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**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CRIMINAL PROJECT OF THE  
ARTIFICIAL  
CROATIAN NATION**

Second Edition

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**I DEDICATE THIS BOOK  
TO MY FELLOW-FIGHTERS AND FRIENDS,  
VOLUNTEERS OF THE SERBIAN RADICAL PARTY,  
THE SERBIAN CHETNIK HEROES,  
WHO LAID THEIR LIVES  
ON THE ALTAR OF THE FATHERLAND AND  
SERBDOM,  
WHILE DEFENDING THE WEST SERBIAN LANDS.  
I ADMIRE THEIR HEROISM AND,  
BOWING TO THAT SUBLIME MARTYRDOM,  
I AM ASHAMED BEFORE HISTORY  
FOR NOT HAVING BEEN WORTHY  
OF SHARING THEIR DESTINY.  
THEREFORE, I AM MUCH MORE DETERMINED  
TO CONTINUE WITH THEIR HOLY FIGHT  
UNTIL MY LAST BREATH.**



## Foreword

To write about an issue that is of existential historical value for the Serbian people, and which has been forming our collective destiny for centuries, demands that an author should put a lot of effort into disregarding emotions and prejudices - writing soberly, reasonably, calmly and in a well argued manner. Only in that way can one objectively and impartially analyse a defined problem; and its successful elaboration, apart from the cognitive-scientific aspect, can gain a performative strength all of its own and can stimulate concrete forms of social behaviour. At the same time, the truth criterion must always dominate over utility principles; it has to put aside partiality and to insist incessantly on a tenacious re-examining of the knowledge acquired. Whenever a Serb writes about Croatian national feeling, he/she cannot escape the impression of the harrowing places of slaughter and the karst caves in Jasenovac as mass graves. Nevertheless, it also demands a large dose of cold-bloodedness and suspicion, because those crimes are ascribed to a small nation that has suffered gravely throughout history, which has been nearly completely destroyed and whose remnants are hardly recognizable in the remaining small enclaves populated by the Chakavian dialect speakers. The chief perpetrators of the crimes against their Orthodox brothers were mainly the Catholic Serbs, instrumentalised as a blind tool in the hands of traditional Serbian enemies. That great truth has been present and recognizable everywhere around us for more than a century, but it has never been systematically presented. My long incarceration in the Hague dungeon has served as a big challenge for me to try to do that and, at the same time, to give meaning and purpose to my imprisonment. Presenting the results of four years of work for public judgment, I feel the need to set out a few introductory notes to, I hope, the exceptionally critical reader.

1. The methodological approach in this study is based on facts and premises that were established long ago, repeatedly checked and confirmed in historiography and political theory. Years ago, a great number of scientists worldwide proved in their research that the Roman Catholic Church had been persistently acting as the leading

world criminal organization, deprived of any moral scruples and governed by the most notorious Machiavellian principles. In its desire for universal world domination, it did not hesitate to brutally liquidate individuals, social groups and nations, if they were in its way, even when they confronted it passively. That is the first premise of this methodological approach. The second is the fact that the Croatian nation did exist historically, that it belonged on the Slavic national tree and had its own language, Chakavian, originally close to the West Slavic language group. The third premise is that that nation was almost completely destroyed during Turkish invasion and that its historical name remained exclusively characteristic for a very thin stratum of feudal gentry, whom the Hungarian rulers simply moved from the endangered and devastated Chakavian environment to the foreign Kajkavian one. In that way, the feudal gentry were gradually imposing their ethnic name on the newly adopted serfs. The fourth premise states that, among today's "Croats", there are few who are genetically related to the authentic Croatian people. According to all historical indicators, it was not until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the Croatian name was imposed on Serbian Catholics in an organized movement of the Roman Catholic Church. The fifth premise is the fact that, for hundreds of years, the "Croats" have been an instrument of the Vatican and of various Western forces in their anti-Serbian invasion.

Based on these five premises of the applied methodological approach, I have constituted the principal hypothesis, already expressed in the title of this study. Today's "Croatian nation" is the artificial creation of the Roman Catholic Church, envisioned beforehand as an instrument in a criminal project based on the aspiration to destroy the Serbian nation through Uniatism, conversion to Catholicism or complete physical liquidation, so that it would no longer represent an obstacle to the further expansion of proselytism to the East European lands. The project was not finished and wrapped up as a whole beforehand. It matured gradually, having an Illyrian option in its first phase and, in the second phase, a Yugoslavian one. Still, the nature of the Roman Catholic crimes against the Serbian nation was the same. Essentially, its nature in World Wars I and II was no different from that of the civil wars in Yugoslavia in the '90s.

The methodological approach was determined by the fact that there was rich scientific and publicist writing that elaborated comprehensively on particular aspects of the problem. For this reason, this study does not have the character of classic research. The author need not have researched archives and museums. I studied the published works and tried to systematically arrange their results within a pre-determined subject matter. Concurrently, I studied four types of works: the works of the romanticist writers of the Croatian pamphlet historiography, serious scientific works with an expressively critical approach, daily political publicist writing and the public appearances of the distinguished ideologists, as well as publications of an autobiographical character. In addition, every text analysis needed to be critically intonated and impartially elaborated. I have included ample quotations from the works studied. I found precise quoting more appropriate than retelling, in order to preserve the authors' authentic attitudes. Retelling would not help me evade my own subjective interpretation. Of course, the choice of quotations also had to be subjective, but I hope that their distinct character will adequately repress the negative influence of the subjective selection. The facts had to repress emotions, but also had to be re-examined themselves by comparing various other authors' interpretations. Of course, I could not include all the works available, so I insisted on choosing the highest quality, most representative and relevant ones. It is not

up to me to judge the extent of my success, because every selection inevitably bears the personal touch of the one who carries it out, who is motivated by a completely determined aim. I count with uncompromising and well argued criticism.

2. First of all, the Croatian pamphlet historiography, the present political publicist writing and the biographical writing represent a problem in themselves. They are all ideologized to the maximum to serve the purpose of the basic Roman Catholic doctrine. The present worldview of the creators of globalization is favourable to them, as they stigmatised the Serbs as a world problem and aligned themselves with the traditional Serbian enemies, whom they presented as the embodiment of justice and righteousness. In every attempt to question the imposed ideological standards and quasi-ethical values, we might see the extent to which the will for power has transformed itself into the control of human mind and has succeeded in presenting its totalitarian nature as the highest democratic achievement. There is a problem in artificially shaping human thought and in the way of understanding reality through the functioning of Western democratic systems in order to more easily keep the present financial and political elite of the world in power and, at the same time, to save and extend all of its privileges. That systematic design is achieved by controlling the main media and with sophisticated means of manipulation within the global media order, which is dominated by the strongest industrial forces and their mastodonic corporations. The lack of any control over their manipulative techniques and propaganda projects is justified by the principle of the freedom of press. The public and behind-the-scenes power centres approve no alternative or diversification of media access, information sources, information checking, etc. The media are simply a sphere without any democratization and every request to initiate it as a process in that sphere is met with most bitter hostility from the centres of political and financial power in America, who are dominant in today's world.

The idealised picture of Western democracy presents the media as reliable and ubiquitous, defiant and stubborn, incorruptible and critically inclined to the point of being sarcastic, participants in the political process that devotedly preserve freedom of speech and guarantee the right of citizens to be fully informed. However, when one defies the ossified ideological stereotypes and indoctrinated prejudice, people immediately and frenetically point their accusatory finger at that person thus making him/her an unwelcome perpetrator of "hate speech". Through argument reversal, he/she becomes a source of intolerance. The Western media have never been less free and politically instrumentalised. The rulers of the world and their half-conspiratorial headquarters are convinced that the democracy crisis has been caused by its immoderations. That, in order to preserve democracy, they must reduce people to idiotism and mediocrity, impose apathy and obedience on them and occupy their attention with peripheral happenings, sensations and intrigues. The great majority of citizens threaten democracy by confronting its instrumentalisation and the ultimate formalisation performed by the political elite, industrial corporations and the strongest financial institutions. Besides, democracy has always been a buzzword for "home affairs". On the international stage, in the relations between large and small countries, there has never been an effort to even create a pretence of democracy. Only threats and blackmailing – as a language of ultimatum.

The Western media are under direct American and Vatican instructions, maximally instrumentalised to declaim a chorus of anti-Serbian lies and curses, whose main aim is to exchange the historical roles between the criminals and the victims in the eyes of the

world public. To that warped consciousness, the real victims of genocide become the perpetrators of crimes. The “poor” Croats and Bosnian Muslims are the favourites of the new world order, and the Serbians are a constant target for extermination. The simplest way to become famous overnight is to bring out, through the press, television or publicist writing, the most horrid and meaningless lie that will pillory the entire Serbian nation even more strongly. Having behaved in this way, they succeeded in finding loyal servants in all Serbian lands. Pro-Western political parties, the media and the so-called non-governmental organizations are paid to serve the enemies of their own nation and to fight against its existential interests. Even to them, the false, illusory consciousness – the Croatian and Muslim self-consciousness – is the model of truthfulness and kind-heartedness while the tragedy of their own nation is a subject of contempt and a slur. On the public stage, the foreign mercenaries are so loud that they even manage to set aside the sober and reasonable judgment of Serbian intellectuals, who will not be bribed for a handful of dollars. They are not ready to sacrifice their personal conscience and academic morale for the sake of being financially secured through payments from the counters of the Western embassies or accounts with suspicious foundations.

3. Naturally, I am aware of the limited credibility of every personal testimony and the ultimate subjectivity of autobiographical material. A writer of an autobiographical document cannot help directing the personal life experience and his/her views on historical events that he witnessed or significantly participated in towards a certain aim. In this way, a teleological approach most often becomes reduced to a need to present a personal role as best as possible, to subsequently justify certain actions or to construct a variant of rationalizing the overall personal conduct. In this way, every prior experience acquires a present significance, and reconstruction of a historical event acquires a practical, i.e. applicable political value. Along with that, one even tries to logically connect things that have been emerging completely spontaneously, that have been appearing completely unexpectedly and, as initially perceived, disarranging the normal flow of a process. What was once completely unpredictable is now seen as the only possible natural outcome. Upon finally becoming familiar with the outcome, everyone is immediately familiar with both the meaning and the purpose of the events, as well as with their causal connections in situating them within a social and historical unit. Every autobiographical project realized is more of an act of present political involvement rather than an elementary component of the previous described ones. Moreover, it is a result of reconsidering the personal role with the intention of beautifying, justifying or defending it. It is always based on the value postulates of the present time, which determine a subsequent conceptual frame that a memoir writer follows. There is none of the spontaneous authenticity that diary notes provide but, nevertheless, it can provide uniqueness and a unity of view, coherence of presentation and the logical consistency of personal attitude. Neatness of unity is also achieved through honesty, spontaneity and objectivity.

A memoir writer always hides something because, as a matter of fact, the apologia of his/her own personality is more important than the truth. A great number of people have timely stolen documentary material, authentic certificates on real events, in order to create a personal touch by subsequent exclusive interpretations. For this reason, it is always more important what the author of an autobiographical document keeps back than what he/she makes a big thing about. They do publicly state more or less truthful facts, but never the complete truth. For the complete truth, what has been kept back is



always more important than what has been said. Still, in every autobiography, one unmistakably testifies about themselves and their personality and, by critically analyzing the writing, one more easily pervades the hidden. Simultaneous testimonies from a number of participants of the same political and historical events, especially when they belonged to opposing sides, add a new quality of value. A high degree of truth is acquired when their factographic statements and analysis match, while in the case of extreme disaccord in attitudes and interpretations, we again get precious groundwork for impartial critical research.

Accordingly, this is the right manner for analysing the documents of the Croatian nationalist ideologists, especially Stjepan Radić, Ante Pavelić and Franjo Tuđman. It is not a coincidence that Tuđman composed autobiographical prose and an ideological study after the model of Adolf Hitler, in that way placing himself in the epicentre of historical events and presenting himself as their mastermind.

In the authentic gallery of human freaks and moral miseries that Croatian history has abounded in for the last two centuries, Franjo Tuđman was the most successful as a theorist and political practitioner. Undoubtedly, the historical circumstances were favourable for him to the highest degree but his personal influence certainly cannot be neglected. Tuđman simply proved himself as a synthetic reincarnation of Ante Starčević and Ante Pavelić – and the one who applied their ideology, political programme and methods with the ultimate consequences. Further, he succeeded in fitting the colossal Croatian historiographic lie into the values of globalisation, as a perfected planetary variant of totalitarianism. With the whole-hearted support of the Vatican, Tuđman succeeded in having the Americans and the West Europeans assume the role of continuing the genocide of Jasenovac and initiating the major Serbian exodus from Krajina. What Franz Joseph I and Adolf Hitler failed in, John Paul II, Helmut Kohl and Bill Clinton realized. They created a monstrous formation of a country, whose foundation is sustained exclusively by anti-Serbian hatred and intolerance. Still, I am sure that that formation cannot be eternal, like everything else that has been built on evil.

4. I wrote this study over all the four years of my imprisonment in The Hague. All the books quoted and other books whose quotations I didn't use, were brought to me in The Hague by my wife Jadranka Šešelj. Apart from the works from my personal library, which I had been thematically collecting for decades, Ljiljana Mihajlović and Filip Stojanović conscientiously and painstakingly searched for and photocopied numerous old editions that are rather difficult to find. I am finishing work on this manuscript today, when I am entering a new phase of my fight in The Hague, a potentially fateful one. I have left more than a thousand handwritten pages in the headquarters of the Serbian Radical Party in Belgrade. I apologise if there are some mistakes in the names of the historical figures or the dates of certain events, due to retyping. Still, I simply did not have the opportunities for correction and a final recension. To postpone the print until I leave jail is also out of question, as I am aware that hardly any Serb returns from the Hague dungeon alive. That does not worry me so much. I am already used to the fact that imprisonment is my life's destiny of its own kind. For that reason, the thought that it should also be used in the political fight occupies my mind constantly. The ordeal of an individual is not so important. The nation is the one in danger and, for that cause, no sacrifice for its salvation is too much. That is why I find inspiration in the example of Deacon Avakum and Stari Vujadin. They can tie me down, but they cannot stop me from defying, whenever and wherever. Defiance is

what keeps me going, and the infinite faith in God, the Serbian people and Russia is what gives me strength.

The Hague, 10 November 2006

**Vojislav Šešelj**

## **Part One**

### **INTRODUCTORY TREATISE**

#### **I Croatian National Feeling as the Most Efficient Vatican Weapon for the Destruction of the Serbian Nation**

The civil wars waged through the process of the externally initiated breakup of the Yugoslav state – the last stage of which was the barbarian aggression of the North Atlantic Pact on Serbia and its whole nation – did not break out spontaneously but had been long and systematically prepared. Their mastermind and organizer was the Vatican, the central base of the Roman Catholic Church. It would never forget or forgive the Serbs for when, at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, they chose the Eastern Christian Church, definitively and by a vast majority. On top of that, they even established their own national one, with the legacy of St. Sava as a specific variant of Orthodox Christianity. For centuries, Rome had been trying to convert Serbians to Catholicism, to repress Orthodoxy and, to that end, they eagerly helped all foreign forces that openly acted as Serbian enemies and aggressors on the Balkans. The Roman Catholic friars in the field, readily and with good organization, greeted every big Serbian tragedy, ordeal and misfortune in order to snatch naïve Serbian souls, desperate in their existential hopelessness. Conversions to Catholicism were often performed using direct violence, bribing, threats, discrimination and all varieties of harassment. In every historical period, a part of the Serbs succumbed to this – always the weaker, less nationally aware and morally underdeveloped portion, representing the same ethnic substrate that, in different social and political circumstances, showed a tendency to Islamisation. Converting to Catholicism was easier to enforce than converting to Islam by the Turks, mainly because of the compatible religious symbolism and a more appealing demagoguery of proselytism.

Nevertheless, the majority of Serbs stuck unwaveringly to their Orthodoxy and the legacy of St. Sava. Those who converted to Islam, Roman Catholicism or any other smaller religious sect, soon lost their national consciousness, exchanging it for a religious or foreign one. The newly converted Serbian Muslims strongly identified with the Turks, whereas the Catholics became Venetians, Hungarians, Germans, etc. over time. Still, until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the majority of Serbian Catholics at least preserved traces of the former Serbian national consciousness, often feeling rejected as apostates and almost instinctively culpable for the conversion of their ancestors. Serbian Catholics massively populated Dubrovnik, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slavonia and Military

Krajina. The gradual manumission of Serbia from Turkish serfdom and the increasingly serious political course of the trans-border Orthodox Serbs [*Prečani*] were gradually opening the Catholics' eyes and arousing feelings of pan-Serbian solidarity in them, regardless of religion. The enlightenment activity, initially embodied in the work of Dositej Obradović and subsequently expanded by Vuk Karadžić and Njegoš, contributed to this. Those processes of awakening the national consciousness and the feeling of a collective spirit seriously worried the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, who was afraid that their Serbian flock might return to the national church. The same fear troubled the Austrian and Hungarian political circles, whose power also extended over the Serbian population considerably.

A few centuries of the proselytism captured the souls of hundreds of thousands of credulous Serbs who converted to Roman Catholicism and who were gradually abandoning the Serbian national consciousness, owing to the fact that, during the fierce fight for the survival of the Serbian nation, Serbdom was evermore intensely identified with the Orthodoxy. The real problems for the Roman Catholic prelates started at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the European countries were going through revolutionary changes and when the middle class, besides the working one, was achieving political dominance with more success. The intellectuals of these nations started to grow stronger and to contribute significantly to realising the national renaissance. The national consciousness was being articulated more clearly, basing itself on history, tradition and, above all, the unique language. The successful start of the Serbian liberation struggle and a perspective bud of the recuperated Serbian country were both raising hopes that, very soon, the people who spoke one, Serbian language (marked as the Shtokavian dialect in Slavic studies), would overcome religious barriers and unite under the concept of one national spirit, consciousness and pride, with the aim of founding a country. The national unity of the Orthodox Serbs, Roman Catholics, Muslims and a handful of Protestants was inevitably leading towards the strengthening of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which was still shattered at that time by the artificial boundaries and political supremacy of the foreign rulers, but with unique aims and aspirations. The numeral predominance of its believers and, above all, the fact that it uniquely represented a national religious organisation in the true meaning of the word and a Serbian national institution with unprecedented real influence on the nation, gave it an initial unbeatable advantage. In addition, it was an alarming situation for Rome and its proselyte legions.

## **1. The Instrumentalisation of the Ethnic Remnants of the Small Croatian Nation**

In order to forestall the establishment of complete Serbian national unity, the Roman Catholic Church instrumentalised the ethnic remnants and historical evidence of the former statehood of a small Slavic nation – the Croats. Unlike the Serbs, who are of East Slavic origin and very similar to the Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians, the Croats belonged to the West Slavic ethnic branch and are originally similar to the Polish, Czech and Slovak people. The original Croatian language was Chakavian, which Milan Rešetar, a Catholic from Dubrovnik, established to be an independent Slavic language and which Aleksandar Belić proved to be originally similar to Polish and Czech. In the middle ages, the Croats formed their own country between Gvozd and the Adriatic

sea, which, in its heyday, extended as far as the Vrbas River and, across today's Hrvatsko Zagorje region, probably as far as the Drava in the north. At the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, they became a part of Hungary, which administratively merged Croatia and Dalmatia between Split and Zadar with its previously conquered province of Slavonia into one duchy. Escaping from the danger of the Turks, the Croats moved *en masse* to the interior of Europe and their gentry got new lands in the counties of Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci, where they kept the Croatian name and imposed it on their new serfs – the Kajkavians or Slovenians.

In its proselyte efforts, the Roman Catholic Church tried to repress the Serbian national name, perfidiously insisting on the thesis that Serbs and Croats made up a part of one unique nation, which needed a common name – the Illyrians or Yugoslavs. Those concepts were the essential preoccupation of its politics in Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Krajina – and later in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reason for those concepts lay in the fact that they underpinned the utterly untenable belief that, under the pretence of Serbo-Croatian national unity, the name Croatian referred to the Roman Catholics and the name Serbian to the Orthodox – within one nation. The Illyrian movement had already initiated that process to a great extent and, with the deafening Yugoslav propaganda of Strossmayer and Rački, the Dalmatian and Slavonian Catholics underwent an almost forceful Croatisation. Having achieved that, quasi-juristic theses on Croatian state law were systematically established. An empty phrase was borrowed from the Hungarians about the existence of one political nation in one country, in order to proclaim the Croats in Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia as one such nation – and later in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska. On all those territories, the Orthodox people were denied the Serbian national identity and efforts were made to instrumentalise them in order to fulfil the Croatian statehood aspirations within the Habsburg monarchy.

After World War I, the Vatican was prepared to accept and support the first Yugoslav state, hoping that there were a sufficient number of the Vatican's own believers within its boundaries, who would be able to persuade the Serbian majority to accept Uniatism for the love of complete national unity. The Roman Catholic prelates were so enchanted with the idea that, for a while, they lost the trust of the Croatian political leaders like Stjepan Radić, who bitterly opposed the Catholic clericalism. His murder and the fierce Serbian opposition to the concordat opened the way for the clerics to use new political action, whose main instrument would be the Ustasha movement and genocide would prove as the most efficient means in the anti-Serbian campaign. The victory of the Communists would give the Vatican a break to recuperate from their defeat and the beginning of Communism's fall would increase the possibility of liquidating Yugoslavia, forming a new Croatian country on the model of the Ustashes and expelling almost all the Serbs from its territory with the help of Western forces. In the last wars, the Vatican was openly on the side of all the Serbian enemies and the Pope personally supported the bombardment of the Serbian people.

## 2. Stealing the Serbian Language

The several years of imprisonment in the illegal and expressively anti-Serbian tribunal in The Hague gave me the opportunity to deal with this problem more elaborately. Studying the vast bibliography that deals with the causes, processes and consequences of breaking up the Yugoslav state, I found profuse arguments that the Vatican had been the most prominent international factor leading the anti-Serbian politics and raking up war hysteria. On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005, at one of the regular status conferences in the case against me, I publicly declared that my defence would be constructed on the basic thesis that John Paul II, the Roman Catholic Pope, was the main culprit for all the crimes that had occurred during the bloody civil wars and Western aggression. That statement and additional motions were published in the book *The Devil's Apprentice, the Villainous Roman Pope John Paul II* (Vojislav Šešelj: Collected writings, the Serbian Radical Party, Belgrade, 2005, book 57).

I ordered the team of experts supporting my defence to make a research study, in the form of a scientific-research project, based on all the available scientific and professional references. Its purpose was to underpin my principal thesis with unquestionable arguments. Having engaged all the human, financial, material and technical resources of the Serbian Radical Party, the research study was finalised in less than two years. It consists of two thematic units, whose preparation was managed by Zoran Krasić, a member of parliament, and by Elena Božić Talijan, editor-in-chief of the *Velika Srbija* magazine. The material was published in four volumes as part of a series of collected documents related to the political Hague process tendentiously designed tendentiously against me. They are: *Pontifex Maximus of the Satanist Church – John Paul II* (book 67), *The Vicar of Antichrist, the Villainous Roman Pope Benedict XVI* (book 68), *The Vatican, Satan's Main Nest* (book 74), and *The Roman Curia, Always Thirsty for the Serbian Blood* (book 75). The research study was designed as an extensive and meticulous chrestomathy that gathered scientific statements from the best Serbian and foreign historians. They gave world science unquestionable evidence on the villainous nature of the Roman Catholic Church as a global criminal organization in general and on the genocidal politics of many a Roman pope, especially against the Serbian nation, throughout centuries and entire millennia. It is especially striking that, behind the concrete facts of the political manifestation of villainy and criminal measures, one can see the continuity of genocidal attacks on the Serbian people, from the medieval Crusades, various forms of proselytist pressures and attempts at mass liquidation in World Wars I and II to Tuđman's expulsion of almost all the Serbian nation from the neo-Ustasha Croatian state.

I took upon myself to produce an analysis of one of the greatest Roman Catholic criminal projects – the creation of the artificial Croatian nation by misapplying the name of a virtually extinct Slavic nation that spoke the Chakavian language to the remaining part of the Croatised Slovenes in the Hrvatsko Zagorje region and the ethnic group of Catholic Serbs that were first denationalised and then strongly religiously and ideologically indoctrinated. The methodological approach that I have used was based on analysing relevant historiographical, linguistic and political-theoretical bibliography. The knowledge regarding the principal issue has existed for two centuries in a vast number of scientific studies and debates, but scattered throughout various individual books and magazines. They have never been systemised in this way, probably due to

rather unfavourable political circumstances that were characterised by Pan-Slavic and Yugoslav ideological delusions or extremely autocratic regimes that ascribed themselves the role of the sovereign arbiters of scientific truth. There was always a reason why this issue was neglected. Sometimes it was the good intention of not causing discord when expecting a higher degree of Serbo-Croatian solidarity and reciprocity, and sometimes it was the simple fear on the part of the intellectuals, faced with endangering their physical existence itself if they did not write in accordance with the formal ideological principles.

This study includes six thematic units. In the Introductory Treatise, I endeavoured to expose the basic categorial apparatus and explain the main differences between the Serbian and Croatian national substrata, the essence of the Roman Catholic Church and its political activity, as well as the instrumentalisation of Croatian national feeling as the most efficient means to repress and destroy the Serbian nation. What follows is a review of the basic premises of the Croatian romanticist and pamphlet historiography; then, a review of the main theses of the leading Croatian historical forger and distinguished Franciscan friar, Dominik Mandić. After that, I tried to critically elucidate the attempt at a theoretical interpretation of Serbo-Croatian ethnic and cultural differentiations using the ideological premises of Ivo Pilar, as well as to present critical elaborations of the main forgery attempts. At the same time, that is the foundation for elucidating the political backgrounds of the leading Croatian national ideologists, starting with Ljudevit Gaj, Joseph Georg Strossmayer, Franjo Rački, Ivan Mažuranić, Ante Starčević and Eugen Kvaternik, followed by Antun and Stjepan Radić and finally Vlatko Maček and Ante Pavelić. Now, I have reached the point of exposing the fundamental facts about the Roman Catholic genocide of the Serbian people in World War II, as well as about the realisation of the Vatican criminal endeavours under the Yugoslav Communist regime of Josip Broz Tito and the Croatian Ustasha regime of Tito's general, Franjo Tuđman.

The Sers have always spoken exclusively Shtokavian. That is their original national language, which distinguished them from the Croats (as Chakavians) and Slovenes (as Kajkavians). The Shtokavian dialect is common for the Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Bulgarian languages, belonging to the East Slavic language group. Chakavian and Kajkavian are of West Slavic origin and are similar to Polish, Czech and Slovakian. What has been exclusively Serbian for thousands of years, the Croats today present to the world as the "Croatian" language. In order to underpin that thesis, it was necessary for the Croats to appropriate Serbian folk poems, systematically and for decades – even those celebrating the brave deeds of Marko Kraljević as a great "Croatian" hero. In order to achieve this in the most convincing manner, Ljudevit Gaj, Joseph Georg Strossmayer and Franjo Rački first tried to prove that the Serbians and Croats were one nation. Then, Ante Starčević claimed that all the Serbs were actually Croats and laughed at the Serbian name as unworthy. When they finally learnt to speak and write Serbian, the Croats took it as theirs, started to change it rapidly, inventing completely new words and phrases and then, in their linguistic debates, tendentially reduced Serbian exclusively to the Ekavian dialect, whereas Chakavian and Kajkavian were referred to as dialects of Shtokavian. Historian Tadija Smičiklas claimed that the Serbian language as such did not exist and the linguist Armin Pavić complimented the Serbian king Milan Obrenović on his good Croatian.

Having appropriated the Serbian language as their own literary one, the Croats soon started using it as the key argument for proving the "Croatian" ethnic character of a particular part of the population. Vjekoslav Klaić, for example, ascertained that the

whole population of Bosnia and Herzegovina spoke exclusively Shtokavian, which, according to him, meant "Croatian". Accordingly, he claimed that all of them were Croats, though he was reluctant to admit that they did not consider or call themselves Croatian and even confirmed that a lot of them declared themselves as Serbs. Still, since a language is the only unquestionable feature of a nationality, the pure fact that all of them spoke "Croatian" was enough to confirm that they were all Croats and they had to be persuaded to believe it. Of course, the Orthodox Serbs did not accept that version of the story but, after persistent endeavours by the Roman Catholic priests, it was favourably received by the Catholic Serbs, whom the missionaries were gradually, patiently and diligently converting into the Croatian national corpus by artificially creating an individual and collective consciousness. The church and the school contributed the most in that the most zealous "Croats" were formed from those who, ethnically, had nothing Croatian in them. To make the tragedy even worse, by deepening the religious intolerance the Catholic Serbs were turned into fanatical haters of Serbdom. Strossmayer's diocese of Đakovo was the main centre and a hotbed, where the Roman Catholic clergy were ideologically trained to persuade the Slavic "Šokci" and "Raci", the Dalmatian "Latins" and the Bosnian Catholics that they had been Croats since the beginning of time, that even their oldest ancestors were Croats as well. It went so far that one Muslim from Herzegovina, due to his homosexual inclinations, ran away from his family to Dalmatia, became a Roman Catholic friar and, under the name of Lovro Ljubuški, started to preach that Shtokavian was the Croatian language.

Such a clerical and political campaign implied the most efficient suppression of the written documents of Ljudevit Gaj, Šima Ljubić and Veber Tkalčević who, in their own time, openly admitted that the Croats had taken their contemporary literary language from the Serbs. Moreover, that fact could demolish to the core the entire quasi-national construction if it were not suppressed from the public scene by a deafening clamour. A language is the most tangible and strongest proof as a feature of a nation, because blood relationship is biological and not social; and the issue of the developed collective consciousness succumbs more to subjective judgment values than to objective ones. Different historical circumstances can influence a nation to appropriate a foreign language and suppress its own, usually in the process of more or less forcible assimilation. In France, this caused the disappearance of numerous ethnic formations and the Germans systematically Germanised the subjugated Slavs. Also the Scottish, Welsh and Irish people involuntarily but completely abandoned their languages and appropriated English. However, history does not remember that a nation like the Croatian one abandoned its own language due to its underdevelopment, grammatical negligence and rudimentary literature, appropriating a foreign one. Admittedly, the Croats could have reformed and developed Kajkavian, following the example of the Slovans. Or they could have returned to Chakavian. But then they would not be able to conduct the big historical mission entrusted to them by the Roman Catholic Church, which was to definitively separate the Catholic Serbs from their national nucleus.

