. K. Günther estimated that 15-20% of the Germans were of Dinaric race. See Brennecke (ed.) *The Nazi Primer*, pp. 33-34.
[41] Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao', pp. 50-51.

had managed to come up with its own 'Aryan' race theory. The Croats were described as Aryan, but were not considered to belong exclusively to any particular Indo-European ethno-linguistic branch, whether Slav, Germanic or Indo-Iranian. For example, in a 1943 article in *Spremnost*, Dr. Krajač wrote that the 'old Croats' who conquered Dalmatia and Pannonia had assimilated their 'linguistic cousins, the Slavic Wends', as well as receiving

> 'the first class racial components of the Goths and old Illyrians, which could only strengthen even more their blood quality and national traits from a warrior and from an organizational perspective…the Goths are a capable noble nation, while the Illyrians are a strong, heroic, mountaineer and maritime nation'.[42]

An alliance with the Nazi Reich did not necessarily demand from a nation that it 'acquire' a Germanic-Aryan identity, even if it might prove favourable to that country's political relationship with Germany. Two other Slav speaking countries, Slovakia and Bulgaria, were allies of Germany, and while Slovak nationalists did claim 'Aryan status', they did not deny their Slavic character, while the Bulgarian Emperor Boris was proud of the Bulgars' 'Hunnish' (in other words, non-Aryan Turkic) racial descent.[43] Hitler did not have a terribly high opinion of the 'Turkoman' Bulgarians, but at the same time he accepted Bulgaria as an ally.[44] One could also cite the cases of Germany's alliance with 'Latin Mediterranean' Italy and 'Finno-Ugric' Hungary and especially with 'Asiatic' Japan to highlight Hitler's occasional

---

[42] Dr. Ivan Krajač, 'Kulturna sposobnost Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 6 June 1943, p. 9.
[43] On the subject of Slovak nationalism, see Nadya Nedelsky, 'The Wartime Slovak State: A Case Study in the Relationship Between Ethnic Nationalism and Authoritarian Patterns of Governance', *Nations and Nationalism* 7, 2, April 2001, p. 224 and 11fn, p. 233. On Bulgaria, see Nada Kisić-Kolanović, *Zagreb-Sofija: Prijateljstvo po mjeri ratnog vremena 1941-1945* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, Dom i svijet, 2003), p. 68.
[44] See *Hitler's Table Talk*, p. 473 and Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, p. 260.

pragmatism on racial matters. Of course, the Führer was able to use his racial theories to get around the problem of the 'dubious' racial identity of most of his allies; thus, one could argue that the Italians were 'heirs to the ancient Roman legions and a southern type of Aryan', while even the Japanese could be 'labelled "honorary Aryans" because they possessed Germanic qualities'.[45]

This does not mean, however, that the average Italian Fascist or Japanese nationalist necessarily wanted to be 'Aryan' or 'Germanic'. Although the 1938 Fascist 'Manifesto of Racial Scientists' argued in favour of an 'Aryan-Nordic orientation' for Italian racism, many Italian scholars and Fascists 'would fight a virtual intellectual and political war against those advocating the "Nordic orientation"', in support of the 'Mediterranean' race theory.[46] In the case of the NDH, Hitler was partially sympathetic to the Croats because of his racial theories that held them to be 'more Germanic than Slav'. For his part, German envoy Siegfried Kasche encouraged German agencies in Croatia to support any 'tendencies that emphasize the non-Slav origin of the Croatian nation'.[47] Nevertheless, despite German ideological influence, Ustasha race theories were basically 'native' and one can easily trace the origin of these theories back to Lukas, Šufflay, Pilar, Starčević and others. Most Ustasha ideologists adhered to the basic idea that the Croats were of mixed, though still Aryan, ethnic-racial background, a point that has continually been missed by historians. Fedor Pucek perhaps

[45] Bryan Mark Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and the Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2002), p. 184.
[46] Aaron Gillette, 'The Origins of the "Manifesto of racial scientists"' in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 6 (3), 2001, pp. 316, 319.
[47] Kasche was concerned with combating pan-Slavism among the Croats. See Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 1, p. 240.

best summed up Ustasha race theory in his 1943 introduction to the translation of Pilar's text.

Pucek noted that the Croats were the product of the 'mixing of various nations and races': the contemporary Croats thus carried the blood of all the peoples that had inhabited the Croatian lands before the arrival of the Croats in the seventh century, including 'Celts, Illyrians, Huns, Avars, Romans and Goths'.[48] Furthermore, the original or 'old' Croats were also not entirely 'homogeneous', but rather consisted of a 'Slavic majority led by a less numerous warrior stratum of Gothic-Caucasian-Iranian origin'.[49] In short, the Croatian state was 'an organism organized by Gothic-Caucasian Iranians with Slavic tribes on the territory of the West Roman Empire' and the Croatian national heritage consisted of all these components, including the 'remains of the Roman state administration'.[50] If the influences of Western Christianity and Islam were added to these components, wrote Pucek, then one had all the basic components that comprised *hrvatstvo* (Croatdom).[51] The Slavic element, which was Nordic in race, was the largest racial component among the Croats, although the 'Gothic-Iranian component' was also 'comparatively very high'; in any case, the Croats were neither, 'only Slavs or only Goths', but simply Croats.[52] Croatian was a Slavic language and 'we are proud of it [and] for us it is the most beautiful language in the world', but this 'linguistic fact', Pucek argued, did not mean that the Croats had to lead a pan-Slavist policy.[53]

---

[48] Pucek, 'Introduction' in Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. xxv.
[49] ibid.
[50] ibid.
[51] ibid.
[52] ibid, pp. xxv-xxvi.
[53] ibid, p. xxvi.

Pucek's outline above was the basic 'race' theory of the Ustasha movement and NDH regime and one can easily see the same or very similar views expressed in the works of, for example, Lorković, Lukas and Pavelić,[54] even if the academic Lukas emphasized the significance of the Slavic component in the Croatian ethnic make-up, downplaying the Iranian one, while the ideologist Lorković stressed the role of the Iranians in Croatian history.[55] To be sure, some Ustasha ideologists also maintained that the Croats were not of mixed descent. Danijel Crljen, for one, was adamant that the Croats 'never consisted of various nations', that their 'descent is uniform and did not originate from the merging of various groups'.[56] The Ustashe in fact argued that the Croats were one of the oldest nations in Europe, for they 'appeared on the stage of the history of cultured humanity as a specific and already formed ethnic group under its own name as far back as the early Middle Ages', while the other major nations of Europe were at that time still part of the 'common Germanic' or 'Romanic groups'.[57]

Such claims, however, were not in open contradiction with the argument that the Croats were of mixed ethnic background, for the most significant point that Crljen and others were

[54] Pavelić mentioned the same basic mixture of Slavs, Goths, Romans and Illyrians in the Croatian racial make-up in the first volume of his memoirs. Pavelić admitted, however, that it would probably be impossible to know with certainty whether the original Croats were of Iranian or of Gothic descent, and instead held the view that the Croatian language (alongside Lithuanian) was the closest relative to the proto-Indo-European language and therefore formed a branch of the Indo-European family in its own right. See Pavelić, *Doživljaji I*, pp. 284-288.

[55] Lukas noted that in the same way as the French became Latins due to intermarriage with Romans and the adoption of a Romance tongue despite their name of Germanic origin, so too did the originally non-Slav Croats become Slavs through linguistic assimilation and intermarriage. See Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao', p. 147.

[56] See Danijel Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta' in Petar Požar (ed.) *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), p. 57.

[57] See 'Najsvetija dužnost majke: uz Poglavnikovu zakonsku odredbu', *Hrvatski narod*, 13 June 1941.

trying to get across was that an *ethnie* under the Croatian name had existed from the earliest times. As Crljen wrote in 1942, '[the Croats] arrived from their old homeland in their new homeland as an organized national group under the name *Croat* [Crljen's emphasis]'.[58] Thus, for the Ustashe, a 'core ethnie' existed in the Croatian nation, which was able to assimilate individuals from other ethnic and racial groups. Pucek described this core 'component' as the 'Nordic Slavic-Gothic-Iranian' one.[59] This component was in itself an ethnic mixture, but racially 'Nordic-Aryan' and united under the Croatian name. As Dr. Božidar Murgić explained in the German language Ustasha newspaper, *Neue Ordnung,* in May 1942, 'the ancient autochthonous culture' of the Croats came form the 'high north', where it was related to the 'urgermanisch-nordische Kultur' ('Ur-Germanic-Nordic culture').[60] Even in their 'southern homeland' along the 'blue Adriatic', the Croatian people retained, argued Murgić, 'its Nordic soul, its Nordic bravery…its honour and its Nordic art'.[61]

The Croats had also retained their national name, the 'first mark of uniqueness and authenticity'. For the Ustashe the national appellation held even greater importance, for the Croat name had had to compete, from the 1830s onwards, with the 'national' Yugoslav, Illyrian and Slav names, even though these last names could not compare, the Ustashe asserted, with the glory of the Croat name. An article that appeared in the Zagreb daily, *Novi List,* in May 1941, under the title 'The holy Croat name cannot be substituted with any other name', stated that,

---

[58] Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta'.
[59] Pucek, 'Introduction', p. xxvii.
[60] Dr. Božidar Murgić, 'Die Kulturbeziehungen des kroatischen und deutschen Volkes', *Neue Ordnung*, 26 May 1942, p. 13.
[61] Murgić based his arguments on the work of J. Strzygowski. See ibid.

> 'the Croat name and Croat people have a separate origin and position among the remaining Slavic peoples. The Croatian name was resurrected in history for the first time in the second and third centuries and from then, across seventeen centuries, it coalesced with the souls and with the blood of generations and remained a holy name, for which one suffered and bled throughout our history'.[62]

Such exaltation of the national name sets the Ustasha regime apart from all its Axis allies, none of which feared losing their 'first mark of uniqueness and authenticity'. The Ustashe did indeed have good reason to fear the ideology of Yugoslavism, the proponents of which effectively aimed to reduce the Croatian name from a national to a regional or 'tribal' appellation. There was certainly nothing *a priori* racist about opposing pan-Slavist racial myths. The Ustashe were not incorrect when they argued that the term Slav was a linguistic classification and that although one could speak of 'nations of the Slavic language group', there was no such thing as a distinct and single Slav race, culture or ethnicity.[63] However, the Ustashe did not just stop at the argument that there was no 'Slav race', but rather had developed their own Aryan race theory, which provided an ideological justification for the expulsion and extermination of peoples considered 'non-Aryan'. It was one thing to claim that the Croats were of mixed ethnic origin and that therefore the proponents of pan-Slavism and Yugoslavism were wrong to pronounce the Croats as 'purely' Slavic, but it was quite another thing to claim that it was the 'Iranian' and/or 'Nordic-Dinaric racial

[62] See 'Sveto ime Hrvat ne može se zamijeniti nikakvim drugim imenom', *Novi List*, 22 May 1941, p. 5. The reference to 'seventeen centuries' in the article referred to the discovery of the 3rd century AD names of 'Horoathos' and 'Horovathos' on two gravestones in the ancient city of Tanais on the river Don in south Russia. See p. 183 of this thesis.
[63] Ivo Bogdan, '"Slavenski kongres" u Moskvi', *Spremnost*, 26 April 1942, p. 1.

component' that had primarily given the Croats their 'state-building talents' and 'warrior spirit'. This was racial theory, not serious history.

Chapter Twelve: The Orthodox Serb 'Problem' in the NDH

Defining the 'Greek-Easterners'

Although the Serbs were not officially treated as 'non-Aryans', they were subject to policies determined by pre-war Ustasha race theory. The Serb provided one component of the generalized Asiatic/Balkan racial 'counter-type' to the Aryan Croat ideal type, as described in the last two chapters. The Ustashe had long held the view that the Serbs of 'historic' Croatia were a people of diverse ethnic/racial origin, who only possessed a united national consciousness through adherence to the Serbian Orthodox Church. Consequently, the Ustashe were to conduct a policy that included mass deportation to German occupied Serbia, mass murder, and the forcible assimilation of some Serbs, which at first meant conversion to Roman Catholicism and later, the establishment of a Croatian Orthodox Church. Although they never expressed their aim in writing, the Ustashe intended to deport a third of the NDH's Orthodox population to Serbia, exterminate a third, and convert a third to Catholicism.[1] To some extent, the use of these methods depended on whether the particular policy in question seemed politically expedient, but the significant factor was what the regime saw as the complex nature of Serbian Orthodox identity in Croatia. The absence of a defined legal status for the Serbs enabled the regime to pursue a more flexible policy with

[1] See Goldstein, *Croatia*, p. 137.

regard to them. The autochthonous Serbs of the NDH were officially classified by the regime as 'Greek-Easterners' (*grčkoistočnjaci*).[2] Serbs from Serbia proper living in the NDH were classified separately, as Serbians or *Srbijanci*, while the ethnically related Orthodox Montenegrins were also to be treated differently from both Serbian and NDH Serbs.

In accordance with the notion that the Serbian Orthodox Church was the chief nurturer of a Serbian identity in Croatia, the regime first set out to destroy that institution on the territory of the NDH. The regime banned the official use of the term 'Serbian Orthodox faith' (*srpskopravoslavna vjera*) and replaced it with the pre-1918 term, 'Greek-Eastern faith' (*grčkoistočna vjera*), on 18 July 1941, arguing that the term 'Serbian Orthodox' was incompatible with the Ustasha state.[3] Pavelić had in fact described the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia to Archbishop Stepinac in 1941 as a 'political organization'.[4] The Julian calender, used by the Orthodox Church, was also banned and replaced by the Gregorian one, while the 'Patriarchate tithe', the tax collected by the Church in the Yugoslav state, was annulled, leaving the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia in financial straits.[5]

The regime also banned the use of the Cyrillic script on the territory of the NDH (25 April 1941). This prohibition was primarily motivated by the regime's policies of linguistic purism. Cyrillic had been promoted together with the Serbian *ekavian* standard as Yugoslavia's

[2] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 113-114.
[3] ibid.
[4] See Alexander, *Triple Myth,* p. 62.
[5] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 531.

official language by the Karađorđević regime.[6] In response to pre-war unitarist attempts to fashion an artificial 'Yugoslav' or 'Serbo-Croatian' language, the Ustashe established the 'Croatian State Office for Language' (*Hrvatski državni ured za jezik*), the aim of which was to purge the Croatian literary language of Serbian and indeed all foreign lexical influences, as well as to re-introduce the (Illyrianist) etymological spelling system.[7] The Ustasha policy of linguistic purism was closely tied to the regime's aim to prove Croatian national individuality. The 'Law decree on the Croatian language, on its purity and its orthography' (14 August 1941) stipulated that the language of the Croats was 'not identical with any other language, nor is it a dialect of any other language'.[8] As Pavelić remarked to the *Sabor* in February 1942, under Serbian rule,

> 'the most vulgar, the most bad and ugliest Balkan words had become a component part of the Croatian language…Our beautiful language…our cultured language, noble language – for the entire Croatian people, the peasant and the worker, is a noble nation – this language became an ordinary jargon, in which the drift of human society speak in night time coffee-houses'.[9]

Not only did 'ugly Balkan words' have to be removed from Croatia. The descendants of Balkan Orthodox immigrants also had to be expelled. These Balkan immigrants were divided, more or less, according to the tripartite ethnic/racial division outlined in Lorković's

---

[6] See ibid and Banac, *National Question*, pp. 212-213. The Croats had traditionally used three alphabets throughout their history – Latin, Glagolitic and Cyrillic – but by the mid 18th century, the Latin script had fully predominated in most Croatian regions.
[7] On the language question in the NDH see Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*.
[8] Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, p. 33.
[9] Pavelić quoted in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 92.

account of the history of the Orthodox Serbian minority in *Narod i zemlja Hrvata*. Throughout the entire period from 1941-1945, Ustasha propaganda was generally consistent in its portrayal of the NDH's Serbs as the descendants of: nomadic Orthodox immigrants of various ethnic/racial origin (including Vlach, Gypsy, Cincar, Bulgarian and Greek), who had served as Ottoman auxiliaries; Catholic Croat converts to Orthodoxy; and ethnic Serbians.[10] Lorković had not, to be sure, made mention of the 'Gypsy' ancestors of the Serbs in his 1939 study, but he would do so during the NDH.[11] Individual Ustashe might place more emphasis on the 'Gypsy' or the 'Croatian' or the 'Vlach' origin of the Serbs, but the above tripartite scheme was the basic Ustasha race theory on the origins of the NDH's Serbs, and provided the justification for the different policies used against them. The Ustashe did not attempt to precisely determine who was of Croatian, Vlach, Gypsy or Serbian origin, for this would have been a logistical impossibility.

Although linguistically indistinguishable from Croats, the NDH's Serbs had not, the Ustashe argued, managed to assimilate into the Croatian nation as other immigrants had done due to their different faith and origins. In a speech at a public rally in Karlovac in July 1941, the Education Minister Mile Budak claimed, for example, that the Croats had taught the Orthodox immigrants – a mixture of 'Greeks, Cincars, Gypsies, Bulgarians, Romanians and

[10] See for example, Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', pp. 236-237 and Pucek, 'Introduction' in Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, p. xxvii. Also see Vatroslav Murvar, 'Ustaška vjera', *Ustaški godišnjak 1942*, p. 85 in which the author argued that the Serbians of the Šumadija region (in Serbia) were also the descendants of Cincar, Romanian, and Greek immigrants.