History demonstrates that nations that gradually appropriated other languages, like the Jews, Scotsmen and Irishmen, did not lose their essential national characteristics. The Croats have twice changed their national character and identity. When the authentic, original Croats - Chakavians had been ruined as a nation and scattered over Europe, their gentry, on moving to the lands given to them in the furthest west in Slavonia, for centuries imposed the artificial Croatian identity on the Kajkavian serfs who lived there.



The newly formed Kajkavian “Croats” were not similar to the original Chakavian Croats in any ethnical sense. In the new wave of artificial Croatisation, the number of Catholic Serbs embraced in the process was incomparably higher than the number of Chakavian Croats and Kajkavian “Croats” together. All the written Croatian monuments, if not in Latin, were always in Chakavian. All the written Serbian monuments, if not in Church Slavonic, were always in the Shtokavian vernacular. There is no trace that the Serbs as a nation ever used any other language except Shtokavian. Similarly, there is no trace that the Croats used any other language except Chakavian up until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Only then did they begin to gradually refer to the Kajkavian variant from Zagorje as Croatian. In the oldest preserved Bosnian written documents from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Bosnian bans referred to their people as exclusively Serbian, even though some of them were Catholics and in conflict with the House of Nemanjić. What is more, Bosnian rulers called the language in which they issued their charters and certificates the Serbian language. People from Dubrovnik always called Shtokavian the Serbian language as well. Even the greatest Croatian intellectual of all times, Vatroslav Jagić, claimed so.

### **a) The Artificial Change of Character of the Original Croatian Nation**

As the Serbs had their own national church of the eastern rite since the time of St. Sava – the Serbian Orthodox Church – it has gradually become an essential part of their national individuality and collective consciousness. In the whole period before the Turkish invasion, that fact did not endanger the Serbian national feelings of the Catholic Serbs in Primorje, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. There was a high degree of religious tolerance among people. Unlike members of the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholics in Bosnia exercised an irreconcilable intolerance towards the Bogomils. Stevan Nemanja violently eliminated the Bogomils in his own country as well; and even banished a lot of them, who found refuge in Bosnia. Under the Ottoman occupation, the Serbian nation had a high degree of autonomy, which was actually realised through the Serbian Orthodox Church, bearing in mind that Turkey was organised as a theocratic state with a sultan who, apart from the secular power, possessed supreme religious power over the Muslims as a caliph. The Serbs who lost connections with the national church through conversion to Islam and Catholicism, often lost their feeling of the Serbian national identity. However, they managed to preserve the Serbian language – Shtokavian – and, in that way, at least unconsciously manifested their real ethnic affiliation.

The ancient people from Dalmatia and Slavonia completely left the lands that the Turks had conquered. Later, the Serbs from Bosnia and the inner parts of Serbia settled there. At the same time, Serbian refugees were coming from the other side of the border – the Austrian and Venetian ones – forming a defensive rampart. In 1798, the Slavonian Petar Matija Katančić wrote about the Montenegrins, Serbians, Bosniaks, Dalmatians and the Serbs in Hungary as one nation that had always been considerably different from the Croats, especially due to the language. He called Shtokavian the Illyrian language, Chakavian was Croatian and Kajkavian was Slovenian. Katančić emphasised that all the Serbs spoke the Illyrian language and that they were also called Illyrians or Vlachs. Another distinguished Slavonian, Torkvato Brlić, said for himself that he spoke the Serbian language and that Slavonia was inhabited by the Serbs “of the Roman Catholic

and Eastern canons”. The greatest Slavonian poet, Matija Antun Veljković, wrote that his language was exclusively Serbian, as did the Bosnian friar Matija Divković. Today, the situation has changed fundamentally. Shtokavian, as a literary language, is used by the Croatised Serbian Catholics, Croatised Slovenian Kajkavians and a handful of the authentic Croatian Chakavians, whose original language is doomed to disappear as their entire nation is instrumentalised as just a means of Roman Catholic anti-Serbian conspiracy. That is how the character of the authentic Croatian nation became artificially changed, deprived of its ethnic traits and became discredited in history due to the horrible crimes systematically performed in its name by the Roman Catholic Church against the Orthodox Serbs.

Ivan Kukuljević and Vatroslav Jagić openly stated that Kajkavian was not actually a Croatian but a Slovenian language, and the distinguished Slavists Miklošič, Budmani and Daničić, agreed with them. In fact, the Slovenes as a nation do not even have any other language except Kajkavian. As for Chakavian, nobody has ever used it as a language except for the Croats. In 1863, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski published *Listine hrvatske*, a collection of old writings and identity documents, showing that they were all written in Chakavian and located according to the place of issue, west from the Vrbas and north from the Cetina. In order to create at least some confusion, Sakcinski included a few obviously Serbian documents in Shtokavian in the collection. Even the most significant Croatian poet from the period of cultural revival, Stanko Vraz, did not have any doubts concerning that issue. In 1843, he wrote that the Chakavians were the only authentic Croats, as well as that Chakavian was the only Croatian language. What is more, a Chakavian has never considered himself/herself either Serbian or Slovenian, only Croatian. Nor has he ever considered anyone who was not a Chakavian as his/her compatriot. Not until the Serbs started settling in the former Croatian areas at the time of Turkish invasion, when they started mixing with the remaining indigenous population, and, above all, not until the process of their Catholicization began, did any document, identity document, or *listina* written in Shtokavian have any Croatian distinctive feature.

### **b) Inflamed Religious Passion Instead of Scientific Facts**

Identifying the Slovenian Kajkavians and subsequently the catholicised Serbian Shtokavians as Croats was the product of political will, not a result of ethnological research. Accordingly, it has no scientific basis and, instead of evidence, it offers kindling for religious passion, defiance and hatred. For that reason, today’s Croatiandom is an artificial political category that has almost no connection with the autochthonous Croatian people and its state. Hence the fact that today’s “Croats” speak three entirely differentiated Slavic languages – Serbian, Slovenian and Croatian and use Serbian as their literary language. This fact was the reason behind the need to forge history and reduce historical science to political pamphlet writing. Especially intense is the appropriation of Serbian history and literary achievements, following the model of considering that everything Catholic is essentially “Croatian”, no matter how convincing its Serbian character is. It started with the appropriation of the tradition of the *Uskoci* [Serbian guerrilla fighting against the Ottomans] and its written monuments. This quasi-national megalomaniac appetite would soon prove insatiable. Due to the lack of national consciousness on the part of the masses that they wanted to control, the political and clerical ideologists were forced to initially turn to the Illyrian or Yugoslav name, so that

the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes could be considered one unique nation. Afterwards, everything that was Catholic in that “unique” nation they named “Croatian”. In the third phase, they directed their endeavours to forcing Orthodox and Muslim Shtokavians on the territories desired by the Croatian ideology to accept the Croatian national identity. The Catholics who kept the Serbian national identity suffered the greatest blow. The Serbs from Dubrovnik were the ones who opposed Croatianisation the longest, the most distinguished among them being: Ivan Stojanović, Ljudevit Vuličević, Baltazar Bogišić, Milan Rešetar, Pero Budmani, Melko Čingrija, Matija Ban, Medo Pucić, Luka Zore and others.

The formation of the artificial Croatian nation on the ethnic basis of the Roman Catholic converts who lost connection with the Serbian Orthodox nucleus, implied stealing other nation’s cultural values and the appropriation of historical and spiritual traditions. To that end, the standard Hungarian ideological construction was used, whose basic categorial apparatus was the empty phrases on a thousand-year statehood, a political nation, historical rights and purported state continuity. The Croatian pamphlet historiography also contributed with an unbelievable dose of mythologization of the most ancient past of the authentic Croatian nation, with which today’s Croats have almost no ethnic connection. Until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatian national feeling did not exist at all in Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Boka Kotorska. Wherever Shtokavian was spoken, the Orthodox Serbs were firmly conscious of their nationality, and the Roman Catholics preserved a collective memory of the conversion of their ancestors and often continued celebrating *slava* [the celebration of a family patron saint]. When the Catholic Serbs would lose their Serbian ethnic characteristics, they would be called *Šokci*, Latins, *Kršćani*, *Bunjevci*, etc. Never and nowhere had they been called Croats until the major political measures of Strossmayer and Rački who Croatised them under the slogan of Serbo-Croatian national unity.

### **c) Not a Word about the Croatian Name in Dalmatia**

According to the data systemised and theoretically explained by Nikola Žutić who used a vast bibliography and his own research papers, “In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after centuries of religious conversion and reconversion, Dalmatia was mainly inhabited by the Roman Catholic Serbs, which is confirmed by the statistical data of the Austrian censuses of 1846 and 1850/51. Namely, Dalmatia, which included Dubrovnik and Boka, was populated by 330,827 Serbs of the Roman Catholic faith, whereas there were only 78,853 Orthodox Serbs after the Catholic conversion. So, according to the Austrian statistics, neither the Croats nor their name were mentioned. The entire Dalmatian population was made up of Serbs, Roman Catholic and Orthodox, totalling 409,685 souls. According to the statistical data from 1846, 393,715 citizens lived in Dalmatia. According to the statistical data of the Austrian census of 1880, out of 476,000 Serbs, 79,000 were Orthodox. According to the census of 1900, out of 593,000 citizens, 96,000 were Orthodox. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before the phase of imported Croatian identity in Dalmatia, Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a phase of creating and expending the Croatian identity in the mythological form of the so-called ‘white’ and ‘red’ Croatian identity by politicians, bishops, canons and historians - the apologists of the Croatian identity (who were mainly foreigners). In order to prove that the Dalmatian population was originally Croatian and not Serbian, the Croatian

mythologists tried to prove with the 'exact' documents that the Croats had lived in the hinterland of Dubrovnik. Afterwards, they simply had to call the literature of Dubrovnik Croatian, not Serbian; and, on the other hand, neglect as far as possible everything that was Serbian 'on this extended Croatian territory'. In order to eliminate the Serbian identity from the large part of Dubrovnik, literature was flourishing that extolled the mythical Croatian identity in Dalmatia" (Nikola Žutić: *The Roman Catholic Serbs – The So-Called Croats*, Serbian Radical Party, Belgrade, 2006, p. 100-101).

The intensive conversion of Catholic Serbs of Dalmatia, Dubrovnik and Boka into Croats did not start before the Austrian authorities estimated that this kind of complete denationalisation of the local Serbian population suited them politically. The Jesuit and Franciscan friars comprehensively elaborated on the technique for creating the artificial Croatian national consciousness. The main political agitators with this purpose were Mihovil Pavlinović and Ivo Prodan, fervent followers of Starčević's ideology of the Croatian Party of Rights. Apart from imposing the new national identity on the local people, they supported the union of Dalmatia, which was a part of Austria, with Croatia and Slavonia, which were constitutional parts of Hungary. It was supposed to be a single banate that would, from its perspective, include Bosnia and Herzegovina as well, so that the Croatian national megalomania could be satisfied. It was certainly in accordance with the endeavours from Vienna to impede, at least retrospectively, the Hungarian expansion after the colossal concessions of Vienna towards Pest, when it was defeated in the Battle of Sadova of the Austro-Prussian War.

The state and church authorities had the same aims and inclinations, so their activities were harmonised as well. "In Dalmatia, as in other regions where the Roman Catholics/Croats lived, the Roman Catholic Church took a series of missionary and proselytist measures in order to expand the Croatian national feeling. In order to win over the greatest possible number of Croats to the ideology of the Roman Church, and also to bring over the Roman Catholic Serbs, the Vatican propaganda proclaimed the Mother of God as 'the Queen of Croats'. The celebration of the so-called 'Croatian jubilee' and the intensive proselyte activity of the organisations of the *Catholic Action* was resounding propaganda among both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox population of Boka, Primorje and Montenegro. The propagandist lines in the Roman Catholic press, the sermons in the Roman Catholic churches and the public manifestations of the *Catholic Action* organisations certainly struck a responsive chord among the Roman Catholic Serbs and 'Latins', so that they gradually and largely started to opt nationally for the Croatian identity" (p. 134). That process was more easily conducted in Slavonia and the Military Krajina, after their administrative annexation to the Banate of Croatia. The key role, after Strossmayer and Rački, was played by the archbishop of Zagreb, Antun Bauer, a long-standing member of Starčević's Party of Rights. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was not one serious civil ideologist of the Croatian identity, in the true sense of the word. That is why the clericals exclusively took that role, lead by Josip Štedler, the archbishop of Vrhbosna, and his successor Ivan Šarić. After the Austro-Hungarian occupation, their campaign was helped significantly by the sudden influx of administration officers and their families, who were of different nationalities but always of the Roman Catholic faith and ready to assimilate into the newly-composed Croatian nation.

### 3. Broz's Merits for the Breakthrough of Catholicism to the East

The Roman Catholic pro-Croatian expansionism could not satisfy its appetites even with all these countries. Its warriors were directed towards Vojvodina and even Romania. "The Croatian national identity had been an unknown national term in today's Vojvodina until the 1930s. Banat, Bačka and Baranja, as part of the Hungarian monarchy, were ethnically and religiously diverse regions populated by Germans, Serbs, Hungarians, Slovaks, the *Bunjevci*, *Šokci*, Russniaks, Romanians, Jews and others. The Croatians, as a particular nation or ethnic formation, were not even mentioned in the sources and literature from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The *Bunjevci* and *Šokci*, as the national element of the Catholic Serbs, had not identified their ethnic being with the Croatian national identity in any way, as it was not until the 1920s that the promoters of Croatiandom started to associate the Croatian national identity with the *Šokci* and *Bunjevci*. In the sources and literature from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the *Bunjevci* were called the Vlachs (Serbians) and their Vlach origin was indeed emphasised. The Croatian national identity of the *Krašovani/Karašovani* (the Roman Catholic Serbs along the Karaš River) was created in Romania only after World War II" (p.175).

Tito's Communists were the ones who, in their extreme anti-Serbian assault, finally finished off the Serbian national identity of the *Šokci* and *Bunjevci*. "In the Communist Yugoslavia, the national and religious issue of *Šokci* and *Bunjevci* was finally settled by the decree of Josip Broz in 1945, which simply ordered that the *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* must consider themselves Croats. The Croatianisation of *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* was initiated during the war in Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1945 by the ruling circle of Partisans led by Josip Broz. The *KPJ* [Communist Party of Yugoslavia] Regional Committee of Vojvodina practiced that kind of initiative of the Yugoslav Communists by issuing various orders and recommendations with the view of naming the *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* Croats. This tendency towards comprehensive Croatianisation of *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* continued in the liberated Communist Yugoslavia. At the founding congress of the Communist Party of Serbia, held on the 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> May 1945, the Secretary General of the *KPJ*, Josip Broz Tito, initiated the complete Croatianisation of the *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* of Vojvodina. He did not mention Slavonia, because the *Šokci* completely accepted the Croatian national identity there as early as the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" (p. 187). The fact that it was possible to conduct this almost complete Croatianisation of the Roman Catholic Serbs in a period of less than a hundred years certainly testifies to the immense political strength of the Vatican and its manipulative capabilities. Nevertheless, a part of the guilt belongs to the Orthodox Serbs and the Serbian Orthodox Church. Imprudently identifying the Serbian national identity with the Orthodoxy and applying a specific Orthodox exclusivism, they intensified the feeling of guilt among their converted brothers for the actions of their ancestors, so that they subconsciously searched for a certain national sanctuary, even a false one.

#### **4. The project of the Croatian Nation: the Negation of the Contemporary Concept of a Nation**

The Roman Catholic project of the artificial nation, wandering from the idea of Illyrism to Yugoslavism, came to anchor at Croatiandom because its creators had been searching for a legal and political foundation on which to base its statehood. At that time in Europe, there was a full affirmation of the concept of national countries, whereas the Austrian negotiated dualism insisted on the theory of political nations, which derived the continuity of statehood from the medieval feudal estate structures. This denied the contemporary concept of a nation and its definition as a social community based on the ethnic identity, cultural unity, common language, and expressive collective consciousness. The advantage was given to the purely formal side of it, to the fact that a former state structure existed, the frame of which was more or less preserved, regardless of its internal ethnic substrate and the present radical changes. What seemed favourable to the building of a new construction was the fact that, for centuries, there had existed in a very small space a feudal council of the Hungarian province called Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia with certain, even if minimal, autonomous rights and which was ruled by a ban as the king's personal trustee – a governor, usually a foreigner. Accordingly, the principle of historical right was emphasised and a great number of romantically inclined historians competed in being most creative and imaginative in writing pamphlets.

The new consciousness could not have become the national consciousness just like that. It would have suffered by relying on a rather limited circle of Zagreb intellectuals, if the Roman Catholic Church had not employed its complete organisational and personnel resources with the view of imposing a new world view, distorting the historical memory and installing a new collective consciousness into people's brains like a computer chip, implanting it into the masses of Catholic Serbs in Military Krajina, Slavonia and Dalmatia, as well as the miserable remnants of the former Croatian ethnos – the Chakavians and Kajkavians (the Slovenes from the hinterland of Zagorje). With demagogic tirades and systematic manipulation, it was not difficult to wash the brains of the primitive, naïve, illiterate and, above all, bigoted people and redirect their brain cells. The spontaneous opposition to the Magyarisation, Germanisation and Italianisation certainly contributed to the complete success of the project; and the target was hit by proclaiming the Serbian national language – Shtokavian – as the Croatian literary language. Those few remaining authentic Croats renounced the Chakavian dialect for the sake of creating an artificial nation with the old name and an utterly changed ethnic substrate, while the formerly denationalised Slovenes from Zagorje renounced Kajkavian.

#### **5. The Formation of the Croatian State Based on the Wrong Interpretation of Estate Rights as State Rights**

After the failure of the projects of winning the Orthodox Serbs over for the denationalising ideas of Illyrism and Yugoslavism that had been launched to expedite their acceptance of Uniatism, their subsequent conversion to Catholicism and complete subjugation, it was believed that in the first phase full control could be exerted only over the Roman Catholic element. Accordingly, the small territory of only three counties was

taken as the principal pillar of statehood over which two territorial frames would be built. The first frame included the lands in which the Roman Catholics of the Serbian language already lived in substantial numbers. It was planned to unite and incorporate them into autonomous Croatia under the Habsburg crown, whereas in the second phase the Croatian idea of the state would be imposed, willingly or forcefully, on the rest of the Serbs, Slovenes and, possibly in the future, on the Bulgarians. In that way, the exclusive estate rights of the noblemen were purposefully interpreted as state rights. It is understandable that there was no real continuity of Croatian statehood under Hungarian rule. Banates were the common form of feudal decentralisation and, besides the Banate of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, there were also those of Jajce, Mačva, Timisoara, Vidin and others. When Croatia and Dalmatia were annexed to Hungary in 1102, the king tied them to Slavonia in order to govern them better. When the Venetians conquered Dalmatia and the Turks conquered almost all of Croatia, the Hungarian king moved the remaining Croatian feudal lords to the surroundings of Zagreb and gave them new lands. Those feudal lords were preserving the Croatian consciousness and gradually imposing it on their Kajkavian serfs.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was an organised effort of devising the postulates which would transform the public and legal competences of the former feudal estates into a modern concept in order to accord them a contemporary meaning of statehood. In order to most convincingly underpin the political requests for autonomy, the entire history was being pragmatically reinterpreted so that even the obvious forgeries were used freely. The entire historical science was instrumentalised for the purpose of forming a new “national” consciousness and implementing the national ideology into the entire education system. The primary objective was to integrate different Roman Catholic formations under one national denominator. Initially, the majority of the Dalmatians and Slavonians opposed it openly, but the Roman Catholic clergy eventually accomplished their goal through persistent and relentless actions that were orchestrated from their centre. The choice of historical documents used to corroborate the state and legal aspirations was extremely selective. Those that were considered beneficial for the national ideology and political doctrine were affirmed, whereas all the others were neglected and ignored. The individual rights of noblemen were often generalised, and the most frequently applied methodology included frivolous interpretation of content, conjecture and guesswork. The basic paradox – that the purported historical rights were presented as mere statistical figures with no historical context and without understanding the dynamics of their development – was solved by using such data more frequently. If something could not be proved with relevant arguments, then the possible opponents could be disheartened and demotivated beforehand through deafening clamour and intolerance. Public hysteria can always impede reasonable debate.

## **6. The Usurpers of the Holiness of the Apostle Peter**

As the founder of a new faith and church, Jesus Christ bestowed the conciliarity principle on his apostles as the principal means of settling all theological issues and those concerning church organisation. The apostles were the founders of the first church municipalities, which were later called apostles’ churches, of which the most important were of Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch, Ephesus and Alexandria. In the beginning, the most prestigious was the Church of Jerusalem, as the place of passion and resurrection of

Jesus Christ. As early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Church endeavoured to gain primacy over other churches, promoting the lie that Peter the Apostle was its first bishop and, another one, that it was he whom Christ personally named his deputy. Falsely presenting themselves as heirs to the episcopal throne of St Peter, the Roman popes persistently demanded that all the other metropolitan churches acknowledge their primacy and authority over the church as a whole. This undermined the original principle of conciliarity and the apostolic or episcopal equality, while the autocratic and monarchic principle was deliberately introduced into the organisation of the Church. Though the apostolic and episcopal authority was exclusively spiritual, the Roman popes were more openly striving for secular dominance. At the same time, they were openly assuming the imperial tendencies of the Roman emperors as their secular counterparts and models of behaviour. Such aspirations were indeed given a solid basis, though not until the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the Christianity was pronounced the state religion in the Roman Empire. The first five Ecumenical Councils were convened by the Roman emperors, and never had a Roman pope attended any of them, although almost all the Christian bishops had.

The pretensions of the Roman bishops were causing more and more turmoil and great internal problems for the Church. In 800, by crowning Charlemagne with the imperial crown of Rome, the Pope gave himself the right to crown rulers in general, proclaiming his own superiority over secular power. Since then, the insistence on jurisdictional primacy over entire Christian Church became increasingly aggressive and unscrupulous. The ultimate moral debauchery of the episcopal throne and the church hierarchy in the 10<sup>th</sup> century would be called the period of pornocracy in the church. The definitive schism between the Eastern and the Western Christian Churches happened in 1054. A few decades later, the popes started seven Crusade Wars under the excuse of liberating Christ's sepulchre from the infidel rulers, but their primary goal (besides colossal robberies) was to suppress the Eastern Church by converting or exterminating its believers. The entire Fourth Crusade in 1204 was directed towards conquering and plundering Constantinople, as well as tearing Byzantium. Additionally, in the following centuries, the Roman Catholic Church tried to rule over the Eastern Christians, Latinise their churches or to appropriate them through the process of Uniatism. It used as many different methods as possible, from persuading and making appealing promises to brazen violence and mass executions. And not only did the popes incite the religious wars but, in several cases, they personally assumed the role of army commanders.

## **7. Serbian Waste in the Genes of the “Croatian” Nation**

For almost a thousand years, the Roman Catholic Church has been continually following two different courses against Orthodoxy, whose forms have been interchanging throughout all the historical phases. The primary one was conversion to Catholicism and Uniatism, which was accomplished through persuasion, threats and intimidation. If it did not achieve positive results, physical destruction of the Orthodox believers and their ethnic formations was freely used, with great imagination in choosing methods and models of genocide. The Serbian nation was most often and most intensively subjected to the Roman Catholic proselytism and genocide – and, due to its resistance and opposition, it caused true eruptions of anger and hatred on the part of the powerful Vatican prelates. Sometimes, the executors of the Vatican anti-Serbian



measures were Venetians and Hungarians, sometimes Austrians and Germans, sometimes Turks and Albanians, but the Roman popes also used the living tissue of the Serbian ethnic being that, by converting the weak and frivolous to Catholicism, they turned into a powerful instrument for further anti-Serbian actions. In this way, they were artificially creating the Croatian nation out of the Serbian outcast and religious converts, misusing the name of one small Slavic nation with an admirable past, but almost extinguished under the Ottoman invasion. The sedulous Roman Catholic spiritual workers created “Croatian” history using forgeries and the crime of genocide brought about the monstrous “Croatian” state. In order to realise it as successfully as possible, a specific form of clerical-fascistic ideology under the name of “Ustasha” was created, yielding the entire Ustasha political movement. With these kinds of deeds, the Roman Catholic Church entirely affirmed itself as a typical criminal organisation. Turning to governance and domination over this world and ignoring spiritual and moral values, it has treated religion exclusively as a means for achieving political goals and financial power.

The entire history of the Roman Catholic Church has represented a system of criminal actions on the part of its clergy, corruption of its highest prelates, forgeries in the scientific and publicity sphere of its diligent intellectual workers, as well as frequent debauchery and monstrous sexual perversions. Essentially renouncing Christ and his teaching and misusing his name, the Roman popes have for centuries been building an imperial model of the church as an absolutist monarchy in which pontifex maximus would be ascribed divine characteristics. At the same time, claimants to the Roman throne were killing and violently overthrowing each other while fighting for power. After 1054, when the Roman Pope announced the excommunication of the clergy in Constantinople and of Patriarch Cerularius, and when the patriarch anathematised the Roman Pope and his deputies, the popes turned to proving their own primacy more energetically and unscrupulously. Thus, they forged a document about an alleged Emperor Constantine’s donation of imperial tokens and territorial governance to the Roman Pope. For a few hundred years, the forged document served as the main means of propaganda, but its much-vaunted authenticity was finally refuted at the Council of Basle in 1433.

## **8. The Crusades – The Language of the Papal Diplomacy**

The Roman Pope also led the Fourth Crusade against Byzantium in order to conquer, destroy, and tear it apart, to plunder it and subordinate its rivalrous church centre. When the crusaders conquered Constantinople, its civil population was simply massacred and thousands of women were raped. Pope Innocent III publicly justified that as God’s revenge against the heretics who persistently disobeyed him as God’s vicar. However, all the other Crusades represented brutal plundering campaigns as well, under the slogan of liberating Christ’s tomb to justify mass crimes. In addition, the Pope formally assumed the role of commander-in-chief, officially naming the commanders of the crusading criminals. The Crusades were always a means and an addition to Vatican external politics. In total, there were nine large Crusades in which multinational plundering armies took part. There were also a great number of smaller ones, directed against local heretics. Accordingly, at the Pope’s order, the Hungarian kings waged three crusades with the purpose of exterminating the Bosnian Bogomils.

The insatiateness and irretrievable moral abyss of the Roman Catholic popes caused the Protestant Reformation in Europe. Still, Rome struck back again with bloody wars of extermination and the atrocities of the inquisition. The persecution of free-minded intellectuals was intensified and some of the most significant world minds ended up burnt at the stake. The Roman Catholics supported the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium and Serbia, hoping to contribute to destroying the Orthodox Church. It was the German and Hungarian experts who, on the spot, actually cast powerful cannons that toppled the walls of Constantinople. In all possible ways, their emissaries suppressed Serbian cultural continuity and Orthodox spiritual tradition, gradually denationalising the ones they had managed to convert to Catholicism. They called them “Slovenes” or “Illyrians” until, as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it occurred to them to recombine them into “Croats”, which was definitively established at The First Croatian Catholic Congress in 1900 in Zagreb. That pan-Croatian unification did not only include the Catholic Serbs, but also a lot of Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, Slovaks, Russniaks, Italians and others that they encountered there. This newly-composed “Croatian nation” finally grew into a malevolent Roman Catholic phalanx, unquestioningly obedient to the Pope and suitable for every kind of criminal indoctrination and instrumentalisation. Croatia, as an artificial nation, became a prototype of what the Roman Curia wished to turn all of humankind into through the process of clero-globalisation.

## **9. Pope John Paul II - The Incarnation of Satan**

Pope John Paul II only continued the genocidal measures of his predecessors, still using them against the Serbian people – but, at the very end of the 20th century, he gave them his personal touch, demonstrating incredible persistence and perfidy. He was without doubt the main mastermind, supreme organiser and the executor of the new major crime that would cement the Roman Catholic Church’s aureole as the main satanic organisation of our time once and for all. One thing is for sure - if the Pope had not personally wanted the war and, through the war, the break-up of Yugoslavia along the previously marked anti-Serbian seams, that war would not have happened. In their anti-Serbian assaults, his predecessors stuck to the standard proselyte principle and plans for intrusion into the lands of Eastern Christianity. Karol Wojtyla expressed a personal bias in favour of the Croats, bearing in mind that they moved from what is today the area of south Poland to the Balkans 13 centuries ago, as well as their belonging to the West Slavic group of people and the traditional animosity towards the Russians and Serbs. At the same time, he emphasised the general significance of the Croatian national feeling for the Catholic proselytism and also the crucial influence of Catholicism on the formation of the Croatian national consciousness. Of course, he never directed a word of reproach at the ruling clique of the Church, at least concerning its serious discrediting during World War II in Europe in general under Hitler’s thumb and especially in the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia. John Paul II actually arrived on the papal throne thanks to the tide of German revenge-seeking in co-operation with the American crusade against Communism. Similarly, the Vienna Cardinal Kent and the Keln Archbishop Hofner contributed the most to the success of his candidacy. They used a lot of their artistry to convince their fellow-colleagues to elect a new pope who was not Italian, for the first time since 1522 and the Dutch cardinal Adrianus VI. That year, 1978, the world media spread the news that Pope John Paul I had been poisoned after only thirty-three

days of pontificate (which was strangely symbolical, bearing in mind that Jesus Christ lived 33 years), so that the road would open for the election of Karol Wojtyla.

As his election was governed by exclusively political motives, the new Pope immediately took on the role as the initiator of a contemporary crusade, with an anti-Communist slant and based on the reaffirmed conservative theology. Wojtyla's doctrinal strictness in the political sphere was manifested as bare bigotry, with a huge dose of Jesuit behavioural hypocrisy. The not insignificant acting experience that he had acquired in his youth as a member of an amateur theatre troop was of much help. His favourite roles were the acts of worry and sorrow – humanistic inclinations with which he tried to create the charisma of a saintly pope and popular tribune at the same time. His capturing of crowds was more successful than Hitler's and he did not even need the hysteria of rhetorical elation. There was not a trace of sincerity in Wojtyla and his commitment to religion was triggered by his huge and concentrated will for power, which was significantly supported by the sublimation of sexual energy accompanied by latent sexual perversion. As the great Polish nationalist, he interpreted the sense of Poland and Polish existence as a dedicated service to the Roman Catholic Church and its mission. He was convinced that the Roman Catholic religion was the essence of Polish national character, a milestone of the literature and the fundament of all national traditions.