[11] See Lorković's interview, 'Worum geht es in Bosnien?' in *Neue Ordnung*, 7 September 1941, pp. 1-2 dealing with the topic of the 'Serbenfrage' ('The Serb Question'). Lorković argued, similarly to Pilar, that the Vlachs themselves were the product of 'balkanromanischen und zigeunerischen Mischvölker' ('Balkan Romanic and Gypsy mixed peoples'). See ibid.

some Serbs' – the Croatian language, but they had not become nationally Croat.[12] The Ustashe viewed the 'problem' of the Orthodox minority in the NDH as one of trying to assimilate an 'anti-social' nomadic element. As Filip Lukas explained in 1943, there had historically been two waves of immigration to Croatia, one from the West and the other from the East; the Western immigrants (who included Germans, Slovaks, Slovenes, Czechs and Hungarians) were largely 'racially and culturally kindred' to the Croats even if they did not share a common heritage and common national customs with them.[13] However, while these Western immigrants had, by and large, come to identify with their new homeland, the Serbian Orthodox immigrants, mainly Vlachs and Gypsies, were both racially and culturally distinct from the Croats and remained more or less a foreign and hostile element on Croatian soil.[14] Lukas argued that the influence of the 'Eastern' immigrants would have been 'far less if it had been limited to racially foreign elements'. However, a great number of 'the autochthonous population, racially Croatian' had become 'spiritually equal' with the Eastern immigrants by converting to Orthodoxy, 'which was then under the protection of the Turkish authorities'.[15]

[12] See, 'Prva ustaška skupština u Karlovcu', *Hrvatski narod*, 14 July 1941, p. 2.
[13] Lukas, 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti', pp. 235-237.
[14] ibid, pp. 236-237.
[15] ibid, p. 237.

The merging of Serbian, Jewish and Gypsy stereotypes in Ustasha propaganda

Although not subject to the race laws, Serbs were portrayed in Ustasha propaganda as being racially akin to Jews and Gypsies.[16] These three peoples would also be associated with 'Asiatic' Bolshevism. By conflating the three groups together, the Ustashe produced a racial counter-type that could provide an easily identifiable enemy. The Ustashe identified Serbs as partially non-Aryan due to centuries of miscegenation with dark Balkan elements and various 'Near-Eastern' immigrants during the period of Turkish rule. A May 1941 article in *Novi list* claimed that due to the mixing with the 'Romanized aboriginals of the Balkan peninsula', the predominant physical features of the Serbs were dark skin, eyes and hair.[17] In 1942, Milivoj Karamarko claimed that a sizeable 15% of Serbs possessed 'non-Aryan Near Eastern and very conspicuous Gypsy' racial features.[18] Furthermore, only a minority of Serbs were Dinaric (25%), while the relative majority (35%) belonged to the Armenoid race, which was characterized by a dark complexion and a personality prone to trickery, fawning and cheating.[19] The Serbs had, as Mirko Košutić further explained in the same year, 'received a considerable admixture of Gypsy, nomadic and…Semitic blood and are therefore clever, cunning, envious and selfish' and had a 'materialistic view of the world'.[20]

---

[16] Although the Serbs were legally speaking not 'non-Aryan', discriminatory decrees were issued by the regime dealing with Serbs and Jews together. For example, see *Hrvatski narod*, 10 May 1941, p. 6, 'Židovi i Srbi moraju za 8 dana napustiti sjeverni dio Zagreba' ('Jews and Serbs must leave the northern part of Zagreb within 8 days').

[17] See 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih Muslimana', *Novi List*, 8 May, p. 7.

[18] M. Karamarko, 'Dinarska rasa i Hrvati: osebujne naše značajke i pozitivni prinos nordijske rase', *Spremnost*, 22 November 1942', p. 7.

[19] ibid.

[20] M. Košutić, 'Ništetnost državnih čina od 1918', *Spremnost*, 15 March 1942, p. 1.

From May to July 1941, during an intensive propaganda campaign involving mass public rallies in several towns throughout Croatia, the Serbs of the NDH were portrayed by the Ustashe as the descendants of 'anti-social' nomads as well as a fifth column of the Belgrade regime. They were deemed similar to the equally 'nomadic' and stateless Jews and Gypsies. Leading Ustasha functionaries (notably Mile Budak, Mladen Lorković and Mirko Puk) addressed large crowds of up to 15,000 people as part of the regime's attempt to indoctrinate the Croat masses to be intolerant toward the 'enemies of the Croatian people'. In the northwest Croatian town of Križevci in early July 1941, the Justice Minister Mirko Puk spoke of enemies who were 'not members of our Croatian national community. These are the Jews and Serbs. The Jews are the bearers of the capitalist system…The Serbs came to our regions with Turkish units, as looters, as the dregs and refuse of the Balkans'.[21]

Later that month in the Slavonian town of Donji Miholjac, Lorković explained to the crowd that the 'Croatian people must purify itself from all elements that are a misfortune for this people, which are foreign and alien to that people'; those elements, noted Lorković, 'are our Serbs and our Jews'.[22] Mile Budak spoke of the NDH's Serbs in a similar manner at several rallies, often referring to them as 'Vlachs' and/or as the descendants of various Orthodox Balkan immigrants, who had served as slaves of and/or auxiliaries to the Ottoman Turks.[23] In

[21] See the article entitled 'Doglavnik dr. Mile Budak o dužnostima svakog Hrvata', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 July 1941, p. 3.
[22] See, 'Značajan politički govor ministra dra Lorkovića na veličanstvenoj ustaškoj skupštini u Donjem Miholjcu', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 July 1941, p. 3.
[23] See for example, 'Sav je narod uz Poglavnika', *Hrvatski narod*, 27 May 1941, pp. 1, 3. Starčević's term 'Slavoserb' was also employed by Ustasha propaganda, but less as a synonym for Serbs and more as a term of reference for Croatian traitors and 'Yugoslavs'. See for example the article 'Nek' se čisti!', *Novi list*, 21 May 1941, p. 1.

a 1942 booklet explaining in detail the principles of the Ustasha movement, Danijel Crljen argued that the Ustashe had had 'to remove two yokes off the back of the Croatian people. On the political, national field, one had to destroy the Serbian state rule over the Croatian lands. On the economic field, one had to erase the fatal and almighty influence of Jewry, which, alongside Serbdom, oppressed us'.[24] As one 1941 article in *Novi List* explained, the Jews had in fact found a welcome home in Serbian dominated Yugoslavia, for they had discovered an 'ideological cousin in the Serbian-Cincar-Gypsy mentality and spirit'.[25]

In accordance with the notion that the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were all 'nomadic' peoples, the Ustasha regime characterized the rise of the anti-NDH Partisan and Chetnik movements as the product of these anti-Croatian and indeed, socially destructive and uncivilized elements. Although the Greater Serbian monarchist Chetniks and Communist led Partisans fought each other for most of the period of the Second World War, the fact that both were committed to the restoration of the Yugoslav state (albeit with quite different ideas on what form of state it should be) and the fact that the Partisan movement was initially mainly Serb in terms of its ethnic make-up, enabled the Ustashe to depict them as essentially the same phenomenon. The regime's propaganda apparatus usually identified the two groups as one movement by use of the hyphenated term 'Communist-Chetnik'.[26] The 'Communist-Chetnik

[24] Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta' in Požar (ed.) *Ustaša*, p. 75.
[25] See 'Povjesna važnost zakonskih odredaba o zaštiti arijske krvi', *Novi List*, 3 May 1941, p. 5.
[26] See for example, the Croatian army report, 'Komunističko-četnički izgredi ('Communist-Chetnik riots') in *Hrvatski narod*, 7 August 1941, p. 3. Ustasha journalists were instructed to use the word 'communist' and not 'serb' when referring to the 'Vlachs in Croatia'. See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 57fn, p. 237.

bandits' were accused of collaborating with international Jewry.[27] This conflation of Serbs, Jews and Communists was not only the result of the wartime Ustasha struggle against the Partisans; Pavelić had already forged a link bewteen the same groups in his 1936 memorandum, *Die kroatische Frage*. The Ustashe were quick to point to the fact that a considerable number of Jews were actively fighting in Partisan ranks and/or had leadership roles in the Yugoslav Communist Party.[28]

A fitting example of how the Ustashe merged the 'Serbian-Jewish-Communist' anti-Croat conspiracy with the question of race is a 1942 *Spremnost* article by Ivo Bogdan. Under the title, 'There are no more Partisans – there have remained only plundering hordes', Bogdan sought to explain the influence the 'various pathological types and the great number of Jews' had on the peculiar characteristics of the Partisans, seeing as the Jews lacked 'the ethical comprehension that is peculiar to us'.[29] Partisan characteristics were marked by the 'appalling atrocities perpetrated on the peaceful population', which Bogdan remarked, could not have been committed 'by beings that deserve the name of humans'.[30] In explaining these Partisan atrocities, one must take into account, Bogdan continued, 'the centuries old alluvium of impure Balkan blood, the sediment of which has risen to the surface in these

[27] See 'Komunističko-četnički izgredi'.
[28] About half of the 9,000 Jews who survived the Holocaust did so as members of Partisan units or as refugees in Partisan held areas. See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 527. See also Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, p. 45 and the article 'Židovi-Odmetnici-Masoni' in *Spremnost*, 13 September 1942, pp. 1-2.
[29] Ivo Bogdan, 'Partizana nema više – ostale su samo pljačkaške horde', *Spremnost*, 16 August 1942, p. 3.
[30] ibid.

murky times'.[31] In his 1944 brochure, 'Croatia in the Struggle against Bolshevism', the then Interior Minister, Lorković, argued that the 'outlaws' (i.e. the 'Communist-Chetniks') were the direct descendants of the *martolosi*, the Christian Vlach auxiliaries who had served as irregular Ottoman forces, or as Lorković explained, 'the rabble who were brought over in the Turkish period from the Balkan interior'.[32]

In an earlier interview given to *Neue Ordnung* in September 1941, Lorković had even referred to the 'Communist-Chetniks' as 'asozialer Untermenschen' ('asocial sub-humans').[33] The Ustashe had also coined a new Croatian word, *podčovjek* ('sub-human'), to describe the 'Jewish Bolshevik' enemy.[34] According to Julije Makanec, the Croats fought war in the manner of the 'warrior nations of cultured Europe', which 'display a disgust and contempt toward bestiality and bloodthirstiness', the latter typically 'Balkan' characteristics 'found only among lower races and peoples of low civilizational value'.[35] The regime often referred to the 'Communist-Chetnik bands' collectively as the *šuma* ('forest'), implying that they hid, as guerrilla bandits, in the forests and mountains of the NDH, in other words, in areas that were 'outside' of civilization.

---

[31] ibid.

[32] Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, p. 9. Lorković had made the same identification between the *martolosi* and the Chetniks in conversation with Hitler, when he accompanied Pavelić for a meeting with the Führer at Klessheim castle in Austria in April 1943. See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića' in *Mladen Lorković*, pp. 286-287.

[33] See 'Worum geht es in Bosnien?' *Neue Ordnung*, 7 September 1941, pp. 1-2.

[34] Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, pp. 67-68. *Podčovjek* was a literal translation of the German *Untermensch*. An article in *Nova Hrvatska* (9 October 1941) noted that the Jewish 'sub-human was raised in the underworld of the dark ghettos of the Eastern cities'. The aim of the 'sub-human' was 'to destroy everything that the civilized world had created over the centuries', something that came naturally to these beings that had 'similar traits to humans, but [were] spiritually on a lower level than any animal'. Quoted in Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, 193fn, p. 68.

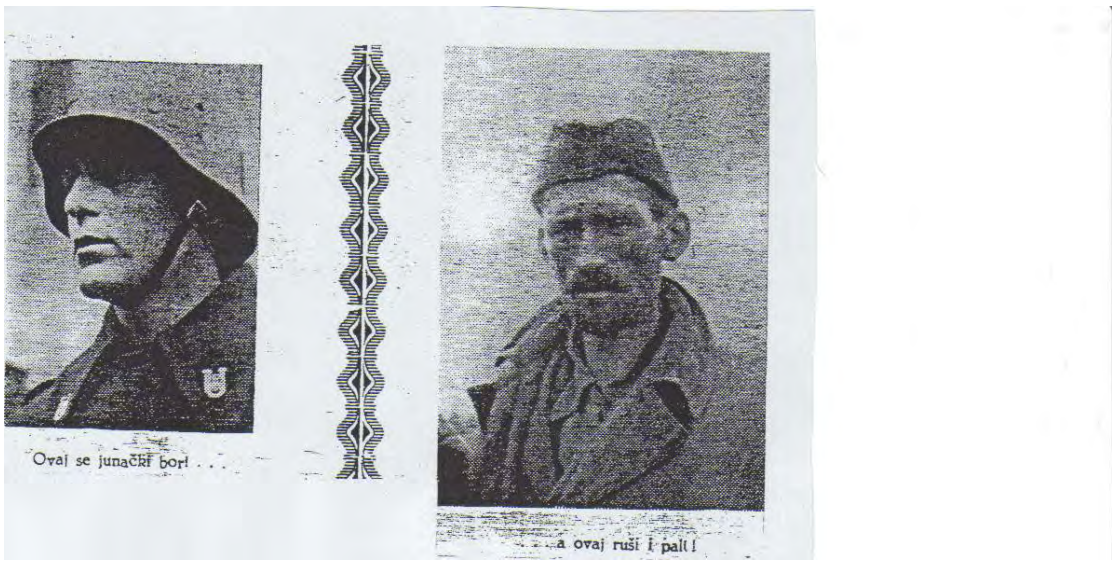
[35] Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici*, p. 60.

Ustasha propaganda: supplement 1. The title of the cartoon is 'When Serbs make war'. The physically dark and ugly commanding officer asks the saluting, equally 'Balkan' looking soldier (in Serbian) how he had executed his order. The soldier replies: 'All in order, general sir. In the whole village there were 17 women and 13 children. We heroically slaughtered them all!' *Novi list*, 11 May 1941, p. 14.

The idea that the 'Communist-Chetniks' were uncivilized hordes was enhanced by the Chetniks' traditional fashion of long hair and beards and fur caps, a look quite distinct from that of the clean-shaven and shorthaired Ustashe outfitted in German or Italian style military uniforms. One Ustasha brochure from 1944 referred to the 'Communist-Chetniks' as 'forest bandits', 'drunken rabble' and 'a plundering gang gone wild'.[36] On the other side to this 'foreign rabble' stood the 'whole Croatian people', which fought to 'protect its home, its

[36] Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi*, pp. 75-76.

family, its property and state borders'.[37] Furthermore this war was to be a war of no mercy, for in 'this bloody confrontation, in this war of justice against crime, as the Poglavnik himself said, there can be no third path. There are only two paths: that of the Croatian Ustasha state or that of the *šuma*'.[38]



Ustasha propaganda: supplement 2. Comparing the 'Nordic-Dinaric' Croatian Ustasha soldier with the Asiatic/Balkan 'Communist-Chetnik' enemy (Caption underneath the Ustasha soldier reads: 'This one fights heroically'; under the other picture: 'and this one destroys and burns!'). Mijo Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi (1928-1941-1944)*, pp. 76-77.

Despite its claims that the Partisans were, for all intents and purposes, a Serbian armed force, the Ustasha regime could not close its eyes to the large number of Croats who had come to either join or at least sympathize with the Partisans. The regime had a generally low opinion of these Croats, even if many Ustashe did concede that the Partisans were often the only

[37] ibid.
[38] ibid, p. 76.

refuge for Dalmatian and Istrian Croats repressed by the Italian occupation authorities.[39] The Croatian Partisan leadership itself was completely committed to the ideologies of pan-Slavism and Yugoslavism and to Croatian-Serbian political dualism within Croatia. The first article of ZAVNOH's 1944 'Declaration on the basic rights of the peoples and citizens of Democratic Croatia' stated that 'the Croatian and Serbian nations in Croatia are completely equal'.[40] The Croat Partisan leaders saw Stalin's Russia through the prism of 'Slavic reciprocity'.[41] Tito himself was, during the whole course of the war (and right until 1948), a 'loyal servant of Stalin'.[42] ZAVNOH was viewed as the culmination of the political aims of 'Strossmayer, Frano Supilo and Stjepan Radić'.[43] Andrija Hebrang recognized that Croats, Serbs and Slovenes were separate nationalities, but still believed in a common state for the 'South Slavs'. His national ideas did indeed originate from Radić, Strossmayer and Gaj, for like them, Hebrang believed in preserving Croatian political individuality, but he also viewed Croatian ethnic identity as being Slavic and/or Yugoslav.[44]

[39] In a public speech in Zagreb after the Italian capitulation, the Poglavnik himself made references to the 'Croatian sons' who had gone to the *šuma* after being expelled from their homes by 'intruders' [i.e. Italians] and offered an amnesty to all those who would return home. See the first volume of Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, pp. 118-119.
[40] Kisić-Kolanović, *Hebrang,* p. 126.
[41] ibid, p. 86.
[42] Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 180. After the war, Belgrade was chosen as the site of the 'Pan-Slav Congress' (held in December 1946) as Marshal Tito was regarded as Stalin's most 'trusted communist fighter', while the 'Yugoslavs were regarded as the second ranking Slav nation', after the Soviet Union. At the end of his opening speech, Tito made a 'three-fold toast, to Slav solidarity, to our greatest Slav brother, the Soviet Union [and] to its leader of genuis, Stalin'. See Kohn, *Pan-Slavism*, pp. 235-237.
[43] Kisić-Kolanović, *Hebrang*, p. 88.
[44] ibid, pp. 82-88.