In Wojtyla's mind, the Polish Catholic society represented a prototype of the entire European structure under the domination of the Vatican and the new world order in general. In his opinion, the Roman Catholic Church was supposed to represent the main social organisation, national substrate, the primary political force and the supreme institution of divine power. At the same time, the firm internal discipline in the Church and the unshakeable hierarchical investiture rejected *a priori* any pluralism of ideas and opinions, concentrating the crucial power in the hands of an individual. To him/her, the dogma on infallibility assigned the role of Christ's terrestrial vicar, imagined as a satrap of Eastern despotism and openly hostile towards the fundamental democratic principles and strivings. On the Easter day of 1983, in St. Peter's square, Wojtyla called the world to subject to God's power, bearing in mind that this could only be done by subjecting to the real and tangible "God's Vicar". He imagined the first phase of that subjection as the conversion of all Europe to Catholicism: the Eastern churches would accept the jurisdictional primacy of the Pope and the Protestant ones would rectify their heretical doctrines.

### **a) The Dictatorial Ambitions of Karol Wojtyla**

Unlike his predecessor, whom the Roman Curia sabotaged at every step, Pope Wojtyla secured firm control over the Vatican administration, primarily because he supported its long established proselyte efforts with all his might, but also because he imposed on it his dictatorially inclined personality and totalitarian capabilities. Through a man of trust, he also governed the Vatican bank, whose business was associated with many financial affairs and scandals, primarily the speculations stemming from the absence of control mechanisms and the extraterritoriality of the Vatican. The papal infallibility and untouchability was regularly expressed through illegal and immoral conduct in the financial sphere. He remained unpunished, no matter what criminal actions he was personally or indirectly involved in. Like the Jesuits, over whom he

managed to establish a forced governance, John Paul II subjected the powerful Opus Dei organisation to himself personally as well, making it his own prelature. That religious organisation, with tens of thousands of members worldwide, originally had lay characteristics, elitist membership, and conspiratorial plans similar to the Masonic ones. Because of its programme, the world very soon called it “God’s mafia”. Insistence on a belligerent religion and church, and the overall Catholic domination in social life, was backed by the powerful influence on the political ruling elites of many states. In that organization, Wojtyla saw the instruments of the church’s militant offensive and the political mobilisation of its believers. The Jesuit order and Opus Dei represented an integrated financial mafia and clerical political party directly under the Pope’s thumb. Control over them enabled Wojtyla to completely restore papal absolutism.

### **b) The Pope’s Alliance with Regan and the Ustashas as Contemporary Crusaders**

The crucial contribution to the enhancement of Wojtyla’s political power was certainly his alliance with the American president Ronald Regan and the CIA chief William Casey, which was made at the beginning of Regan’s mandate. Casey was Catholic and constantly in touch with the Pope and the influential members of the Roman Curia. Eagerly supporting the Croatian separatism in the process of breaking-up of Yugoslavia, the Vatican invested US \$40 million for the armament of the Croatian paramilitary formations at the very start, which was written about in the London *Guardian* as late as 1999. According to Wojtyla’s moral codex, every villain, criminal and fraud was always welcome, provided they were useful for the political strivings of the Roman Catholic Church. On the one hand, he promoted ecumenism and the convergence of the Christian churches and, on the other, he used the most perfidious and sanguinary methods to try and suppress Orthodoxy – primarily Russian and Serbian as the most intransigent in the resistance they offered to Uniatism. Wojtyla put his back into helping Franjo Tudman come to power. All the parsons and friars throughout Croatia eagerly joined in his electioneering and many openly propagated the return to Ustasha ideology. In the beginning of the 1920s, the Zagreb *Glas Koncila* was full of texts about the affirmative confessions of the Roman Catholic priests, steeped in the Ustasha service, who escaped from the country after World War II through the “ratlines” and often with the personal help of Bishop Stepinac. Tudman’s rise to power meant that the former Ustasha butchers were definitively rehabilitated.

Decades earlier, in the Roman Catholic press, the co-operation between their priests and bishops and the Ustasha regime was categorically denied. However, since 1990, the church people bragged about it, ascribing themselves great national merit from this fact. The special merit was that they regularly represented a pivot in gathering the Ustasha emigration. The Roman Catholic temples around the world represented a new hotbed of Ustasha ideology. Otherwise, the Catholic nations in emigration with temples with national features have been very rare. That fact confirms that the Vatican was designating a new anti-Serbian and anti-Orthodox mission for the Croats when conditions were favourable – and, when the Berlin Wall collapsed, they were. Tudman was politically created by the Roman Catholic Church but, after his death, it distanced itself from him after concluding that Tudman had achieved the maximum under the given circumstances. Consequently, they needed to adjust the further political measures

and re-form the practical methodology. The essence of the Ustasha movement and clerical fascism was preserved but the appearances and means were more or less sophisticated, depending on the most appropriate tactics under certain conditions and times. The Roman Catholic Church was the main factor in the indoctrination, organisation, propagandistic appearance and financing of the Ustasha movement and its prelates decided on the degree of publicity for those activities at a certain moment. The Croats stringently stuck to the belief that all the Ustashes were good Catholics and that it was impossible that true Catholics would not accept the Ustasha ideology. The Ustashes were contemporary crusaders.

The statement that the Roman Catholic Church did not distance itself completely from Nazism in the time of John Paul II is most convincingly proven by the fact that it was the ruling circles of the Church and the Pope himself who diligently defended the war criminal Kurt Waldheim at the time of publicly disclosing his Hitlerist past. In the glare of worldwide public bitterness, the Pope called Waldheim to the Vatican as an official guest, acknowledging his Catholic religious righteousness and openly supporting the reactionary Catholic block to which he belonged in the Austrian political structures. Besides, the secret Vatican plans foresaw Austria's highly significant role in the forthcoming break-up of Yugoslavia, which that country would play with great enthusiasm. The Pope received the greatest support in his strivings from Cardinal König and Regan's national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski who, as a very influential Pole, was strongly influencing the conclave offstage during Wojtyła's election. Otto von Habsburg also belonged to that circle, with his project of the *Danube Federation*, which had also been a theme of interest to Hitler's Pope Pius XII. The Vatican plan predicted that, upon the break-up of Yugoslavia, the conditions would be favourable for including Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina, but also Montenegro or, at least, Boka Kotorska into that extremely Catholic federation.

As early as 1990, in Hungary, camps for training the Ustasha terrorists were established and their paramilitary formations, made of extremist emigrants, were formed. It was all performed pursuant to the directives from the Vatican and the bishop of Đakovo, Ćiril Kos, personally visited those camps, calling them refuge camps. The Vatican had a crucial influence on the Hungarian government to empty its armouries left over from the time of the Warsaw Pact and to deliver them in convoys to Tuđman's regime. During the liberation of Vukovar, a large number of hardened Ustashes illegally crossed Vojvodina and escaped to Hungary, helped by the Roman Catholic priests. Often, the Ustasha sabotage and terrorist groups were directly imported from Hungary to the territory of Serbia. The Roman Catholic parsons in Vojvodina and Belgrade were their main logistics network. They considered the Ustasha terrorists to be religious warriors – new crusaders – the so-called *križari*. Otherwise, conspiratorial political measures, hypocrisy and two-faced moral judgments, accompanied by intolerance towards other religions, have traditionally characterised the Roman Catholic clergy. Today, they combine all these styles with the usage of all the propagandist possibilities of the mass media, which multiply the effects of their demagoguery, turning it into a massive psychosis of believers that are reduced to a flock. Under the thumb of the Roman Catholic prelates, even a flock of “sheep” can easily become bloodthirsty.

### c) The Catholic Link between Ustashas and Ballists

In his anti-Yugoslav and anti-Serbian endeavours, John Paul II engaged the Institute of Saint Jerome, the Sovereign Order of Maltese Knights and the Catholic organisation Communion and Liberation (CL), which is an Opus Dei branch of its own kind for populist actions. Because of their militant public appearances, the members of this organisation are often called “Heavenly Tupamaros”, “God’s Stalinists” or “religion watchdogs”. Its combat squads number around seven thousand members and the total number of members reaches half a million. Its direct leader was Pope John Paul II himself and the principal ideologist was Cardinal Ratzinger, with his concept of the papal state stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals. Ratzinger, Wojtyla’s successor to the papal throne as the then German Cardinal, managed the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which continued with the activities of the former Inquisition. In 1988, apart from traditionally playing on the Slovenian and Croatia card, Wojtyla publicly supported the unification of the Albanians, adding additional wind to the sails of the Albanian separatism. On his order, Albanian Catholic priests in Albania, Serbia and in emigration countries, punctiliously undertook political engagement in the realisation of the Great Albania project. For decades, the Roman Catholic Church had been the one who actually synchronised and connected the activities of the Croatian Ustasha and Albanian Ballist emigrations and, at the beginning of the 1990s, it was sedulously working on Croatian-Albanian political alliance and military co-operation. Wojtyla’s contribution to the general Albanian separatist endeavours was so great that it led to their principal leader, Ibrahim Rugova, deciding to convert from Islam to Catholicism. Though Shariat law threatens the death penalty for those who convert from Islam to any other religion, in Kosovo and Metohija there have been a number of conversions recorded in the last two decades, as the Albanian Muslim parents baptised their children in the Roman Catholic Churches. It has been recorded that, in Đakovica, five Bosnian Franciscan missionaries were undertaking that proselytist work.

By strongly supporting all the proselytist tendencies in East European lands, agitations in Russia, attempts at establishing a Catholic church in Belarus, Uniate brokerage in Ukraine, efforts to adjoin Romania to the Union, instigation of schisms in Bulgaria, etc., Wojtyla’s successor, Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI), has been advocating a united Europe, which would be Roman Catholic, conservative and clerical. His concept foresees a theocratic system of rule and values, at whose top would be the Vatican and the “infallible” Pope. It denies the importance of nations, unless they represent an instrument for implementing this strategy. Whoever opposes the strategy should be crushed on time - even by bombardment, which Wojtyla, demanded as retaliation against disobedient Serbs on several occasions. Wojtyla and Ratzinger’s understanding of ecumenism amounts to absolute deference to the Roman Catholic dogmas and all the more pressure on other Christian Churches, primarily the Orthodox ones, to defer to them. In January 1993, John Paul II also laid out his own doctrine of limited sovereignty, which implied the right to humanitarian military intervention in order to suppress aggression and protect human rights. The right to wage a humanitarian war, in practice, rapidly evolved into the right to preventive war. As the definition was provided by the “infallible” *Pontifex Maximus*, it would regularly have the characteristics of a religious war.

#### **d) The Mafia Actions of John Paul II**

Consistent with the traditions of Pius VI, who, in 1791, condemned the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen and the French Republic established through the French Revolution, and with the tradition of Gregory XVI, who, in 1832, condemned the principles of freedom of conscience, thought and press, John Paul II also remained loyal to the church feudal system, which proclaimed that all power stemmed directly from God. He coveted the power of the former popes, who had subjugated all the Catholic emperors and kings. Wojtyla wanted to wage wars again, following the models from the time when the Vatican had been a state with its powerful personal army. Forgetting that the Italian nation liberated itself only after it had destroyed the papal state, he wanted to re-create that state in his own time, at least over the whole of Europe. The new Hitler or Mussolini who would secure such a role for him was found in Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Bill Clinton. It is not insignificant that, unlike some of his edgy predecessors, Wojtyla always verbally advocated freedom, democracy and human rights while, in practice, he always stifled libertarian tendencies, suppressed democratic yearnings and trampled on human rights if they were opposing his church interests. Following Pius XI's model of symbiosis with Mussolini and Fascism, which had been playing at politics, Wojtyla found a creature of Mussolini's appearance and attitude, a comical operatic personality in Croatia - Franjo Tuđman - to maximally support and prepare him for the mission, designed a long time ago, of exterminating the Orthodox people from Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. As a basic means of his actions, John Paul II also used lies, manipulation and crime.

Opus Dei, in the hands of John Paul II, worked like a real mafia organisation that did not scruple to kill political opponents, financial competitors and the fallen ones within its ranks. With financial speculations, manipulations and genuine plundering, this organisation provided Pope Wojtyla with huge amounts of money necessary for financing his criminal ventures. Under his leadership, the Vatican was active as the strongest political and economic force, deprived of every moral scruple in its efforts to achieve the highest possible degree of secular domination. The scandal about the Catholic P-2 Lodge, founded on the Masonic model, is a telling example of the brazen criminal activities, whose principal organizer and mastermind was the Pope. The direct executors of his criminal will were liquidated as soon as investigative organs revealed them and, to that end, the traditional Vatican principle that dead men tell no tales was re-affirmed. The internal structure of Opus Dei followed the Fascist and Nazi model and they preached Catholic fundamentalism as a political ideology. The Pope personally proclaimed the democratic ideas false, preaching absolute obedience within the Church and of society towards Church. He caused the true inflation of the newly appointed "saints" and "the blessed", giving those attributes with both hands to Catholic priests, who were considered victims of the French revolutionaries, Communist overthrows and various other political movements. He did the same thing in the case of the Ustasha Archbishop, Alojzije Stepinac.

Karol Wojtyla was always exclusively interested in political goals, governing and power and indifferent towards the Christian philosophy of salvation or the liberation theology of the poor. In this sense, he was fortifying the Roman Catholic Church as a desecralised and authoritarian organization, where religious fundamentalism grew into political totalitarianism and the cult of the Pope's personality transcended those of Hitler

and Stalin. Accordingly, the Pope turned into a mythical monster and his Church into the materialisation of primordial evil and historical injustice and oppression. Earlier, that Church attributed Messianic characteristics to Mussolini, Franco, Hitler and Pinochet and, nowadays, its Messiah is the Pope himself.

The Vatican has always had the most powerful spy service. Willingly or unwillingly, literally all its spies are priests, friars and nuns and, apart from spying, their obligation, following the Pope's orders, is to participate in various conspiratorial and subversive activities in the countries where they perform their mission and whose regimes are under attack by the Vatican politics or are seen as an obstacle in gaining power and influence for the Roman Curia. Under the cloak of false Christianity and hypocrisy, that spy network is ready to co-operate with the worst killers and criminals if it finds them useful at the appropriate moment. It has neither moral scruples nor legal doubts. The entire Roman Catholic Church is organised like a conquering and occupying legion. The Roman religious institutes were systematically transformed into centres for quality spy-training, and the main means of propaganda are Radio Vatican and the paper *Osservatore Romano*. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church either controls, or has a strong and organised influence on numerous world media. The key role in the spying and propagandist activities has always belonged to the Jesuits. Only the Jesuits were capable of converting hardened Fascists, Nazis, Ustashas and other criminals into dedicated fighters for "freedom and democracy" in the eyes of the world public.

Although he had been firmly pulling the strings of the anti-Yugoslav and anti-Serbian conspiracy, John Paul II publicly and expressly supported Croatian separatism for the first time on 17 August 1991, during his stay in Pecs, Hungary. On that occasion, the Croatian church delegation, led by the Zagreb Archbishop Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, came to honour him and, in their presence, the Pope highlighted the legality of the Croatian nation's endeavours to form a sovereign and independent country on the principle of the right to self-determination, although the civil war had already broken out at the time. Flagrantly breaching the precise provisions of international public law, on 13 January 1992, the Vatican was the first in the world to recognise the independency of "the Republic of Croatia" and, in a diplomatic note, expressed the readiness to establish full diplomatic relations with it on the ambassadorial level, i.e. the nunciature. In this way, the Pope demonstrated to the world his immense love towards his own monstrous baby, towards the product of long-term criminal politics.

### **e) The Beatification of an Obscure Personality at the Scene of the Crime**

Not having been invited as a guest, John Paul II invaded Republika Srpska on 22 June 2003, with a huge suite of sixty cardinals and bishops and fifty thousand fervent believers, in order to beatify one obscure personality, Ivan Merc, as "the blessed" in Petrićevac, near Banjaluka. Merc's former name had been Hans. He was of German origin. He was born in Banjaluka in 1896 and, after World War I, he worked as a professor in the Archdiocesan Classic Gymnasium in Zagreb. He deserved the halo of the blessed one, which is a first step towards the saint's halo, as a clerical and fascist ideologist who had been active in several clero-fascist organisations, primarily in the Catholic Action, until his death in 1928 at the age of 32. He was beatified in the very Franciscan priory that was the cradle of Friar Tomislav Filipović, under whose



leadership the Ustashas slaughtered more than two thousand Orthodox Serbs on 7 February 1942 in Petrićevac. What is more, the Franciscan priory of Petrićevac, is known as one of the main Ustasha strongholds in Bosnia and its ideological hotbed. Although it would have been more logical to beatify Merc in Zagreb where he had acquired his merits and had been buried, or in Banjaluka where he had been born, the Pope chose this priory in order to reaffirm the Ustasha ideology and the politics of slaughtering “schismatics”. Apart from that, he blessed one heinous friar’s crime and let the public know that he considered such a crime an appropriate model for the future behaviour of the Roman Catholic votaries.

Furthermore, John Paul II also tried to inflict hard blows upon Orthodox Serbs by openly supporting the schismatic “Macedonian Orthodox Church” and the sectarian and false “Montenegrin Orthodox Church”. In Montenegro, the Roman Catholic bishops also punctiliously helped the so-called “Doclean Academy of Sciences and Arts”, as did all the anti-Serbian media and, most of all, the mafia separatist regime of Milo Đukanović. The Catholic Serbs who inhabited the coast had been named “Croats” years before and forced to declare themselves as such, while a pseudo-historiographic thesis on the former “Red Croatia” was largely coming into use again. According to the fancy of some old friars, that state had extended precisely over the region of today’s Montenegro, Herzegovina and Dubrovnik, though there were no historical traces related to it. The Vatican was completely sure that the secession of Montenegro, in the very near future, would create conditions for “Red Croatia’s” massive Uniatism. These tendencies were regularly synchronised with the systematic endeavours of the Roman Catholic bishops of Bosnia-Herzegovina to destroy Republika Srpska as much as possible. In order to achieve that, they easily repudiated the formerly proclaimed Croatian territorial union of Herzeg-Bosnia, hoping that they would firmly win over the relative majority of Muslims to their option and, afterwards, induce them to convert to Catholicism in considerable numbers due to being spatially isolated from the Muslim world. In parallel with that, they were developing a wide publicist production “proving” that Bosnia and Herzegovina had been Croatian lands from the ethnic point of view for a very long period of time. With all their powers, Archbishop of Vrhbosna Cardinal Vinko Puljić and the Bosnian Bishop Franjo Komarica tried to prove to the world-wide public, through a great number of media appearances, that Republika Srpska was a “genocidal” creation established by “the war criminal” Radovan Karadžić and that it should be abolished as such.

## **10. Ratzinger, the Dear Child Raised in the Nazi’s Cradle**

Upon the death of John Paul II, his closest associate for the last twenty-five years and his successor, German Cardinal Ratzinger, i.e. Pope Benedict XVI, rapidly initiated the process of beatification of his predecessor. In that way, he consciously and purposefully broke the canon rule according to which one should wait for at least five years after the death of “the blessed” to initiate such a process. That is how this famous traditionalist and supporter of church conservatism continued the serial production of “saints”. John Paul II and Benedict XVI entered into their political partnership as early as the period of World War II, devotedly serving Hitler. The former worked in a chemical factory producing poisonous gas for Auschwitz, whereas the latter participated in air defence activities as a member of the Hitlerjugend, as a part of the war endeavours

of the Wehrmacht, then set antitank mine fields shortly before the Allied invasion. The air defence unit in which Ratzinger served was located in the Dachau concentration camp and it protected the aircraft production plants, where the camp internees forcibly worked. In one of his first statements upon accession to the throne of the Roman *Pontifex Maximus*, Benedict XVI commended Hitler's Pope Pius XII, saying that he had been an excellent pope. That was how Pope Ratzinger proved himself a real Bavarian, the dear child raised in a national-socialist cradle. That is why his overemphasised "humanism" is purely of a Nazi character. Even before acceding to the papal throne, Ratzinger used to actively participate in all Vatican activities that outlined the neo-Ustasha movement and its aims – financing and organising armament provisions for Croatian paramilitary formations, supporting the diplomatic endeavours of Tuđman's regime, the international satanization of the Serbian nation, conducting an anti-Serbian campaign whose parallel targets were Serbia, Montenegro, Republika Srpska Krajina and Republika Srpska, as well as supporting aggression against the Serbian nation and invocation of the bombardment of Serbian towns and villages.

## 11. The Quasi-Religious Manifestation of the Vatican's Abilities

To mobilise fanatical Catholic masses on the eve of the expected and programmed destruction of Yugoslavia, the Vatican launched a perfidious lie that, in 1981, six boys and girls saw the apparition of Virgin Mary in Međugorje, west Herzegovina. The conspiracy was carried out by the local Franciscans, who linked it with a bloody 40-year jubilee – surely not accidentally. In June 1941, Ustashes threw several hundred Serbian civilians from Prebilovac into the near-by Šurmanovci pit. The pompous rumour about Our Lady was, in the first place, promoted in order to definitively erase the unclear conscious of the Ustashes who had survived and to motivate their agile and systematically indoctrinated offspring for new crimes. A message was skilfully broadcast to Croatized Catholics, saying that God himself had predestined them for new tasks in protecting "the only true religion". For the first few years after "the apparition", the Vatican restrained itself from showing any reactions, waiting to see all the real effects it would have. However, when he saw that the brainwashed crowd had believed the fraud, John Paul II himself stated that "the apparition" in Međugorje would yield "gorgeous fruit". Immediately after that, as the crowd of believers was still fanatical about it, the former restraint and caution of the Vatican waned and they themselves followed suit.

The flourishing of religious tourism brought huge wealth to all of Međugorje in a short time and, most of all, to the local friars. They used the money unsparingly to provide armament for Croatian paramilitary formations in 1990, 1991 and in later years. In 1997, the friars of Međugorje were again among the main organisers of the *Hercegovačka* Bank, well know for its big criminal affairs. "Our Lady" of Međugorje, as "the Queen of Croats", was turned into a mafia cult of its own kind, combined with fascist ideology and political movement. This friar-Ustasha mafia was deeply involved in drug and human trafficking, illegal sale of weapons and car theft. Friar Jozo Zovko, the mastermind and conductor of the "Our-Lady-of-Međugorje" scheme and, later, the guardian of the Franciscan priory in Široki Brijeg, was accused of sexual harassment on several occasions. However, "Our Lady of Međugorje" was not an ordinary scheme. It is the most dramatic contemporary testimony of the manipulative tendencies and practical

abilities of the Roman Catholic Church, which continues to treat its devotees as a brainwashed flock. The shepherd of that flock has long divinised his own personality, established a vicious worldly quasi-religion and systematically stifled elementary humanity, reason and conscientiousness in people, turning them into mere executors of a unique will of concentrated evil. The system of universal moral values, built over thousands of years, has been turned upside down and everything is allowed, every evil and debauchery, if it functions as a pillar of the domination of the Roman bishop and the Antichrist's vicar on earth.

## **II. The Memories of the US Ambassador to the Holy See**

Thomas Patrick Melady, a University Professor and Knight in Obedience of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, was a US Ambassador to the Vatican from 1989 to 1993. This man is a hardened Catholic, a member of the Executive Council and the Chairman of the National Board of the Catholic Action of America, who never hid his extreme pro-Croatian bias. Upon terminating this diplomatic mission, he published a book of memoirs which was soon translated from English, and printed in Zagreb under the title: *The Ambassador's Story. The United States of America and the Vatican in World Affairs* (Croatian University Press, Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb, 1997). Melady is the apologist for the political mission of John Paul II and he wrote true panegyrics about his alleged fight for human rights. Following the intentions of the political alliance that was formed between Reagan and the Pope years ago, he is full of hope that "the United States of America, as the only world superpower, and the Holy See, as the only moral-political authority in the world, will take a significant role in the future. Their actions will influence the lives of people in all the parts of the world" (p. 14). For Melady, the Pope is unquestionably the Vicar of Christ on earth.

### **1. The Radical Change of US Politics towards Yugoslavia**

A whole chapter in Melady's book is dedicated to his own contribution to coordinating the Vatican-American politics towards the ex-Yugoslavia and the gradual harmonisation of pro-Croatian political stances. He starts with his meeting with Cardinal Sodano on 4 October 1991. The content of the conversation is wrapped up in following words: "He mentioned that Croatian President Tudman had met with the Pope the day before. Sodano told me that the Pope had asked him to talk with me openly about the stance of the United States on the issue of Yugoslavia. The Pope wanted the United States to take a more active role in dealing with the problems in ex-Yugoslavia, which were getting worse. In addition, Soldano reported to me that the Pope had concluded that the people of Slovenia and Croatia had the right to independence, so the Vatican was addressing numerous countries, persuading them to recognise the independence of those two states. The Pope's request was opposite from the position of the United States that had been formed in 1989, at the time when I took up my duty. Not until 1992 and 1993 did our stances match on fundamental issues. What the Holy See had openly predicted in 1990, eventually happened, but the wishes of the United States remained unfulfilled. As the ethnic horror was getting worse, our stances became similar at the end of my mandate in Rome, at the beginning of 1993" (p. 152).

This is an unambiguous confession that the politics of United States towards the crisis in Yugoslavia was radically changed under the direct influence of the Vatican. Until then, the United States government had wanted to preserve the Yugoslav state, bearing in mind the general American principles of multiculturalism and the fact that President Wilson had argued in favour of creating Yugoslavia during his governance. Melady criticises that attitude from the point of his anti-Serbian bias, saying: “On the other hand, in 1990, the Soviet leaders considered Yugoslavia as their ally - it was dominated by Serbians and that was why they wanted Yugoslavia to exist, because it meant that Yugoslavia as such, controlled by the Serbians, would last. In 1990, the Soviet leaders saw what the United States politics was neglecting - the Serbian control over the government structure in Yugoslavia. I found surprising that the State Department strongly argued in favour of preserving Yugoslavia, because it was a well-known fact that other institutions predicted destruction of Yugoslavia” (p. 153).

He claims that “leading” scientists, whom he does not name, were predicting the break-up of Yugoslavia due to the fall of Communism, because it had been created artificially. In those circumstances, the US ambassadors accredited in European countries, concluded at their meeting on 15 and 16 December 1989 that Yugoslavia should be preserved, at least as a fragile federation that would have the external features of a sovereign country. “That, of course, again meant keeping the Serbian governing structure” (p. 153). The American government predicted a catastrophe if the independence of particular Yugoslav federal units was recognised. “On the other hand, the Vatican insinuated that there would be bloodshed if immediate steps were not taken to acknowledge that Yugoslavia, as it had once been, had come to an end. The United States and the Holy See had extremely different views, but they both wanted to evade an ethnic war. The Holy See was primarily interested in the Catholic states within Yugoslavia - Slovenia and Croatia. I understood that, and found that it was natural that the Vatican showed interest in members of the same religion. The United States and the Holy See agreed on one aim - to evade an ethnic war in Yugoslavia - but they disagreed on the methods of achieving that aim” (p. 154).

## **2. The Amortisation of the Criminal Actions of the Roman Catholic Church**

In the part of the book called *Bitter History*, Melady provides an anti-Serbian version of historical retrospective of the international and inter-confessional relations in Yugoslavia, trying to mitigate the impression of continuous criminal actions of the Roman Catholic Church. Accordingly, he states: “During World War II, Croatia was openly co-operating with the Nazis. Croatian nationalists were fighting a bloody battle against the Orthodox Serbs. The Western public was under the impression that the Croatian Catholic Church tacitly approved of the Croatian crimes from World War II, that included false conversions and hundreds of thousands dead. Similar sombre data on the Serbian crimes against the Croats did not create the same impression on the Western public. Moreover, the Serbs were an ally in the war against the Nazis. The then Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, was inclined to the Croatian nationalist regime in World War II. As the Serbs see it, Croatian nationalism has always been connected with Catholicism. While the violent actions of Croats in World War II were given a great deal of public attention, the same could not be said for the Serbian misdeeds.

Probably the main reason for that lay in the fact that the Croats were on the Nazi's side and Serbs were with the allies. Archbishop Stepinac was imprisoned after the war and sentenced to 16 years hard labour for war crimes. After he was released from prison in 1951, on the decision of Marshal Tito, he preferred to voluntarily remain in the "internal exile" of his home than to leave the country. Not long after this, Pope Pius XII promoted Stepinac to the cardinalate. Enraged by the Pope's act, Tito terminated diplomatic relations with the Holy See in 1952" (p. 155).

Melady then states that the relations between Yugoslavia and the Vatican were re-established in 1966 and the long negotiations resulted in that the Vatican officially condemned the "acts of political terrorism", as it was formulated. "Tito wanted to take away the political influence of the Church, in exchange for freedom for the Vatican to conduct church affairs without the interference of the state. That was Tito's slight concession to religious freedom. The local bishops resented the fact that the Holy See accepted this condition, holding that it thus acknowledged the misdeeds of the Church in World War II. The high Vatican officials confessed to me that the Croatian conduct during World War II, especially because it had been connected with the Catholic Church, had been largely responsible for the alienation the Serbian Orthodox Church felt towards the Catholic Church. The period of alienation between the Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbs during World War II left permanent scars in their relations. When Tito's "iron hand" disappeared, Yugoslavia started to break up and the earlier ethnic hatred soon appeared again" (p. 155-156).

Melady subsequently reviewed this already mild version of the Croatian and Catholic criminal acts and the artificial thesis of a parallel Serbo-Croatian guilt, providing the following footnote: "I wrote this paragraph while I was still working in the American Embassy to the Holy See and the short excerpts from recent Croatian history within the frame of Yugoslavia and World War II respond to the inveterate knowledge of the USA. However, upon returning to the USA, I took a more detailed interest in the history of the Croats and, today, I am aware of the fact that what I wrote in my book is, in its essence, the image of Croatian history drawn by Yugoslav propaganda. Today, I know that the relations are much more subtle and that they were particularly complicated during World War II, so we cannot ascribe guilt to the Croats and merits to the Serbs. I am especially familiar with the specific position of the Archbishop of Zagreb and the role of the Croats in the antifascist struggle. In particular, I am familiar with the attempts to falsely present the books of the historian Dr Franjo Tudman. I ask the reader to accept this emendation" (p. 154).

### **a) The Gradual Development of the American Catholic**

Melady confessed that he came to the Vatican with views on the Yugoslav issue that were completely different from the ones that he acquired while in the papal state and associating with its officials. "During my first year in Rome, I was following instructions and advocated endeavours to keep Yugoslavia united - as one country with different nationalities. During the first months of my post in Rome, I often asked my Yugoslav and Vatican colleagues what would happen to the Christian message if the Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats started killing each other because of ethnic differences. However, after exhaustive conversations with elder men who co-operated with the Vatican, I soon concluded that my instructions had probably been based on

wrong assumptions. In March 1991, in my conversations on that subject with Cardinal Jozef Tomka, the Pope's privy advisor, he drew my attention to the fact that the situations in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had been different from the American experience. He explained that the "the melting pot" succeeded in the United States thanks to the favourable historical and social conditions that were related to the American economic system. Tito's old system had based its control and religion on the Communist party. The system collapsed and, in Yugoslavia, there was no tolerance for multinationalism. I always listened carefully to Cardinal Tomka, because I knew that, concerning those issues, he supported the Pope's opinions. I reported on that to Washington" (p. 156-157).

Melady singles out two men who significantly influenced that radical transformation of his initial views. These are Stefano Falez and Ivica Mašturko. As he states, "two diplomats to the Vatican were the key players in 1989 and 1990, and they draw my attention to the Serbian ethnic intentions. Not long after I left, Dr Stefano Falez got in touch with me. He was born in today's Slovenia, married to an Italian, became an American citizen while studying in America and then returned to Rome. Steve, as the Pope's court man, was in contact with the Vatican authorities. As a very successful businessperson, he was adaptable to different function levels of the Vatican-Roman structure of power. He set out to me a very comprehensive analysis of Serbian control over Yugoslav government (1989-1990). Additionally, he mentioned data on the preponderant majority of Serbian officers within the Yugoslav army ranks. I knew that these thoughts and observations of his reflected "the opinion" of the Vatican as well so, accordingly, I reported them to Washington. In 1989, when I came to the Holy See, Professor Ivica Mašturko was the Yugoslav ambassador. As academic colleagues, we soon became friends and so, after a few months, I reported to the State Department that Mašturko did not see a future for a Yugoslavia that was dominated by Serbs. He is Croatian, and his acceptance of or hopes for the state union were as thin as paper. The Yugoslav ambassador explained to me in detail why the break-up of the country was inevitable" (p. 157-158).

Having succumbed to the direct influence of the papal politics, Melady also explains the discrepancy between his personal attitude and the politics of the American government: "Until June 1991, the Holy See had directed its politics to supporting the recognition of independence without delay. It was obvious that the Holy See tried to influence other countries to be the first to recognise Slovenia and Croatia. Until the middle of 1991, the Vatican had taken the unprecedented action of the recognition process, assuming the role of its conductor. Pope John Paul II, while delivering a speech at the ceremony of promoting twenty-three bishops to cardinals, he looked back at the fights in Yugoslavia. Talking about the Croatian and Slovene people, the Pope referred to their rights to independence as "the legitimate aspirations of the people". In August 1991, the Pope sent Archbishop Toran to war-torn Yugoslavia. Soon after his return, on 13 August, Toran told my deputy, Cameron Hume: "Yugoslavia has been irretrievably transformed". He said that the Holy See recognised the legitimate right of Slovenia and Croatia to decide on their future relations with other countries. On 18 August, the Pope addressed a group of Croats in the Vatican in the following words: "Once again, I assure you that I am familiar with your legitimate aspirations". In addition, he stated that he would like to visit Croatia one day. Immediately after that, I reported to Washington that the Holy See was determined to recognise the independence of Slovenia and Croatia.

However, American politics remained unchanged. Replying to my reports on the developments of the Vatican politics, the State Department wired me to notify the Holy See that “the State Department supports a stable, united, democratic Yugoslavia that is coming closer to market economy and fully respecting individual human rights”. The additional note said: “America will help Yugoslavia through its federal bodies”. That was the official stance of the United States and, consequently, my message did not surprise the officials of the Holy See. My reports on Slovene and Croatian aspirations for freedom and on the disgraceful distortions of Yugoslav democracy caused by tyrannical Serbian control over the Belgrade government no significant influence on the decisions of the State Department in 1990 and 1991” (p. 158-159).

### **3. Impatient Croatian Bishops Urge Secession**

Although the Vatican support of Croatian separatism was strong and persistent, the bishops from Croatia were incessantly urging the Pope to make that final step, to be the first to recognise independence and, in that way, to practically make an abrupt turn-around in the politics that the Popes had been conducting for centuries. “In December 1991, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, Archbishop of Zagreb, came to Rome to visit the Pope for a few days. It was obvious from the start that he was there in order exert the strongest influence on the Pope to recognise Croatia officially and immediately. This growing pressure came at a time when the Holy See was already willing to continue its unprecedented measures. I reported on that after the meeting held on 26 November 1991, in the State Secretariat of the Vatican. Cardinal Sodano summoned the ambassadors of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Austria to his bureau. I was there too. He handed out a memorandum inviting our governments to recognise Slovenia and Croatia “within a month”. Cardinal Sodano, accompanied by Archbishop Toran, intensely elaborated on the Vatican view of the issue. Never before in modern history had it been the case that the Holy See was actively conducting a campaign to recognise new countries. Obviously, the views on the subject had been adjusted before the meeting, as the German Ambassador Haller, the Italian Ambassador Scammacca and the Austrian Ambassador Hohenberg, expressed support for the Vatican view. They pointed out that their countries were about to recognise Slovenia and Croatia. I listened and asked a few questions. Though I thought that the Vatican stand carried a lot of weight, I did not say so because I knew that the State Department held a restrained attitude towards the Vatican’s initiative” (p. 159).

Again, Ivica Mašturko was at the centre of attention, as the Yugoslav Ambassador who was openly working against his own country. Among moral people, that would have caused general condemnation and contempt, but there were no honourable and honest people in Melady’s surroundings, and neither at this meeting. According to Melady’s testimony, “a very unusual aspect of the meeting was the attitude of the Yugoslav Ambassador, Ivica Mašturko. Some were surprised by his criticism of the government in Belgrade (though not me, because he often talked to me about that in private). He mentioned the ‘rump’ feature of the governing circle in Belgrade. He, the ambassador, said that it ‘was not a government any more, because it only served Serbian military aims’. Ambassador Mašturko continued to poignantly report on the brutal killing of Croats and asked all countries to withdraw their ambassadors from Belgrade as a sign of protest. He ended his speech by saying that the government of Yugoslavia - the

government that he still represented - was 'illegal'. At the end of 1991, Dr Mašturko renounced his position in Belgrade and, after a few weeks, he became the first Croatian Ambassador to Italy" (p. 160).

It had probably never happened that somebody, somewhere pitied Franjo Kuharić because of the "sufferings" that he survived as a youth under Nazi occupation before Melady's outpour of emotions. Melady, as a loquacious Catholic, is actually ready to do anything, so he says: "When Cardinal Kuharić came to my residence on 10 December 1991 to eat with me, I knew what stance the Vatican had opted for. The Cardinal is an impressive man who, as a youth, survived the Nazi occupation in World War II and later learnt to deal with the cruel Communist regime at the beginning of Tito's rule. Cardinal Kuharić visited the United States on several occasions and was, accordingly, well connected with the American church hierarchy. He conducted a very effective campaign for Croatian independence, not only within the American church hierarchy, but also among the two million Croatian Americans. I heard both groups delivering the same message: Croatia had the right to be free and independent. Concerning that, I had always been in a fix because, essentially, I supported this claim but, as ambassador, I had to follow the instructions from my government. The issue of recognising Slovenia and Croatia was a matter of conversations between Secretary James Baker, Cardinal Sodano and Archbishop Toran on 8 December 1991. It was obvious that the Holy See was inclining towards direct recognition, as a means of impeding further deterioration of the situation in Yugoslavia. The Secretary of State was accompanied by General Scowcroft, who did not take part in the debate. Sodano and Toran's expressions of concern about Serbian control of the government in Belgrade and the Serbian attachment to 'Great Serbia', did not have any noticeable influence on the US representatives at that meeting" (p. 160-161).

#### **a) The Destructive Action of the Black International**

The Vatican's recognition of independence was supported by all the influential Catholic circles in the world and, after three months, the American government joined them. Melady describes it like this: "The long-awaited recognition of Croatia and Slovenia by the Holy See took place on 13 January 1992. There was a big celebration after this had been announced in Rome, because it seemed that both ideologically left- and right-oriented circles, and even the Roman Catholic central circles adjoined to the Vatican, agreed on that issue. I could not name one voice that was against this decision of the Pope, not one segment of the international Catholic community. While the opinions of the American church hierarchy concerning the participation of the United States in the Gulf War were divided, it was not the case with Croatia and Slovenia. Actually, not only did the master leaders of the American hierarchy express that opinion, but the leaders of the Protestant Church, as well. All the American church leaders that got in touch with me in 1990 approved of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. The only exception was a few American Jewish organisations that were worried by the data on anti-Semitism in Croatia during World War II and were indecisive about supporting its independence. During the first months of 1992, after the Holy See and various European countries recognised Slovenia and Croatia, fights ensued in Bosnia-Herzegovina, wherein the role of Serbia in supporting internal conflict was becoming increasingly apparent. The Pope sent new pleas for ceasefire. On 7 April 1992, the



United States of America officially expressed their recognition of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as independent countries. The United States indicated that, in the future, they would recognize Macedonia as well. The sanctions imposed on these countries were also lifted” (p. 161-162).

The Pope took action to recognise Macedonian independence as well, but he shrank from it, at least temporarily, because of the backlash of the Greeks. “As the situation in Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian regions was getting increasingly tragic, Archbishop Toran told me that the Holy See considered Serbia ‘the unquestionable aggressor’ in that war. Serbian policy of ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Bosnia-Herzegovina hit the world like thunder. It had all the features of Hitler conducting the genocide of the Jewish and other nations. The American attitude towards the Serbian role in the war in Bosnia became similar to that of the Vatican. In May 1992, I received instructions to notify Cardinal Sodano that the United States considered the Serbian government ‘the driving force behind the polarisation of ethnic relations that is the principal reason behind the ongoing disintegration of Yugoslavia. We hold that the present Serbian use of force is the main barrier to the actual implementation of ceasefire and finding a political solution’. The world media paid great attention to this position of the United States, because it reflected a significant change. The new opinion of the USA made my job easier as well. For almost two years, I had nursed significant doubts concerning our measures for preserving Yugoslavia. In spite of that, I followed the instructions that my position as American ambassador requested me to. That is an issue of regular debate among diplomats - carrying out instructions when one does not agree with them. According to one way of thinking, an ambassador cannot have his personal political ideas, but must implement the decisions of his superiors. I could never accept that in my diplomatic duties. It presented a challenge to me. At the same time, while I had my personal opinion, I strongly believed in loyalty towards my community. In addition, I was a member of Bush’s and Baker’s diplomatic community. The new stance of the USA included what the Vatican had been talking about for a long time. Later, in May 1992, I was able to notify the Vatican that the USA was taking serious steps towards forcing Serbia to stop its incessant aggression against Bosnia. Parallel with the decision of the UN Security Council to admit Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia to the membership of UNO in May 1992, and to impose sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro, the politics of the Holy See, United Nations and the USA concerning the Yugoslav problem were drawing closer together” (p. 163-164).

### **b) John Paul II Inciting the Great Powers Against the Bosnian Serbs**

Emboldened by American support, the Roman Pope started an even more ardent anti-Serbian campaign with respect to the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina. “On 6 August 1992, Pope John Paul II asked for ‘a humanitarian intervention’ in order to ‘disarm the ones who are ready to kill’. A few days later, Cardinal Sodano, discussing the Bosnian issue, referred to ‘the right to humanitarian intervention’. Then he carried on, saying: ‘It would not represent supporting the war, but stopping it’. The Pope was repeatedly referring to the position of the Holy See concerning the rights of the people within ex-Yugoslavia to achieve full sovereignty. On 3 February 1993, during his flight to Benin, Africa, the Holy Father stated that ‘there are different geo-political situations, different

approaches to nations, but every nation has the right to self-determination, that is, sovereignty'. He said that in the context of referring to the situation in Yugoslavia. During the last months of Bush's mandate, I was reporting to the State Department about the various statements of the Pope, related to the advantages of intervening in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A high Vatican official, satisfied with the US-led intervention in Somalia in December 1992, said to me: 'Why not in Bosnia?' In February 1993, the same official told me that he did not believe that the United States would take the lead in resolving the horror in ex-Yugoslavia. I agreed with this observation" (p. 164-165).

#### **4. The Hypocrisy of a Powerful Catholic**

Guessing at the reasons for the earlier doubts of America related to subsequent anti-Serbian measures, Melady reduces them to close personal relations between former and present American officials and the Belgrade political circles. However, he could not keep silent about one very important factor. "It was not only because the State Department was blinded by the Belgrade government under Serbian control, which had been developing for almost four decades, but they also felt repugnance towards Croatia and its role in World War II. I could understand that repugnance, because Croatian leaders from the period 1940-1945 had sided Croatia with the Nazis. The crimes of Ante Pavelić and his cohorts of the then Independent State of Croatia had been brutal. Reliable estimates testify that, between 1941 and 1945, more than a million Jews, Romanies and Orthodox Serbs were killed. Moreover, in Croatia, there is a notorious death camp called Jasenovac. One can still feel the restrained attitude of the State Department towards Franjo Tuđman, the present Croatian President, and his unwillingness to condemn the misdeeds of Croatia in World War II. However, in February 1994, Tuđman apologised for having written a book that denied the holocaust. However, the anti-Croatian attitude of the State Department overlooked one important fact: only the Serbian leaders in Belgrade had possessed drafts of expansionistic tendencies beyond their borders, and they also included a concept of ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, the idea of 'Great Serbia' had been a part of Serbian culture for centuries" (p. 166-167).

In order to give additional vent to his expressive hypocrisy, Melady even complains that his Catholic faith represented a sort of handicap for him, because he could not express his pro-Croatian attitude more energetically and more enthusiastically, as he privately wanted. He goes on to explain it: "In November 1991, approximately at the time when I was making preparations for President Bush's visit to the Pope for the first (and only) time during my ambassadorship, I felt that my Catholic faith was a handicap when considering the case of Yugoslavia. An important aspect of my duties as the US Ambassador to the Holy See was to convey information given by the Vatican officials and to state my own recommendations. I held that the Vatican's stance, that advocated immediate recognition of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, was highly noteworthy. Those states had their individual traditions, cultures and languages. They wanted to be independent. The United States of America was ardently supporting the independence of countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean island. If Togo, Benin and Burundi could be independent, why couldn't the more vital countries of ex-Yugoslavia be so as well?

“Since the Holy See took a firm stand, especially concerning the right to independence of predominantly Catholic countries, Slovenia and Croatia, the whole matter looked like a Catholic project. The European press largely reported that the Holy See supported the governments inclined to Catholicism, whereas the Socialist governments of Europe were against the recognition and supported the stand of the USA. Furthermore, the American church hierarchy completely approved of the Vatican position concerning Slovenia and Croatia. Although American Catholic leaders had divided attitudes towards the Vatican approach to the Gulf War and, in earlier years, towards the Vatican position related to the Nicaragua issue, now it firmly backed the Vatican support for early recognition of the independence of the republics that comprised Yugoslavia. As I was known as an active Catholic lay person, I felt that I was not in the position to advocate my personal opinion: namely, that the Vatican’s stand was the right one and that, consequently, it would be in everybody’s best interest if the USA recognised the parts of old Yugoslavia as independent and sovereign states. I thought that the USA should also be aware of the hypocrisy of the Yugoslav government controlled by the Serbs” (p. 168).

Involuntarily, he admits that he was warned by his supervisors concerning the matter, but he tries to give those warnings an informal character. Accordingly, he writes: “During my consultations in Washington in 1991, I conferred with an old friend, who was a high official in the State Department. He warned me against asking political questions concerning this matter, because people already knew that I was an active Catholic and that there was a risk that the leading group in the State Department could accuse me of being under the influence of Catholicism and, accordingly, of representing the Holy See in Washington and not the United States at the Holy See. He thought that the overall atmosphere was so strongly favourable for Belgrade that I could lose credibility. He was convinced that they could consider me ‘a subject’ of the Pope’s ideas and, in that way, my ability to influence politics would be diminished in all matters. That was a strong personal challenge for me. However, after a few months, the US politics towards ex-Yugoslavia was significantly changed anyway. Also, Washington finally confirmed the engagement of Serbian military commanders in the terrorist attacks against civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina and announced that it would demand trial for the perpetrators of these atrocious war crimes.

“The politics of the USA towards Yugoslavia in the period 1989-1992 was motivated by the good intentions of preserving the federation. We thought it would be useful for all the nations who lived there - especially economically; however, it was a confirmed fact that the nations in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina wanted freedom. The plans of foreign powers could no longer be imposed on diverse ethnic communities in the former Yugoslavia. After more than four decades of cruel Communist-style governance, those nations, observing the expansion of freedom and independence in the world, did not want to renounce their right to independence. The change in the US politics came late, in 1992. Now it is parallel with the directives of the Vatican politics. They only have different views on how to end this tragedy” (p. 168-169).

As for the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Melady evaluates that it is a misfortune “that the USA and the Vatican had differences in opinion regarding the difficult Yugoslav situation at the beginning of the 1989-1991 break-up. However, the present co-operation between the Holy See and the USA, which also includes the United Nations and

countries in Europe, is able to put an end to the most shameful situation in the heart of Europe ... When the killings in Bosnia came to the point that children were killed while playing in the snow, on 23 January 1994, Pope John Paul II summoned the world community to consider the use of force in order to stop quotidian atrocious acts. Similarly, in the past centuries, the Pope's predecessors had justified the use of force when it served a clear irrepressible moral purpose and when there was no other way of solving the problem" (p. 170). Even today, Melady is probably unconscious of the fact that, with this book, he unintentionally contributed, to a great extent, to revealing the complete Vatican politics in the process of breaking up Yugoslavia.

### **III. The Study of Nikola Žutić on the Catholic Idea of Croatian National Identity**

The initiation, development and realisation of the Greater Croatian idea are the results of a centuries-old efforts to accomplish the interests of the Roman Catholic Church and its domination in the Balkans. A historical national myth was cultivated on unreliable and most often falsified historical data that, due to the lack of facts, relied on apologia and imaginative ideological constructions and whose authors had never bothered with the principles of truthfulness and factographic knowledge. In their books and articles, history was additionally changed and adjusted to contemporary political aspirations and aims. A quasi-historiography sprang from lies and fabrications which Nikola Žutić endeavoured to unmask in his study entitled *The Roman Catholic Church and Croatian Nationalism from the Illyrian idea to Greater Croatian Realisation 1453-1941*, (The Institute of Contemporary History, Belgrade, 1997). In it, the author starts his research and theoretical elaboration with a statement that this false Catholic Croatian historiography had "the task of establishing Croatian national feeling with the far-reaching effects, territorially and nationally, in order to accomplish the Pan-Germanic and the Roman Catholic mission of the non-Slavic (foreign) creators of the Pan-Croatian identity. The means for accomplishing this idea were freely used. Newly constructed and fantastical 'historical' claims became authoritative in lieu of empirical knowledge" (p. 5). At the same time, in order to elucidate all the aspects of the great historic drama that had been played act by act, Žutić refers to the present historical affairs, the repetition of bloody historical events, the intrusion of the world powers in the resulting war of the Yugoslav crisis and the responsibility of historians for a huge number of human victims.

#### **1. The Upsurge of Croatiandom on the Wings of Foreign Help and Indifference of the Serbian Ruling Structures**

"As seen from a historical angle, the newest state boom of Croatia triggered associations with the former 'artificial breeding' of Croatia and the Croatian national identity. Again, for the third time in this century, Croatiandom was picking up steam on the wings of foreign and political power. It is necessary to highlight the fact that Croatian nationalism has never had stronger foreign mentors (projectors) than these present ones. Starting from the beginning of the century and during World War I, the Croatian national identity has been supported by powerful imperialistic and feudal-aristocratic powers (Austria, Germany and the Vatican). The Croatian national identity

achieved its greatest expansion in World War II, helped by the anti-liberal Nazi-Fascistic countries and the Vatican. What is especially tragic and instructive for the Serbs is that this third ebullience of Croatiandom was realised because that had been the wish of former Serbian allies and Germany. The political sponsorship of what is currently the strongest 'temporal' force (the USA) and its European liberal ideological and political allies turned Croatia into a regional force of markedly aggressive strategy and of, ideologically, neo-fascist Pan-Croatian racist features. Although liberal and anti-clerical countries, the so-called 'Western democracies' and the centuries-old enemies of the Vatican, also contributed to creating the new state of Croatia, it was the Pope who gave God's blessing and full support to that kind of a design of the world's liberal bureaucracy, because it signified the accomplishment of decades-long wishes and plans of the Vatican" (p. 5-6).

Irresponsible Serbian politicians were among those who significantly contributed to the realisation of the criminal Croatian statehood project, starting from those who are guilty of forming the Yugoslav state of its own kind, to Regent Prince Pavle Karađorđević and his Vice President of the Government Dragiša Cvetković, who both participated in creating the Banate of Croatia, and finally to the Communist autocrats who systematically acted against their own nation. In August 1939, with the Cvetković-Maček Agreement, "for the first time, by establishing the Banate of Croatia (administrative unit within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the centuries-old idea of establishing a unique Danubian-Adriatic Croatia was finally realised. For decades, during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, this idea was being created and elaborated in the heads of the Roman Catholic historians, the Vatican forgers of historiography and Croatian ideologists of the Croatian Party of Rights and the Croatian Peasant Party (Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik, Mihovil Pavlinović, Josip Frank, Stjepan Radić, Vlatko Maček, etc.). This Danubian-Adriatic Croatia was expanded into Pavelić's state and lasted as such from 1941 to 1945; with the establishment of the Communist (Socialist) Croatia, Croatian unitarism and statehood were getting stronger, as was the case with Croatian territorial and state hegemony over the Serbs of Krajina. For the last forty years of Yugoslav socialist history, regime historians, political scientists, sociologists and theorists of state and law have tried consciously, and sometimes even unconsciously, to historically found the borders of Prince Pavle's and Broz's Croatia – that is, to simply show them as the frontiers of the centuries-old Croatian territorial and national region. The term Croatia began to include all the territories of various historical regions and lands that were nationally heterogeneous, and one was expected to forget the historical existence of Istria, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the Republic of Dubrovnik, the Military Krajina and the three-county Banate of Croatia (the so-called "Civil Croatia"). Efforts were made so that it would be forgotten that a conglomerate of various nations had ever lived there. All of that was to be turned into Croatian lands and Croatiandom" (p. 9).

Žutić severely criticises the passivity of Serbian historians and intellectuals in general, who took Croatian propagandist lies for granted, adopted pseudo-historical terminology and Communist ideological platitudes, avoiding serious consideration of the history of Croatia, the problem of conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism and the planned deprivation of their national identity. Besides, the "revolutionary Communist factor demanded Serbian historians to refrain from questioning the Croatian 'historical achievement' too deeply. They were expected to simply adopt 'the accomplishments' from the Croatian historiography, as given by God, without any particular critical

observations” (p. 10). That kind of mythological historiography nested in primary and high school books, while the regime historians simply competed to see who would most strongly attack the purported Greater Serbian aspirations and help the newly formed nations to erase the results of civil historiography from the collective consciousness. Lies that had been habitually repeated appeared in subsequent debates without any critical revision and questioning.

## 2. Proving the Impossible in the Croatian Historical Science

In order to prove the actually unprovable and non-existing state and legal continuity, “German, Hungarian and Italian feudal lords simply declared themselves Croats and the territory of Hungary, that is Austria, as Croatian ... Croatian historian Jaroslav Šidak uses the terms ‘ethnic territory of the Croatian nation’, ‘Croatian lands’, etc. Those Croatian lands include Srem and reach as far as Zemun, that is the farthest Austrian borders. Namely, the Croatian border was equated with the Austrian state border (Srem, Boka). Šidak goes on to include even the territory of Military Krajina within Croatia, claiming that its right to possess Military Krajina was never disputed. Still, Šidak contradicts himself when he claims that it actually took two and a half centuries (until 1881) “for that right to materialise”. Furthermore, Šidak arbitrarily emphasises that Croatia preserved important features of its individual statehood, even though “it was rather constrained and repressed by the imperial military force”! That is a very daring statement for a “distinguished” Croatian (or, even better, Czech) “historian”. As some of the more important elements of this phantom-like Croatian statehood, Šidak includes “legally delineated territory”, “its citizenship (*indigenat*) and executive and legislative power”. Šidak confirms his claim about the legislative power with the fact that, in 1636, the emperor (king) sanctioned 29 law “articles” that the Croatian Assembly had enacted in the period from 1609 to 1639. However, in the end, Šidak himself diminishes the significance of that Croatian statehood, or rather its geographical and administrative unity, and puts all the blame for such diminished significance of the Croatian statehood on Hungary, because “the centuries-old connection of its (Croatian - N.Ž.) political nation (i.e. nobility that, truth to be told, had never been Croatian) with Hungary had a negative influence on these features of its statehood”. Quite irrationally, Šidak ascribes all the attributes of statehood to a typical constituent land (*cesarovina*) of the Austrian Empire. According to those outrageous state and legal constructions, the firmly centralised and unique Austrian Empire should be called a confederation (state union) since, applying such Šidak’s standard, that kind of statehood could be ascribed to other ‘imperial lands’, for example, to the Kingdom of Dalmatia or the Kingdom of Slavonia” (p. 11-12).

Catholic ideologists considered the ancient population of Slavonia to be Croatian, even though they had no proof to corroborate its alleged Croatian ethnic origin. “In his book entitled *The Inhabitants of Požega and the Surrounding Areas From 1700 to 1950*, the Roman Catholic writer Josip Butorac sets out the thesis that a significant number of Croatian Catholics disappeared from Slavonia due to their ‘probable’ conversion to Islam - so, as such, they moved to Bosnia in 1687?! The same thesis is ‘suggested’ by Stjepan Pavičić. However, as noted by Đ. Stanković, examination of the scripts of Croatian historian Tadija Smičiklas from the archives of the Imperial Chamber in Vienna, and especially of Hapsch’s population census from 1702, revealed that the

**Comment [PC1]:** Translator’s note: We were unable to confirm this name in our sources, therefore we gave the suggested spelling here. The original reads *Hapš*.

Croatian historiography wrongly concluded that the ‘ancient inhabitants’ of 22 settlements of the valley of Požega ‘were probably Croatian Catholics who converted to Islam and moved to Bosnia after the liberation of Slavonia in 1691’. In Hapsch’s census, it is clearly specified that, until the Ottoman invasion (1537), those were only Serbian settlements” (p. 12-13).

### a) A Rare case of Courage - Jeremija Mitrović

As one of the rare Serbian historians who dared to write about Croatian forgeries in historiography under Broz’s rule, Žutić singles out Jeremija Mitrović. Mitrović publicly stigmatised the suppression of the Serbian name in historiographic writings in Dalmatia, Dubrovnik, Slavonia and the Military Krajina. In incompletely defined quantities, the Serbs blended the Slavs, eastern Greek Christians, schismatic *Morlachs*, etc. Their most frequent determinant was “the Vlach Stokavian immigrants”. Critically considering Stančić’s book on the national ideology in Dalmatia in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mitrović “points out that, as early as the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Zadar Archbishop Vićentije Zmajević stopped calling Serbs ‘schismatics’, ‘Greek Catholics’, ‘Vlachs’ or ‘Morlachs’ and settled on them being Serbs. Zmajević’s successor Matej Koroman behaved similarly, but he even went one step further, mentioning a category of Serbian Catholics as well” (p. 14). Jeremija Mitrović, using firm and implacable logic, simply destroys those scientific frame-ups, highlighting: “If Kačić knows that the Vlachs are Serbs, if other Croatian scientists know it too, then it is not clear why this name is evaded. If Zmajević himself testified, as a contemporary, that the Serbs spread from Hungary to Albania and Thrace and that they knew what ‘the Serbian land’ was - if, as the Archbishop, he testified that the Serbs lived in the dioceses of Kotor, Makarska, Trogir, Šibenik, Skradin, Zadar and Nin and that the number of the Orthodox was similar to the number of Catholics, why do we now avoid mentioning and explaining where and when the Serbs came from, how many of them there were and why they converted to Catholicism? Why do we not mention that, in 1673, Zagreb Archbishop Benko Vinković confirmed that the Serbs (Vlachs) in Istria, the diocese of Senj and Vindol, had converted to Catholicism and taken on the Croatian name? Why do we not say that the Archbishop of Split decided in 1732 that: ‘The Orthodox Serbs in Dalmatia must not be Orthodox, but Latins and Uniates’? At the same time, an official report appeared, in which we find that the converted Serbs abandoned their customs, but never their family patron saint’s day [*slava*]. Even today, in Konavle and the parish of Dubrava, and even more to the north, the *slava* is not forgotten” (p. 14).

The hardened Roman Catholic historian Mile Bogović calls the Serbs “the Christians of the Byzantine rite”, insisting on the derogatory tinge of that term. At the same time, he denies that the Vlachs and Morlachs are ethnically Serbs and minimises the number of the Orthodox in Dalmatia, especially the number of those who converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. His book *The Catholic Church and Orthodoxy in Dalmatia under Venetian Rule*, published in Zagreb in 1982, simply abounds with historical forgeries. The case of Nada Klaić is especially interesting, and Žutić elaborates on it: “In particular debates, articles, and critical analyses published in magazines that were not drawing great public attention of the Croatian national mythomaniacs and megalomaniacs, the Croatian historian Nada Klaić fervently criticised those historians (e.g. Friar Dominik Mandić) who pathologically spread the Croatian name and linked

Croatian national identity and Croatia with everything on the Balkans, especially if it was Roman Catholic. However, in studies and monographs that could have been attacked by the Communist/Greater Croatian political circles and broader contemporary Croatian and Yugoslav public, Klaić's exemplary critical zeal of her earlier years disappeared considerably and she herself even started using the historiographic constructions that she had once criticised. For example, when she wrote about the social turmoil and uprisings in Croatia in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, she identified the 'Slovini' (Slavs) with the Croats as D. Mandić had done, even though she had criticised him. In any case, she spread the Croatian name and erased and suppressed the Serbian one, which associated her with the circle of Croatian historians who identified the Slavic and Illyrian names with the Croatian one and, accordingly, spread the Croatian national identity. In the abovementioned book, Nada Klaić did not even mention the Serbian name, exclusively using the name 'Vlachs', though not in the sense of a homogenous national or ethnic term, but as some sort of stratum, a national and religious conglomerate. For Nada Klaić, the Vlachs were 'those groups of new population that took over the military service', so the name Vlach was a synonym for a soldier. According to Nada Klaić, since they had certain privileges as soldiers, civilians with a different national and religious origin joined the 'Vlach community' as well. With this analysis of the term 'Vlach', Nada Klaić denied the synonymy of the Serbian and Vlach names (in the modern era) and, applying this way of reasoning, she eliminated the centuries-old Serbian existence in the regions of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and the Military Krajina" (p. 15-16).