Needless to say, Croatian Partisan collaboration with the Serbs, and the recognition of Serbian political equality in Croatia, was anathema to the Ustashe.[45] There could be no political equality between Croats and Serbs within Croatia; Mirko Puk remarked in his speech in July 1941, that 'we cannot allow that in our national state two nations rule. God is one and so is the one nation that rules and that is the Croatian nation'.[46] The chief director of propaganda in the NDH (from late 1942 to early 1944), Matija Kovačić, spoke on Zagreb radio in late 1943, of that 'small percentage of Croats who had succumbed to the propaganda of Moscow' as 'refuse', which is 'prone to criminality, theft, murder and destruction' and which put itself at the disposal of 'identical types of another blood, of another nationality'.[47] The Partisans were no heroes as Allied propaganda made them out, but rather, Ivo Bogdan noted, the product of regions where, for centuries, people had been educated into the ways of banditry, after the example of the Balkan brigands known as *hajduks*.[48]

Accusations of betrayal were also made against the HSS representatives that had joined the royal Yugoslav government-in-exile in London. According to the Ustashe, these Croats in London did not seem to understand that Croatia's only natural ally was Germany.[49] Croatia was, as Lorković claimed in 1944, one of the bulwarks of Europe, and the 'heart' of this

[45] Out of the total of 150,000 Croatian Partisans in late 1944 and early 1945, almost 30% were ethnic Serbs (60% were Croats, the remaining 10% of other nationalities). See Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest,* p. 182. In March 1945, the Partisan army command in Croatia was officially designated as the 'Chief Staff of the Yugoslav army for Croatia'. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Hebrang*, 55fn, p. 74.
[46] See 'Doglavnik dr. Mile Budak o dužnostima svakog Hrvata', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 July 1941, p. 3.
[47] Matija Kovačić, *Partizanska lakrdija: Partizanstvo mora nestati!* (Zagreb: Hrvatski tiskarski zavod, 1943), p. 27.
[48] Ivo Bogdan, *Hrvatska i svjetska politika* (Zagreb: Ustaški stožer, 1944), p. 19.
[49] ibid, pp. 26-27.

Europe was the 'Greater German Reich', while its 'genuis' was the Führer.[50] The NDH had, as a result, become the

> 'target of a joint conspiracy of the defeated Greater Serbia, leaning on Jewry and the Anglo-Saxon plutocracy, of Bolshevism, leaning on the Serbian masses of the Balkans, and the traitorous Italian army, which under the guise of protection, for two and half years stirred up, supplied and helped with all means our first two enemies' [i.e. the Chetniks and Partisans].[51]

The mass deportation and mass killing of Serbs

Having defined the 'Serbian masses' of the NDH in racial terms, the Ustashe moved to put their racial theories into racist practice. While all members of the regime agreed that the Serbian 'masses' had to be removed, the more moderate Ustashe, such as Slavko Kvaternik and Mladen Lorković, advocated deportation and conversion, while Pavelić and his militant émigré recruits from Italy (the Ustasha *ras*) were the main instigators and organizers of mass killings.[52] Although there were 'homeland Ustashe' involved in the killings of Serbs, they did not take a leading role. Homeland Ustashe were generally not as radical as the émigré Ustashe, who were indoctrinated into a cult of violence and revenge in Italy during the

[50] Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, p. 8.
[51] ibid.
[52] Goldstein, *Croatia*, p. 137. Also Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 592-593.

1930s.[53] Ustashe such as Lorković and Slavko Kvaternik were sincere believers in the movement's ideological tenets, but as 'salon Ustashe' their political methods were quite different from those of the belligerent émigrés.[54]

The policies of mass murder and deportation followed two important meetings. The first occurred on 4 June 1941, when agreement was reached between German representatives, including Siegfried Kasche and Chief of the Civil Administration of Lower Styria, Gauleiter Uiberreither, and representatives of the Croatian government, including Mladen Lorković and Slavko Kvaternik, on the resettlement of approximately 170,000 Slovenes from German annexed areas of Slovenia to the NDH (and 5,000 'politically tainted' Slovenes to Serbia), and the simultaneous deportation of the same number of Serbs from the NDH to German occupied Serbia.[55] The Germans were aiming to Germanize their annexed areas of Slovenia, and so needed to 'dump' their racially 'unassimilable' Slovene population somewhere else. The Croats, for their part, were willing to accept the Slovenes in order to have German permission to deport Croatian Serbs to Serbia. Hitler and Ribbentrop approved of the efforts

[53] Nataša Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941-1945: Logor smrti i radni logor* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni cvijet, 2003), p. 17.

[54] On Kvaternik's more moderate stance on the 'Serb question', see Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, pp. 43-44. Slavko's methods were very different from those of his son Eugen, who was one of the most intelligent but at the same time most fanatical Ustashe and who wanted, as one secret German police report stated, 'to solve the contradiction between the Croats and the Orthodox [Serbs] with a knife'. In conversation with Glaise, the elder Kvaternik accused Pavelić of having 'turned the honest émigré youth into sadists' and even considered Eugen as being, 'in a spiritual sense', not his own but Pavelić's son. See ibid, p. 43. There is, however, conflicting evidence, from late 1941, of Slavko voicing approval of the more bloody methods of Pavelić and his *rasovi*. See Broucek (ed.) 'Deutscher Bevollmächtigter General in Kroatien', p. 432.

[55] See Vol. XII, 'The War Years' (February 1 – June 22, 1941) in *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, p. 957. See also Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, pp. 271-272.

to 'reduce', as the Führer commented, 'the extraordinarily strong Serbian minority in Croatia'.[56]

Hitler expressed his approval of Ustasha anti-Serb actions to Pavelić when he met the Poglavnik two days later (6 June) in Berchtesgaden. In reference to the agreed deportations, Hitler gave the Poglavnik some advice: 'If the Croatian state was to be really stable, a nationally intolerant policy had to be pursued for 50 years, because only damage resulted from too much tolerance in these matters'.[57] Hitler therefore welcomed and encouraged Pavelić's policies toward the Serbs, giving the Poglavnik, as Bogdan Krizman remarked, a 'green light' to begin with the persecution.[58] Hitler's 'advice' to Pavelić was only in line with his policy of punishing the Serbs for the 'betrayal' of 27 March 1941 and keeping anti-German Serbia 'so klein wie möglich' ('as small as possible').[59] In Serbia itself, the Communist led uprising on 22 June 1941 saw German authorities retaliate with typical ruthlessness against the civilian population; in October 1941, the Wehrmacht killed 4,000 Serb civilians in the towns of Kraljevo and Kragujevac.[60] Although the Wehrmacht sought, and found, a sizeable number of Serbian collaborators, Nazi attitudes toward the 'vorderasiatisch' Serbs tended to reflect those of SS Obergruppenführer August Meyszner, SS

[56] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 97.
[57] Vol. XII, *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, p. 979.
[58] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 529.
[59] Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 69.
[60] The commanding general in Serbia, the Austrian Franz Böhme, instructed his troops that 'Your mission lies in the country in which German blood flowed in 1914 through the treachery of Serbs, women and children. You are the avengers of these dead'. See Browning, 'Germans and Serbs', pp. 69-70.

and police leader in Serbia, who considered Serbs to be *ein Rattenvolk* ('a people of rats') and preferred 'a dead Serb better than a live one'.[61]

At the end of the Hitler-Pavelić meeting in Berchtesgaden, it was agreed that now 175,000 Slovenes would be deported to Croatia and the same number of Serbs from the NDH to Serbia; the Croats were in fact reluctant to receive too many Slovenes at once, much to the frustration of the Germans. The *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) chief, SS Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich, would complain that the Croats had only accepted 26,341 Slovenes by September (1941), while they had deported, legally or illegally, 118,000 Serbs to Serbia.[62] Although the Ustashe may have preferred the Slovenes to the Serbs, since the former were 'Westerners', the Ustashe were nonetheless suspicious of the Slovenes, who had tended to take a neutral position in Croat-Serb disputes in the inter-war period, and so kept them under close police supervision in the NDH (where they were mainly settled in Bosnia and north Croatia).[63] The Ustashe were adamant that Croatia was 'a national state' in which only Aryan Croats would hold the power and were therefore reluctant to replace one foreign minority (the Serbs) with another. After Italy's capitulation, for example, at the time Pavelić

---

[61] See Jonathan Steinberg, *All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust 1941-1943* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 32 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 78. Although one of the leading advocates for German-Yugoslav co-operation during the 1930s, after the Serbian 'betrayal' of March 1941, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring's attitude toward the Serbs hardened to the extreme. In May 1942, he told the then Croatian military attaché in Berlin, Admiral Jakčin, that 'die Serben müssen ausgerottet werden' ('the Serbs must be exterminated'). See Kisić-Kolanović, 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića', *Mladen Lorković*, p. 166. An economic report dated March 1942, from the offices of I.G. Farben, welcomed the Ustasha measures against the Serbs as 'a constructive contribution to solving the local overpopulation problem'. See Götz Aly & Susanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (London: Phoenix Press, 2002), p. 232.

[62] Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, p. 272. On the results of the Hitler-Pavelić meeting concerning the Slovenes, see Krizman, *Ante Pavelić*, p. 481.

[63] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 169.

unsuccessfully pleaded with Hitler to have Croatian sovereignty recognized over eastern Istria, Ribbentrop asked the Poglavnik whether he had any interest for the province of Ljubljana; Pavelić replied that the NDH wished to remain a 'national state' and therefore did not desire any Slovene lands.[64]

To carry out the deportations of Serbs, the Ustashe established the 'State Directorate for Renewal' (*Državno ravnateljstvo za ponovu*), whose aim was defined as the 'removal of foreign life from the NDH'.[65] The Directorate set up offices in all districts that in turn set up assembly points from where Serbs were to be deported.[66] The first deportations involved Serbian immigrants and their descendents who had arrived in Croatia after 1900. Slavko Kvaternik signed the 'Decree on the duty to register Serbians' on 7 June 1941; all Serbians (*Srbijanci*) in the NDH had to register with their district authorities.[67] The Montenegrins were also subject to the same discrmination at first. The Ustashe justified their deportations of Serbians and Montenegrins by arguing that these 'colonizers' were the main agents of Serbianization under the Karađorđević regime. On 3 May 1941, for example, the Main Ustasha Headquarters in Banja Luka issued a decree ordering all Serbians and Montenegrins in the area of northwest Bosnia to leave 'for their homeland'.[68] These immigrants had 'occupied the leading places' in the administration prior to 1941, and had been given the task

[64] Kisić-Kolanović, 'Zapisi', *Mladen Lorković*, p. 306. The number of Slovenes in the NDH probably never exceeded the 20,000 or so cited above.
[65] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p.168.
[66] The main assembly points were in the northern towns of Bjelovar, Sisak, Slavonska Požega and Zagreb. See ibid, p. 170 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 394.
[67] See 'Naredba o dužnosti prijave Srbijanaca', in Požar (ed.) *Ustaša*, p. 191.
[68] See 'Izgon Srbijanaca iz Bosanske Krajine: do 900 nepoželjnih osoba napušta Banja Luku', *Novi List*, 4 May 1941, p. 16.

of organizing Chetniks in the area after Yugoslavia's collapse. Therefore 'the nation is happy that these parasites will leave the healthy national organism and we can only hope that this evil never returns'.[69]

The Ustashe were also overjoyed to see the departure of 'Greek-Easterners'. The Ustasha *stožernik* in Banja Luka, Viktor Gutić, remarked in July 1941 that the 'Serbs do not deserve any consideration for they belong to a criminal breed'.[70] The Ustashe justified the general deportation of Serbs (whether autochthonous or not) by referring to the precedent of the population exchange between Greece and Turkey on mutual deportations of Orthodox Greeks and Muslims/Turks in 1923. The Ustasha Minister for the 'National Economy', Dr. Lovro Sušić, explained at one public rally in early June 1941, that there would be no 'bloody cleansing'; in other words, 'if the Turks and Greeks had to exchange, then these [Serbs] have to move as well'.[71]

In mid May 1941, the NDH Ministry of Internal Affairs decreed that the Montenegrins were not to be treated as Serbians, for the former were 'citizens of a state of a friendly nation'.[72] This was in reference to Montenegro's autonomous status within Italy, the NDH's formal ally. The decree was also in line with the Ustasha policy of co-operation with anti-Serbian

---

[69] ibid.

[70] See 'Zločinačka pasmina' in *Hrvatski narod*, 11 July 1941. A *stožernik* was an Ustasha party official responsible for a whole *župa*.

[71] See 'Velika skupština ustaškog pokreta u Slunju', *Hrvatski narod*, 9 June 1941, p. 5. At his trial in May 1945, Mile Budak claimed that he never thought that the 'Croatian-Serbian conflict could be solved by massacres and killings, but only by a mutual exchange of populations'. Cited in Jareb, 'Prilog životopisu dra Mile Budaka', p. 316.

[72] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 102fn, p. 165.

Montenegrin nationalists, particularly the group around the politician Sekula Drljević. Furthermore, Ustasha race theory characterized the Montenegrins as being predominantly of Dinaric race, which made them more politically acceptable to the Ustashe.[73]

The Ustashe made many unofficial transports of Serbs to Serbia under the Germans' noses, while many thousands of frightened Serbs had already fled across the border.[74] By late July 1941, German authorities in Serbia were already inundated with refugees and refused to accept any more. The Germans feared a large influx might add more recruits to the Partisans and Chetniks in Serbia.[75] Illegal Ustasha deportations continued even after the Germans asked at a September (1941) conference in Zagreb that all deportations cease.[76] The deportation of Slovenes to Croatia also ceased at this time. By war's end, some 200,000 Serbs had been deported or fled to Serbia.[77]

The deportation went hand in hand with mass murder. Although sporadic murders of Serb civilians took place in April and May 1941, large-scale atrocities began in earnest in the summer months, especially after Pavelić's meeting with Hitler. The mass killings took place

[73] On the Montenegrins' racial affiliation, see the maps in Lukas, 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao', pp. 48-49. In 1944, Sekula Drljević argued that 'races are communities of blood, whereas peoples are creatures of history. With its language, the Montenegrin people belong to the Slavic linguistic community. By their blood, however, they belong to the Dinaric peoples. According to the contemporary science of European races, Dinaric peoples are the descendants of the Illyrians'. Cited in Banac, *National Question*, p. 290.
[74] See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 396.
[75] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 170.
[76] ibid, pp. 170-171.
[77] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 392-397.

in Lika, the Dalmatian hinterland, Slavonia and throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina.[78] The main perpetrators, the émigré Ustashe and *rasovi*, were keen to make Serbs suffer for real or imagined wrongs committed during the interwar period. During the early months of Pavelić's rule, Serbian civilians also fell victim to the brutality of the 'wild Ustashe' (*divlje ustaše*), locally organized units of armed Croat nationalists who operated independently of the government.[79] Serbs were killed in their villages and towns, usually by being shot, stabbed or burned to death in their own homes and/or Orthodox Churches. Alongside these pogroms, hundreds of Serbian Orthodox clergy were also deported to Serbia or murdered, and numerous Serbian Orthodox churches were destroyed.[80]

Serbs were also murdered, along with Jews, Gypsies and Croatian political dissidents, in concentration camps. These camps were constructed after Eugen Kvaternik returned from an official visit to Germany in early June 1941, where he had conferred with SS leaders who advised him on how to organize a concentration camp system.[81] The Gestapo also invited the head of department 3 of UNS, the Ustasha Defence (*Ustaška obrana* – which actually had the specific task of running the camps), Maks Luburić, to make a tour of the Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg concentration camp near Berlin in September 1941; after doing so Luburić proceeded to organize the largest Ustasha camp, the infamous Jasenovac concentration camp,

[78] See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 167.
[79] Tomasevich, *Chetniks*, p. 107. Also see S. Kvaternik's testimony in Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, pp. 204-207. The 'wild Ustashe' were disbanded by orders of the government by the end of the summer of 1941.
[80] The Ustashe murdered 183 Orthodox priests and 5 bishops. Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 529, 572.
[81] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 266 and Mataušić, *Jasenovac*, p. 23.

on the Nazi model.[82] There were around thirty concentration camps in the NDH, many of which were transit or labour camps.[83] The Jasenovac camp, located in Slavonia, operated until April 1945 and was both a labour and extermination camp; close to 80,000 people, including around 47,000 Serbs, 10 – 13,000 Jews, 6 – 10,000 Gypsies and 6 – 12,000 Croats, lost their lives in this concentration camp. In a letter of protest to Pavelić in 1943, Archbishop Stepinac described Jasenovac 'as a shameful fault for the Independent State of Croatia'.[84] The Jasenovac camp in fact symbolized the entire system of Ustasha tyranny and murder. Altogether, an estimated 217,000 of the NDH's Serbs died as victims of both Ustasha and Nazi terror, although the great majority of these Serbs were killed at the hands of the Ustashe.[85]