What Nada Klaić could not deny is the fact that those alleged "Vlachs" were all of the Orthodox religion and members of the Serbian Orthodox Church. That is why she offered an additional explanation, not based on any real facts, saying: "As the majority of Vlachs who crossed to the territory of Slavonian Krajina at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were Orthodox and as their church leaders moved with them to 'Christendom' and were granted their own church organization, i.e. the well-known Episcopacy of Marča, from that time on the term Vlach was getting narrower and, from the broad meaning of a foreigner in general, it became more frequently used to designate the soldiers of the Orthodox religion. Since that Vlach population mostly came from the Turkish frontier territories - from the Sanjaks of Pakrac and Crmnica - and not from Old Serbia, they were never referred to as Serbs in the sources from the 17<sup>th</sup> century" (p. 16). For Nada Klaić, the fact that, from 1630, not all the Vlachs had been Orthodox was of special significance and that is why she claimed that the Catholics, included in this term ever since, were actually original Croatian settlers and, in that way, she neglected the unquestionable data on the massive conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism.

As Nikola Žutić notices, "Nada Klaić considers the Catholic Vlachs as the population that merged with the Orthodox Vlachs, as a new foreign element. She does not mention the possibility that those Catholic Vlachs could have originated from the Serbian (Vlach) Orthodox core and were only afterwards removed from it by being subjected to the Roman Catholic (proselytist) campaign. Most importantly, Nada Klaić references no sources in support of her theses." (p. 16). The book *On the Scattered Illyrian-Rascian Nation* by Baron Bartenstein, published in 1761, is highly significant for this issue. He insists on the fact that the terms *Raci*, *Rascians*, Greeks, Uniates and non-Uniates, Vlachs and Ruthenians are synonyms and refer exclusively to the Serbs. The Austrian authorities avoided the name Serb with the view of suppressing and



stifling their national consciousness, accordingly banning their national customs, persecuting their religion, language, script, etc. “The editor of Bartenstein’s book, Academician Slavko Gavrilović, refers to the name of the *Kroati* (Croats) mentioned therein, as a name for Serbs who lived in Krajina in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century ... The Serbs that got that name lived in the geographical region of the Croatian banate. Bartenstein himself mentions frontiersmen from Krajina who were habitually called Croats as early as in his time. Bartenstein also mentions a category of Croatian Uniates and non-Uniates. Since Uniates could only be Serbs or members of some other Orthodox nation, then the Croatian Uniates and non-Uniates were actually Serbs - both Catholic and Orthodox” (p. 17).

### **b) Croatian Forgeries of Archaeological Findings**

The forgeries in historiography are accompanied by various falsifications of archaeological findings through outrageous interpretations and the violent addition of Croatian attributes in cases when they unquestionably originate from a time long before the period of Serbian and Croatian settlement in the Balkans. “Therefore, the Croatian archaeologist-priests (Franciscans and Dominicans) made a crucial contribution to establishing the Croatian national identity of the Dalmatian lands that had been Serbian for centuries” (p. 22). Friar Lujo Marun and Don Frane Bulić, considered the fathers of Croatian archaeology, “actually created Croatian archaeological medieval history by arbitrarily using stone inscriptions and the remnants of material culture (Roman, Byzantine, and Romanic) ... In 1886, Marun began excavations in the village of Biskupija near Knin, having finally concluded that King Zvonimir had been killed here. Such an archaeological conviction of Marun initiated the creation of a sacred Croatian national pilgrimage site in Biskupija ... He continued to excavate in the north and middle part of Dalmatia in order to ‘prove’ the incidence of old Croatian monuments and, accordingly, the domination of the Roman Catholics (Croats) in the Serbian hinterland of Dalmatia. Political association with Dalmatian Greater Croatian Miha Pavlinović additionally inspired Don Frane Bulić to link the results of his archaeological findings with Croatian medieval mythical history, i.e. with the dynasty of the so-called Croatian national rulers... As a matter of fact, Bulić had the pragmatic task of linking Dalmatia with the Croatandom as strongly as possible - actually, with ‘northern Croatia’ - using unreliable archaeological historical data under the pretensions of Dalmatian autonomists who insisted on the Italian character of Dalmatia” (p. 20-21). As for Mihovil Pavlinović, a distinguished politician and hardened proponent of the Croatian Party of Rights, he was “active in creating Croatian epic literature. Namely, he made Croatian heroic songs out of Serbian ones. In addition, Pavlinović introduced the practice of recording written documents of the so-called Croatian heroic songs in the Serbian regions of Bukovica, Ravni Kotari and Serbian Herzegovina in the period from 1860 to 1875” (p. 21).

Apart from being an archaeological dilettante whose only “scientific” criterion was his quivering romantic national rapture, Don Frane Bulić “also dabbled in history, using his recensions to falsify older editions of certain historiographic works” (p. 21-22). Historiographic and archaeological forgeries, as well as linguistic, literary and artistic ones, were regularly substantiated by Roman Catholic sacralisation, as one entire church organisation founded on the principles of a criminal association implemented its own

will and strove for the quickest realization of evil and perfidious aims by freely using all means. “The archaeological early-Romanic excavation in Biskupija became a central votive place dedicated to Holy Mary, Mother of God - ‘the Queen of the Croats’. Without many convincing arguments, the Franciscan archaeologists turned the Romanic inscriptions and sculptures, with their elements of the Byzantine manner of presenting the Mother of God, into Croatian ones. J. A. Soldo himself says that the excavated objects belonged to various cultures, but that statement does not prevent him from concluding, as a Croatian national romanticist, that: “Those works (objects) were well made, so it shows the aesthetic taste of a Croatian man at the time of the culture flourishing in Biskupija” (p. 22). An unearthed figure of a warrior is then “reliable” evidence that it was a Croatian dignitary and every church, even from the early Christian period, confirms the deep religious rapture of the “ancient Croats”. As Žutić ironically comments: “this is really ‘exact’ scientific archaeological data and, what is particularly comical, it is the only data that was used as such to create the mythological notion of the Croatian national identity of Kninska krajina and of Knin as ‘the royal Croatian city’. It is not clear which elements formed the foundation of the hypothesis that, for example, ‘the Croatian dignitary’ from Biskupija (the 11<sup>th</sup> century) was actually Croatian, when there is no stone inscription on that archaeological fragment. Moreover, Croatian archaeologists do not explain what actually are those recognisable ‘Croatian ornamentation’ that reveal the Croatian origin of certain archaeological material ... Without any mention of the Croatian name at that time, archaeologist-priests proclaimed the Slavic [*Slovinski*] princes as Croatian ones. Nada Klaić warned that a few Croatian historians (mostly priests) had substituted the Slavic name with the Croatian one” (p. 23).

### **c) Friars’ Fantasizing about King Zvonimir’s and Meštrović’s Expressive Catholicism**

In 1938, the building of a memorial church began in Biskupija in order to renew old fame and mark “the holy place of Croatian history”, with all the grotesquery that the homosexual brains of the Roman Catholic priests could have simulated. The assumption that it was the authentic place where mythical King Zvonimir had been killed was launched into public. Allegedly, the King had cursed the Croats so that they would never have a ruler of their own blood because of their betrayal of him. A frenetic campaign was initiated to explain to the religiously indoctrinated people that building this church could remove Zvonimir’s curse. “Canon Matija Stepinac initiated the votive Croatian national and religious idea of building Mary and Zvonimir’s shrine in Biskupija and Ivan Menđušić, a friar from Knin (who used a pseudonym ‘Old Man Prokop’), was fanatically trying to realise it. In 1933, during his ‘holy mission’, Pater Ivan Menđušić was going around Biskupija and its surroundings ‘armed’ with a Serbian ethnological token – the single-stringed musical instrument called *gusle*, which he carried in his ‘sling bag’. Very convincingly, he portrayed the early-Romanic art of the ‘Croatian sculptors’ who ‘adorned the royal memorial foundation with precious stone-work: lines and curlicues, curves and flowers, net-like wattle, pillars and statuettes, all in the white and hard stone from our mountains and hills’. In his mythological fever, ‘the Croatian Homer’ Friar Ivan Menđušić recalled the time of ‘Zvonimir’s doom’, when ‘the evil force attacked the Croatian state’ because of ‘the disaccord between noblemen’ that

caused the Croatian royal crown to sit on a foreigner's head. 'The old Croatian royal town' in the region of Biskupija disappeared like Troy under 'the fierce Ottomans', who 'devastated and razed holy churches and noblemen's castles to the ground'. Friar Ivan Mendušić dedicated his 'epic work' (*Let Us Renew the Ancient Memorial*) to the sculptor Ivan Meštrović, as he expected him to resurrect the old Croatian royal capital city. He hoped that 'with the artistic thought and work' of Meštrović, 'the ancient legacy of Zvonimir, the King of the Croats, would resurrect'. The fund-raising and artistic engagement of the sculptor Ivan Meštrović related to the building of Zvonimir's memorial church in Biskupija in 1938, revealed his loyalty to Roman Catholicism and the Croatian national identity, which was greatly suppressed in public. Namely, in the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Meštrović was presented as a great Yugoslav, royal sculptor of the Karadžević dynasty and, in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he was a supporter of the Croatian-Serbian coalition and a member of the Yugoslav Board, even creating works related to the Kosovo cycle of Serbian heroic poems. However, Meštrović's national-romantic old-Croatian cycle, which included sculpture motives from the Roman Catholic themes, dominated his creative opus, especially in the period between the wars" (p. 24-25).

Showing a very pronounced Croatian national romanticism and a deeply accentuated Roman Catholic religious orientation, "Meštrović was especially active in building the Museum of Croatian Historical Antiquities in Knin during the 1930s. As early as 1911, he suggested to Friar Lujo Marun that he make a draft project of the Museum at the fortress of Knin. Meštrović toyed with the idea of building a temple with 'numerous statues of people from Croatian history' on Lopuška Glavica in Biskupija. That was what triggered the idea of building the Croatian religious and 'historical' shrine of Our Lady in Serbian Biskupija, dedicated to King Zvonimir. The sculptor Ivan Meštrović was given most credit for building the memorial church of Our Lady in Biskupija and, with the greatest monetary help, he made a draft of the church, painted the works and rendered the statue of 'Our Lady' free of charge. Meštrović's 'Lady' (the Mother of God) was dressed in a stylised Serbian folk costume from Knin and Drniš with a large scarf around her head. According to J. A. Solde, the statue of 'Our Lady' is stylistically similar to Meštrović's *The History of Croats* and represents the women from the village of Petrovo Polje. The painted peasants, who are praying to God, are dressed in the folk costumes of the Dalmatian Serbs. It is especially absurd that all those Serbian ethnological tokens were used to enliven images from legendary 'old Croatian times'. Zvonimir's character reminds us of *Hajduci* and *Uskoci* heroes from the Serbian epic songs, while his clothes, with the elements of Dalmatian Serbian folk costume, make him resemble the Serbian heroes from *Kotari*" (p. 26). When the church was opened in 1938, a major Croatian national and Catholic ceremony was organised and attended by a great number of politicians, priests, members of various associations and Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac of Zagreb himself.

#### **d) Franjo Tuđman, the King of Forgers**

In the following decades, it was Stjepan Gunjača who mostly dealt with the archaeological forgeries, treading in Marun and Bulić's steps. In the commemorative book, published in Split in 1988, in honour of the half-century jubilee of the memorial church in Biskupija, Soldo writes that "by revising the excavations in Biskupija, he shed

even more light on the greatness and strength of the renewed church in Croatia at the time of King Zvonimir's rule. His works showed that it was 'sacred grounds' that should be saved from oblivion" (p. 27). Žutić notes that Gunjača "was working on the reconstruction of mythological medieval Croatian history in the very region of Serbian Kninska Krajina, following the same principle as Marun and Bulić - using archaeological findings without any written sources. In Gunjača's archaeological dream, there were numerous 'ancient Croatian churches' in the region of the Cetina, the Zrmanja, Knin and the village of Biskupija. Croatian archaeologists, especially the Roman Catholic votaries, established a 'historical' thesis that was accepted by Croatian historians as well. According to them, by uniting Croatia, King Zvonimir made the region of Knin one of the central parts of his kingdom, connecting the north and south parts (Dalmatia) of Croatia. Živko Kustić, the propagandist from the *Glas Koncila* magazine, writes about 'thousands of ancient Croatian tombs' around the small church in Biskupija, wherein 'shine the restored countenances of the Mother of the Kingdom and Christ Almighty and King Dmitar Zvonimir, our last great Catholic king.' For that reason, the building of churches in the region of Biskupija was 'the final phase of long endeavours of Church representatives and Croatian rulers gathered around the idea of creating a unified Kingdom of Croatia'. At present, Franjo Tuđman, President of the Republic of Croatia (otherwise, the doctor of historical sciences), also contributes to the 'research' of the ancient Croatian 'history', as he completely fits into the fantastical dream vision of archaeologist-votaries. He pronounces Knin an old Croatian town that, after 'Operation Storm' (1995) became ethnically clean as in the time of King Zvonimir. 'The Storm' accomplished 'the historical results', because Knin 'was returned to the arms of Mother Croatia'. Furthermore, he equalled the ancientness of the Croatiandom with the oldness of amoebas, insisting that Croatia 'has been part of Central Europe for 14 centuries' and corroborated that with claims that Croatian culture was older than the cultures of many European nations. According to Tuđman, Croatia had writers (!) who had written and been translated to other languages even before Shakespeare and Molière" (p. 27-28).

### e) The Incessant Stealing of the Serbian Cultural Heritage

It must be admitted that there were Croatian intellectuals who did not succumb, at least not entirely, to the widespread hysteria of forgeries and the euphoria of restless imagination. "The work of Grga Novak, the historian and archaeologist from Hvar, stands out above the archaeological constructions of the Roman Catholic votaries. In his works, he mentioned the name of Croatia to a very modest extent. For that reason, the Croatian 'fraternalist' newspaper *Obzor* writes about Grga Novak as a scientist of worldly fame who, nevertheless, shies away from mentioning the name 'Croat', especially in the treatise entitled *Hvar throughout the Centuries* (Belgrade, 1924). The crucial influence on the shaping of historical consciousness of the Croatian nation was exerted by the cultural elite who popularised and adopted the values of literary works whose content sprang from 'the radical Catholicism'.

"The works of contemporary Croatian writers and literary historians represent Dubrovnik as an ancient Croatian cultural centre, even though it had no Croatian national characteristics in the period between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. At that time, Dubrovnik was a Roman Catholic town with a mixture of Latin and Slavic culture,

where the Romanic cultural elements dominated. Thanks to the intensive centuries-old engagement of the friars and Jesuits, especially at the time of the so-called “Catholic reformation” (counter-reformation), Catholicism and, later, the Croatian national identity were successfully rooted in contemporary Dubrovnik. Most of all, the Jesuits left the greatest influence on the cultural and political life of Dubrovnik. Croatian politicians, both civil (e.g. Stjepan Radić) and clerical, and especially the Croatian writers and literary historians, intensively conveyed the reflection of the present Croatian national identity into the far past. Similarly, Marin Franičević stated that Mavro Vetranović, the poet from Dubrovnik (1482-1576), addressed ‘the renowned Croats, defenders of Klis’, although it is an unquestionable historical fact that it was the *Uskoci* (Orthodox Serbs) that lived in Knin and defended Klis. After the town was conquered in 1537, they moved to Senj and gradually, due to the proselytist activities, became Uniates and settled in Žumberak. Similarly, through the verses of Vetranović, M. Franičević, interprets the defeat of the Hungarian army in the battle at Krbava in 1493, led by the Hungarian Ban Emerik Derenčin, as “Croatian glory” (p. 28-29).

Furthermore, the Serbian folk songs were adopted unsparingly and forcibly Croatized, as well as the Serbian oral folk tales, traditions, customs and other forms of folk creativity. “Croatian literary theorists, especially those from monastic orders, used to credit Croatian heroic epic poetry with the heroes of the Kosovo, *Hajduci* and *Uskoci* cycles. The Serbian *Uskoci* and the epic heroes from Kotar and Senj (Stojan Janković, Vuk Mandušić, Ilija Smiljanić, Komljen the Flag-bearer, Tadija Senjanin, Ivan Senjanin, Uskok Radojica, etc.) were forcibly introduced into Croatian epic songs and given the Croatian national name. The cleric Dragutin Nežić proclaimed the town Senj ‘the centre of the most beautiful cycle of Croatian epic folk poetry, dating from the period of the Ottoman wars’. Likewise, he called the town of Orthodox *Uskoci* ‘the most Croatian among Croatian towns’. They used to say that Ilija Smiljanić was a son of the Croatian hero Petar Smiljanić and that he was a commander [*harambaša*] of the Croatian *Uskoci*. The contemporary Croatian version of the song about the Smiljanić family (*Smiljanić, Smiljanić, may your drapes get wet!*) was considered an old Catholic Dalmatian (Croatian) song. The fact that the Smiljanić family originated from Serbian Udbina of Lika was deliberately overlooked. Vuk Mandušić was also presented as a Croatian hero and his Serbian (Montenegrin) origin was discarded. The Franciscan pan-Croatian national propaganda presented Muslim (‘Turkish’) heroes as ‘the heroes of the Croatian Muslim folk songs’. Secular Croatian literary historians acted in a similar way. Rafo Bogišić, for example, emphasised that ‘apart from the Franciscan Catholic literature, another literature appeared independently in the Croatian language in Bosnia, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and, more profusely, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century - the literature of the Bosnian Muslims, using the Arabic alphabet. We call it ‘*aljamiado* poetry’ because of the Arabic word ‘*aladzamije*’, which means foreign, non-Arabian.’ Muhamed Hadzizahić, ‘a Croatian of the Muslim religion’, writer for the *Obzor* magazine, writes about the beginnings of the Croatian Muslim poetry and about ‘Croatian Muslim literature before 1878’” (p. 29-30).

#### **f) The Roman Catholic Retort for Merging what is Serbian into Croatian**

Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbs sometimes protested because of the frequent Croatian forgeries. Žutić gives the example of the Dalmatian newspaper *Srpski Glas* that was “resentful when, in 1897 and 1898, the Matica Hrvatska (*Matrix Croatica*) published two books of Serbian songs about Kraljević Marko, Miloš Obilić and other Serbian heroes, under the Croatian name. Matica Hrvatska made a similar forgery in 1888 by publishing the *Sparklets* by Nikola Tomazeo. In this impression, the Illyrian name was changed to Croatian. The *Srpski Glas* severely condemned this act and mentioned the impression of *Sparklets* in which Tomazeo changed the Illyrian name into Serbian. Tomazeo’s works demonstrated his Serbian feelings. Even though he published songs about Kosovo and Kraljević Marko under the Illyrian name, he emphasised that those were the Serbian songs. In order to create Croatian heroic epic literature, the collection of *Croatian National Songs* was published (Volume I) in 1896 in Zagreb. By 1939, a total of eight volumes had been published.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Franciscans in Bosnia and Dalmatia started to promote and turn the spotlight on the “Croatian *gusle* players” and “Croatian heroic songs”. The Franciscan Silvestar Kutleša from Imotski even published heroic national (Croatian) songs from Imotska Krajina in 1939. In 1940, the *Hrvatska Revija* [*Croatian Review*] also published the heroic national songs from Imotska Krajina, naming them Croatian songs. Dr Mate Uvejić published the *Croatian National Songbook* in Zagreb in 1938. A new impulse to adopt Serbian epic national songs as Croatian was given in 1964, when Matica Hrvatska published the *National Epic Songs* (2 volumes!) that were a part of a several-volume edition named *Five Centuries of Croatian Literature ...* Among the Croatian national songs, the editorial staff of Matica Hrvatska included songs from the Serbian heroic epic cycle that refer to the fight of the Serbian *Uskoci* and *Hajduci* against Muslim (Turkish) heroes. A typical example of such an epic is the song *Letters of Nuka the Standard-Bearer* that mentions the Serbian heroes from Ravni Kotari (nine members of the Vučković family, Ilija Žarković and others) who confront the Turkish warriors. “The Blood tribute” becomes “a heart-rending sight” connected exclusively with the Croatian epic poetry, if we exclude “the Spanish national romance”. There is not a single Croatian epic character mentioned but the editorial staff of Matica Hrvatska forcibly included the Serbian heroes of the Islamic religion (Muslims) as Croats in the manner of the ideology of Croatian Party of Rights and the Independent State of Croatia (NDH).

Stealing Serbian songs could not have been performed without previously adopting the Serbian language and pronouncing it Croatian. “The Serbian *gusle* players from Imotska Krajina, who were converted to Catholicism and bore Serbian surnames and Catholic given names (Mate Galić, Ivan Kutleša, Mijo Škoro, Ante Lončar, Ivan Marić, Ivan Vučković and others), all of a sudden, according to the Franciscan epic version, “.sing in beautiful Croatian language” about “bloody skirmishes between Croatian Christian and Muslim heroes”. Serbs, Serbian names and Orthodoxy are not mentioned. The Serbian population who suffered under the Turks are, in the best case, called “the Christians” and are usually mentioned as “the Christian *Krajišnici*” (inhabitants of Krajina). In those moments, the creators of “the Croatian national epic poetry” needed Pan-Christian ecumenism in order to use the Orthodox (Serbian) epic poetry for the Greater Croatian national aims. The Franciscan Silvestar Kutleša even changed the Jekavian language form, used by the abovementioned *gusle* players, into the Ikavian form that, over time, was transformed from the Serbian language form to the Catholic

(Croatian) one. On the other hand, the Matica Hrvatska editor of the *Croatian heroic national songs*, Olinko Deroko, insouciantly claims that Vuk Karadžić, Friar Grga Martić and B. Bogišić changed the Ikavian language forms into Jekavian. Some theorists and literary historians emphasised that the “Croatian” heroic songs from Imotska Krajina had been taken “from other regions of ours” and other collections of heroic songs. Antun Šimčik warned that, in Kutleša’s *Song Book*, there were songs taken from Karadžić’s collection (*The Wedding Day of Milić the Standard-Bearer, The Wedding Day of Ivan-Ilija Smiljanić, The Sister of Serdar Đurković and Zukan the Standard-Bearer, Bajo Pivljanin and Bey Ljubović*, etc.). We consider that no additional argument is necessary after this Šimčik’s statement, because it is obvious from their titles that the songs belong to the Serbian epic heroic cycle.

As they were unable to provide sound arguments to refute the Serbian character of the heroic national songs, the Roman Catholic literary “experts” constantly repeated the claim that Vuk Karadžić made the national songs “Serbian” and that he “changed them according to his grammatical, lexical and aesthetic principles”. Furthermore, Šimčik claimed that a certain number of songs from Kutleša’s *Song Book* were taken from the collection published by the Franciscans Franko Jukić and Grga Martić under the title *National Songs of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Mostar, 1892)” (p. 32).

### 3. The Fatal Error of Rejecting the Catholic Serbs

Nikola Žutić draws special attention to the most significant Croatian writer of historical novels, Avgust Šenoa, who “was not even of Croatian origin. His father, a confectioner named Alojz, was brought from Buda to Zagreb by the Zagreb Bishop Aleksandar Alagović in 1830. Alojz completely forgot Czech, the language of his ancestors, and he spoke only German and Hungarian. Šenoa’s mother Terezija was the daughter of Hungarian Maksimilijan Eduard Rabač. However, non-Croatian origin was not an obstacle for him to write numerous historical novels and stories in which he emphasised and glorified the Croats, Croatiandom and Roman Catholic religion. In the historical story *Beware of the Hand of Senj*, he entrusted Croats with the last wish, though through the heroic deeds of the Serbian *Uskoci*: “Croatian son! In your heart God’s fire glows, and your bosom is the hard stone; Croatian son, remember the ancient song till your last day: *Beware of the Hand of Senj*” (p. 33). The retort for melting various nationalities into an artificial Croatian one was functioning successfully, because the leading Roman Catholic ideologists did not let the reins out of their hands for one moment. “In order to hide the truth that a great number of Croats were created when the Orthodox Serbs were converted to Catholicism, Croatian writers and literary historians - especially the ones with exemplary theological education - rejected the thesis on the creation of Croats through Roman Catholicism.

On the other hand, ideologists of the Serbian Orthodox Church did the Serbdom a terrible favour by reducing the Serbdom to the Orthodox devotees. The Serbs - Catholics and Muslims - were thus rejected. However, the Croats, who were a confessional Roman Catholic nation by majority, did not let be reduced to the ethnos that was exclusively created by religious activities” (p. 34).

Illustrating that attitude, Žutić quotes Radovan Grgec, the editor-in-chief of the *Marulić* magazine, published by the Zagreb-based Croatian Literary Society of St. Cyril and Methodius. With regard to that issue, Grgec says: “We have quite often emphasised

that nationality cannot be identified with religious affiliation, nor can the Croatiandom be equated with Catholicism; although the history of our nation is much connected with the Roman Church and its representatives, the Croats are not Catholics only. Among them, there are members of other religions, atheists and agnostics. We should not be diminishing our number - it is already small and is getting even smaller” (p. 34).

That the Croats themselves are intimately insecure of their megalomaniac projects and quasi-national constructions is testified by their custom of putting under the spotlight their forged heraldry, mythical slogans and petty political platitudes, whenever they have an opportunity.

#### 4. The “Survival” of Croatia in Foreign Countries

Žutić says that he found additional inspiration for writing this book in the fact that the Croatian historiographical forgeries “were even included in the Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia from 1990. No serious country would emphasise those historiographic constructions in the preamble to its constitution. The unique preamble to the Croatian Constitution includes fantastical data on the state and legal history of Croats ‘a thousand three hundred years’ old. So, the previously ‘factually determined’ thousand-year-old state and legal Croatian existence was subjected to chronological correction. Accordingly, the ‘thousand years’ state and legal existence, determined by the *Pravaši* [ideologists of the Croatian Party of Rights], was chronologically harmonised with the Vatican forgery of ‘a thousand and three hundred years’ since the time of Christianisation of the Croats and their entering the Christian European civilisation. The ‘original bases’ of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia is dominated by the mythological Croatian ‘historical’ primeval origin” (p. 36-37). That fragment of the preamble, whose content Žutić emphasises, reads as follows: “[Expressing] the millennial national identity of the Croatian nation and the continuity of its statehood, confirmed by the course of its entire historical experience in various state forms and by the perpetuation and growth of the statehood idea of the Croatian nation’s historical right to full sovereignty [...]” (p. 37). As Žutić further comments, “the formulation ‘national identity ... and the continuity of its statehood’ in ‘various (they forgot to say ‘foreign’ - N. Ž.) state forms’ represents an absurd form of independence. Furthermore, the fantastical story continues, mentioning the establishment of Croatian principalities right after their settlement in the Balkans in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, it turns out that the pagan Croats, like no other nomadic Indo-European nation, formed their state organs and established certain state functions directly after their arrival in the Balkans. On the other hand, for serious historiography, it is an ultimately contentious issue whether the Croats actually existed as a formed nation in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Historiography has not answered this question simply because of the fact that there are no preserved contemporary historical sources (documents) concerning it. Due to the lack of sources, myths inevitably appear, so what becomes available are the arbitrary hypotheses of Croatian archaeologists, philologists and anthropologists that historical science cannot take seriously” (p. 37).

Žutić also questions the reliability of the work *On Governing an Empire* by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, because it dates from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, but primarily because its oldest preserved written copy dates from as late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. “It is doubtful whether the original existed at all and it might be that the



‘transcription’ is just a subsequent forgery constructed at the time of creating the so-called Croatian historical redactions. The Vatican itself has been prone to creating these so-called ‘transcripts’ of the non-existent and uncertain original sources, especially from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when *Constantine’s Deed of Gift* also appeared as its greatest forgery” (p. 38). Even Nada Klaić, in the book *The History of Croats in the Early Medieval Period* (Zagreb, 1971), concluded that nobody had proved that White Croats and White Croatia actually existed in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, as well as that historical criticism in Croatia was virtually nonexistent.

### 5. The Irritating Silence of the Serbian Scientists

Žutić mostly criticises Serbian historians for not having more seriously committed themselves to the problem of Croatian mythomaniacal prehistory. “Serbian medievalists have remained silent, inert and with no response to the obvious Croatian historiographic forgeries to this very day. Because of that situation, the Roman Catholic ‘historians’ could arbitrarily interpret the small number of unreliable subsequent sources that referred to the medieval Slavic past. All those meagre sources (if there are sources at all) have not been preserved as originals, but there are transcripts (‘Croatian redactions’) from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Because the Serbian side tacitly accepted those window-dressed sources, Croatian historiographic results became unquestionably true and ‘factually’ unbeatable over time. That kind of ‘literary supremacy’ (based on the nimble and systematic forging of historical facts) of the Roman Catholic (‘Croatian’) historians made possible the creation of historical works for daily political use” (p. 39). Since they were formed as a nation and a blindly obedient instrument of the Roman Catholic prelates in an artificial way and according to the Vatican political interests, “the Croats had to emphasise their mythical past in order to prove their old state and legal tradition that, however, had not existed until the formation of the Nazi-Fascist Independent State of Croatia in 1941. After the fall of the so-called Trpimirović dynasty (at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century), whose princes and kings bore the Slavic name, there are no traces of separate Croatian statehood and state history. This is the reason why the Croatian ‘historical’ mythomania is blindly sticking to the story of a thousand year old Croatian statehood that was purportedly established at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 39-40).

In all this Croatian forgery, it is particularly significant that “the so-called history of Croats from the time of the settlement in the Balkans and the dynasty of Trpimirović (‘people’s rulers’) is largely mentioned by the Roman Catholic priests and votaries (Benedictine Mavro Orbin, Archdeacon Thomas, Archdeacon John of Gorica, etc), the anonymous authors (*The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, Anonymous from Split I, Anonymous from Split II) and the historiographic works of Croatian theologians and secular writers (Joannes Lucius - ‘the father of Croatian historiography’, Pavle Ritter, Tadija Smičiklas, Franjo Rački, Ferdo Šišić, Vjekoslav Klaić, Dominik Mandić, Krunoslav Draganović, Nada Klaić, etc.). Professor Petar Grgec, a historian in Pavelić’s NDH, states that ‘the treatises’ of the Jesuit Stjepan Krizina Sakač ‘clearly elucidated these circumstances (the settlement and Christianization of Croats - N. Ž.), which, at around 679, at the time of Ban Borko and Pope Agathon, led to the conclusion of the contract (concordat).’ Further on, Grgec quotes Sakač’s text that talks of the pacifism of the ‘righteous’ Croats who only want to protect their territory without coveting foreign

land ... Finally, Grgec concludes that the love of peace brought the Croats two great goods: firstly, international recognition of their national identity and of their homeland (!). For the Great Croatia ideologists, the quoted words became the ‘famous oath from the time of Prince Borko and Pope Agathon’. Having acquired ‘an internationally recognised homeland, national identity and state’, they became Croats, as professor P. Grgec says, ‘and an attractive base for those tribes that did not belong to the core of the Croatian nation in the beginning.’ This infantile explanation of the creation of the Croatian national identity and state requires no comment” (p. 38-39). Not only was the influence of the Vatican and Roman Catholicism crucial for the artificial creation of Croatian history, but they also thought out a manner in which the Croats would be referred to in foreign, mainly Western European languages. “The Latin or, better still, Italian name for the Croatian country (*Croatia*) basically has a militant Roman Catholic missionary meaning. In the Italian-Slavic dictionary of Friar Dragutin Parčić (Zadar, 1868), who had been educated in the Illyrian Institute of St Jerome, the word ‘*crociato*’ was translated as ‘crusader’. Croatian Latinists linked the Italian root of the word *Croatia* with the names from the antiquity. Accordingly, in the Latin ‘exercise book’ for secondary school, *Elementa Latina* (Zagreb, 1964), the word *Croatia* denotes the state of Croatia. In the Žepić’s exemplary *Latin-Croatian Dictionary* (Zagreb, 1961), the word *Croatia* does not exist, which is logical. With those fantastical theories of a few Croatian classical philologists, the existence of the Croatiandom and Croatia is transferred to distant ancient times” (p. 40).

#### a) **Dominik Mandić in the Critical Review of Nada Klaić**

The Croatian historian Nada Klaić herself successfully exposed the two most striking historical forgeries, namely, *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* and the books of Dominik Mandić. “One of the first and most deserving revisers, who rooted the Croatian name in the distant past, was the unknown redactor of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*” (the 12<sup>th</sup> century). Namely, as N. Klaić claims, the Croatian redaction was introduced into *The Chronicle* in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, purposefully including the Croatian name instead of the Slavic. The redactor changed the Latin text, introducing the Croats where the Latin redaction does not mention them. The historian Nada Klaić thinks that the cause of this redaction lay in the fact that the author had not been familiar with the name *Slavs* (that was used exclusively at the time of the Priest of Duklja), so he wanted to change it to the contemporary term - Croats. Giving a general evaluation of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, Nada Klaić concluded that the information from *The Chronicle* was “rather unreliable” so that “critical historiography hardly takes it into consideration” (p. 41).

The criticism of the works of Dominik Mandić is very striking and that is why Žutić gives an elaborate overview of Mandić’s standpoints and its convincing challenging expertly taken up by Nada Klaić. “The individuals who did most to preserve the continuity of and further develop the contemporary mythological Croatian history were the Roman Catholic votaries Krunoslav Draganović and Friar Dominik Mandić. The authorities of the Republic of Croatia used as an ideal propagandist means Mandić’s ‘comparative historical synthesis’, under the tendentious title *The Serbs and the Croats - two different ancient nations* (Zagreb, 1990). The title itself reveals Mandić’s theory of the nations formed in the distant past that, according to the title, have nothing in

common. Mandić's book precisely sets out unacceptable arguments that serve as testimonies that the Serbs and Croats are racially different nations. In this work, Mandić presents himself as 'an accomplished philologist'. Suffice it to mention just a couple of chapter titles in order to see the whole scale of his 'philological' intellectual creations (*The Settlement of Slavs - Shtokavian Ikavians - in the Balkans*, *The Settlement of Slavs - Shtokavian Ekavians - in the Balkans*). In Chapter Four of his book, Mandić debates on the Croatian 'Assembly at Duvanjsko Polje in 753', though historiography has not succeeded in confirming any historical fact about Croatian history in the 8<sup>th</sup> century ... In her criticism of Mandić's book *The Treatises of the Old Croatian History*, Nada Klaić stated that Mandić had used imaginary sources that are not familiar to serious researchers of the Croatian history. Further on, she observed that Mandić had not possessed any new source material that would be unfamiliar to other researchers of the medieval history" (p. 41-42).

From her critical review, published in *The Historical Collection XXI-XXII* in Zagreb in 1971, Žutić literally conveys the fragment in which Nada Klaić said of Dominik Mandić that he "reverted to the initial phase of historiography when it, at the very beginning of the last century, considered its basic duty mainly to be retelling the most famous sources without their critical analysis. Yet, even then many historians knew how to separate myth from truth. In Croatian historiography, the narrative sources, such as legends and chronicles, have been used with great caution for a long time now. F. Rački, as the true father of contemporary Croatian historiography, frequently pointed out the shortcomings of the source material" (p. 42). As Žutić notes that the allegedly historical facts of Dominik Mandić "were based on ultimately controversial data from *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* and that their combinations followed each other in succession", Nada Klaić concludes that "His fantastical history grows gradually in such a way that it is impossible to refute it because it lacks the basic elements necessary to start a debate. Namely, if dealing with a problem starts with claims that should be the result of the debate, then there is nothing to debate on. For example, for Mandić, the mere assumption that *Croatian Chronicle* or *The Kingdom of Croats* is a work by a Croatian glagolitic author that was written before *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* is an established fact ... Almost obsessed with the idea that the purported 'Kingdom of Croats' was created in Duklja, or as he calls it - Red Croatia, Mandić did not even notice that (even) the Croatian redaction (of the Chronicle) does not include the name Red Croatia! In spite of that, the reviser of the Croatian redaction often changed the names Slavs and Slavic to Croats and Croatian in the text of the Priest of Duklja!" (p. 42).

The key argument that challenges the seriousness and morality of all Mandić's books is the fact that Dominik Mandić in all places substituted the term *Sclavs*, which in Latin means Slavs, with the term Croats, "and even tried to prove that the Croatian redaction of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* was older than the Latin one. The Croatian redaction does not mention Red Croatia, either. Similarly, Mandić interpreted the expression *Regnum Sclavorum* as the Kingdom of Croats. In that way, he could emphasise the thesis that, 'since ancient times, Duklja (today's Montenegro - N.Ž.) has been an integral part of the Croatian kingdom, i.e. White and Red Croatia.' In his euphoria about Croatia, Mandić claimed that Duklja was 'the centre and its ruling family the main pillar of the state life of all Croats in the first centuries of their life on the Adriatic'" (p. 42-43). Žutić especially emphasises that Nada Klaić is "terrified at the way Mandić takes *The Gothic Introduction* from *The Chronicle* as a proof of 'the

Croatian legend (tradition)'. Under Mandić's pen, all the Goths turn into Croats and, in that way, he expands Croatia to the desired borders" (p. 43). Though Croatian, Nada Klaić mercilessly refutes Mandić's pamphlet theories, stating that Dominik Mandić is not at all "confused by the fact that in those first chapters (of *The Chronicle*), on which there are a lot of reference works, there is no trace of the Croats: the nation that arrives is the Gothic one and its leaders are Totila and Ostroil! ... He subjects every source to his objective and interprets it so that the ultimate result is always the same. In this way, the Croatian region of Bosnia and Duklja is created and, in the newest supplement, the principality of Narenta ... As can be concluded, his history is comprised of meagre source fragments, seeming logic that he uses to stick the fragments to each other and the almost sick desire to include as many South Slavs as possible among the Croats. Moreover, under the term Croatian, he refers to the political one, not ethnic, because the would-be 'Croatian national country' extends from the Raša to Valona. The proof that the principality of Narenta is Croatian is also an example of Mandić's forgery of source material" (p. 43). In addition to these statements, Žutić believes that "Mandić's pan-Croatian megalomania reaches its climax at the moment when he claims that 'at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, three powerful countries were flourishing in the south-east of Europe,' one of which was Croatia, with borders stretching 'from the Raša River in Istria to the Drim River in today's Albania, then from the Adriatic Sea to the Drava and the Danube in the north and the Drina in the east, and was divided into White Croatia, from the Raša to the Cetina in Dalmatia, and Red Croatia, from the Cetina to the Drim (!)'" (p. 43). Those fairy tales circulated among ignorant people thanks to the interference of the Roman Catholic priests and served the purpose of a massive indoctrination of the brainwashed flock of believers and their instrumentalisation in order to achieve long-termed proselytist projects and domination.

The authentic historical sources prove quite the opposite and confirm that the population that lived in the area where today's Croatian ideologists situate the former Croatian country was called the Slavs, or *Sclavs* in Latin. "In the modern period redactions, the Slavic name was tendentiously substituted with the term Croatian. For example, in 879, Pope John VIII sent the letter 'to my dear son Zdeslav, the famous Prince of the Slavs'. The work *Liber Pontificalis* says that the Pope's envoys fell into Domagoj's hands (*in Sclavorum deducti Domagoj manus*). In the 11<sup>th</sup> century in *The Venetian Chronicle*, the Venetian chronicler Ivan Đakon called the people from Dalmatia '*Sclavorum pessime dentes et Dalmationarum*' and Prince Domagoj from the 9<sup>th</sup> century '*pessimus Sclavorum dux*'. Later, Croatian historical redactions called Domagoj '*pessimus dux Croatorum*' ('the worst prince of the Croats'). Generations of Yugoslav scholars were educated with the stories of Domagoj, 'the worst prince of Croats' – a Croatian hero without precedent. The crucial source that confirms the Croatian Party of Rights concept of the 'thousand years' old state and legal history of the Croats is the *Qualiter* or *Pacta Conventa* (contract) from the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The *Pacta Conventa* is supposedly a transcript of an older original source that has not been preserved; however, most of the Croatian historians take it as a very reliable document. The *Pacta Conventa* describes the fall of Croatia under Hungarian rule in 1102. According to 'the Croatian legend', the Hungarians previously defeated the army of the mythical Croatian King Petar Svačić in 1097 at Petrova Gora and governed the Croats until 1527 - that is, until Hungary fell under the Turks and Croatia under Austria. The anonymous author wanted to emphasise the fact that the Croats were not a

vassal nation within Hungary, but an equal state and legal factor of the joint Hungarian-Croatian country. The invented event, related to the alleged fall of Croatia under Hungarian rule in 1102, has been the object of the efforts of Croatian historians to depict it as affirmatively as possible for the Croatian statehood. The priest historian Dr Lovre Katić interprets that Croatia and Hungary formed a personal union that lasted from 1102 until 1918 ... Professor Petar Grgec performs some weird linguistic acrobatics whose purpose is to prove the alleged Croatian independence within Hungary. He writes that, in 1102, ‘the Arpad dynasty firmly sat on the Croatian royal throne.’ However, after that, he emphasises that Croatia descended into civil war and doom in 1102 ... The leading Croatian mythomaniac D. Mandić calls the *Pacta Conventa* the Contractual compromise and the created countries ‘friendly kingdoms’. According to him, those kingdoms were sovereign countries within a personal union” (p. 44-45).

### **b) Forgering According to the Instructions of the Council of Florence**

Nikola Žutić concludes the debate on this issue with an additional review of the content of the *Pacta Conventa* and a concise representation of the standpoints of the leading Croatian historians in relation to this document. “After he set forth his subject in the title (*How and under which Contract the Croats Subjected to the Hungarian King*), the anonymous author of the *Pacta Conventa* declares that the Hungarian King Coloman decided to conquer ‘the entire Croatia all the way to the Dalmatian sea’. Consequently, he reached the Drava, which prompted the Croats, who had heard about the ruler’s coming, to gather an army and prepare for battle. Hungarian King Coloman then sent his envoys to conclude an agreement with the Croats according to their wishes. After consultation, the Croats sent twelve noblemen from twelve tribes (a rare example of tribes who are conscious that they live in a state - N. Ž.). Having numbered the representatives of the twelve tribes, the author states that Coloman exchanged a kiss of peace with them and that, after a discussion, they concluded a contract. It stipulated that these noblemen should keep their lands peacefully, that no one out of the twelve tribes paid tax or tribute to the King, that every tribe would bring ten equestrians to the Drava at their expense in the case of a defensive war and that, from then on, they were obliged to participate in the war across Hungary at the King’s expense, as long as the war lasted ... The historian Nada Klaić concluded that the older Croatian historiography was eager to prove that the *Pacta Conventa* was a state and legal document and that, in that way, the Croatian nation negotiated with the Hungarian King Coloman on an equal footing. Nada Klaić simply rejected the validity of the *Pacta Conventa* by stating that those sorts of contracts were completely unknown and impossible in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Croatian historian Ferdo Šišić refuted the public law character of the *Pacta Conventa* in 1914. At the time, he claimed that it could not have been any kind of ‘state and legal document’ or ‘even international’, but simply a royal certificate. Lubor Hauptmann simply proclaimed the *Pacta Conventa* a forgery. The contemporary Croatian historiography confirmed that there had not actually been twelve tribes in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Croatian ‘historians’ established that an institute of ‘twelve tribes’ had existed in ‘the Croatian areas’ in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The inconsistency between the interpretation of the historical facts and the opinions among the Croatian historians themselves is thus obvious. We can conclude that Croatiandom was an unfamiliar term in the periods of the early and

developed Middle Ages. Only with the subsequent redactions of source information in the modern period was that national term established and spread, both territorially and numerically” (p. 45-46).

The key foundation of all those historical forgeries was the Roman Catholic Church Council of Florence in 1439, when it was decided to initiate aggressive action in order to unite all Christians under the domination of the Vatican. As they tried to make the approach towards Orthodox nations more subtle, they reaffirmed the concept of Uniate churches that kept the rite of the Eastern Churches or accepted the supreme power of the Pope. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople made several unions of this kind with Rome, mainly during times of difficult Byzantine foreign policy circumstances and threats related to saving the state. Poland imposed Uniatism on Ukraine in 1596, giving considerable incentives for further missionary breakthroughs in the East European countries. As early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Vatican started to systematically educate and train its missionaries, who would be conducting religious Roman Catholic propaganda and proselytist action in the Balkans. For that cause, they launched the so-called Illyrian idea of uniting the Slavic nations in the Balkans as the alleged descendants of the ancient Illyrians under the Pope’s sceptre. The Vatican vultures happily embraced the fall of Constantinople under the Ottoman rule in 1453 and the final doom of Byzantium as a God-given opportunity for accomplishing their sinister goals. Consequently, in that same year, they founded the Illyrian Institute of Saint Jerome in Rome with the Papal Bull of Nicholas V, giving it a seemingly humanitarian role, but primarily with the goal of educating future missionaries about influencing the Dalmatians and Slavs. “Therefore, the Croatian name was not mentioned anywhere. However, the Roman Catholic ideologists had an explanation for everything, including the fact that the Croatian name was not known in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Dr Mijo Tumpić explained that the Croats were called ‘*Skijavoni*’ or Illyrians (*‘Ilirici’*) ‘according to the customs of that period’” (p. 48). According to his claims, due to the fact that the Croatiandom was being hidden behind the Illyrian or Slavic name, Tumpić “states that the Vatican, ‘with its Roman punctuality’, ascertained which countries were Illyrian (in order to know whose descendants could go to the Institute of St Jerome). The Vatican defined it on 24 April 1656, when the supreme court of St Rota decided that Illyria included Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, all the Croatian lands according to Tumpić’s way of thinking” (p. 48).

## 6. Illyrian Movement in the Service of Catholicisation

Besides, Saint Jerome was proclaimed the Illyrian protector and was ascribed to be the father of the glagolitic script and the founder of Illyrian literature. “A half-moon and a star, the Illyrian symbol, appeared on the Bosnian coat of arms for the first time in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Bosnian-Illyrian idea was visibly delineated in the genealogy of Petar Ohmučević from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Namely, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Franciscans created the so-called Ohmučević’s ‘Illyrian Genealogy and Book of Heraldry’ of the ‘Illyrian’ Emperor Stefan Dušan Nemanjić, who proclaimed the entire Balkans Illyria and the nations in the Balkans, primarily Slavic, Illyrians” (p. 49). In 1622, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was established in the Vatican and its primary activity was the prozelytist missionary work, whereas, what had significantly contributed to the spreading of the Roman Catholic religion in the traditional Orthodox

regions a century ago was the atmosphere of the Catholic renewal aimed at efficient confronting of the Reformation in all of Austria. Furthermore, the Council of Trent, held over a period of almost two decades in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, established an infinite papal power within the concept of the Roman Catholic Church as a closed institution. The whole Church was again overcome by the fighting spirit and it wished to recover domination over regions that had been lost because of the Protestant reformation and also to acquire domination over new areas - the countries of Eastern Christianity. In 1604, the Council of the Banate of Croatia enacted a religious law that proclaimed Catholicism as the only permissible religion in Croatia. Two years later, the Jesuits started to come to Croatia in greater numbers. In order to increase Catholicisation as much as possible, the Jesuits themselves were the ones who, at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, urged the acceptance of the Shtokavian dialect in the entire "Illyrian" region. "As early as 1625, the Jesuit 'Chakavian', Bartol Kašić (1575-1650) advocated Shtokavian. Besides, Kašić attended the Jesuit Illyrian College in Loreto and the Roman Seminary. He was the founder of the first Jesuit residence in Dubrovnik. As a missionary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, he spent time in Belgrade, Smederevo, Timișoara, Osjek and Valpovo" (p. 50). In 1604, the Illyrian Academy in Loreto entrusted Bartol Kašić with the creation of the grammar of the Illyrian language. Yet, there is no data confirming his realisation of the job, except for the fact that the Belgrade Jesuit Vladimir Horvat credited him with the authorship of the anonymous written script of the Dalmatian-Italian dictionary almost four centuries later. In the book *The Church in the Croatian Reformatory Movement*, published in Zagreb in 1986, Vladimir Horvat arbitrarily calls Kašić the author of the first Croatian grammar and even credits him with calling Chakavian and Shtokavian the Croatian language. However, not only is there no evidence that confirms this claim, but it is completely unquestionable that Kašić never used the adjective "Croatian", only Illyrian. The Roman Catholic Church launched the term "Illyrian" as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century in order to suppress the Serbian name for the nation that had its own national Christian church. Still, particular parts of that church dropped off, turning to Catholicism and Islam. Before launching the term "Illyrian" and in parallel with its use in the Roman Catholic areas, the term "Slavic" was used, also as a replacement for "Serbian". Moreover, the presence of any kind of Croatian national consciousness or a consciousness of nationality - even an ethnic one - has never been mentioned.

Žutić also confirms this fact, basing it on valid historical sources. "In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the works of the Roman Catholic votaries and clerics exclusively mention the terms Slavic - that is, Illyrian. Croatian, as the term for a nationality, did not exist at all at the time. The territorial region of Croatia, which was at the time just a geographical term, was too small and insignificant to cover the entire region of 'Illyria' and 'Illyrian' (Slavic) nation" (p. 51). The Roman Catholic clergyman Juraj Baraković (1548-1628) called his songs Slavic and his narrative stories Illyrian. The Jesuit Juraj Habelić (1609-1678) wrote a Slavic dictionary. The contemporary Croatian national ideologists subsequently turned both of them into Croatian writers and the latter into the founder of the Croatian dialectology. The Franciscan Rafael Levaković (1579-1649), as a distinguished propagandist of the Illyrian variant of the prozelytist mission, is the author of the treatise *On the Destruction of the Schism and the Union of the Schismatics and the Roman Church*. The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith systematically supported the building of a unique literary language and script for all the Slavs.

“Because the mission of unifying the churches of the Orthodox Serbs had been conducted since the 16<sup>th</sup> century without influencing the Orthodox religious rituals and the rite language, tendencies appeared in the Vatican for unifying the Slavs as one nation and under a unique general language. Consequently, the Uniate Russification of the glagolitic ecclesiastical books started, which Friar Rafael Levaković himself patiently conducted. He adjusted the Roman religious books to the Slavic divine services and then edited the glagolitic editions for the Slavic - that is, Serbian Orthodox - believers” (p. 52-53). With the support of the Austrian Emperor, Levaković was trying to become the bishop in Smederevo and, later, “made efforts to become ‘the Bishop of the Vlachs’ in Croatia, because Maksim Predojević, who had been named one by the Austrian Emperor, did not remain loyal to the Union. In 1642, when Gavriilo Predojević was named Uniate Bishop, Levaković returned to Rome in order to continue with the work in the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. It should be especially emphasised that Levaković intensively worked on the creation of historiographic forgeries and compilations, as well as his teacher, Franjo Glavinić. He used to copy historical sources of his own free will and create the so-called ‘Croatian redactions’ of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja, Historia Salonitana* by Archdeacon Thomas ... One must emphasise the fact that he was a forerunner of Pavle Ritter, because he started to identify the Illyrians with Croats earlier - that is, to develop the Pan-Croatian nationalism of the South Slavic (Serbian) regions through Illyrianism” (p. 53).

## 7. The Denial of the Croatian Historiographic Lies

Calling Levaković a historiographic and philological dilettante, the distinguished lexicographer of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Art Vjekoslav Štefanić writes in Volume Five of *Yugoslav Encyclopaedia* that: “His delusions about the autochthony of the Croats and their identification with the Illyrians, as well as the delusion about Jerome as the author of the glagolitic script, are a tribute to the time. The reason behind his thinking that the Russian-Slavic redaction of the Slavic language was the matrix of the Slavic languages and that it should be the literary language of all the Slavs, was his weakness to the influences of the Ukrainian Uniates and the aspirations of Rome” (p. 53). Nevertheless, Levaković’s influence on today’s Croatian historiographic forgeries was huge. As Žutić emphasises, “the works of such ‘a dilettante of history’ became old and unquestionable historical sources that are, as such, used by distinguished Roman Catholic historians and writers, for example: ‘the father of Croatian history’, Joannes Lucius; historian and rector Tomo Kovačević (1664-1724), who cooperated in creating the Vatican forgery *Illyricum Sacrum*; historian Baltazar Krčelić (1715-1778), who studied theology and law at the colleges in Vienna and Bologna; Jozef Asamani (1687-1768), the curator of the Vatican library; Archbishop of Zadar, Matej Karaman (1700-1771); the Jesuits D. Farlati (1690-1773) and G. Coleti, the authors of the ecclesiastic history of Illyria (*Illyricum Sacrum*). By using the Levaković’s controversial writings (‘the fountain-head’), the works of these Roman Catholic writers and historians cannot be highly evaluated scientifically, only reduced to the level of non-original compilations” (p. 54). In 1937, in *Ljetopis JAZU*, Franjo Francev called the Zagreb clergyman and the Hungarian Juraj Rattkay (1612-1666) “the founder and ideologist of the Illyrism in Transsavian Croatia within the South Slavic region”. In 1652 in Vienna, Rattkay published a book in Latin about the kingdoms and banates of Dalmatia, Croatia

**Comment [PC2]:** Translator’s note: no sources were found to confirm the name so we left it in the original.



and Slavonia, in which he claimed that even the mythological brothers Czech and Lech were originally from a place near Krapina. “Rattkay claimed that the Slavs had originally come from Croatia and Slavonia and that, accordingly, they were Croats ... As the basis for his work, he used the medieval chronicles and legends, especially the unreliable *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*. J. Rattkay was the first among the Croatian historians who listed the fairy-tale names of the legendary mythological ‘Croatian kings and bans’, whose authenticity no Croatian historian or politician can doubt, even at the cost of their lives. Rattkay did not include the Slovenians in his Slavic (Croatian) Illyricum. Šidak emphasises that the reasons for this view of his are not familiar, but it still initiated one long-term dispute in Rome, especially among the circles of the Illyrian Institute of St Jerome” (p. 54).

### a) The Vatican Spy in Imperial Russia

The case of Juraj Križanić (1618-1683) is an especially interesting one. He was an ideological follower of Levaković and Rattkay, and his family came from the middle stream of the Una, though he himself was born in Gornje Pokuplje. “In 1659, in Moscow, Križanić presented himself as the son of a Serbian tradesman from Bihać, using the pseudonym Serbljanin (Serbenin). The Croatian historian Vjekoslav Klaić gave Križanić the name Đuro. Mihailo M. Vujić claims that, in terms of nation and religion, Križanić was a Serbian Catholic. The Serbian historian Nikola Radojčić calls Križanić Jurko Križanić-Srbljanin” (p. 54-55). As we can see from Šidak’s book *On Five Centuries of Croatian History*, published in Zagreb in 1981, in the documents of the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Križanić was recorded as a Serbian missionary from Žumberak. “Jaroslav Šidak fanatically and tendentiously rejects any thought of a possible Serbian origin of Križanić because, according to Šidak, he used the Serbdom for tactical conspiratorial reasons” (p. 55). Šidak exclusively says that Križanić presented himself “to the Russian authorities as the son of an alleged Serbian tradesman from Bihać and, although his father’s name was Gašpar, he hid his affiliation to the Catholic Church by using the invented name ‘Srbljanin’” (p. 55). What obviously bothers Šidak the most is qualifying Križanić as a Serbian Catholic. “J. Šidak simply refutes everything that has been specified without offering any source argumentation, and he does not mention any documentary proof that could support his claims. The top witness to the righteousness of his uncompromising judgment is Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski, whose works served Croatian national romanticism - that is, forming the Croatian nation because, for example, ‘he fiducially confirmed that Križanić had originally come from a Croatian noble family’. Since it could not be well substantiated that J. Križanić was Croatian, the thesis on Križanić’s Polish origin was subsequently fabricated” (p. 55).

In 1636, Križanić graduated from the Jesuit Gymnasium in Zagreb. In 1638, he earned a master’s degree in Philosophy at the University in Graz and in 1642, he earned a doctor’s degree in theology at the Vatican’s Greek College. Šidak claims that Križanić was matriculated in the University of Graz as a Croat and he called his mother tongue Croatian. “However, Šidak does not mention the archive location of that matriculation document, which he would have to particularly emphasise because the mentioning of a Croatian name at those times was a rarity. Following the well-established principle of the Croatian historians and literary historians, he simply translated the Slavic or Illyrian

mother tongue as Croatian” (p. 55). According to the facts, “the information that Križanić won his doctor’s degree at the Vatican’s ‘Greek College’, which was exclusively intended for the members of the Orthodox (Eastern) Church, qualified Križanić as an Orthodox Serbian. Šidak again adjusted this information to his Pan-Croatian way of thinking, used skilled linguistic constructions in order to erase the possibility of Križanić’s Serbian origin” (p. 55). Šidak’s historiographic method includes imagination and guesswork, deducing the conclusions from unfounded assumptions and taking them as if they were indisputable facts. In accordance with that, he sets out: “Križanić’s enrolment in the above mentioned college, normally intended for members of the Eastern Church, was the result of his application in order to prepare himself for the missionary work in Russia” (p. 55-56). Besides, Šidak also reproaches Križanić for having served in purely Catholic environments and for not having demonstrated his abilities and gained experience in the Orthodox environment with the *Uskoci* of Žumberak. As for Križanić’s role, Žutić states the following: “J. Križanić was a member of the Illyrian Institute of St Jerome and, as such, denied Slovenians the right to participate in the institutes of St Jerome. Accordingly, he negated Slovenian nationalism, national identity and historical existence, probably in order to successfully separate the Kajkavian Banate of Croatia (a geographical term) from the Slovenian nucleus ... Križanić received a very ambitious task from the Holy See - to prepare the missionary work in Russia. In 1641, he comprehensively set out his purpose in a Memorandum directed at the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, wherein he conditioned the success of the union with the Russian Church by his literary endeavours aimed at gaining the support of the Russian Emperor for the need for unification. At that time, he had already predicted the creation of the Slavic grammar and emphasised the idea of sticking of the South Slavs to the Emperor, as the ruler of the same language and nation, if he, with the help of the Catholic rulers, initiated war against the Turks. Still, it was surprising that he did not care about introducing a common literary language for the South Slavs (mainly Serbs), using Shtokavian as the basis. On the other hand, the Roman Curia had been conducting this action systematically for decades in the spirit of its counterreformation tendencies. The Slavs should be used as a future rampart of Catholicism against the North Germanic Protestantism that shook the influence of Roman Catholicism from the ground. In order to win over the Slavic people to the ideas of the Roman Church, the Vatican took all spiritual actions, working on the creation of a common literary language, both in the Balkans (by introducing Shtokavian) and in the Russian Orthodox East” (p. 56).

In Rome, Križanić elaborately studied the texts of the Western writers about Russia. He spent more than a year in Poland and came to Moscow for the first time in 1647, only to stay two months. Only in 1658 did he return to stay longer. “The leading thoughts of Križanić were related to the idea of the Slavic national identity as an ethnic and linguistic unity and the thought of an ecclesiastic union as an instrument of its spiritual and cultural unity. He decided to realise his thoughts in Russia because it was the only Slavic country that had succeeded in keeping its freedom and that had an autocratic ruler of Slavic origin. Križanić considered that the Uniatism could be conducted most easily in Russia because he estimated that, in the case of the Russian Orthodoxy it was not a real schism like the Greek schism ... On 27 November 1659, hiding the real reason for his arrival, directed towards the Uniatism of Russians, Križanić directly addressed the Russian Emperor in Moscow, using the ‘Serbian script’

to set out the plan of his work if the Emperor accepted him as historian-chronicler. Having been accepted into the Emperor's service, Križanić immediately started writing treatises on the reformation of Russian Cyrillic, which was to be followed by the creation of the Russian grammar" (p. 57). Even though Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski and Vatroslav Jagić supported the thesis that Križanić initiated his action due to his idealistic Pan-Slavic tendencies - and even though Ferdo Šišić emphasised his dual leading idea of realising the Uniatism and suppressing the schism alongside pure Slavic ambition - Nikola Škerović saw in Križanić 'a religious enthusiast, a mere fanatical, unbalanced missionary, loyal to the idea of subjecting the Russian Orthodox Church to the Roman Pope" (p. 58). Moreover, Nikola Radojčić, Ivan Milčević and Petar Grgec considered that Križanić's primary motives were rooted in the proselytist missionary work, especially relying on the hope that the idea of Pan-Slavic reciprocity could realise church unity under the papal patronage. "Furthermore, Škerović denied any Slavic feeling in Križanić because he was spiritually alienated from the Slavic national identity, depicting him exclusively as a fanatic of the papal supremacy in Christianity. He restricted Križanić's hatred towards the Germans to the German north Protestant part, presenting it as 'pure religious, non-national hatred. He hated Protestants, the opponents of Rome" (p. 58).

Križanić had not even been one whole year in the Russian royal service before he was expelled to Siberia - as early as 1661 - where he spent fifteen years. "The true reason was never revealed, but presumably the Russian authorities had discovered his true identity as a Vatican missionary and sent him to Siberia to cool down his ardour for the Uniate mission, from which Russia had hardly defended itself in the wars with Poland" (p. 59). His missionary work yielded no results. "As J. Šidak emphasises, J. Križanić remained unknown to 'his people' until 1869, when Ivan Kukuljević 'brought him back to his homeland'. Križanić's ideas, which thrilled the Radić brothers, were introduced into Croatian politics as late as the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century ... To this person, with a supporting role in history that was unknown in Russia itself, Croatian historiography ascribed an overestimated significance 150 years after his death – the significance he did not have in reality" (p. 59).