Religious conversion

In late 1941, the Ustashe needed to 'readjust' their policy of deporting and killing the Serbs, following the outbreak of Chetnik and Partisan rebellions in the NDH and Serbia, which prompted German authorities in Serbia to close the border. The Germans began to argue that

[82] See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 312 and 'Vjekoslav Luburić' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 241.
[83] Matausić, *Jasenovac*, pp. 23-26. Also see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 399. Many of these labour camps were disbanded at the end of 1941.
[84] For figures on the number of victims in Jasenovac, see Matausić, *Jasenovac*, pp. 122-123. For Stepinac's letter to Pavelić, see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 400.
[85] The above figure is based on the most reliable research conducted by the Croatian demographer Vladimir Žerjavić, *Opsesije i megalomanije oko Jasenovca i Bleiburga* (Zagreb: Globus, 1992), p. 71. In 1985, the Serbian scholar, Bogoljub Kočović, arrived at a similar number of Serbian deaths in the NDH. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 736-739. Out of the 217,000 Serbs killed, 124,000 were killed in their own homes/villages, while around 93,000 were killed in concentration camps and prisons. See Žerjavić, *Opsesije*, p. 71.

the anti-Serbian policies of the Ustasha regime were chiefly responsible for the expansion of the Chetnik and Partisan movements. The German Plenipotentiary General in Zagreb, Glaise von Horstenau, was particularly critical, while even SS officers stationed in the NDH were also beginning to voice concerns.[86]

By September 1941, conversion to Catholicism, or forced assimilation, therefore became the main Ustasha policy toward 'Greek-Easterners'. Preparations for such a policy had been made, however, months in advance. As early as 3 May, the Ustasha regime had issued the Law decree on the 'Conversion from one religion to another': all previous laws dealing with conversions were annulled, while converts needed to submit a written application to the state authorities concerning their decision to change religion.[87] Orthodox Serbs were legally permitted to convert to the other recognized religions of the NDH, namely Islam and Protestantism, though the Ustashe desired conversion to the Catholic Church.[88] The Ustashe were keen to bolster the Croat element, but not let the *Volksdeutsche* (with most Croatian Protestants belonging to this community) or Bosnian Muslim separatists bolster the number of 'Germans' or 'Bosnians'. Therefore, the best resort, so reasoned the Ustashe, in assimilating part of the Serb population was conversion to the faith to which the majority of the Croatian nation belonged. Converting to Catholicism was a much simpler process than conversion to a non-Christian faith, while joining the main Protestant community, the Evangelical Church, might entail assimilation into ethnic German rather than Croatian culture. In any case, many

[86] See Hory & Broszat, *kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, pp. 101-102.
[87] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 82 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 534.
[88] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 88.

Serbs sought conversion to the Catholic faith in the early months of 1941 in the hope of avoiding discrimination and/or persecution.[89]

On 30 July 1941, the Ministry of Justice and Religion sent a detailed circular to all *župe* in the NDH, in which the regime spelled out the procedures for conversion. 'Greek-Easterners' wishing to convert had to provide 'a certificate of good conduct' issued by their respective district authorities.[90] The circular maintained the 'basic principle' that 'Greek-Eastern schoolmasters, priests, tradesmen, artisans, rich peasants and the intelligentsia' should not receive certificates.[91] Thus conversion was only limited to the Serbian Orthodox peasantry, for the regime deduced that Serb national identity among peasants was weaker than among educated or wealthy Serbs. The conversion of peasants, therefore, would be a far less complicated process. Furthermore, religious conversion was not to be conducted in all areas of the NDH. The circular stated that the conversion rules were valid for all the *župe* of the NDH, except Gora, Krbava and Psat (districts found on the border between Croatia and northwest Bosnia), where the local authorities could act 'according to the local situation'.[92] What this essentially meant was that in the above strategically important areas, the solution to the 'Serb problem' would be expedited through the 'final means' (i.e. deportation and extermination).[93]

---

[89] ibid, p. 84.
[90] See Falconi, *The Silence of Pius XII*, pp. 283-284 and Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 174.
[91] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 174.
[92] ibid.
[93] ibid. After sending the elite Poglavnik's Bodyguard units on a 'punitive expedition' into the area of Kordun (along the northwest border of Bosnia) in early 1942, Pavelić explained to Slavko Kvaternik that he had ordered the attack on the Chetniks in the area, because he 'could not tolerate a Serbian state right in front of Zagreb'. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 226.

The regime had also made clear in the July circular that Greek-Easterners wishing to convert to the Protestant faith and join the German *Volksgruppe* would not enjoy the rights of those 'of German blood'.[94] The Ustashe were strongly opposed to any moves whereby the German *Volksgruppe* might become, as Pavelić told Count Ciano in December 1941, 'a pole of attraction for Croatian elements which are not of German origin'.[95] There were constant bureaucratic tussles between the Ustashe and *Volksgruppe* over whether a given individual was German or Croatian, especially in the ethnically mixed areas of northeast Croatia. Ustasha authorities were deeply concerned about Croats joining the *Volksgruppe*.[96] The Ustashe had good reason to fear German attempts of ethnic assimilation of Croats. Hitler had himself spoken of the possibility of one-day Germanizing the 'Dinaric' Croats. Therefore, German attempts to entice Croats to join the *Volksgruppe* and Protestant efforts to convert Orthodox Serbs were not looked kindly upon by the Ustashe, even if the Ustashe did not otherwise discriminate against Protestants, indeed arguing that 'every Protestant has the right to become an Ustasha'.[97]

The regime also stipulated that any Jews, Gypsies and Cincars wishing to convert to Catholicism would be prohibited from doing so.[98] Conversions in the NDH were therefore

---

[94] Falconi, *Silence of Pius XII*, p. 285.
[95] See Count Galeazzo Ciano, *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, Malcolm Muggeridge (ed.), Translated by Stuart Hood (London: Odhams Press Ltd, 1948), p. 472.
[96] See HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 26: Broj 23914/1941 ('Upisivanje i stupanja Hrvata u članstvo njemačke narodne skupine') 14 August 1941.
[97] See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 125fn, p. 107. In any case, few Serbs sought conversion to the Evangelical Church. Some 1500 Serbs ended up converting to Protestantism. See ibid, p. 111.
[98] See Falconi, *Silence*, p. 285. On the Gypsies and Cincars see HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 34: Broj 26081/1941 ('Upute za vjerozakonski prelaz grčkoistočnjaka') 24 October 1941.

subject to 'racial' restrictions; only Serbs, in reality 'Orthodox Croats', could convert. In other words, the Ustashe were prepared to assimilate a portion ('one-third') of the NDH's Serbian population, justifying this action by the racial theory that many Croatian Serbs were in fact of ethnic Croat origin. Pavelić pointed out to Italian representatives in the NDH that 'the largest part of the Orthodox in Croatia is of Croatian race and language' and the Orthodox should therefore 'return to racial and political Croatdom'; this would be achieved, the Poglavnik told the Italians, through conversion to Catholicism.[99]

As far as the Catholic Church's position on religious conversions is concerned, it is true that once the regime announced its intention to convert mass numbers of Serbs, the Church hierarchy in Croatia welcomed the possibility of gaining converts, especially among the 'schismatic' Orthodox. On the other hand, the Church hierarchy opposed the regime's policy because the Ustashe wanted to convert the Serbs in order to achieve a secular aim – the integration of those Serbs into the Croatian 'national community'. Furthermore, the regime's policy violated Catholic teaching for the conversions were often carried out under duress; the Church wanted potential converts to seek admission to the Catholic faith because they truly desired conversion of their own free will. In any case, the regime, and not the Catholic

[99] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 271. See Pavelić's interview, 'Der Poglavnik zur Innenpolitik' in *Neue Ordnung*, 24 August 1941, p. 2, where Pavelić explained that there were few 'real' Serbs in the NDH, since the majority were either 'Croats of the Serbian Orthodox religion' or Vlachs. Also see Mile Budak's speech in Slavonski Brod in June 1941, where he remarked, 'we have not only the right, but also the duty to seek from the Orthodox population here that it sees what it is…We have the right therefore to say, that if someone is a Serb, then he has Serbia and that is his homeland'. Although Budak did not explicitly mention conversion to Catholicism, he nonetheless offered the possibility of Croatian assimilation by asking the Orthodox to decide whether they were Serbian or native to Croatia. See 'Poglavnik je uvijek imao pravo', *Hrvatski narod*, 16 June 1941, p. 16.

Church, set the rules as to who could convert.[100] The regime was able to secure the services of a number of lower clergymen for carrying out the conversion ceremonies, but the Church hierarchy remained opposed.[101] The conversions were thus carried out under the civil and not Church authorities. Archbishop Stepinac had, for his part, eventually instructed the clergy to allow Orthodox Christians to convert, without too much concern for their motive, if this would save their lives from Ustasha persecution; in other words, Stepinac's main interest became one of saving the lives of innocent Orthodox Christians, and not in ensuring that the latter sincerely desired to convert to the 'true' faith.[102]

During the period of mass conversions, from September 1941 to February 1942, close to 100,000 Serbs converted to Catholicism.[103] Although Catholicized Serbs were officially designated as Croats,[104] they were not always save from further harassment and persecution from the Ustasha *ras*. These Ustashe (and Pavelić) were certainly prepared to assimilate some Orthodox Serbs, but tended to favour a racial policy, according to which the majority of the NDH's Serbs were a different ethnic/racial minority that could not be assimilated. Therefore deportation and outright extermination were considered more 'appropriate' methods than the more time consuming and complex process of converting/assimilating large numbers of people, who considered themselves nationally Serb. There were Ustasha district authorities,

[100] Alexander, *Triple Myth*, pp. 74-76.
[101] See ibid, pp. 75-76 and Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', pp. 86-87.
[102] Alexander, *Triple Myth*, p. 85.
[103] Jelić-Butić gave the figure of 240,000 Serb converts for the years 1941-1942 (*Ustaše i NDH*, p. 175) but Biondich, working from recently opened archives from the Religious section of the 'State Directorate for Renewal' gives a figure of between 97,447 to 99,333 converts to Catholicism for the period from 1941 to 1942. See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', pp. 91, 111.
[104] See HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 45: Broj 818-XI-2/1942 ('Srbi prelaznici na rimokatoličku vjeru – upisivanje narodnosti'), 13 January 1942.

for example, who were quite indifferent or openly hostile to the policy of conversion, arguing that 'why should the Vlachs convert, they should all be killed'.[105]

On the other hand, the 'moderate' Ustashe ensured that the regime as a whole remained seriously committed to the attempt of assimilating a sizeable part of the NDH's Serb population. While historians accept the conversion process was a failure, given it did not 'solve' the 'Serb problem', the attempted 'Croatization' of 100,000 Serbs is significant, for the NDH had 'lost' half a million or so ethnic Croats in Italian occupied Istria and Dalmatia, as well as Hungarian occupied Međimurje. Furthermore, while Biondich is right in suggesting that the Ustashe were 'not yet interested in mass conversions' in the early months of 1941, preferring deportation and outright killing to solve the 'Serb question',[106] the Ustashe needed conversion as a possible back-up solution. For according to the German-Croatian agreements of June 1941 regulating deportations, only 175,000 of the NDH's Serbs were in fact to be deported to Serbia, leaving well over a million and a half Serbs in the NDH.

The Croatian Orthodox Church

Locked in a bloody struggle with both Chetniks and Partisans, by early 1942 the Ustashe tried to come to a *modus vivendi* with what was left of the Serbian minority. After the mass conversions, mass deportations and outright killings, there were still approximately over a

[105] Cited in Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 103.
[106] ibid, p. 84.

million Serbs living within the borders of the NDH. It should be noted, however, that by early 1942 large parts of the NDH were under Partisan or Chetnik control. With the added pressure of growing German disapproval over his anti-Serbian measures, Pavelić declared the establishment of a 'Croatian Orthodox Church' in April 1942.[107] As part of his more 'conciliatory' approach toward the Serbs, the Poglavnik even allowed his troops to make temporary peace arrangements with many Chetnik detachments from mid 1942, on the basis of action against the common Communist Partisan enemy. In practice, the Ustashe accepted agreements only with those Chetnik leaders who were born in the NDH and were willing to recognize the NDH and did not include 'strong opponents of Croatia'.[108] Hatred between the Ustashe and Chetniks did not, of course, abate and nor did actual armed conflict between the two groups ever cease.

The regime was only prepared to 'Croatize' the NDH's remaining Serbs (not including converts to Catholicism) who voluntarily and formally joined the Croatian Orthodox Church.[109] Pavelić had not set up a separate Croat Orthodox Church in 1941 because he had

---

[107] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, pp. 177-178. Under mainly German pressure, Pavelić also dismissed Eugen Kvaternik as chief of police in October 1942, for the Germans (especially Glaise) saw the young Eugen as most responsible for the violent Ustasha repression of Serbs. His father Slavko was also dismissed as commander-in-chief of the Croatian army, due to the generally poor performance of the Home Guard. See Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, pp. 56-60.

[108] Tomasevich, *Chetniks,* p. 229. After Italy's capitulation, the German military also began to use the anti-Communist Chetniks more frequently as allies against the Partisans, even if they had previously admonished the Italians for their use of the Chetniks. The Serbophobe Hitler was, for his part, always wary of forging too close a relationship with the Chetniks and ensured that German-Chetnik collaboration was 'staged only within narrow limits'. See ibid, p. 358.

[109] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 546. Also see Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 135fn, p. 110 and Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva,* p. 295. There was some initial uncertainty in parts of Croatia as to whether members of the newly established Croatian Orthodox Church were still to be officially classified as Serbs in an ethnic/national sense. A letter to the district authorities in Vukovar from the head of police in Hrvatska Mitrovica (in northeast Croatia), for

been reluctant to allow the NDH's Serbs any religious autonomy at all, for they would, he argued, 'again remain Vlachs and be our enemies at the first opportunity'.[110] A small number of Serbian Orthodox clergy joined the new Croatian church, but the Serbian Church hierarchy and most ordinary Serbs rejected it.[111] The idea of a Croatian Orthodox Church was hard to sell to the remaining Serb population in 1942, after the Ustashe had tried to destroy the Serbian Orthodox Church as an institution the previous year.[112] It was left to a Russian émigré priest, Grigorij Ivanovič Maksimov, to head the church, under the name of Germogen. All the same, the Croatian Orthodox Church was officially recognized as an autocephalous one by the Orthodox Church in Axis Romania.[113] After the Church's establishment, Orthodox citizens of the NDH began to be called for service in labour detachments of the Home Guard, known as *Dora pukovnije* (Home Guard Labour Regiments); the Poglavnik even visited a barracks of the *Dora* regiments in August 1942 in Zagreb, which was given due publicity in the press.[114]

It is true that the Croat Orthodox Church served more as a propaganda tool for the regime than as a sincere attempt to accommodate Eastern Orthodoxy in Croatia, and the persecution

---

example, requested clarification on the national designation of members of the Croatian Orthodox Church, for 'many citizens of Croatian Orthodox faith wish that instead of "Serb" as their nationality, one insert "Croat"'. See HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 45: Broj T. 168/1942 ('Hrvatska-pravoslavna vjeroispovjest, narodnost i obilježje') 15 April 1942.

[110] Pavelić quoted in Cecelja, 'Moja sjećanja na uzoritoga kardinala Stepinca', p. 721.

[111] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 178. There were approximately 51 Croatian Orthodox priests in the NDH by the end of 1942. See Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, p. 297. Despite the lack of recognition for the Croatian Orthodox Church, S. P. Ramet aptly observes that the establishment of the Croatian Church was the 'first twentieth century challenge' to the Serbian Orthodox Church. See Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, pp. 174-175.

[112] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 178.

[113] Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 199-201. The Croat Orthodox Church also appears to have been recognized by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, but this remains uncertain. See ibid, p. 203.

[114] ibid, p. 318.

of the Serbs did not cease until 1945. Hundreds of Serbs were murdered in an anti-Partisan Ustasha police operation in northeastern Croatia in April 1942.[115] In September and October of the same year, Luburić led his Ustasha Defence units into the surrounding Orthodox villages of the Jasenovac concentration camp, and ordered the deportation of around 2,000 Orthodox civilians to Jasenovac.[116] Furthermore, although the regime had recognized in early 1942 that one of the main causes for the existence of a 'Serb question' was that a 'defined legal status' was not provided by state law to 'hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people' (i.e. to the NDH's Serbs), the establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church did not solve the question of the legal position of the remaining Serbs who had not joined the Croatian Orthodox Church, had not been converted, deported or murdered.[117] In spite of its doubtful propaganda value, the Croatian Orthodox Church could not, however, have been conceived without the ideological justification provided by Ustasha race theory, namely that large numbers of Serbs were in fact of ethnic Croatian origin.

Although Ustasha propaganda placed more emphasis on the notion of the 'Croatian heritage' of the NDH's Orthodox population during the conversion process (late 1941 and early 1942) and the setting up of the Orthodox Church (April 1942) than at any other time, Biondich

---

[115] See Kisić-Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, p. 42.

[116] After German protests at these actions, which were hindering German military interests in the area, Luburić was suspended from duty and interned in a village in northwest Croatia, but continued to command the Ustasha Defence behind the scenes until he was fully rehabilitated in 1944. See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 324-327.