## **b) Evidence from Catholic Sources on the Irrefutable Autochthony of the West Serbs**

In the book by the Roman Catholic priest Manojlo Sladović entitled *The Histories of the Dioceses of Senj and Modruš or Krbava*, published in Trieste in 1856, Žutić also finds confirmation for the claim that, in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Serbs lived as an autochthonous national community in the regions of today's Croatia, Srpska Krajina, Bosnia and Herzegovina - that is, long before the Austrian formation of the Military Krajina and additional settlement *en masse* of the Serbian population. According to Sladović, at the time of King Sigmund's rule (1387-1437), "there were many Serbs in the Krbava region, especially next to the Ura in today's Serbian company (the *Srb* military unit), from the tri-border area, along the Bosnian frontier, as well as in Lika and even around Senj" (p. 60). In the entire area of Venetian Krajina, the population was exclusively Serbian. "The Serbs in the west parts of the Balkans...", as Žutić continues, "who mainly represented the population of that region, were under religious pressure from the Roman Catholic missionaries who tried to convert them to Roman Catholicism.

In the Vatican, they knew that a spiritual preparation should be conducted with the aim of a consolatory ‘spiritual harvest of the Eastern Orthodox field’. In the period from the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Serbs in Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the Military Krajina, Vojvodina with Baranja, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia itself were under intensive proselytist pressure from the Roman Catholic votaries, who tried to alienate them from Orthodoxy and ‘win them over to the true religion’... There are numerous well-substantiated testimonies available of the Roman Catholic proselytism against the Serbs, even those of Vatican provenance. As early as the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Venetian government had sought to weed out Orthodoxy in the regions of Dalmatia. In the *Documenta* of Nikodim Milaš, there are numerous examples (starting from 1412) of the prohibition of Orthodox rituals under threat of punishment, the destruction or confiscation of Orthodox shrines, persecution of the Orthodox priests or conversions to Catholicism” (p. 60-61). The Serbs from Bar and Boka Kotorska were under attack. “In the letter to Archbishop Thomas of Bar (Antivari), dated 1 December 1600, Pope Clement VIII emphasises the proselytist work on the Union among the Orthodox Serbs as the primary task in the Archdiocese of Bar. Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) re-established the Illyrian College, which had been founded previously by Gregory XIII (1572-1585). The exclusive task of the Illyrian colleges was to educate a cadre for missionary tasks in the Balkans, with the aim of expanding the Roman Catholic jurisdiction over Serbian Orthodox lands” (p. 61).

## 8. The Proselyte Attacks and Violent Uniatism

According to the book by Marko Jačov entitled *Documents of the Secret Vatican Archive from the 16th to the 18th Centuries*, published in Belgrade in 1983, Žutić, after analysing the parallel and mutually consistent sources, sets out the following concrete information: “In 1629, the Bishop of Kotor Vićentije Buća praised the activity of Friar Serafin in the field of the Uniatism of the Serbian people. In the report from 12 June 1637, Vićentije Buća informed that around 7,000 members of the Orthodox tribe of Paštrovići had been converted to the Roman Catholic religion. That report mentioned that around 2,000 Orthodox Serbs lived in Luštica, Krtole and Lješevici. The bishop expected to convert them to the Roman Catholic religion soon, as well. In the letter of 16 April 1627 to Ludovic Ludovisi, Cardinal of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Karlo Karafa, Bishop of Anvers and the papal nuncio to Austrian Emperor Ferdinand II, writes what is required to attach the Orthodox Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia to Rome. In 1636, Cardinal Bernardino Spada reported at the session of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith that the Serbian people of Paštrovići were ready to accept Uniatism, on the condition that they kept their Orthodox ecclesiastic rituals. The Congregation accepted those requests. The decision of the Congregation emphasised the role of the representative of Venice, the proveditor of Kotor, who spread imperial Venetian-Vatican power in the Serbian lands. It is necessary to emphasise that, during their proselytist work, the Roman Catholic missionaries regularly emphasised that the essential difference between Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy was only in the rituals, not in the dogmas or the significant spiritual content and experiences (feelings) of the Christian religion. Because of that, the Roman Catholic missionaries ‘generously’ allowed the converted Uniates to retain their Orthodox rites, but not the seven sacred dogmas of the seven Ecumenical councils and the Christian (Orthodox) feelings of

spirituality. In 1641, the missionary Francesco Leonardis reported to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith that Uniatism should be conducted among the Serbs in Zeta, Boka and in the region of today's Albania" (p. 62). With the letter dated 16 November 1661, Archbishop Theodosius of Zadar demanded that the prefect of that congregation "take rigorous measures against the 'Mauro-Vlach schismatics' (Serbs from Knin Krajina, Bukovica and Ravni Kotari) in order to convert them to the Union. Therefore, in the Orthodox areas of the Balkans, the Vatican persistently conducted the proselytist mission over the Orthodox 'schismatics'" (p. 63).

Furthermore, Žutić sets out a lot of credible data on this issue. For example, in the letter from 5 October 1680, the Bishop of Nin reported: "that the Orthodox Serbs live in many parts of the Bishopric of Nin. The Bishop expresses his wish that Rome should send missionaries to work on their Uniatism. He particularly emphasises that, in the village of Budin, 'lives the worst schismatic people'. In the report from April 1693, Bishop Đorđe Parčić of Nin stated that, on the territory of the diocese of Nin, lived 5,486 Roman Catholics and 7,363 Orthodox Serbs. Twenty-one priests served the Roman Catholics, while only 15 priests served the Orthodox people. Bishop Parčić actively worked on the Uniatism of the Orthodox Serbs, teaching them religion and 'true Catholic doctrine'. Thanks to the Bishop's devotion, 'the people from the village of Poličnik' renounced 'schismatic errors', i.e. the Orthodox religion and accepted 'the Roman Catholic faith'. From the time of the Great War of Vienna, waged between Turkey and Austria (1683-1699) - that is, from the annexation of Lika, Kordun, Banija, Slavonia, Srem and Bačka to the Catholic Austrian Empire - there ensued a phase of extremely intensified Roman Catholic missionary activity in the regions populated by the Orthodox Serbs. Since the times of Cardinal Kolonić, who converted the Serbs from today's Baranja and Slavonia to Catholicism, and priest Mesić, who was in charge of the Orthodox-Muslim population of Lika and greater parts of Krajina - missionaries, primarily Franciscans and Jesuits, continually created Roman Catholic converts from the Serbian 'schismatics', who became Croats over time. This priest Marko Mesić, who was an archdeacon, Episcopal vicar and the Pope's apostolic delegate, was especially prominent in the actions of averting Serbs from the Orthodox religion and converting them to the Roman Catholic one. Immediately upon the liberation of Lika and Krbava from the Turks, he converted a considerable number of Mohammedan and Orthodox families to the Roman Catholic religion. Mesić mainly converted to Catholicism the families in the villages that the Serbs founded on both sides of Mountain Velebit... In that area, Serbs were mostly converted due to the strong influence of the Order of Capuchin Friars from Bag (Karlobag)... Since, on 22 September 1702, on the proposal of Bishop Brajković of Senj, Mesić was appointed chief military commander in Lika and Krbava and Episcopal envoy for both Churches, he took all the measures possible to assimilate the Serbs into the Roman Church, by fair means or foul. He divided parishes and dismissed both Roman and Orthodox priests in the parishes as he pleased. He took the better land from the Orthodox Serbs and gave it to the converted ones. Moreover, he forced the Orthodox Serbs to pay tithes on their land to the Roman Catholic priests. In order to make Uniatism and the conversion of the Serbian people to Roman Catholicism more successful, the secular and spiritual powers of the Austrian Empire did not permit the establishing of the Orthodox episcopate in Lika. It did not matter that, in 1690/91, Patriarch Arsenije Černojević was granted privileges for the Orthodox Church in the territory of the Austrian monarchy. The authorities were trying to put the church

governance over all the Serbs in Lika and Krbava into the hands of the Uniate Bishop of Marča. That situation persisted until 1707, when Orthodox Metropolitan Atanasije Ljubojević became the Bishop of Lika and Krbava by royal grant. However, even at the time of Bishop Ljubojević, who was the Bishop of all the Serbs in Lika, Krbava and Gacka until his death in 1712, religious violence was still in place against the Serbian people in order to convert them to Uniatism and Roman Catholicism” (p. 64-66).

The Serbs that lived between the Drava and the Danube were converted to Uniatism *en masse* in 1690, and the main conductor of these actions was the Imperial and Royal Commissioner, Tullio Miglio. Already in 1689, “he engaged ‘the honourable missionary fathers’, the Jesuits from Pecs, to teach all the ‘schismatics’ the Catholic religion. The Jesuits performed their tasks of ‘apostolic duty’ righteously by revealing one common eternal truth - both Catholic and apostolic - under one visible, supreme and universal Roman *pontifex* - the head ruler of all believers in the world”. The ‘schismatics’ promised the Pope in front of the Jesuits that they would subject to him most humbly in all matters” (p. 66). The ceremony of taking the oath took place on 18 January 1690 and marked the conversion of many Serbs from Baranja and Slavonia from Orthodoxy to Uniatism. “The oath of converting to Uniatism was spreading automatically from the municipal envoys to all individual ‘numerous church and secular schismatics’ who lived between the Danube and the Drava. Through that act, all Orthodox Serbs in that region had to unite with the Roman Church” (p. 66-67). Judging by everything, “the Union represented a highly efficient form of converting the Orthodox people to Roman Catholicism. Every member of the new Uniate (Greek Catholic) religion had to take the oath, the so-called ‘Serbian formula’ for professing the faith after joining the Union” (p. 67). Cardinal Kolonić, as the Hungarian primate, personally supervised the proselytist activities in Baranja, Slavonia, Bačka, Srem and Banat as he was empowered by the Emperor and the Vatican. As the Manager of the Court Commission on regulating property relations, founded as early as 1688, “after the Karlovac Peace Agreement, he demonstrated that the fight for converting Serbs to Uniatism would not stop, despite the privileges achieved. In one letter, Kolonić fiercely attacked Patriarch Arsenije III who had forbidden Greek and Russian Uniates in Buda and Pest to pray for the Roman Pope. He severely warned the Patriarch against doing that, against interfering with his authority, and advised him to correct his ‘devil’s devotees’. He called the Patriarch an agitator and the thief of somebody else’s good, accusing him of working against God and the Austrian Emperor. For the Austrian powers and the Catholic hierarchy, all the Serbian ‘newcomers’ were enemies of the Roman Catholic religion” (p. 69).

### **a) The Armed Uprisings against the Menace of Uniatism**

The proselytist attacks reached their climax between 1699 and 1703, when Austrian Emperor Leopold I, openly reneging on the privileges given to Serbs previously, ordered forcible conversion of the Orthodox people to Catholicism or their banishment from towns such as Pecs, and even from the suburbs. In 1701, he tried to limit the Patriarch’s religious authority exclusively to Szentendre, forbidding him canonical visitations. “At the beginning of December 1703, Cardinal Kolonić wrote to Pope Clement XI that he was working to win over the Serbian Patriarch and convert him to Uniatism, together with more than 60,000 Serbs who had moved to Hungary. The huge pressure that the Austrian dicasteries and proselytist propaganda were putting on the Serbian people

started to weaken abruptly from the moment that the uprising broke out in Hungary under the leadership of Francis II Rakoczi. Austria intended to use the Serbs against the rebels, so it had to change its earlier hostile attitude towards Patriarch Arsenije III, the Serbian nation and its privileges. In the aftermath of Rakoczi's uprising, the proselytist activity resumed with previous intensity" (p. 70). Then a new flaring of proselytism ensued in Banija and the Generalate of Varaždin, to which the Uniate Bishop of Marča, Rafailo Marković, gave his personal touch. "Earlier, the bishops of Zagreb did everything possible to provoke a rift between the bishops of Marča and the people, using the failed 'conspiracy' of the Zrinski and Frankopans families against Emperor Leopold I as well, in order to accuse the Serbian Bishop of Marča, Gavrilo Mijakić of being unreliable due to his connections with those two families. In 1670, he was deposed and put into eternal slavery and, from then on, bishops who were loyal to the Union and the bishops of Zagreb took his place, as they came from their Jesuit hot bed. On 29 August, the Zagreb Bishop Stefan Samišević reported to the Congregation of the Council that many Serbs, who lived on the territory of the Zagreb diocese had converted to the roman Catholic religion" (p. 70-71).

The case of the Serbian Orthodox Bishopric of Marča and its violent conversion to Uniatism is probably the most remarkable illustration of the criminal thoughts and actions of the Vatican masterminds and the Zagreb proselytist executors, as well as their adherents from the Serbian population, deprived of their national identity and ready to violate the interests of their own nation for the sake of personal ambitions. "Those endeavours of the bishops close to the see of the Bishop of Zagreb at Kaptol sparked the resistance of the monks and Serbs from Krajina, which resulted in a revolt in 1672 that was crushed with the use of military force. The new revolt of monks and Serbs broke out in 1715, when the national leaders submitted a request to the Emperor, stating that they would not tolerate the Uniate bishops and accept the monks they ordained. The Deputation of Krajina, located in Vienna, was informed of the Emperor's position that, apart from the Uniate Bishop, it was out of the question to have an Orthodox bishop in Marča. The uprisings of the people were frequent until 1734, when the Orthodox Bishop Simeon Filipović was appointed. However, the Uniate monks continued to serve in the monasteries. Soon, the Pope again ordained a Uniate Bishop, Silvester Ivanović, which led to new revolts of the clergy and people from Krajina who demanded an Orthodox bishop in Marča and Ivanović had to escape to Zagreb. Still, in 1738 in Vienna, a decision was made to take Marča away from the Orthodox and subject it to the authority of the Bishop of Zagreb. The decision enraged the people, who burnt the monastery in 1739... Under the influence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy during 1753, a special study on conducting Uniatism was created by the Illyrian Court Deputation in Vienna. According to it, the Serbian clergy should be prevented from impeding the conversion of their believers to Uniatism. The implementation of this policy in the Generalate of Varaždin was entrusted to General Benvenuto Petazzi, who demanded the Serbs to accept Uniate priest Gavrilo Palković as their bishop. Since the Serbs rejected those demands, Petazzi entered Marča with his army and consigned it to the Uniates. Furthermore, he communicated the decree of Empress Maria Theresa to the Serbs, threatening execution for anyone who opposed the consignment of Marča to the Uniates. Petazzi closed several Serbian churches and abused and exiled their priests. Moreover, in 1754, when the rights of the people from Krajina were significantly limited by the introduction of new government structure in Krajina, as well as by the forcible

instalment of Bishop Palković in Marča, the peoples' rage went over the top and, at the beginning of 1755, the revolt broke out in Severin. As this revolt in Krajina was crushed, the Vienna court forced the Serbian military and church leaders to formally renounce the monastery of Marča forever, as well. They did so, under the condition that the Uniates were banished from the population who demanded guaranty of a safe and peaceful survival in their ancient Orthodox religion. As for Marča, the Empress was requested to hand it over to the Roman Catholics and not to the Uniates. The latter condition was accepted and the monastery of Marča was handed over to the Catholic monastic order of Piarists instead of the Uniates" (p. 72).

However, this victory for the Orthodox Serbs over the Uniate menace could not have been definitive, for the proselytist pressure continued and the Roman Catholics did not want to easily give up this perfidious means of clandestine conversion to Catholicism. "Namely, in 1777, a Uniate diocese was established in Križevci, in the vicinity of the Generalate, and Vasilij Božičković was appointed its head. Over time, it caused the conversion to Uniatism of a part of the Serbs around Križevci. In 1777, that Uniate diocese was granted a feudal estate as far as Srem (the landed estate of Šid), although there were no Uniate members in that area. The Roman Catholic hierarchy and its loyal Empress Maria Theresa were expecting this measure to undermine the heart of the Orthodox Church - the Archdiocese of Srem. Still, the Uniate core, moved from Križevci to Šid, did not succeed in creating a spiritual flock of converted Serbs and so the Bishop finally had no other choice but to bring the previously converted Russniaks from Bačka to his estate. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Uniate diocese of Križevci completely took over the jurisdiction over the Uniates in the entire Balkans" (p. 73).

A similar destiny befell the Serbs under the Venetian rule in the Dalmatian littoral area and Boka Kotorska, where the Vatican and Venice synchronized their actions in the process of their conversion to Catholicism. "Acting through its proselytist emissaries, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was making it impossible for the Orthodox Serbs to survive in the Dalmatian hinterland. In September 1685, the Split Archbishop Steffano Cosmi emphasized the significance of conquering the Turkish territories because of converting those who were preaching Orthodoxy to the Roman Catholic religion. Having conquered Knin, Venice made around 3,000 Orthodox Serbs their subjects. Archbishop Cosmi considered that they would easily accept the Roman Catholic religion if it were not for their priests. However, he expected that their mere inclusion in the Venetian territory would be 'a big step towards them coming into the lap of the Roman Catholic Church'. Archbishop Cosmi recommended proceeding very cautiously with the conversion of the Orthodox Serbs to Roman Catholicism, using 'episcopal wisdom'. In July 1688, the Zadar Archbishop, Evangelist Parcagi, asked the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to send missionaries who would teach the Roman Catholic religion to around 10,000 newcomers in the territory of the Archdiocese of Zadar. The Zadar Archbishop Viktor regularly sent exhaustive information on the Orthodox Serbs to the Congregation" (p. 73). On 9 August 1692, he reported to his superiors on the new mass of Orthodox Serbs who arrived in the area around Zadar. "Archbishop Viktor was trying to prevent the 'schismatics' from building their 'foul' houses of prayer. Furthermore, he reported that he had found only two churches, one in Zadar and the other one in a village, while a third one 'they planned to build hastily' in Zemunik. He tried to destroy that church in Zemunik at all costs, with the help of 'the

**Comment [PC3]:** Translators' note: We were unable to find any source to transcribe this name, so we left it as spelled in the source language.



supreme lord' Dolfino. Archbishop Viktor was hoping to see 'all these people (Serbs) in the lap of the holy Church'. The monks were in his way more than anyone else, because 'they supported the schism'. In the Roman churches, they believed that those same people listened to the masses of Roman priests and that they even let their boys learn the first bases of 'the holy Roman religion' from the Catholic rectors. Archbishop Viktor, talking about the manner of that cultural-religious conversion of 'schismatics' to the Roman religion" (p. 74), recommended kindness, politeness and pleasant manners in teaching, in order to coax the coarse mountain people, the uneducated and the naïve.

### b) "The Catholic Nation" of Vićentije Zmajević

In order to improve the religious education of the hitherto Orthodox Serbs as far as possible, Archbishop Viktor ordered the translation of the Trent Catechesis into the Serbian language, in order to facilitate the training of parsons. When the book was translated, the Zadar Inquisitor approved its usage. As Nikola Žutić emphasises, "it is obvious that there were no Croats in the Dalmatian hinterland and that they were created over time in that region from the Serbs who had been converted to Uniatism and Catholicism" (p. 74). In a letter from May 1707, Bishop of Makarska Nikola Bjanković bragged that he had converted many schismatics to Catholicism and baptised Turkish families, then complained in 1720 that around a thousand Orthodox Serbs had settled from Herzegovina and Montenegro. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Bar Archbishop and the primate of Serbia, Vićentije Zmajević, was "the conductor and mastermind of the then politics of the Vatican in the Balkans and, as a renegade from the Serbian national identity, was a great adversary to the Serbs and 'schismatic' Orthodoxy. His feeling of religious affiliation was stronger than the traditions of his Serbian origin. The fact that he belonged to the nation that, according to him, 'remained deluded by schism and heresy', became a great burden for him over time. Suffering because not all Serbs professed the Roman Catholic religion, he called them the most derogatory names. His hatred towards the nation of his origin was astonishing. There are documents of Vatican origin that testify to Zmajević's actions against Orthodoxy and the Serbian national identity. On 28 August 1695, while he was still an abbot in Perast, he notified the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith about the danger of the Orthodox Serbs' intrusion into Boka Kotorska" (p. 75). Later, he persistently snitched to the Venetian authorities about the Dalmatian Orthodox Bishop, Stefan Ljubibratić as a Roman Catholic adversary, demanding that the Bishop should be banished. "In 1720, Zmajević sent his *Mirror of Truth* to Venice, which was replete with offences directed at the Serbian nation and its church... As he thought that Dalmatia was contaminated by the arrival of the Serbian people, Zmajević wanted, in this way as well, to 'reason with them (the Orthodox Serbs and their priests) to become conscious of their delusion and accept the Roman Catholic religion'. In this work, Zmajević glorified the Republic of Dubrovnik, because it did not let anyone who was not a Catholic stay in its territory" (p. 76-77). In that document, Zmajević writes about the ancient Serbs as "the nation who is brutal and blood-thirsty, sombre from the day of creation and wild" (p. 77). For that reason, he advocated the banishment of the Orthodox priests and monks from the Serbian nation, as sowers of heretical poison, as soon as possible, so that the people could subject and bow to Catholicism. In 1721, Zmajević wrote *A Dialogue between a Serb and a Catholic*, which Marko Jačov claims to be "the first explicit attempt of a

Roman Catholic high official to identify Orthodoxy with the Serbdom and to deprive the Catholic Serbs of their national name". Since he wanted to separate the Catholic Serbs from his own nation and could not include them in some other nation, Zmajević tried to determine them nationally through Catholicism. Only in this way could his 'Catholic nation' be explained. He mentioned it several times in his writings. Therefore, at the time, the Catholic Serbs were not assimilated into Croatiandom (because the Croatian name was not widespread), which became necessary only in later times, when the Croatian nation was being created and expanded (in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and during the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries)" (p. 77-78).

Later, when he was already holding the post of the Archbishop of Zadar, on 24 April 1741 Vićentije Zmajević notified Rome of his fight against Orthodoxy and of the conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism that he had performed as the Apostolic Visitor to Serbia. After conversations with the Serbian Orthodox bishops and monks, he concluded: "I could see a huge amount of heretical errors that these animals preach in Turkey without being punished. Since I was transferred to this church, I found that numerous Serbs in my diocese, and many more in the surrounding dioceses of Nin, Šibenik and Skradin, helped by their parsons, were considered good members of the Orthodox Church. I studied their dogmas and found that they were identical to the ones preached in Serbia to the disgrace of the Roman religion. In order to remove that contamination from the Latin Catholics, for 28 years I had to conscientiously use my voice and pen and all other weapons I deemed most useful in order to extinguish evil and enlighten with the truthful facts the supreme mind of the ruler, always hostile towards the dogmas harmful to Catholicism. It seems to me that Dear Lord has blessed my too difficult and immeasurable effort, because, a while ago, I saw that the false Serbian bishop (S. Ljubibratić - N. Ž.) was banished from Dalmatia by the supreme decree. His pestilent cathedra was destroyed and now, with a new golden decree, worthy of the pious Catholic ruler, the Serbian clergy themselves are subjected, as they are constantly dependant on the jurisdiction of the Latin bishops. The attachment is a copy of the decree that, on the order of the illustrious Senate, was created by the supreme authorities of Dalmatia. It is my honour to humbly deliver it to your eminencies as a glorious trophy of the Catholic religion and a glorious sign of Venetian piety" (p. 78-79). There is a whole series of specific data on prohibition of religious service by Orthodox priests that was imposed by the Venetian authorities, as well as on the insistence of the Catholic prelates and parsons that Orthodoxy should be completely suppressed. Bishop Ljubibratić was banished from Venetian Dalmatia, with the explanation that he had been ordained by Serbian Patriarch.

### **c) The Illyrian Training of the Catholic Clergy**

On 16 September 1742, Pope Benedict XIV was presiding over a session of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, at which the issue of converting the Dalmatian Serbs to Catholicism was discussed. "In *The Great Minute-Book*, it was stated that the Zadar Archbishop expressed 'keen interest' in the movement and behaviour of the Serbs and in the election of the head of the church of Nin, 'in whose diocese there were numerous Serbs'. The Zadar Archbishop was especially eager to remove 'the schismatic Serbian Bishop' who was dependent on the Patriarch of Peć. To provide for a faster and easier conversion of Serbs, the Zadar Archbishop founded a

seminary in the 'Illyrian' (Serbian) literary language and science, necessary for his proselytist service. It was decided that the new seminary in Zadar should be called 'Illyrian', because the students would be 'of Illyrian nationality' (Slavs, that is Serbs). The students – future Illyrian (Slavic) Roman Catholic priests – would be preaching in 'the Illyrian' language 'everything that was essential for preserving the Catholic religion among Catholics and for spreading faith among the Turks (Muslim Serbs) and 'schismatics' (Orthodox Serbs) that did not know any other language. Such 'Illyrian' Catholic priests were most suitable for mingling among the 'schismatic' Serbs and spreading Roman religion. At the meeting of 16 September 1742, a very convenient method for converting the Serbs was suggested - the 'education' of the students at papal colleges in Loreto, Fermo and 'the propagandist one in Rome', the St. Jerome. They intended to establish a department (course) in the 'Illyrian' literary language, 'as it was necessary to persuade everyone of the truth that the Serbs would rather learn from an Illyrian (Catholic) priest than their own monks or priests, who asked a lot of money from their students due to the common avarice of the Greeks'. The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to direct the proselytist activity at the Orthodox people from Bosnia and Lika. There were several reasons for this. 'The Serbian schismatic Bishop' (S. Ljubibratić) who was dependent on the Patriarch of Peć was banished from Dalmatia since the Zadar Archbishop had pressed for that; and Venice decided to prevent the ordaining ('introducing') of the Serbian priests in Dalmatia, in order to put the Serbian parsons in the hands of 'the Latin bishops'. The Congregation persisted on separating the Dalmatian Serbian parsons from the 'schismatic' Serbian bishops, dependent on the Patriarch of Peć. In order to confront 'this troublesome situation', the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to push for appointing Uniate bishops instead of the Orthodox Serbian ones – even at its expense. They feared that a 'schismatic' bishop could succeed a Catholic bishop with the help of 'Greek money'. The Vatican considered that even the Roman Catholic bishops should adjust to performing their rituals 'following the model of the Serbian ritual that is identical to the Ruthenian one' – that is, the Uniate one (the Greek Catholic). In order to realise the conversion of the Serbs more easily, many Roman Catholic priests received the assignment to convert to Uniate priests so that they could perform the rituals according to the Uniate model" (p. 80-81).

#### **d) The Orthodoxy in Dalmatia under Various Regimes**

The Serbs and their Orthodox priests desperately resisted Uniatism and conversion to Catholicism – and especially institutional authority of the Latin bishops over Serbian parsons, which was decreed by the Venetian state authority. One part of the Serbs finally succumbed to the pressures and accepted conversion to the Western Christian religion and, in 1753, the Venetian authorities banished the new Serbian Bishop Simeon Končarević from Dalmatia, at the request of the Zadar Archbishop Matija Karaman. That same Karaman "composed a document against the Orthodox Serbs in 1744 and, in September 1750, inquisitors issued an order that a Serbian priest can only perform the parochial service after an exam at the curia of a bishop in whose diocese the parish in question is located. The Roman Catholic bishops were given the right to appoint parsons in Orthodox parishes, using their patents. It was forbidden for Orthodox priests to do the service without the bishop's patents and to bless mixed marriages without the

permission of the bishop in charge, under threat of jail, monetary fine or banishment from the country. All Orthodox rectors and church tutors were obliged to greet Latin bishops on the occasion of their canonical visitations” (p. 82). In order to neutralise the resistance of the Serbs and prevent further turmoil in one way or another, the Venetian authorities formed the Philadelphian Orthodox Archdiocese in Venice in 1762 to include all the Orthodox people in its territory under its rule. Religious tolerance was a bit more pronounced under Napoleon’s rule and, when Austria took over the ex-Venetian territories, it achieved the conversion to Uniatism of the Orthodox Dalmatian Bishop Venedikt Kraljević in 1818, under the threat of being deposed from the bishop’s throne. During his comprehensive proselytist offensive, “Austrian Emperor Franz I, at the proposal of the Uniate Archbishop of Przemyśl, appointed the missionaries of the Union in Dalmatia - canon Aleksij Stupnicki, Prefect Jakov Cerovski of the Greek-Catholic seminary in Lviv and the catechist of the high school in Czernowicz, Vasiliy Terlecky. The Emperor ordered them to keep the objective of their mission a secret and to start growing beard so as not to arouse distrust of the Orthodox people in Dalmatia. The canon Stupnitsky was appointed rector of the newly-established seminary in Šibenik at the same time. In the spring of 1820, these missionaries came to Zadar and started currying favour with the Orthodox people, reading the liturgy and singing in Orthodox churches, trying to win their approval. The second attempt of Uniatism occurred in 1832 and 1835, especially in Drniš and to a lesser extent in Vrlika. After numerous successful proselytist actions, a relatively small number of Orthodox Serbs remained in the territory of Dalmatia. A certain number of them kept their Serbian name, whereas they were religiously determined as Roman Catholics. According to the statistical census data from 1880, of 476,000 citizens, there were 79,000 Orthodox. According to the census of 1900, out of 593,000 citizens, 96,000 were Orthodox” (p. 84).

When the process of religious conversion to Catholicism was completed, the Vatican began supporting the publishing of books whose authors, like Krunoslav Draganović and Mile Bogović, set out the thesis that it was the Serbian Orthodox Church that had been conducting the process of forcible conversion of Catholic Croats to Orthodoxy throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it is a well-known historical fact that the members of the Orthodox Church had never conducted any kind of missionary activity under Turkish rule. “Together with K. Draganović, the entire team of Ustasha ideologists and historians of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) worked on the assignment of spreading Roman Catholicism and Croatiandom with their works to Drina, Boka and Srem. With help from the Vatican, new Croatian national foundations were created by spreading the Croatiandom to the Bogomils (Patarenos) and Muslims. They persisted in establishing the theses that the Croatian noblemen and the people in Bosnia converted to Islam during the Ottoman rule, while they had been Patarenos at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. They claimed that the Turks had conquered centuries-old Croatian territories, such as the towns of Bihać and Banja Luka. The Venetians were accused of spreading the Dalmatian name ‘which, until the 15<sup>th</sup> century was as little as at the time of the Byzantine Empire’. They emphasized that ‘the Vlachs of the Eastern Greek religion’ settled in ‘the Croatian regions’” (p. 86-87).