[117] The above quote is found in the draft proposal for the 'Law decree on the legal status of members of the Eastern Church in the Independent State of Croatia', which sought to regulate the legal position of the NDH's Serbs. See Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, p. 176. Attempts by members of the Croatian *Sabor* to secure a greater decree of legal protection for the 'Greek-Easterners' were not looked upon kindly by the regime (see ibid, 148fn). The above draft (which would have officially made Serbs who rejected Croatian assimilation second class citizens) was ever put into practice.

errs when he claims that 'within a matter of months in 1941, Ustaša rhetoric had evolved from exclusionist, virtually racist language (Serbs as a supposed alien element, Vlachs, Roma) to assimilationist language (Serbs as supposed old Catholics and later as Orthodox "Croats")'.[118] On the contrary, the regime was fairly consistent throughout 1941-1945, as it had been in pre-war times, in portraying the Serbs of the NDH as the descendants of three main ethnic/racial groupings. For example, in a speech given before Croatian soldiers in Zagreb on 1 January 1942, during the period of intensive conversions, Slavko Kvaternik made reference to the 'one part of the Croats who converted to the Greek-Eastern faith', but also to the 'various mixture of peoples' that had joined the Turks during the Ottoman invasions of Croatia and who because of their Orthodox faith became Serbs.[119] Mladen Lorković also pointed out in his political essay, 'The Tasks of our Generation', printed later in the same month, that 'a very considerable part' of the Croatian people converted to the Greek-Eastern faith during the period of Ottoman occupation, while a large number of 'Greek-Eastern' immigrants from the central Balkans, some of 'Slavic breed', others of 'Aromun breed', had settled in Croatian lands at the same time.[120] In February 1942, the Poglavnik himself explained in an essay on Bosnian history that the 'Orthodox element' of Bosnia was descended mainly from the Vlachs, while the remainder were Catholic Croats who had converted during the Ottoman period; only the Orthodox population of Slavonia and Vojvodina was descended from ethnic Serbs.[121]

---

[118] See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 112.
[119] See 'Prošla godina bila je za Hrvate najvažnija godina', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 January 1942, p. 1.
[120] See 'Zadaci našeg naraštaja', *Hrvatski narod*, 15 January 1942.
[121] Dr. Ante Pavelić, 'Pojam Bosne kroz stoljeća', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 February, p. 2.

Even after the establishment of a Croat Orthodox Church, the Ustashe did not always explicitly refer to all the Orthodox in the NDH as 'Orthodox Croats'. For example, in an article in *Hrvatski narod* in June 1944, the author claimed that the title, 'The Croatian Orthodox Church', did not mean that all members of this church were necessarily of Croatian nationality, but the title nonetheless signified that the Orthodox were 'members of a church community that exists in the Independent State of Croatia', and was therefore called 'Croatian'.[122] The Croatian *Orthodox Calender* for 1944 included an essay on 'Orthodoxy in Croatia', in which the author, Savić Marković Štedimlija, detailed all the peoples that had contributed to the ethnic make-up of the Orthodox inhabitants of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and these included, among others, Vlachs, Cincars, Greeks, Serbs as well as Croatian converts to Orthodoxy.[123] Although he did not mention the three broad groups into which the NDH's Serbs were divided, Biondich also notes that after April 1942, the official Ustasha line was that 'the Orthodox were largely of Croat nationality'.[124] In other words, the NDH's Serbs could also be of Vlach, Gypsy, Greek or ethnic Serbian descent.

Some of the NDH's Orthodox inhabitants were clearly acceptable to the regime as Croats. There were three Croatian Orthodox generals in the Home Guard, one of whom – Djuro Gruić – was among Pavelić's most trusted generals.[125] Orthodox Christianity as such was

---

[122] See Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, p. 310. Also see Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State": Nationalism, Myth and Memory', p. 64.

[123] See Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 71-86. Croatian Orthodox texts and calenders were printed, in accordance with Ustasha law, in Latin and not Cyrillic script. See ibid, p. 316.

[124] Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State"', p. 64.

[125] The other two generals were Lavoslav Milić and Fedor Dragojlov. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 426. To be sure, Supreme Ustasha Headquarters (*Glavni ustaški stan*) did not look favourably on the high military office of these Croats of Serb-Orthodox origin. See ibid, p. 436. For a

never a target of Ustasha anti-Serb policy, only Serbian Orthodoxy (in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina). Thus the small number of Orthodox Montenegrins, Russians, Romanians and Ukrainians living in the NDH were not discriminated against or persecuted.[126] The NDH also enjoyed cordial relations with its two Orthodox Axis allies, Bulgaria and Romania. There were many cultural exchanges between Bulgaria and Croatia during the Second World War and the 'Croatian-Bulgarian Society of Friendship' in Zagreb promoted the works of Bulgarian artists and writers.[127] The NDH also found sympathy from Bulgaria in its territorial disputes with Italy, for the Bulgarians had their own conflict of interest with Italy in Macedonia, while Romania supported Croatia's right to Hungarian occupied Međimurje because it aimed to return Hungarian ruled Translyvania to Romanian control.[128] Pavelić also maintained his close pre-war links with the IMRO chief Vanča Mihajlov, who, at Pavelić's expense, lived in a Zagreb villa with his wife from 1941 to 1944.[129]

The Orthodoxy of the Romanians, Macedonians and Bulgarians certainly never bothered the Ustashe, and nor were they bothered by the Protestantism or 'paganism' of many of their German comrades. Religion was basically irrelevant. Pavelić claimed that the NDH, which was home to Catholics, Muslims, Protestants and Orthodox Christians, had an interest in ensuring that

---

short biography of Gruić, who was also made a 'knight' (*vitez*) of the NDH, see 'Djuro Gruić' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 142. One of the commanders of the Croatian air force legion that fought as part of the Luftwaffe on the Russian front was an Orthodox Croat, Vladimir Graovac. See Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, p. 114.

[126] See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', p. 88.

[127] See Kisić-Kolanović, *Zagreb-Sofija,* pp. 59-62.

[128] See ibid, pp. 139-156, 162-165.

[129] ibid, p. 110.

> 'there be no disagreements in the state, and least of all religious friction. This is of particular interest for us, because we know that we are on the border of the Balkans…we know that until recently peoples in the Balkans were differentiated by religion, that nationhood was…so masked because of life, because of events, that only religion was visible…This is a factor of the past'.[130]

Pavelić's words again highlight the centrality of nation and 'race', and not Catholic anti-Orthodox clericalism, to Ustasha ideology. Ustasha persecution of Serbs was motivated by the desire to erase a Serbian political, cultural and ethnic identity in the NDH, and justified by Ustasha race theory. Pavelić explained the 'logic' behind his persecution of the Serbs to Ivan Meštrović in 1942:

> 'I am not aiming for the extermination of the self-professed Serbs, but rather the Serbian fifth column, with which [the Serbians] thought that they could keep us forever in a subordinate position…Many of those have already perished, but more so that the others are frightened into escaping across the Drina or so that they are pacified and become loyal citizens. One need not force them to Catholicize as some think. I couldn't care less about the Catholic Church. If [the Serbs] recognize themselves as Croats then even I will convert to Orthodoxy'.[131]

Furthermore, persecution of Serbs was also motivated by the desire to destroy the ideology of Yugoslavism. The Ustasha movement was willing to go to any lengths to 'prove' Croat

[130] Quoted in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, p. 90.
[131] See Meštrović, *Uspomene,* pp. 322-323.

ethnic/racial individuality. The mass murder of the Serbs can also be seen in this light, for the Ustashe believed, writes Aleksa Djilas,

> 'that they had begun an irreversible Croatian-Serbian war and had made the very idea of a Yugoslav state unthinkable. By provoking Serbs into rebellion and sometimes even into reprisals against Croats, the Ustashas wanted to compel the Croatian nation to choose between subjugation by the Serbs or support for the Ustashas as masters of Croatia'.[132]

In other words, the Ustashe were prepared to confront the Serbs in the most brutal fashion and 'face the consequences'. They were almost successful in achieving their aim of an 'irreversible Croatian-Serbian war' that would make Yugoslavism 'unthinkable', for their Chetnik enemies planned to take total 'revenge' on the Croatian people after the expected Allied victory, which was supposed to bring them, and not the Partisans, back to power (as the Chetniks were officially part of the Allied coalition until 1944). The plan of 'revenge' was justified by the Chetniks as necessary and 'sacred' retribution for the Serbs exterminated by the Ustashe. The Chetniks calculated that as many as 600,000 to 800,000 Serbs had been murdered by the Ustashe (the Chetniks thus having tripled and even quadrupled the number of Serbs actually killed by the Ustashe). The Chetniks therefore estimated that an equal number of Croats would have to be killed.[133] Only the Partisan victory in 1945 saved the Croats from such a fate.

---

[132] Djilas, *Contested Country*, p. 122.
[133] Tomasevich, *Chetniks*, p. 261.

Chapter Thirteen: The Persecution of Jews and Roma in the NDH

Ustasha anti-Semitic policies: deportation, murder and exemptions

Jews and Roma were part of the generalized non-European 'Asiatic' counter-type that the Ustashe were committed to 'removing' from the NDH; they were also specifically targeted as Jews and Gypsies. Like the Nazis, the Ustashe identified the Jews as a race category. The dominant racial strain among the Jews was defined as the 'Oriental and Near Eastern race with admixtures of the Mongol and Black races', but Jews supposedly carried a 20% European racial admixture as well.[1] Ustasha measures against the Jews were also partly motivated by a desire to win favour with the German Reich, to 'render gratitude to the Germans' for recognizing the NDH and 'expel any German suspicions that they were further well disposed toward the Italian Fascists'.[2] The Ustashe, however, needed little prodding when it came to persecuting Jews. Ustasha policies toward Jews (and Gypsies) were shaped by pre-war racist ideological tenets, and during the period of power the Ustashe would further expound and elaborate on the 'Jewish question' in their propaganda.

Anti-Semitic propaganda made its appearance in the press from the very beginning of Ustasha rule. When they were not identified together with Serbs and Gypsies, Jews were

[1] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi', *Hrvatski narod*, 3 May, 1941, p. 7. In 1938, the director of the Kaiser Wilhelm-Institute for Anthropology, Prof. Eugen Fischer, had described the Jews as an 'oriental-near eastern amalgamated race'. See Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', pp. 26-27.
[2] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 591.

specifically and continually accused of having controlled the interwar Croatian economy, of having exploited Croatian peasants and for corrupting interwar art, music and public morality. In his 1942 book, 'The Ustasha Principles', Danijel Crljen claimed that in the cultural field, the Jews had 'promoted decadence in all directions': 'they made music into barbarism, painting into a disgrace to true art and the theatre into an exhibition of absurdity and filth'.[3] The Jew had no concept of honour, which one Ustasha intellectual described in the same year as the basic Aryan principle, according to which the Aryan man would 'rather die than trample on his honour', and against the honourable Aryans stood 'the parasitic people of Jewish liars'.[4] As Pavelić's adjutant, Vjekoslav Blaškov, argued, for the parasitic Jew, 'money is [his] God' and all his 'concepts of beauty, of the elevated are merely economic concepts.'[5]

This 'Jewish spirit' was completely alien to the European or Aryan spirit, because it was, as Julije Makanec explained in 1944, 'materialist in its essence'.[6] That is why the Jews

> 'can not comprehend the huge role of creative and heroic personalities in the history of politics and culture…From that basic characteristic of theirs there follows the science of Marxist historical materialism, according to which the essential and only decisive content of world history is made by the struggle over purely materialistic values'.[7]

---

[3] Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta' in Požar (ed.) *Ustaša*, p. 77.
[4] Dr. Antun Bonifačić, 'Europski duh je našao sebe', *Spremnost*, 28 March 1942, p. 9.
[5] See Vjekoslav Blaškov, 'Židovi su kroz cijelu povijest čovječanstva smatrani neprijateljima svakog naroda', in Goldstein, *Holokaust,* p. 110.
[6] Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici*, p. 27.
[7] ibid.

Jewish Marxism was therefore focused on 'destroying the three foundations of European culture'. The first of these foundations was antiquity, 'with its cult of heroic and creative personalities', while the second was Christianity, whereby man was 'a carrier of the spirit' and 'a citizen of not only the visible, but also the invisible world'.[8] The third foundation of European culture was nationalism and the nation, which was a 'God-given dynamic creative entity…that as a moral and spiritual medium encompasses all its members and gives their individual lives a higher and durable meaning'.[9] Makanec claimed that together with Germany, Croatia was fighting a war for the best cultural and historical traditions of Europe: 'Fighting today for Croatia and Europe, we fight for the values that are represented by the names such as Sophocles, Plato, Dante, Bošković, Pascal, Goethe…and against the world whose representatives are Rotschild, Morgenthau, La Guardi, Apfelbaum and Bela Kun'.[10]

Most of Croatia's Jews had already been 'removed' long before Makanec wrote the above words. Along with the race laws issued on 30 April 1941, numerous other decrees were passed prohibiting Jews, among other things, the right to change their surnames or display the Croatian national flag.[11] On 4 June 1941, a law decree was passed stating that 'Racial Jews cannot influence, through co-operation, the construction of the national and Aryan culture'. In other words, Jews were prohibited from joining or participating in social, youth, sporting or cultural organizations and 'especially in literature, journalism, the fine arts and music,

[8] ibid, pp. 26-27.
[9] ibid, p. 27.
[10] ibid, p. 22. Ruđer Josip Bošković was a famous 18th century Croatian astronomer from Dubrovnik.
[11] See Nada Kisić-Kolanović, 'Podržavljenje imovine Židova u NDH', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 30, br, 3, 1998, p. 432.

town planning, theatre and film'.[12] In late May, Jews were ordered, three months before German Jews would be required to do the same in the Reich, to wear the yellow star.[13]

On 26 June 1941, Pavelić issued an 'Extraordinary Law decree and command' in order to put an end to the excesses of the 'Wild Ustashe'; the Poglavnik also declared that anyone caught 'spreading rumours about so-called pogroms against one part of the population will be put before a court martial'.[14] Furthermore,

> 'since Jews spread false reports with a view to causing disturbance amongst the population and with their know speculative manner hinder and make difficult the provision of the population, they are considered collectively responsible and accordingly the [authorities] will act against them and they will be confined, beyond criminal legal responsibility, in assembly camps under the open sky'.[15]

Pavelić was quoted in *Neue Ordnung* in late August 1941 as stating that, 'concerning the Jewish question, I can say to you that they will be finally liquidated within a very short time'.[16]

Pavelić was being sincere. For by the end of November 1941, the Ustasha regime had, according to the Nazi model, carried out a systematic campaign of expropriation of most Jewish owned businesses ('economic Aryanization'), and had rounded up and deported

---

[12] See 'Židovi po rasi ne smiju suradnjom utjecati na izgradnji narodne i arijske kulture', *Hrvatski narod*, 5 June 1941, p. 6.
[13] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 125.
[14] See 'Poglavnikova izvanredna zakonska odredba i zapovijed', *Hrvatski narod*, 27 June 1941, p. 1.
[15] ibid. Also see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 593.
[16] See 'Der Poglavnik zur Innenpolitik', *Neue Ordnung*, 24 August 1941, p. 2.

thousands of north Croatian and Bosnian Jews to internment and concentration camps in the NDH.[17] In these camps, Jews were used as forced labour and/or killed outright. Around the end of 1941 and early 1942, Berlin politely asked the Ustasha regime whether it planned 'to recall its Jews [residing in the Reich], or did it agree to their deportation?'[18] The Ustasha regime duly 'expressed "its gratitude for the gesture of the German government," but indicated that "it would appreciate the deportation of its Jews to the East"'.[19] As Raul Hilberg notes, the Ustasha reply 'doomed not only the handful of Croat Jews in Germany but almost all of Jewry in Croatia itself, for when consent has been given to the death of even one victim, the threshold has been crossed and the decisive involvement has begun'.[20] Thousands of Croat Jews were deported to Auschwitz in two rounds of deportations in August 1942 and April/May 1943.

Despite such thorough measures, however, the Nazis were never totally satisfied with the Ustasha contribution to the 'Final Solution'. As already noted, the NDH's race laws carried the 'honorary Aryan' paragraph that contradicted racial theory and created some tension with the Germans (see chapter eleven). The Ustashe needed this clause to legally 'accommodate' the few important Ustashe who were either assimilated Jews or married to Jewish women, and/or certain 'indispensable' Jews, such as doctors, whose services were

[17] See Yeshayahu A. Jelinek, 'Yugoslavia' in Walter Laqueur (ed.) *The Holocaust Encyclopedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 708. Also see Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 455.
[18] Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 455.
[19] ibid.
[20] ibid.

required.[21] In the article in *Hrvatski narod* entitled 'Interpretation of the racial decrees', the author nonetheless tried to argue that the honorary Aryan paragraph could be backed up by racial theory, for the Jews carried 'a 20%' genetic inheritance from the 'European racial community'. As a result, in rare cases, individual Jews who had proved their worth in the struggle for Croatian independence might actually possess, through a chance combination of genes, a more dominant European strain. The article noted that only in the most exceptional cases would a Jew be recognized as an Aryan.[22]

This was indeed the case. Out of a total Jewish population of between 36,000 to 39,000, only a few hundred actually attained the protection of the honorary Aryan paragraph.[23] The lives of these Jews were not always safe from the threat of further Ustasha harassment and/or persecution. Even long-standing Ustashe such as Vlado Singer were not secure. In the early months of 1941, Singer became head of department 2 of UNS (the intelligence service), but in September he was deported to Jasenovac and then killed in the Stara Gradiška concentration camp in 1943, accused of having secret ties to Communists.[24] Although the circumstances leading to his arrest and death are still not entirely clear, it appears that his Jewish background played some part in his removal; Pavelić was probably worried about German objections to a full 'racial' Jew having such an important post in the NDH.[25] Another 'racial Jew', Ljubomir Kremzir, also held a high position in the NDH, being the

[21] See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 215.
[22] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi'.
[23] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 593-594. See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 132-144, 378-384.
[24] See 'Vlado Singer' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 359.
[25] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 621.

chief official of the main Zagreb customs house; his influence could not, however, save his sister Zlata Glück from deportion to Auschwitz, along with her husband and daughter.[26]

Kasche felt confident enough to report to Berlin, in April 1944, that the 'Jewish question' in the NDH was solved apart from the cases of 'honorary Aryans', Jews in mixed marriages and *Mischlinge* (half- and quarter-Jews); the German police attaché in Zagreb, Hans Helm, observed, however, that the problem of *Mischlinge* and mixed marriages had not been solved in Germany either.[27] Postwar apologists for the Ustashe have always noted the existence of the honorary Aryan paragraph as evidence that anti-Semitic measures were primarily the result of German pressure and that the regime tried to alleviate Jewish suffering where it could.[28] While the Ustashe were certainly less obsessed with Jews than the Nazis were, and German pressure was real enough at times, especially during the second round of deportations of Croatian Jews to Auschwitz in May 1943 when the Ustashe began to procrastinate somewhat on the 'Jewish question', there is no doubt that the regime was determinedly anti-Semitic. The Germans had to apply more pressure on the Ustashe in 1943 to comply with the deportations because the Ustasha leadership 'kept an eye on the reactions

[26] See 'Ljubomir Kremzir' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, pp. 206-207 and Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 623.

[27] See Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 457-458. Although the Nazis never instituted a practice similar to the Ustasha 'honorary Aryan' paragraph, many German *Mischlinge* also found their way into important positions in the German military. Although the SS required officer candidates to show pure Aryan ancestry to 1750 (for soldiers and NCOs, 1800), the Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine were less strict. For example, 'one of the most powerful men in the Luftwaffe and the Third Reich' was the half-Jew Field Marshal Erhard Milch. See Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers*, pp. 29-30, 177-178.

[28] In exile, E. Kvaternik claimed, for example, that 'the Croatian government saved many Jews. We were not extreme, on the contrary, the Germans always reproached us that Nedić and his [Serbian collaborationist] government had solved the Jewish problem much more radically'. See Kvaternik, *Sjećanja i zapažanja*, p. 289. Also see Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 623-625.

of the Western Allies'.[29] As it was evident that Germany was losing the war, Pavelić toyed with the vain possibility of Croatia switching to the Allied side, and so was willing to show some 'generosity' toward Jews. The Poglavnik would thus allow the International Red Cross to inspect the remaining Jewish inmates in Jasenovac in spring 1944, naturally under the watchful eyes of Ustasha officials.[30]

Such measures were aimed at putting the NDH in a better light, but by the end of 1942 most Croatian Jews in the German zone had already been 'removed' to Auschwitz or had perished in NDH concentration camps.[31] The exemption of some Jews does not bring Ustasha racial anti-Semitism into question. The Ustashe simply did not share the Nazi imperative to exterminate every single living Jew. It was enough for the Ustashe to deport or murder mass numbers of Jews, and then assimilate the small 'honorary Aryan' remainder. This manner of thinking grated with the efficient technocrats of the SS. SS and SD officers in the NDH complained as late as 1944 that the 'Jewish influence' on the Croatian population was still 'extraordinarily large'.[32] As Ivo Goldstein rightly argues, such accusations were simply baseless reflections of 'the anti-Semitic hysteria, which was generally, with the onset of the agony of the Third Reich, all the more characteristic for some Nazi agencies, and especially for Hitler personally'.[33]

---

[29] Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (New Jersey: Jason Aaronson Inc., 1987), p. 369. Also see Jelinek, 'Yugoslavia', p. 709.
[30] Reitlinger, *Final Solution*, p. 369. Also see Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 333.
[31] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 434.
[32] ibid, p. 536.
[33] ibid.

Nazi anti-Semitic hysteria also saw Jewish influence operating in the Poglavnik's own household, for his wife Mara was of Jewish origin on her mother's side.[34] Regardless of Nazi attitudes, Mara Pavelić was legally 'Aryan' under the Ustasha race laws; she was a '*Mischlinge* of the first degree' (i.e. a half-Jewess) who was already married to an Aryan before 1941 and was also a Catholic, and therefore did not belong to the Jewish religious community. There is also evidence that Mara Pavelić herself hated Jews; according to the postwar testimony of Ante Moškov, Mara felt that the Jews 'deserved nothing other' than to be sent to concentration camps.[35] Similarly, Josip Frank's grandson, Eugen Dido Kvaternik, being one-fourth Jewish, was legally an Aryan. Moškov also argued that Eugen's fanatical antipathy toward the Jews could have originated from his desire to show others, and particularly the Poglavnik, that he had no 'racial ties' to Jewry.[36]

For all their complaints about the Croats, the Germans had a much tougher time trying to convince the Italians of the need to deport Jews. Both the Ustashe and Nazis were keen to hunt down Jews in the Italian zone of the NDH, where some 5,000 or so Jews were hiding.[37] The Italians continually refused to hand over 'their' Jews to either the Croats or Germans, and most Jews managed to eventually find their way to safety in Italy after Italy's

[34] The Germans had little love for the NDH's first lady, for alongside being half-Jewish, she was also an avid Italophile. See Broucek (ed.) 'Deutscher Bevollmächtigter General in Kroatien', p. 429.
[35] Moškov claimed that he had heard this from Dora Werner (daughter of the Ustasha mayor of Zagreb, Ivan Werner) and Eugen Dido Kvaternik's brother-in-law, Ivica Cvitković. See Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, p. 30.
[36] ibid, p. 237. Interestingly, the Nazi entrusted with organizing the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question', Reinhard Heydrich, was suspected by many of having a Jewish parent or grandparent. Hitler had apparently told Himmler that 'gifted men of non-Aryan origins' such as Heydrich could be very useful, 'for he would be eternally grateful to us that we had kept him…and would obey blindly'. Whether or not Heydrich actually had Jewish descent may never be known with certainty, but it is possible that Hitler believed that he did. See Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers*, pp. 176-177.
[37] See Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 456.

capitulation. Although cautious in their diplomatic approach to Mussolini on the need to deport the Jews, the Germans were openly disgusted by the sight of Italians protecting Jews (and Serbs) from the Ustashe and of Italian officers sitting with Jewish women in the cafés of Dubrovnik.[38] Pavelić referred to the Italian centre for Serbian and Jewish refugees in Dalmatia as 'a real anti-Croatian fortress'.[39] As a result, the Poglavnik complained to Hitler during their second meeting in September 1942 that, while 'the Jewish question in a great part of Croatia was practically solved', he could not solve it in 'Jewish centres' such as Mostar and Dubrovnik because of Italian opposition.[40]

Pavelić had been correct in his above assessment that the Jewish question was practically solved in most parts of the NDH. What Kasche had meant by this 'solution' in his 1944 report entailed the deportation of around 6,000 to 7,000 Croatian Jews to Auschwitz by the Germans, with Croatian agreement and assistance, while the Ustasha regime itself was responsible for the deaths of approximately 20,000 to 25,000 Jews, the majority of whom were murdered in Jasenovac.[41] Approximately 9,000 of the NDH's Jews survived the war; most found sanctuary by joining the Partisans, others were protected by the Italian army, while some survived because of the honorary Aryan paragraph or were sheltered by fellow

[38] Steinberg, *All or Nothing,* pp. 46-47.
[39] Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, p. 193.
[40] See Bogdan Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija* (Zagreb: Globus, 1980), p. 412. The Italian Fascists also periodically persecuted Jews in their occupation zone. For example, in response to the attacks of 'Jewish-Communist' Partisans in June 1942, the Fascists burned the synagogue in Split and destroyed some Jewish shops. See Kisić-Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 79fn, p. 193.
[41] See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, pp. 17, 636. Also see Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 457, Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 595-596, 607 and Leni Yahil, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry 1932-1945,* Translated by Ina Friedman and Haya Galai (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 429, 431.

Croats.[42] Between 75-80% of the pre-war Jewish population of the NDH was destroyed by the Ustashe and Nazis.[43]

To highlight the racial anti-Semitism of the Ustashe it is enough to point out the absence of any mention of the Jewish convert Josip Frank, Starčević's successor as HSP party chief, in Ustasha propaganda. While Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik, Milan Šufflay and even Stjepan Radić were frequently eulogized by the Ustashe during the NDH, Josip Frank was consciously forgotten.[44] This was due both to Frank's Habsburg loyalism and his Jewish origin. Pavelić admitted as much during a meeting with high-ranking Ustasha officials in February 1944. The Poglavnik had noted that one of the reasons why the HSP had failed to capitalize on Starčević's greatness and popularity was that 'Frank, who did not emerge from the Croatian national core, could never draw the wider national rank and file with him'.[45] In fact, the Ustashe tried to exploit the pre-war 'a-Semitism' of the anti-Frankist HSS to justify their own radical anti-Semitic measures. At the same meeting, the Ustasha *Doglavnik*, Miško Račan, remarked that when ordinary citizens had criticized the Ustasha measures against

[42] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 636.
[43] ibid.
[44] See, for example, Julije Makanec's *Hrvatski vidici*, in which a chapter each is dedicated to Starčević, Radić, Šufflay and Pavelić.
[45] See Jareb, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća', p. 184. Frank's daughter Olga committed suicide in late August 1941, apparently because of her partly Jewish origin and because of the important positions her husband Slavko and son Eugen occupied in the NDH. See 'Slavko Kvaternik' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 227.

Jews and Serbs at local party meetings, he had always justified these actions by quoting Radić's statements against the Jews and Starčević's views against the Serbs.[46]

The last point also shows that many ordinary Croats did not support the brutal measures against Jews. Indeed, despite the great deal of anti-Semitic propaganda, there is no documentary evidence 'that Jews became the target of spontaneous attacks by citizens'.[47] On the other hand, Ante Pavelić and Eugen Dido Kvaternik could not have killed Jews on their own without the help of thousands of fellow Croatian collaborators and accomplices.[48]

The Gypsy 'problem'

Unlike the mainly urban Jews, who were described as having a deleterious influence on the Croatian economy and culture, the Roma were considered simply a racially alien nomadic people with no culture and especially prone to theft and disease. In fact, there was little Ustasha propaganda specifically aimed at Roma. The Roma were frequently mentioned, but in association with Serbs. The Ustashe were more interested in degrading Serbs than targeting Gypsies, but nonetheless wanted to remove the 'non-Aryan' presence of the latter from the territory of the NDH. In his first report on 3 May 1941 to Berlin as Reich envoy, Kasche noted that the 'general disposition' of the Croatian population was 'against them' (i.e.

[46] See Jareb, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća', p. 185. A 'Doglavnik' was a deputy party leader. The 'Doglavnik's Council' (*doglavničko vijeće*) was made up of twelve members. See Matković, *Povijest NDH* and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 340.
[47] Kisić-Kolanović, 'Podržavljenje imovine Židova', p. 433.
[48] Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 627.

the Gypsies).[49] The negative attitude of many Croats toward the dark-skinned and nomadic Roma differed little from the stereotypes and prejudices common to all 'civilized civic societies and states' in Europe, where laws against the movement and settlement of Gypsies had been in force for centuries.[50]

The exact number of Roma in the NDH at the beginning of Ustasha rule is hard to determine, but in any case the number was quite small, somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000.[51] The Roma were defined by the Ustashe as a 'mixture of the Indic and Iranian race with paleo-Negroid elements with Oriental and Mongoloid admixtures' (but also had '20%' European racial admixture).[52] Exemptions from the race laws were made, however, for the Muslim Gypsies of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who were protected by the Islamic clergy. The Ustasha regime, always anxious to court the Muslim political and religious elite, decided to exempt the so-called 'White Gypsies' (i.e. Gypsies assimilated into Muslim culture) and most of them did in fact survive the war.[53] The Ustashe justified the exemptions by arguing that the 'White Gypsies' had intermarried with Muslim Croats, had long lost use of their 'Gypsy language' and 'lived with their families completely equally as other Muslims of these areas'.[54]

---

[49] Cited in Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 29.
[50] Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima,* pp. 16-18. In contrast to Western Europe, areas under Ottoman rule were generally more tolerant of Gypsies. See ibid, p. 17 and Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 114-116. Post-Ottoman Serbian governments were also considerably tolerant of Serbia's Gypsy population, which was assimilated en masse. See Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima*, p. 17.
[51] Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad romima*, pp. 30-31.
[52] See 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi'.
[53] Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid*, pp. 37-40.
[54] See ibid, pp. 38-39 and the report 'Pitanje Cigana' in ibid, p. 68.

On the other hand, Catholic (and Orthodox) Gypsies were subject to the race laws. UNS gave instructions to Sarajevo police in June 1942 that it must hinder any attempts by Catholic Gypsies to avoid detention by posing as Muslims.[55] Also not exempt from the persecution directed against Gypsies were 401 ethnic Romanian Vlachs from the village of Bošnjaci in northeast Croatia, who were erroneously classified and then murdered as Gypsies in Jasenovac, because of their very dark complexion.[56] The persecution of the small number of Catholic Gypsies and dark-skinned Romanian Vlachs clearly shows the radical level that Ustasha racism reached. The Ustashe in fact nearly wiped out the entire Roma minority of the NDH; approximately 8,500 Roma lost their lives at the hands of the Ustashe, mainly in Jasenovac in 1942.[57]

By the end of 1942, the Ustashe had murdered, or helped to deport to Auschwitz, most of the NDH's Jews and Roma, while hundreds and thousands of Serbs had also suffered death or deportation to Serbia. After the mass murder and mass deportation of 'racial undesirables', which occurred in the NDH primarily from April 1941 to late 1942, the Ustasha regime continued to undertake, during the last two and a half years of its existence, its relentless military struggle against the armed enemies of the Croat 'national community', namely the 'Communist-Chetniks' (albeit more so against the Partisans than the Chetniks). NDH soldiers fought to the bitter end with fanatical bravery, while Pavelić and his police henchmen also carried out the work of terror until the last. In February 1945, for example,

[55] ibid, p. 39.
[56] All 401 of these Orthodox Romanian Vlachs carried the same typically Serbian surname, Radosavljević. See ibid, p. 40.
[57] ibid, p. 60.

the Papal Legate in Zagreb, the Abbé Ramiro Marcone, sent a letter to the Poglavnik in response to the reports he was receiving of the many arbitrary death sentences still being carried out in the NDH, often without any trial. Marcone pleaded with Pavelić to show leniency in these 'sad times', so that peace could be established in Croatia.[58] The Poglavnik's response to Marcone was clear and unapologetic: it was not the sentences being carried out that were disturbing the peace, but rather the 'acts of sabotage and crimes of those elements that act against the Croatian people and state under the leadership of Bolshevism'.[59]

Such attitudes ensured that the NDH would have the 'honour' of remaining the last standing ally of the Nazi Reich. Despite his undying loyalty to the alliance with German National Socialism, three days before Germany's capitulation, on 5 May 1945, the Poglavnik abolished by decree the NDH's race legislation.[60] This was done as part of the hopeless effort of trying to present a more respectable face to the victorious Allies, in the vain hope of saving the NDH from Communist Partisan destruction by having the Croat 'state' placed under the protection of the Western Allies.[61] It is unlikely that Pavelić really believed that such actions would have any real influence on Allied policy making. The Ustasha leader was no doubt well aware that the abolition of the race laws, as the Croatian journalist Josip Horvat wrote at the time, 'will not save anybody nor will it resurrect the dead'.[62]

[58] Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 2, p. 235.
[59] ibid, p. 243.
[60] See Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 551.
[61] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 202-204.
[62] Quoted in Goldstein, *Holokaust*, p. 551.

EPILOGUE

The capitulation of the German Reich, and the NDH with it, on 7 May 1945, did not spell an end to mass murder on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Victorious Yugoslav Partisan forces followed the remnants of the fleeing NDH armed forces, which together with the Poglavnik and his government, and together with many Croatian civilians (who were either loyal to the NDH or fearful of Communist rule) were attempting to reach Austria. There they hoped to surrender to the British army, rather than face possible death or imprisonment under the Partisans. The British, however, had no intention of accepting Germany's loyal allies. The British refused to grant asylum not only to the Ustashe and *Domobrani*, but also to other Axis or pro-Axis forces, including Russian Cossacks, Serbian Chetniks and Slovenian Home Guardsmen. Once NDH forces surrended near the Austrian-Slovenian border, the Partisans massacred POWS and an indeterminate number of civilians on the field of Bleiburg in southern Austria in their quest to destroy their most fervent ideological enemies. Those who survived the initial massacres were sent on death marches across the length and breadth of the 'new' Yugoslavia. In all, between 45,000 to 55,000 Croats and Muslims were executed by the Partisans.[1]

[1] See Žerjavić, *Opsesije i megalomanije*, pp. 77-79. The Poglavnik himself survived in hiding for several months in British occupied Austria, after which he made his way to Rome (where he enjoyed Vatican protection). In 1947, he found sanctuary in Juan Peron's Argentina. After an attempted assassination attempt (probably by the Yugoslav secret service) in 1957, Pavelić fled to Chile and then on to Franco's Spain. He died in Madrid in 1959. See Matković, *Povijest NDH*, pp. 207-211.

Furthermore, in 1945 and 1946, Tito's regime would be responsible for the murder of up to 250,000 people,[2] killed all over Yugoslavia in the name of 'revolutionary' Yugoslav Communism, although there was a particular animus toward Ustasha collaborators and Roman Catholic priests. The Partisans carried out their revolutionary war against 'class enemies' regardless of nationality, but Ustasha members and supporters, as well as anti-Communist Catholic priests, suffered more at the hands of the Partisans than the Chetniks and Serbian Orthodox priests. The latter two groups suffered far fewer reprisals because many Chetniks surrended to or joined the Partisans and a larger number of Orthodox priests co-operated with them, while both the Ustashe and Catholic Church (the latter with some notable exceptions) were utterly opposed to both Yugoslavism and Communism.[3] For example, although close to the age of 80, Kerubin Šegvić, the Catholic priest and leading proponent of the 'Gothic theory', was sentenced to death and executed in 1945, accused of 'destroying Slavic unity' through his theories on the origins of the proto-Croats.[4] Archbishop Stepinac was imprisoned until 1951 on trumped up charges of 'collaboration' with the Ustashe and Nazis, and afterwards remained under house arrest until his death in 1960.[5]

The massacres the Partisans carried out in Bleiburg in May 1945 marked the end to the dialectic of violence that had been initiated by the Ustasha genocidal program in 1941. The Ustashe had launched a fanatical ideological war that had to end in either a complete

[2] See Goldstein, *Croatia*, p. 156 and Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 193.
[3] The Partisans killed 353 Roman Catholic priests and 2 bishops, most of them in 1945. The number of Orthodox priests killed by the Partisans was considerably less: 152 Orthodox priests and 1 bishop. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 569, 572. Also see Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija*, pp. 224-225.
[4] See 'Kerubin Šegvić' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 378.
[5] See Stepinac's biography in *Tko je tko u NDH*, pp. 367-369 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, pp. 560-563.

Ustasha (and Nazi) victory, or their eradication. Inspired by the ideology of nation and race, the Ustashe had declared in 1941 that the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies had no place in the NDH. The aim of one nation-state demanded that state and nation correspond and, in that sense, Ustasha ideas differed little from other nationalist ideologies in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, where the formation of independent nation states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was often accompanied by the ethnic cleansing of minorities. However, the Ustashe had 'racialized' their notion of Croatian nationhood, and this had a great bearing on the identification of the majority of Serbs, the great majority of Jews and the overwhelming majority of Gypsies as racially unassimilable minorities, deemed 'anti-social', or to use a Nazi term, *Gemeinschaftsunfähig* ('incapable of creating or sustaining a community').[6] The Ustasha aim of moulding a 'new Croatian man', in order to produce 'barbarians' and the 'sons of wolves and lions' found its truest expression in the brutal fanaticism of the Ustasha Militia. The regime had indoctrinated its troops and police to think of their Jewish led 'Communist-Chetnik' enemies as lawless, 'forest' bandit *Untermenschen,* whose annihilation could only be welcome.

The end result of Ustasha nationalism and racism was genocide. There is no doubt that the Ustashe committed genocide according to the 1948 'Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide', approved by the UN General Assembly. The Ustasha regime's intent had been, 'to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group', for it had: 'killed members of the group'; 'caused serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group'; and 'deliberately inflicted on the group conditions of life

[6] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, p. 64.

calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part'.[7] In the case of the Ustasha policy toward the NDH's Serbs, however, one must be careful not to fall into the trap, as some historians have, of comparing their fate to that of the six million Jews exterminated by the Nazis. The Ustasha movement wanted to eliminate the presence of a Serbian ethnic, cultural and political identity in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but it did not seek the physical destruction of all Serbs in the NDH, nor did it have any interest in the fate of the Serbians of Serbia proper.

One must also be cautious in trying to find a Croatian historical *Sonderweg*, which can 'explain' the genocidal actions of the Ustashe. A sizeable number of historians (especially Serbian ones) have attempted, for example, to trace the racist ideology and genocidal policies of the Ustashe directly to Ante Starčević's writings.[8] Although the Ustashe were influenced by some of Starčević's ideas, the founder of the HSP cannot be held accountable for the racist policies of the NDH, policies that would have been anathema to a man who shared the pacifist aversion to political violence common to most Croatian political leaders. Ivo Pilar and Milan Šufflay also ideologically influenced the Ustashe, but they too abhorred political extremism. The aversion to dictatorial violence was also common to many ordinary Croats living in the NDH. They could not accept the torture and murder of their fellow citizens and neighbours. The Ustashe never enjoyed the support of the majority of Croats. Their brutality

[7] See the article on 'genocide' in Vol. 5 of 'Micropaedia' in the 15th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1985, p. 183.

[8] See, for example, Djilas' *Contested Country*, in which he accused Starčević of being 'the progenitor of extreme Croatian nationalism, which sought to suppress and perhaps even to exterminate all those who had a different national consciousness' (ibid, pp. 106-107). Also see Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, pp. 57-58 and Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', p. 365, for similar views to those of Djilas.

forced many Croats to take up arms against the regime; 46,000 died fighting in Partisan ranks.[9] Serbs, Gypsies and Jews were not the only victims of the Ustashe. Many thousands of anti-fascist Croats also lost their lives in NDH concentration camps.

One final point needs to be made. This thesis has endeavoured to highlight how the racist ideology behind Ustasha genocide emerged primarily as a reaction to Yugoslavist and Greater Serbian racial claims, which held that the Croats were either 'only worth something' because they were Slavs, or so inferior that they needed to be 'exterminated' and assimilated by their 'superior' Serbian 'brethren'. This argument does not, however, bring into question the fact that Pavelić and his Ustasha movement bear the ultimate responsibility for the racist genocide committed in the NDH. The Poglavnik willingly chose to implement policies of mass murder and commit the NDH to an alliance with the Third Reich.

[9] See Žerjavić, *Opsesije*, p. 77.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Hrvatski državni arhiv, HDA (Croatian State Archive), Zagreb:

Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (MUP NDH, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Independent State of Croatia); kutije (boxes) 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41, 45.

Arhiv Hansa Helma (Archive of Hans Helm):

kutija 26 (box 26): Državni aparat Trećeg Reicha u Njemačkoj i NDH; Dosje Kasche Siegfrieda

kutije 27-28 (boxes 27-28): Državni aparat NDH, A – L, M – Z; Dosje Dr. Mile Budak; Dosje Dr. Ante Pavelić – Poglavnik

kutija 29: Oružane snage NDH: podaci o pripadnicima

kutija 34: Židovi (kratki biografski podaci)

kutija 35: Katolički svećenici, podaci

kutija 36: knjiga XIII; Razna izvješća o problemima katoličke i drugih religija u NDH

kutija 36: knjiga XIV: c) Podatke o Židovima

PUBLISHED ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Broucek, Peter (ed.), 'Deutscher Bevollmächtigter General in Kroatien und Zeuge des Untergangs des "Tausendjährigen Reiches" (Band 3) in *Ein General im Zwielicht: Die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaises von Horstenau* (Wien-Köln-Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1988).

Ciano, Count Galeazzo, *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, Malcolm Muggeridge (ed.), Translated by Stuart Hood (London: Odhams Press Ltd, 1948).

_____ (ed.) *Ciano's Diary 1939-1943*, Malcolm Muggeridge (ed.) (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1947).

Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945: Vol. XIII, 'The War Years: June 23 – December 11, 1941', in Series D (1937-1945) (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964).

_____ Vol. XII, 'The War Years': February 1 – June 22, 1941' in Series D (1937-1945) (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964).

Hillgruber, Andreas (ed.), *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler: vertrauliche Aufzeichnungen über Unterredungen mit Vertreten des Auslandes 1939-1941* (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1967).

Hitler, Adolf, *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944*, Translated by Norman Cameron & R. H. Stevens (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953).

Jareb, Jere, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća 1943-1945 iz ostavštine Lovre Sušića', *Hrvatska revija*, *Jubilarni zbornik 1951-1975*, München-Barcelona, 1976, pp. 153-196.

Moškov, Ante, *Pavelićevo doba*, Petar Požar (ed.) (Split: Laus, 1999).

Požar, Petar, (ed.) *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995).

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS, REFERENCE MATERIALS AND ANNUALS

Brennecke, Fritz (ed.), *The Nazi Primer: Official Handbook for Schooling the Hitler Youth,* Translated by Harwood L. Childs (1938; New York: Ams Press, 1966).

Encyclopaedia Britannica: Vol. 5, Micropaedia, 15th edition, 1985.

Glavni ustaški stan, *Ustaški godišnjak 1943* (Zagreb: Hrvatski tiskarski zavod, 1943).

_____ *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni tiskarski zavod, 1942).

Jelinek, Yeshayahu, 'Yugoslavia' in Walter Laqueur (ed.), *The Holocaust Encyclopedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 706-713.

Stuparić, Darko (ed.), *Tko je tko u NDH: Hrvatska 1941-1945* (Zagreb: Minerva, 1997).

NEWSPAPERS

Hrvatski narod, glasilo hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta, Zagreb 1939-1945.

Neue Ordnung in Kroatien, kroatische Wochenschrift, Zagreb 1941-1945.

Novi list, Zagreb 1941-1945.

Spremnost: misao i volja ustaške Hrvatske, Zagreb 1942-1945.

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Adamovsky, Ezequiel, 'Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810-1880', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77, September 2005, pp. 591-628.

Alexander, Stella, *The Triple Myth: A Life of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000).

Aly, Götz and Heim, Susanne, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (London: Phoenix Press, 2002).

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

Armstrong, John. A., 'Collaborationism in World War II: The Integral Nationalist Variant in Eastern Europe', *Journal of Modern History*, September 1968, pp. 396-410.

Ascherson, Neal, *Black Sea: The Birthplace of Civilisation and Barbarism* (London: Vintage, 1995).

Babić, Ivan, 'Military History: The Croatian Army and its Enemies in the Second World War 1941-1945' in Vol. 1 of Francis H. Eterovich (ed.) *Croatia: Land, People, Culture,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), pp. 154-164.

Banac, Ivo, 'Zarathustra in Red Croatia: Milan Šufflay and his Theory of Nationhood' in Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery (eds.) *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995).

_____ *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984).

_____ 'The Confessional "Rule" and the Dubrovnik Exception: The Origins of the "Serb-Catholic" Circle in Nineteenth-Century Dalmatia', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 42, No. 3, Fall 1983, pp. 448-474.

Behschnitt, Wolf Dietrich, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten 1830-1914: Analyse und Typologie der nationalen Ideologie* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1980).

Bideleux, Robert and Jeffries, Ian, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

Bilandžić, Dušan, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999).

Biondich, Mark, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustaša Policy of Forced Religious Conversions, 1941-1942', *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 83, No. 1, January 2005, pp. 71-115.

_____ '"We Were Defending the State": Nationalism, Myth and Memory in Twentieth-Century Croatia' in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), pp. 54-82.

_____ *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

Blažeković, Zdenko, *Mladež i država* (Zagreb: Tipografija, 1944).

Bogdan, Ivo, *Hrvatska i svjetska politika* (Zagreb: Ustaški stožer, 1944).

Bracewell, Catherine Wendy, *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Banditry, and Holy War in the Sixteenth Century Adriatic* (London: Cornell University Press, 1992).

Bracher, Karl Dietrich, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure and Consequences of National Socialism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973).

Browning, Christopher R., 'Germans and Serbs: The Emergence of Nazi Antipartisan Policies in 1941' in Michael Berenbaum (ed.), *A Mosaic of Victims: Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), pp. 64-73.

Brubaker, Rogers, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992).

Budak, Mile, 'Hrvatski ustaški pokret' in Petar Požar (ed.) *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), pp. 115-118.

_____ *Pripovijetke, Ratno roblje* (1941-1942; Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1995).

_____ 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države' in Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978), pp. 367-376.

Bukowski, James, 'Yugoslavism and the Croatian National Party in 1867', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1975, pp. 70-88.

Bzik, Mijo, *Ustaški pogledi (1928-1941-1944)* (Zagreb: Ustaša, 1944).

Carmichael, Cathie, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2002).

Cecelja, Vilim, 'Moja sjećanja na uzoritoga kardinala Stepinca, zagrebačkog nadbiskupa', *Hrvatska revija*, God. XL, Sv. 4, December 1990, pp. 690-737.

Cipek, Tihomir, *Ideja hrvatske države u političkoj misli Stjepana Radića* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2001).

Connelly, John, 'Nazis and Slavs: From Racial Theory to Racist Practice', *Central European History*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1999, pp. 1-33.

Crljen, Danijel, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta' in Petar Požar (ed.) *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), pp. 57-89.

Crowe, David M., *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

Cvijić, Jovan, 'Studies in Jugoslav Psychology', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 9, 1930-1931, pp. 375-390.

Despalatović, Elinor Murray, 'The Peasant Nationalism of Ante Radić', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* Vol. 5, No. 1, 1978, pp. 86-98.

_____ *Ljudevit Gaj and the Illyrian Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

Djilas, Aleksa, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919-1953* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

Djilas, Milovan, *Wartime* (London: Martin, Seecker & Warburg, 1977).

Falconi, Carlo, *The Silence of Pius XII,* Translated by Bernard Wall (London: Faber and Faber, 1970).

Farrell, Nicholas, *Mussolini: A New Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003).

Fertilio, Luka, 'Kavalir i legitimista: Ivan pl. Perčević', *Hrvatska revija: Jubilarni zbornik*, *1951-1975*, München-Barcelona, 1976, pp. 229-239.

_____ 'Poslanici N.D.H. u Trećem Reichu: Branko Benzon', Hrvatska revija, XXV, 1, March 1975, pp. 48-54.

_____ 'Izlet bez iluzija', *Hrvatska revija*, Vol. 4 (40), 1960, pp. 621-630.

Fine Jr. John V. A., *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early-Modern Periods* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006).

_____ *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983).

Friedman, Francine, *The Bosnian Muslims: Denial of a Nation* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996).

Gärtner, Emil Robert, *Kroatien in Südslawien* (Berlin: Junker und Dürmhaupt Verlag, 1944).

Geary, Patrick J., *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

Gellner, Ernest, *Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997).

Gillette, Aaron, 'The Origins of the "Manifesto of racial scientists"', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies,* 6 (3), 2001, pp. 305-323.

Glenny, Misha, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999).

Goldstein, Ivo, 'Granica na Drini – značenje i razvoj mitologema' in H. Kamberović (ur.) *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu* (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2003).

_____ *Holokaust u Zagrebu* (Zagreb: Novi Liber, 2001).

_____ *Croatia: A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999).

Gross, Mirjana, *Izvorno pravaštvo: Ideologija, agitacija, pokret* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2000).

_____ 'On the Integration of the Croatian Nation: A Case Study in Nation Building', *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XV, No. 2, June 1981, pp. 209-225.

_____ 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies from the End of Illyrism to the Creation of Yugoslavia', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 15-16, 1979-1980, pp. 3-33.

Guberina, Ivo, *Komunizam i hrvatstvo* (Zagreb: Hrvatska omladinska biblioteka, 1937).

Gumplowicz, Ludwig, 'Die politische Geschichte der Serben und Kroaten', *Politisch-Anthropologische Revue: Monatschrift für das soziale und geistige Leben der Völker*, 1902/1903 (Eisenach und Leipzig: Thüringische Verlags Anstalt), pp. 779-789.

Gumz, Jonathan E., 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia, 1941-1942', *The Historical Journal*, 44, 4, 2001, pp. 1015-1038.

Günther, Hans F. K., *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (München: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1935).

Harris, Robin, *Dubrovnik: A History* (London: Saqi, 2003).

Hastings, Adrian, 'Special Peoples', *Nations and Nationalism*, 5 (3), 1999, pp. 381-396.

_____ *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Herzstein, Robert Edwin, *When Nazi Dreams Come True: The Third Reich's Internal Struggle over the Future of Europe after a German Victory: A Look at the Nazi Mentality 1939-45* (London: Abacus, 1982).

Hilberg, Raul, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961).

Hnilicka, Karl, *Das Ende auf dem Balkan 1944/45: Die militärische Räumung Jugoslaviens durch die deutsche Wehrmacht* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1970).

Hobsbawm, Eric, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Hory, Ladislaus and Broszat, Martin, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941-1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 1964).

Hroch, Miroslav, 'Nationalism and National Movements: Comparing the Past and Present of Central Europe and Eastern Europe', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2, 1, 1996, pp. 35-44.

Iordachi, Constantin, 'Charisma, Religion, and Ideology: Romania's Interwar Legion of the Archangel Michael' in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), pp. 19-53.

Ivančević, Radovan, 'The Pre-Romanesque in Croatia – A Question of Interpretation', in Ivan Supičić (ed.), *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 417-442.

Jareb, Jere, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike 1895-1945* (1960; Zagreb: Biblioteka Hrvatska povjesnica, 1995).

_____ 'Prilog životopisu dra. Mile Budaka', *Hrvatska revija*, God. XL, Sv. 2, June 1990, pp. 311-355.

_____ *Političke uspomene i rad dra. Branimira Jelića* (Cleveland: Mirko Šamija, 1982).

Jareb, Mario, 'Planovi i koncepcije ustaško-domobranskog pokreta od početka tridesetih godina do travnja 1941. o opsegu i granicama buduće nezavisne hrvatske države' in Stjepan Matković (ed.) *Hereditas rerum Croaticarum* ad honorem Mirko Valentić/Buczynski/Aleksander (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2003) pp. 302-314.

Jelavich, Charles, *South Slav Nationalisms: Textbooks and Yugoslav Union before 1914* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990).

_____ 'Serbian Textbooks: Toward Greater Serbia or Yugoslavia?' *Slavic Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4, Winter 1983, pp. 601-619.

Jelić-Butić, Fikreta, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941-1945* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1977).

Jelinek, Yeshayahu, 'Bosnia-Herzegovina at War: Relations Between Moslems and Non-Moslems', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1990, pp. 275-292.

_____ 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1984, pp. 195-210.

_____ 'An Authoritarian Parliament: The Croatian State Sabor of 1942', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 22:2 June 1980, pp. 260-273.

_____ 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement' in S. U. Larsen, B. Hagtvet, J. P. Myklebust (eds.), *Who Were the Fascists: Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1980), pp. 367-378.

Judah, Tim, *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

Jurković, Ivan, 'Das Schicksal des kroatischen Kleinadels unter dem Druck des Osmanreiches', *East Central Europe*, Vol. 29, Part 1-2, 2002, pp. 235-248.

Kadić, Ante, *The Tradition of Freedom in Croatian Literature: Essays* (Indiana: The Croatian Alliance, 1983).

Karadžić, Vuk, 'Serbs All and Everywhere' in Bože Čović (ed.) *Roots of Serbian Aggression: Debates/Documents/Cartographic Reviews* (Zagreb: Centar za strane jezike & AGM, 1993), pp. 85-104.

Katičić, Radoslav, 'On the Origins of the Croats', in Ivan Supičić (ed.), *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 149-167.

Kershaw, Ian, *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis* (London: Penguin Books, 2000).

Kisić-Kolanović, Nada, 'Muslimanska inteligencija i islam u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 36, br. 3, 2004, pp. 901-938.

_____ *Zagreb-Sofija: Prijateljstvo po mjeri ratnog vremena 1941-1945* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, Dom i svijet, 2003).

_____ 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 34, br. 3, 2002, pp. 679-712.

_____ *NDH i Italija: Političke veze i diplomatski odnosi* (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2001).

_____ 'Hrvatski državni sabor Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1942.', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 32, br.2, 2000, pp. 545-565.

_____ *Mladen Lorković: Ministar urotnik* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1998).

_____ 'Podržavljenje imovine Židova u NDH', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, God. 30, br. 3, 1998, pp. 429-453.

_____ *Vojskovođa i politika: Sjećanja Slavka Kvaternika* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1997).

_____ *Hebrang: Iluzije i otrežnjenja 1899-1945* (Zagreb: Institut za suvremenu povijest, 1995).

Kiszling, Rudolf, *Die Kroaten: Der Schicksalsweg eines Südslawenvolkes* (Graz-Köln: Verlag Hermann Böhlaus Nachf., 1956).

Kohn, Hans, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964).

Košćak, Vladimir, 'Iranian Theory of the Croatians' Origin' in Neven Budak (ed.) *Etnogeneza Hrvata* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1995), pp. 233-234.

Košutić, Ivan, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u drugom svjetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1992).

Kovačić, Matija, *Partizanska lakrdija: Partizanstvo mora nestati!!* (Zagreb: Hrvatski tiskarski zavod, 1943).

Krizman, Bogdan, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 1-2 (Zagreb: Globus, 1983).

_____ *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija* (Zagreb: Globus, 1980).

_____ *Ante Pavelić i ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978).

Kuntić-Makvić, Bruna, 'Greek and Roman Antiquity', in Ivan Supičić (ed.) *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 73-91.

Kvaternik, Eugen Dido, *Sjećanja i zapažanja 1925-1945: Prilozi za hrvatsku povijest*, Jere Jareb (ed.) (Zagreb: Naklada Starčević, 1995).

Lampe, John R., *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition, 2000).

Laqueur, Walter, *Fascism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Lederer, Ivo J., 'Nationalism and the Yugoslavs', in Peter F. Sugar & Ivo J. Lederer (eds.) *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 396-438.

Lencek, Rado L., 'The Enlightenment's Interest in Languages and the National Revival of the South Slavs', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1983, pp. 111-134.

Lendvai, Paul, *The Hungarians: 1000 Years of Victory in Defeat* (London: Hurst & Company, 2003).

Lengel-Krizman, Narcisa, *Genocid nad Romima. Jasenovac 1942* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni cvijet, 2003).

Lepre, George, *Himmler's Bosnian Division: The Waffen-SS Handschar Division 1943-1945* (Atglen PA: Schiffer Military History, 1997).

Lewis, Bernard, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (London: Phoenix Giant, 1997).

Loker, Zvi, 'The Testimony of Dr. Edo Neufeld: The Italians and the Jews of Croatia', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1993, pp. 67-76.

Lorković, Mladen, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* (1939; Zagreb: DoNeHa, 1996).

_____ *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma* (Zagreb: Velebit, 1944).

Lukas, Filip, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', in *Povijest Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463* (1942; Sarajevo: Hrvatsko kulturno društvo Napredak, 1998), pp. 39-77.

_____ 'Problem hrvatske kulture' (1938) in *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost,* Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), pp. 241-277.

_____ 'Zašto je Dubrovnik bio velik' (1938) in *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost,* Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), pp. 217-231.

_____ 'Dr. Ante Starčević' (1937) in *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), pp. 177-190.

_____ 'Geografijska osnovica hrvatskoga naroda' (1925) in *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost,* Mirko Mađor (ed.) (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), pp. 67-96.

_____ 'Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao (knjiga II) in *Za hrvatsku samosvojnosti: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944).

_____ 'Ličnosti – stvaranja – pokreti' (knjiga III) in *Za hrvatsku samosvojnost: Zakoni zemlje – krvi – duha: eseji, govori, članci*, (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944).

Macartney, C. A., *The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969).

Makanec, Julije, *Hrvatski vidici: nacionalno-politički eseji* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1944).

Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1998).

_____ *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1996).

Mandić, Dominik, 'Crvena Hrvatska u svjetlu povijesnih izvora' in Vol. 2 of Vinko Lasić (ed.), *Sabrana djela dr. o. Dominika Mandića* (Chicago-Rome: Ziral, 1973).

Mataušić Nataša, *Jasenovac 1941-1945: Logor smrti i radni logor* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni Cvijet, 2003).

Matica hrvatska, 'Memorandum about the Croatian Language', Translated by Luka Budak, *Croatian Studies Review*, No. 1, 1997, pp. 103-105.

Matković, Hrvoje, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1994).

Mazower, Mark, *The Balkans* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000).

Meštrović, Ivan, *Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1969).

Michaelis, Meir, *Mussolini and the Jews: German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy 1922-1945* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978).

Miller, Nicholas J., *Between Nation and State: Serbian Politics in Croatia before the First World War* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997).

Mosse, George L., *The Fascist Revolution: Toward a General Theory of Fascism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1999).

_____ *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1978).

_____ *Nazism: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978).

_____ *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1961).

Nedelsky, Nadya, 'The Wartime Slovak State: A Case Study in the Relationship Between Ethnic Nationalism and Authoritarian Patterns of Governance', *Nations and Nationalism*, 7, 2, April 2001, pp. 215-234.

Novak, Viktor, 'The Slavonic-Latin Symbiosis in Dalmatia during the Middle Ages', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 32, 1953-1954, pp. 1-28.

Okey, Robin, 'Austria and the South Slavs' in Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (eds.), *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), pp. 46-57.

Ostojić, Ivan, 'The Terms Croats Have Used for Their Language', *Folia Croatica-Canadiana*, Vol. II, 1999 at www.hic.hr/hrvatski/izdavalaštvo/FOLIA.pdf., pp. 17-60.

Pakulski, Jan, *Social Movements: The Politics of Moral Protest* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1991).

Paris, Edmond, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia, 1941-1945: A Record of Racial and Religious Persecutions and Massacres* (Chicago: American Institute for Balkan Affairs, 1961).

Pavelić, Ante, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (1941; Zagreb: Croatiaprojekt, 2000).

_____ *Doživljaji II* (Madrid: Domovina,1998).

_____ 'Uzpostava hrvatske države, trajni mir na Balkanu' in Petar Požar (ed.) *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), pp. 27-44.

_____ *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (1941; Domovina: Madrid, 1974).

_____ *Doživljaji I* (Madrid: Domovina, 1968).

Pavlowitch, Stevan K., *Unconvential Perceptions of Yugoslavia 1940-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

_____ 'How Many Non-Serbian Generals in 1941?' *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, January 1983, pp. 447-452.

Payne, Stanley, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).

_____ *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980).

Petrovich, Michael B., 'The Croatian Humanists and the Ottoman Peril', *Balkan Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1979, pp. 257-273.

_____ 'Croatian Humanists and the Writing of History in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 1978, pp. 624-639.

Pittard, Eugène, *Race and History: An Ethnological Introduction to History* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd, 1926).

Poliakov, Leon, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe* (London: University of Sussex Press, 1975).

Požar, Petar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva: U prošlosti i budućnosti* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1996).

Prlenda, Sandra, 'Young, Religious, and Radical: The Croat Catholic Youth Organizations, 1922-1945' in John Lampe and Mark Mazower (eds.) *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), pp. 82-97.

Radić, Antun, *Sabrana djela X* (Zagreb: Seljačka sloga, 1938).

_____ *Sabrana djela VIII* (Zagreb: Dom,1937).

_____ *Sabrana djela VII* (Zagreb: Seljački nauk, 1936).

Ramet, Pedro, 'From Strossmayer to Stepinac: Croatian National Ideology and Catholicism', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, XII, 1, 1985, pp. 123-139.

Ramet, Sabrina Petra, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996).

Raukar, Tomislav, 'Land and Society' in Ivan Supičić (ed) *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 181-196.

Redžić, Enver, *Muslimansko autonomaštvo i 13. SS divizija: Autonomija Bosne i Hercegovine i Hitlerov Treći Rajh* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1987).

Reitlinger, Gerald, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (New Jersey: Jason Aaronson Inc., 1987).

Renan, Ernest, 'What is a Nation?' in Omar Dahbour & Micheline R. Ishay (eds.), *The Nationalism Reader* (New Jersey: Humanities Press: New Jersey, 1995), pp. 143-155.

Rendić-Miočević, Ivo, 'Retracing the Past to the Cradle of Croatian History', *East European Quarterly*, XXXVI, No. 1, March 2002, pp. 1-25.

Rich, Norman, *Hitler's War Aims: The Establishment of the New Order* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1974).

Rigby, T. H., 'Russia's Nationhood from its Origins to Putin', *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1-2, 2003, pp. 123-158.

Rigg, Bryan Mark, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and the Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2002).

Rohrbacher, Robert J., 'Bishop J. J. Strossmayer's Yugoslavism in the Light of the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878', *East European Quarterly*, XXXV, No. 3, September 2001, pp. 343-371.

Rothenberg, Gunther Erich, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522-1747* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960).

Sadkovich, James J., *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism 1927-1937* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987).

Samardžija, Marko, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1993).

Schöpflin, George, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000).

Segvić, Cherubin (Šegvić, Kerubin), 'Die gotische Abstammung der Kroaten', *Nordische Welt* (Berlin: Verlag Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1935).

Seitz, Aleksandar, *Put do hrvatskog socializma* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1943).

Sekulić, Duško, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Croatia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3, May 2004, pp. 455-483.

Smith, Anthony D., *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

_____ *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

Smith, Dennis Mack, *Mussolini's Roman Empire* (London: Longman, 1976).

Spalatin, Mario S., 'The Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević, 1845-1871', *Croatian Studies Journal*, 16, 1975, pp. 19-146.

Spence, Richard B., 'General Stephan Freiherr Sarkotić von Lovćen and Croatian Nationalism', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, XVII, 1-2, 1990, pp. 147-155.

Stančić, Nikša, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Barbat, 2002).

Starčević, Ante, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?: Dva razgovora' in Josip Bratulić (ur.) *Djela dra. Ante Starčevića: 3. Znanstveno-političke razprave 1894-1896* (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995), pp. 3-47.

_____ 'Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj' in Josip Bratulić (ur.) *Djela dra. Ante Starčevića: 3. Znanstveno-političke razprave 1894-1896* (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995), pp. 137-216.

Steinberg, Jonathan, 'Types of Genocide? Croatians, Serbs and Jews, 1941-5', in David Cesarani (ed.) *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 175-193.

_____ *All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust 1941-1943* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Stojanović, Nikola, 'Until Your or Our Extermination', in Bože Čović (ed.) *Roots of Serbian Aggression: Debates/Documents/Cartographic Reviews* (Zagreb: Centar za strane jezike & AGM, 1993), pp. 105-113.

Strižić, Ivan, *Hrvatski portreti* (Zagreb: DoNeHa, 1993).

Südland, L. V. (Pilar, Ivo), *Južnoslavensko pitanje: Prikaz cjelokupnog pitanja*, Translated by Fedor Pucek (1943; Varaždin: Hrvatska demokratska stranka, 1990).

Šufflay, Milan, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999).

Sugar, Peter F., 'External and Domestic Roots of Eastern European Nationalism', in Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (eds.) *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 3-54.

Sundhaussen, Holm, 'Der Ustascha Staat: Anatomie eines Herrschaftssystems', *Österreichische Osthefte*, No. 37, 1995, pp. 497-533.

_____ 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan Raum', *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 48, 1993, pp. 233-257.

_____ *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Kroatiens im nationalsozialistischen Großraum 1941-1945: Das Scheitern einer Ausbeutungsstrategie* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983).

Tanner, Marcus, *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

Thomas, Nigel and Mikulan, Krunoslav, 'Axis Forces in Yugoslavia 1941-45', *Men-at-Arms* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 1995).

Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Tomasevich, Jozo, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (California: Stanford University Press, 2001).

_____ *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (California: Stanford University Press, 1975).

Tomašić, Dinko, *Politički razvitak Hrvata: Rasprave i eseji* (1938; Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 1997).

_____ 'Croatia in European Politics', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. 2, 1942-1943, pp. 64-86.

_____ 'Sociology in Yugoslavia', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 47, 1941-42, pp. 53-69.

Trifković, Srdjan, 'Yugoslavia in Crisis: Europe and the Croat Question, 1939-41', *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 1993, pp. 529-561.

_____ 'Rivalry Between Germany and Italy in Croatia, 1942-1943', *The Historical Journal*, 36, 4, 1993, pp. 879-904.

_____ 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', *East European Quarterly*, XXVI, No. 3, September 1992, pp. 345-370.

Turda, Marius, '"The Magyars: A Ruling Race": The Idea of National Superiority in Fin-de-Siècle Hungary', *European Review of History*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2003, pp. 5-33.

Udovički, Jasminka, 'The Bonds and the Fault Lines', in Jasminka Udovički and James Ridgeway (eds.) *Burn this House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

Van den Berghe, Pierre L., 'Does Race Matter?' *Nations and Nationalism*, 1 (3), 1995, pp. 357-368.

Verdery, Katherine, 'Introduction' in Ivo Banac and K. Verdery (eds.) *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995).

Vucinich Wayne S., 'Croatian Illyrism: Its Background and Genesis' in Stanley B. Winters and Joseph Held (eds.), *Intellectual and Social Developments in the Habsburg Empire from Maria Theresa to World War 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

Walston, James, 'History and Memory of the Italian Concentration Camps', *The Historical Journal*, 40, 1, 1997, pp. 169-183.

West, Rebecca, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941; London: Penguin Books, 1982).

Wistrich, Robert S., 'The Jews and Nationality Conflicts in the Habsburg Lands', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1994, pp. 119-139.

Yahil, Leni, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932-1945*, Translated by Ina Friedman and Haya Galai (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Yeomans, Rory, 'Militant Women, Warrior Men and Revolutionary Personae: The New Ustasha Man and Woman in the Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945', *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4, October 2005, pp. 685-732.

Zaninović, Marin, 'The Illyrians on Croatian Soil in Antiquity' in Ivan Supičić (ed.) *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), pp. 55-72.

Zelić-Bučan, Benedikta, 'The National Name of the Croatian Language Throughout History', *Folia Croatica-Canadiana*, Vol. II, 1999, at www.hic.hr/hrvatski/izdavalaštvo/FOLIA.pdf., pp. 61-121.

Žerjavić, Vladimir, *Opsesije i megalomanije oko Jasenovca i Bleiburga* (Zagreb: Globus, 1992).