## 9. Vitezović More Significant as Ideologist than Starčević

Žutić considers Paul Ritter Vitezović to be a more significant ideologist of the Greater Croatian nationalism than Ante Starčević himself, because he “cunningly identified the Croatiandom with the Illyrian idea. Namely, Ritter contributed most to placing the Vatican Illyrian idea in the service of creating ‘Greater Croatia’ – that is, expanding the ‘apostolic’ Austrian Empire” (p. 87). Although of German origin and born in Senj in 1652, Ritter Vitezović attended the Jesuit gymnasium in Zagreb and grew into a leading Croatian Roman Catholic fighter of his time. In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, at the time of the Austrian-Venetian dispute over the conquered Dalmatian territories, “Ritter was working in the interests of the Habsburg dynasty, which is why he used all his ‘historical knowledge’ to prove, with ‘scientific arguments’, that Venice did not have a right to that part of Croatia in the name of some imaginary Dalmatia. Ritter considered the Habsburgs to be Croatian kings and defended the unity of Croatian lands on behalf of Austria. Consequently, it seems that Austria indispensably needed ‘Greater Croatia’ due to the pragmatic reasons of expanding their territories to the south and east... Ritter saw the liberation of the Christian lands under the Ottomans as a chance to initiate the idea of restituting the Croatia that had seemingly existed in the middle ages before the Turkish conquest. It was necessary to inform the world about what Croatia used to be and where its borders had reached. The Austrian military victory over the Turks should be used in the spiritual sphere as well (‘the Catholic harvest’), so Ritter took up writing about it” (p. 88). He printed the forty-page booklet entitled *Revived, that is Newly Born Croatia*, written in Latin. At the beginning of the book, there is a false Illyrian coat-of-arms, found on the Bogomil tombstones [*stećci*] inside Bosnian Orthodox graves and on the coins of the Hungarian-Slavonian Herzog Andras Arpad from a later period. The coat-of-arms has a white crescent with a yellow six-point star on the blue background of the shield. “Ritter emphasised that the essential purpose of the written work was to explain the Croatian name and demonstrate ‘everything that is God-given in the Croatian lands’... Ritter’s main argument confirming the former ‘huge’ Croatian territory, which should be ‘revived’ by restoring the earlier borders, was the identification of Illyria, that is the Illyrians and Slavs. At this point, Ritter established the ‘rule’ that the terms Illyrian, Slavic and Croatian were just three synonyms for a single term. Consequently, he concluded that the term Croatia should include everything that the Romans had called *Illyricum*, except for Retia and a part of Noricum on the west side, and Achaia and the Aegean islands in the south” (p. 91).

Accordingly, Ritter Vitezović arrived at the construction of “the entire Croatia” that he afterwards divided into the north and south parts, then the south one into “White Croatia” and “Red Croatia”. According to his projection, the White one would include Primorje, Zagorje, Međurečje and “Alpine Croatia”, i.e. Carniola, Carinthia and Styria. “Red Croatia was divided into Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Thrace... Šišić concluded that, for Ritter, “South Croatia’ was the land of all the South Slavs (Slovenes, Serbs, Croats and Bulgarians). According to Ritter, “North Croatia’ was the land of all other West and East Slavs (Slovaks, Czechs, Poles and Russians). Therefore, to Ritter,

Pan-Slavism was actually Pan-Croatianism generically. Namely, Ritter started from the point of view that the common name for all the Slavs used to be Croatian. Ritter knew very well that all those countries – the former ‘large’ and ‘extinguished’ Croatias and the ‘revived Croatias’ after the Great War of Vienna – had their own borders, names, state coats-of-arms and national customs. However, it was not a serious obstacle for him to claim that in all those countries lived only one nation, Illyrian or Slavic – that is, Croatian – fragmented into a multitude of individual tribes that spoke only different dialects of one and the same Illyrian or Slavic or Croatian language” (p. 91-92). That idea of Pan-Croatiandom was eagerly accepted later by Ljudevit Gaj, Ante Starčević and Eugen Kvaternik, all of them Illyrian and Croatian Party of Rights ideologists; it was also accepted by the Viennese court, which had an immense trust in Ritter’s proven Germanophilia and loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Franjo Rački claimed that the medieval “Slavism” was synonymous with “Croatianism”, while polemizing with Lazar Tomanović on the thesis that Andrija Kačić Miošić was a Serbian writer. In 1747, Ritter’s immediate successor, the Franciscan from Vrlika, Filip Grabovac, identified the Slovene and Illyrian name with the Croatian in his book *The Flower of Nation’s Conversations and the Illyrian or Croatian Language*. However, Grabovac’s animosity towards the members of the Orthodox Church clearly revealed his complex about conversion. “The information that Grabovac’s ancestors had come to Vrlika, which was converted to Catholicism, from Ravni Kotari in Serbia (the village of Medari) testifies to Grabovac’s non-Croatian origin” (p. 95).

### **10. Roman Catholic Expansionism as the Basis of the Pan-Slavism of Ljudevit Gaj**

Like Ritter, Ljudevit Gaj too was of German origin, but he did not finish a Jesuit high school, but rather a Franciscan one in Varždin and Karlovac. Apart from these two Germans, until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the creators of the contemporary Croatian “national” wonder all were Roman Catholic priests “Namely, over a long period of time, the Habsburgs and the Vatican saw the Illyrian Movement as an integral factor, whose aim was to unify, and religiously and spatially connect the Balkan historical lands (regions) into a whole. Through the Illyrian Movement, the Roman religious ideology was to be spread in the name of ‘the apostolic Habsburg Emperor’” (p. 97). As a matter of fact, Gaj’s political goals were highly transparent, even at the beginning of his mission. As Nikola Žutić emphasises: “Gaj would use the re-activation of the Roman Catholic Greater Croatian ideas, under the mock ‘Illyrian’ name, to oppose them to the objective danger of the strengthening of the Serbian national movement after the creation of autonomous Serbia in 1830” (p. 98). Through the ideology of the Illyrian Movement, Gaj tried to realise Croatian national integration, using the wide Serbian ethnic base and accepting the Serbian language as a literary one. “Gaj’s Pan-Croatian Illyrian movement, as well as Ritter’s, served the Austrian interests against Hungarian aspirations for independence, and also as a defence from ‘the northern heretics’. On the other hand, it was intended to draw Slavic nations and the neighbouring Slavic countries close to Austria, since they were exposed to the influence of Orthodox Russia and autonomous Orthodox Serbia. From this stemmed Gaj’s Pan-Slavic commitment, which was based on a concealed Austro-Slavic feature and even more on concealed Roman Catholic expansionism. In order to establish Pan-Croatianism in the so-called ‘Croatian

lands', the ideologists of the Illyrian Movement insisted on the shtokavian nations in order to assimilate (unify) the so-called 'Croatian' language of 'three dialects' (shtokavian, kajkavian, chakavian). The dialects of Chakavians and Kajkavians, that were in the minority, were to be dismissed, and the Serbian Shtokavian was to be prescribed as the official dialect of Croatians" (p. 102).

Since the distinguished Slavist Jernej Kopitar insisted on the fact that the shtokavian dialect belonged only to the Serbian language, and Kajkavian to Slovenian, so the Croatian one could only be chakavian, as Franc Miklošić claimed as well; Bishop Maksimilijan Vrhovec as a gray eminence of Gaj's movement, demanded that Kajkavian should be included as shtokavian, since it had been exposed to its influence for a long time. It is particularly significant that the Illyrian Movement had massive and energetic support from the Roman Catholic clergy as long as it lasted. "Many front persons of the Illyrian Movement were the Roman Catholic priests, for example: Pavao Štos, Fra Martin Nedić and numerous Bosnian Franciscans, the rector Tomaž Mikloušić □□ a forerunner of the Illyrian Movement, etc. Bishop Aleksandar Alagović (1760-1837) recommended to the Roman Catholic clergy that they read Gaj's *Novine* and *Danica*<sup>23</sup>. Prof. Nikola Žic emphasised that Gaj precisely in 'the Croatian clergy found the most experienced and the most thrilled followers and supporters for his work and success'. Apart from 'the domestic people', the Illyrian movement was supported by 'the newcomers' □□ the Roman Catholics from Hungary and Slovakia: Ban Vlašić (otherwise Hungarian), the Zagreb clergyman Mojzes, Bishop Aleksandar (Šandor) Alagović (from Slovakia), Bishop-Cardinal Haulik. That the views of the Illyrians were reactionary 'was proved by the *Mađaroni* (pro-Hungarian activists) by the fact that there were a lot of members of the Church among them. Antun Barac states that 'the most boisterous of Gaj's followers were the Zagreb seminarians and the majority of the lower priests" (p. 106). Supported by the church prelates, the Roman Catholic theologians formed various patriotic societies in many places. "*The Choir of Regular Bosnian Youth*<sup>24</sup> that was formed in Đakovo in 1855, and then moved to Ostrogon in 1876, brought up the educated Roman Catholic clerics that undertook 'the holy' missionary duties in Orthodox-Muslim Bosnia and Herzegovina, casually noting down the Serbian folk songs that they published as Croatian. Friar I. Jukić especially excelled in those activities" (p. 107-108). It was obvious that, as one of its main goals, the Illyrian Movement in Croatia and Slavonia had to defend the Roman Catholic exclusivity of these territories faced with Orthodox and Protestant danger. That Pope Pius IX pinned great hopes on Zagreb as a Catholic centre testifies the fact that in 1850, he raised the Zagreb diocese to the rank of archdiocese, subjecting to it the Bosnian or Đakovačka-Sremska, Senjska-Modruška or Krbavska and Križevačka diocese. "In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Austria and the Vatican accepted the Yugoslav (Pan-Slavic) name, apart from the Illyrian one, as a possible means of spreading Germanism and Roman Catholicism in the name of the apostolic Austrian Emperor and the Roman Pope" (p. 110). As early as 26 July 1843, Austria became a formal protector of the Institute of Saint Jerome in Rome as well, and in it, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Yugoslav name was being more frequently used than the Illyrian one.

<sup>23</sup> the Croatian daily newspapers that Gaj started

<sup>24</sup> a literary society

### a) Croatianisation as the Essence of Illyrianisation

The Yugoslav national identity within the Austro-Hungarian framework seemed like a way of efficient opposition to the Greater Hungarian separatist aspirations for a long time. With the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII from 1 August 1901, the Institute of Saint Jerome definitively got a Croatian attribute in its name. By so doing, the Vatican adopted a project in which all Catholics who spoke the Serbian language were of Croatian nationality, enforcing a more aggressive realisation of it. Although the Pope returned the Illyrian name to this institute the following year due to the pressures of Dalmatian and *Bokeljski* Serbian Catholics, as well as Dalmatian 'pro-Italians', the basic project of Croatianisation was never given up. The Hungarian officials fiercely opposed the Vatican formation of the new Croatian nation, demonstrating that both the Yugoslav and the Croatian name of this distinguished institute were equally unacceptable to them, though the institute came under the authority of the Yugoslav delegation in Rome in 1924. "Finally, after the visit of Yugoslav President Josip Broz to the Vatican in April 1971, at the time of the so-called '*maspok*'<sup>25</sup>, Pope Pavle VI gave the name 'the Croatian Papal Institute of Saint Jerome' to the Illyrian Institute of Saint Jerome on 22 July 1971" (p. 119). After the First Croatian Catholic Congress in Zagreb in 1990, clericalism was gradually becoming the basic Croatian political option, especially after the death of Stjepan Radić, the last distinguished anti-clerical. The clericals were systematically taking over the primacy in all spheres of social life of the Yugoslav Catholics, having as their principal aim the creation of a Croatian Catholic fortress, a support for a further Eastern proselytizing renaissance. "The creation of a Unitarian Roman Catholic Croatia, especially during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was the imperative of the time for the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church, because it had an invaluable significance for the realisation of successful missionary and proselytizing activity in the Balkans. Over time, the converted Serbians (the converts) and the Roman Catholic foreigners (Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenians, Italians, Ruthenians, Hungarians, etc.) of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and the greater part of the Balkans were adopting the Croatian name and becoming the purest, chosen Croats. Thus, Croatia was actually becoming a great uni-national creation in an ever-greater proportion, without national minorities" (p. 156). This was particularly noticeable in 1995, when the Croatian authorities, in armed, brutally terrorist actions banished en masse almost all Orthodox Serbs from the Krajina.

### 11. The Animosity of the Roman Catholic Church towards Stjepan Radić

It is also a significant piece of information that the anti-clerical moves of Stjepan Radić led to his murder. "According to the testimony of Korošec's Head of Cabinet, Stanko Majcen, on the night before the assassination, Puniša Račić spent several hours talking with Korošec 'behind closed doors' in the Ministry of Domestic Affairs in Belgrade. On the same day, 19 June 1928, P. Račić was also seen inside the Palace, and according to the historian Bogdan Krizman, his father Hinko Krizman claimed that Korošec had warned the members of the Yugoslav Club not to sit behind the members

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<sup>25</sup> The Croatian Spring, "mass movement" was a political movement from the early 1970s that called for greater rights for Croatia, which was then part of Yugoslavia.



of the Croatian Peasant Party on the June 20, where they regularly sat. Already on the June 20, as Minister of Domestic Affairs, Korošec ordered all district prefects to suppress every newspaper that would 'unfaithfully represent the sad case in the National Assembly'. Instead of a resignation due to a serious attack on internal peace in the country and the responsibility of the office of which he was in charge, Korošec, as the first non-Serbian, became Premier on 27 July 1928" (p. 287). Otherwise, Anton Korošec was a Roman Catholic priest, a leading Slovenian clerical and the leader of the Slovenian Human Party. The animosity of the leading Catholic circles towards Stjepan Radić reached its climax after his attack on the papal nuncio Pellegrinetti in 1926. It was going so far that some distinguished clericals publicly demanded Radić's removal from political life, or were openly pleased after the murder in the Assembly and the wounding of the chief leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party. "In *Hrvatski List (The Croatian Paper)* of Osijek, from November 1926, a clerical member, Dr Kerubin Šegvić, sharply criticized S. Radić, expressing the wish to see him removed from political life, but not murdered. He called him 'the leader of the quarrelling parties, the blind and the drunks'. His removal would be 'the most significant deed committed in the entire Croatian history'. In Dragoljub Jovanović's view, the case of Šegvić demonstrated the hatred nourished by the clericals towards Radić, giving an example of a friar in Dalmatia, who after the assassination in the Assembly, cheered: 'Long live Puniša Račić', at the same time having high hopes for Korošec as the Minister of Domestic Affairs" (p. 286-287). The Vatican could never forget the fact that Stjepan Radić himself, as Royal Yugoslav Minister, prevented the ratification of an already clinched agreement in 1925. 'Because of Radić's domination over the peasantry in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia; the clericals thought that if he disappeared they would win over the peasantry for their clerical and political aims" (p. 287).

According to the views of Vasa Kazimirović as well, who one of the best connoisseurs of Yugoslav history between the wars, ". . . it is more than certain that the accusations against the King were unfounded. The King had never considered the murder of Radić, even when the latter attacked and even offended him in the most direct manner. He only wanted to destroy him politically, and to win him over afterwards □□ which confirms the fact that Radić was imprisoned by his order, and that he was the first to later get in touch with Radić while imprisoned, before Nikola Pašić. The fact that must be taken into consideration is that, at the time when the assassination occurred, the collaboration of Radić with King Aleksandar was at its closest. The King's wish was his command. Carrying out the King's order, Radić had threatened the representatives of the majority that a general would soon come to power and disperse them, as they deserved. That was three months before the bloody event in the National Assembly, on 5 March 1928. Some twenty days later, on 26 April 1928, he again threatened the representatives of the majority that a general would take the position as the premier. 'The mere idea that a general will be a premier is important', he said. 'That means that the King gets a position that he should have to be an arbiter, a judge between two sides. What is more natural than that a king, who represents the grandeur of a monarchy, makes a compromise as an arbiter? Accordingly, it is natural that a general, who is not a partisan but a representative of the king, comes to power'" (Vasa Kazimirović: *Serbia and Yugoslavia*, Kragujevac 1995, p. 513). The author quotes Radić's speech according to the stenographic notes of the National Assembly on 26 April 1928.

## **12. The Catholic Priest, Antun Korošec, the Most Perfidious Politician of the Kingdom**

Antun Korošec was, without any doubt, the most perfidious and crooked politician in the entire political arena of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The Roman Catholic friar, with a highly developed Jesuit manner, skilfully concealed his anti-Serbian hatred and scorn, but did not at all hesitate from delivering blows to Croatian separatism when he believed that the Slovenians could exploit it. For Korošec, utility was the highest criterion of morality, and his unscrupulousness and perfidiousness were proverbial. “The wave on which Korošec was persistently riding, which made him an almost unavoidable factor on the political stage of Yugoslavia, was the tension between Croatian and Serbian relations. Taking the adage ‘where two quarrel, a third one wins’ as a starting point, he himself worked on the deepening of the Croatian-Serbian conflict with remarkable skilfulness, always succeeding in making a profit for his Slovenia. He is even claimed to have been one of the initiators of the assassination of Stjepan Radić and the attacks on the members of the Croatian Peasant Party in the National Assembly. However, there is no completely reliable evidence to prove that. One thing is sure starting from 1918, the relations between Radić and Korošec were never good. Even in the first month of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, when Radić flared up with separatist requests and actions, Korošec rose up against him. Still, it was not because he cared so much about the Yugoslav state, but because he was afraid of a Croatian hegemony over the Slovenians” (Second Book, p. 515-516).

Skillfully catering to the Belgrade ruling circles, Korošec was persistent in attacking Radić for separatism, Bolshevism and anti-Serbian feeling. As Kazimirović states in a special reference: “One of those politicians who connected Korošec with the shedding of blood in the National Assembly was Dr Janko Baričević. At the 31<sup>st</sup> regular meeting of the National Assembly, on 3 March 1937, he said: ‘After the murder in the National Assembly, Puniša Račić escaped to a tavern. The owner of the tavern notified the city manager that Račić was at his place, and asked for advice about what to do with him. He got the reply: ‘Wait until I ask Minister Korošec!’ A while later, the city manager called and said, ‘Get in the car, bring Puniša Račić with you and take him straight to the Minister of Domestic Affairs!’ That tavern owner, whom Baričević mentioned, was the famous Belgrade caterer, Đorđe Popara, the father-in-law of the longstanding president of the Main Association of Serbian Agricultural Cooperatives and Minister Vojislav Đorđević, who, defending his father-in-law and Korošec against Baričević’s accusations in the National Assembly, said that Korošec was ‘a grand figure of a statesman, a politician who met his match only in few people from the public political arena of today’ (p. 516). Otherwise an outstanding Machiavellianist by nature, Anton Korošec in practice proved to be a strong-armed thug. Kazimirović says that he was “. . . a champion of Vatican politics in every respect” (p. 518). For him, Rome was the one and only acceptable ideological orientation, and the incarnation of “positive spiritual strength”. For this reason, he had to remove Stjepan Radić from the political stage, so that he would not disturb the political actions of the Roman Catholic Church with his instability and circus-like rope-dancing; and at the same time to deliver a strong blow to the Serbian political aspirations by the act of murder.

### **13. The Prosecution of the Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina under Austrian Rule**

The manipulative technique that the Roman Catholic Church practiced in the process of constructing the artificial Croatian nation had not been completely conceptualised in advance. It was preceded by long decades of wondering and experimentation with the Illyrian Movement and the Yugoslav national identity. However, once elaborately worked out, it was more easily applied, and encountered less opposition among the Serbian Catholic masses. When Strossmayer and Rački got involved, the Catholics in Slavonia and the Military Krajina were indoctrinated. Likewise, the Roman Catholic priest Mihovil Pavlinović led that manipulative affair in Dalmatia. At the time of the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the technical process was already perfected and well-tested in practice. That is why it was probably the most efficient there. A detailed description of its implementation is given in the book *Serbia and Yugoslavia 1914-1945 (Prizma – Kragujevac, Centar Film – Belgrade, Kragujevac 1995)*, by Vasa Kazimirović. According to his view, “the agitator of angry Serbo-phobia in Bosnia and Herzegovina, before and after the creation of the Yugoslav country, was the leaders of the Catholic Church, even the Catholic Church as a whole. The first full-scale action of the Catholic Church against the Serbians was initiated immediately after the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Under the new conditions (and due to the fact that the Vatican appointed the Austrian court as the protector of Catholicism in the entire south-east), the Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina became a kind of state religion, a religious organisation to which the authorities were obliged to offer full and the fullest support, with the aim of spreading Catholicism among the members of other religions as well” (p. 305-306).

It is interesting that Kazimirović came across the information that there had been oppositions to that kind of policy in the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg royal family as well. “In order to convert Bosnia into a first-class Catholic country, a secret association was also founded at the Habsburg Court, whose leaders were, among other eminent Austrian and influential figures, the brother of Emperor Franz Joseph, Carl Ludwig; and Erzherzog Albrecht. That association was active, but, in Vienna itself, it had a very reputable opponent: Crown Prince Rudolf. Having liberal views, he had fierce disputes with Erzherzog Albrecht in the very first year of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He demanded that the policy of converting Bosnia and Herzegovina to Catholicism should be abandoned, and especially that the plans for converting the members of the Orthodox Church to the Catholic religion should be given up. Since those appeals had no effect, Rudolf turned to writing articles for different newspapers, by which he wanted to inform the public that there was a secret association for converting Bosnia and Herzegovina to Catholicism. In one of his first articles, he said that this association was only one of the secret clerical associations under the command of the Jesuits, and that it could be dangerous for Austria’s interests. Rudolf wrote that the aspirations of forcibly imposing the Catholic religion on the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially on the Orthodox Serbs, meant nothing more than the creation of eternal enemies to Austria. Emphasising that big differences existed between the Orthodox people and the Catholics, which would never vanish, Rudolf declared that a true and fair policy would be that the government in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not support any religion, and that it be equally tolerant and fair towards the members of all

religions. Crown Prince Rudolf particularly outlined the detrimental aspects of indentifying state interests with the interests of the Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All the actions taken by Crown Prince Rudolf to unmask the most influential members of the royal family on the one hand, and to force his own father to choose a policy of respecting all the religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other hand, had little success. The secret association for converting Bosnia and Herzegovina to Catholicism, for turning these countries into a bastion of Catholicism and a spring-board for its spreading to the entire Southeast, continued with its activities, by, among other methods, bringing the Jesuits to Bosnia. As for Emperor Franz Joseph, at one moment, when forced by state interests, he would publicly manifest that he was not 'ill-disposed' towards and 'without understanding' for other religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (p. 306-307).

### **a) The Croatianisation of the Bosnian Catholics and the Exclusive, Croatian Course of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Catholic population under Austrian occupation was enticed to give in to the Croatian national option by skilful friars' demagogic sermons, but even more by putting them in a seemingly privileged social, economic and political position. As Kazimirović states, "... the pro-Catholic politics of Vienna in Bosnia and Herzegovina were working mostly to the Croats' advantage. As Catholics, the Croats were predisposed to be not only supported, but also forced to act to the detriment of the Serbs and the Muslims. This was brought to the attention of 'the conductor of the occupation', General Filipović. The chief of the general staff, von Bek, briefed him on, among other things, the fact that the Catholics should be given special attention, since they were 'reliable, and showed a friendly attitude towards the aspirations of the Monarchy'. Being a Catholic and a Croatian himself, General Filipović followed the guidelines most consistently. As soon as he became established in Sarajevo, he dedicated himself to 'a watchful care' of the Catholic, that is, the 'Croatian element'. In a relatively short time, he introduced 'an exclusive, Croatian course' in the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina. The result was that, among other things, the Croatian language and 'Croatian name' were promoted in both regions, with the full engagement of the Catholic Church. All government announcements and newspapers were printed in the Latin script and 'the distinctive language of the Croatian administration'. The Serbian name was suppressed, as well as the use of the Cyrillic alphabet. It remained a banished script until May 1880, as long as General Filipović was in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, after numerous and severe protests by the Serbs, things changed after all" (p. 307).

The newly formed "Croats" soon coped with their new role, and they were considerably strengthened by an influx of various foreign Roman Catholic elements, which filled in the gaps of the clerical apparatus. "Though they were in the minority, the Croats strove to present themselves to Vienna as the main factor in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at the same time, as the only reliable 'state element'. Also, they did not miss one opportunity to emphasise that these regions were Croatian lands, and that they should be annexed to Croatia. As time passed, the 'Croatian element' in Bosnia and Herzegovina was becoming more intolerant towards the Serbs, and more merciless in their aspirations to repress them. The situation was particularly intensified by the arrival of Josip Štadler from Zagreb, who took the post of archbishop in Sarajevo.

Consequently, Croats started to settle in Bosnia and Herzegovina in huge proportions. At the proposal of Štadler, the newspaper *Hrvatski dnevnik* (*The Croatian Journal*) was started in Sarajevo in 1906. As Todor Kruševac stated, the exclusive Croatian standpoints particularly surfaced in the numerous attacks on the Serbians and their political aspirations'. In this same year, again at Štadler's proposal, a resolution was adopted at an assembly of Croats in Doc, demanding from the Austrian Emperor that Bosnia and Herzegovina be annexed to Croatia. As it can be concluded, this resolution was externally initiated, and was in reality a test-kite for the forthcoming annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (p. 308).

Here, clericalism, a totalitarian political concept, manifested its anti-Serb demands and proved its remarkable, manipulative abilities to the extreme. Of course, the key significance of its success lay in the fact that it represented the interests, and enjoyed the support of, the then most powerful European Roman Catholic Empire; thus, the state and church organs could co-ordinate their efforts to the maximum. "In its efforts to maximally Croatianise Bosnia and Herzegovina, to convert it to Catholicism and create the conditions for its annexation to Croatia, the Catholic Church did not hesitate from even the most direct involvement in everyday politics. Under the leadership of Štadler, a Catholic political party was founded the Croatian Catholic Community (Association). Archbishop Štadler's main supporter was the Imperial Viennese Court the Emperor himself, and with him Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand. The Emperor considered Štadler 'his dear child', because he himself had appointed him as the first archbishop on 16 August 1881 (right after the conclusion of the agreement between the Vatican and Austro-Hungary on the establishment of a secular church hierarchy over the archdiocese in Sarajevo, on 8 June 1881). Fully loyal to the Imperial Court and Austro-Hungary as a state, Štadler went to Vienna on 27 November 1908, in order to personally express his gratitude to the Emperor for the promulgation of the annexation. As he said it on that occasion, with that act, the Monarchy had 'performed a historic deed'. However, he did not go to Vienna by himself, but with 430 more Croats from all the regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During his audience with Emperor Franz Joseph, Štadler, among other things, stated: 'Our homeland is obliged to you, because as Catholics, you secured us our freedom of religion; and as Croats, our survival'" (p. 308-309).

Insisting on the Roman Catholic exclusivity of Croatianhood, Štadler constantly demonstrated an open religious intolerance towards Islam and Orthodoxy, as well as a national hatred towards Serbians. "Never giving up the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be annexed to Croatia, Štadler was against every 'Yugoslav scheme', and due to that, unlike the elders of the Catholic Church in Croatia and Slovenia, he did not even want to hear about the May declaration of the representatives of the South Slavs in the Imperial Council in Vienna in 1917. In the *Hrvatski dnevnik* (from 17 November 1917), he stated that 'the state and legal question of the South of the Monarchy' must be solved only 'in a Croatian sense, on the foundation of the Croatian state and legal right, and with the intact preservation of Croatian national and state individuality', with the unification of all Croatian lands – Bosnia and Herzegovina among them – 'into a political and financial autonomous state body with the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole'. In the end, Štadler did not live to see the Yugoslav country, which he had been so against, and against which he had campaigned so much. He died suddenly, leaving behind precisely sixteen children, almost as many as Bishop Josip Georg Strossmayer, as Austrian sources point out. His successor was Ivan Šarić, who at

the very least felt the same Serbophobia and hatred towards Yugoslavia. Well-educated and speaking almost all the main European languages, Šarić skilfully, but inconsiderately, persistently carried out an anti-Serbian policy on the one hand; and on the other, a Greater Croatian one, during which his starting point (like Štadler's) was that Bosnia and Herzegovina were 'purely Croatian lands', and that there was no place for the Orthodox Serbs in them" (p. 309-310).

That is precisely the kind of clerical ideology that could reach its climax in the Ustasha movement and the quisling Independent State of Croatia. "When the Ustasha country was founded, Šarić became the leading propagator of the Ustasha movement, and just as he had blessed the soldiers from Bosnia that were going to war against Serbia in 1914, he also blessed the Ustashas who were committing crimes against Serbs in 1941, calling them 'Christ's soldiers'. Among the Croatian politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who especially stood out with their Serbophobia by spreading hatred towards Serbs, one of the most eminent was Dr Nikola Mandić. The deputy of a provincial governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina during World War I, he continued to carry out an anti-Serbian policy even after the foundation of Yugoslavia, and, in the end, he would become the premier in the Ustasha Croatian-Muslim state. That Mandić was filled with hatred towards Serbia and Serbs also testifies his public announcement on 22 February 1915. In the presence of Kerber, a minister of Austro-Hungary, he demanded, in the name of 'the population' of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that the 'persecutor' nation of Serbia should be 'adequately punished, because of their destructive machinations and their unjustly shedding of the precious royal blood of martyrs; so that their disastrous flow into the kindred part of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina would be impeded once and for all'" (p. 310). It is probably useful to mention here that after the removal of the provincial governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Oskar Počorek, due to his disastrous defeats on the Serbian front, a Croatian, Stjepan Sarkotić, took his position. His Croatianhood was guarantee enough that systematic and massive crimes over the Serbian nation would be committed with the greatest of enthusiasm. After defeat in the war, Sarkotić was the main pivot of the gathering of the Croatian political emigration, that was more and more gaining the form of the Ustasha movement.

#### **IV. Vasilije Krestić on the Greater-Croatian Genocidal Character**

Pointing out the fact that the creators of the Croatian national consciousness have been producing anti-Serbian hatred for a century and a half, and bearing in mind that the mere existence of the Serbian nation represents the greatest obstacle to the realisation of the ideological, empty phrase of the Croatian state and historical right, Vasilije Đ. Krestić, in his book *Through Genocide to the Greater Croatia* (Gambit, Jagodina 2002) demonstrates how the Croats – from the time of Jelačić's bloody campaigns in the revolutionary year of 1848, to present day – ". . . intended to create a great, ethnically clean and Catholic state,. Since the Serbs were not ready to renounce their national identity and the Serbian Orthodox religion, they were always under attack by the Croatian political parties and numerous highly eminent individuals, who based the Croatian thought about the state on a so-called state and historical right. . . The ideas of the genocidal extermination of the Serbs and of a great, both ethnically and Catholic pure Croatia, outlived all state frameworks, and political and social systems. Like a red

thread, they connected the ideas of Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik, Mihovil Pavlinović, Josip Frank, Frank Supilo, Stjepan Radić, Ante Pavelić and finally Franjo Tuđman” (p. 5-6). Even today, the situation has not significantly changed concerning that issue, only the genocidal methods have been improved in the meantime. “That policy is still, as it was a hundred years ago, completely based on “the state and historical right”, on the institution of the Croatian “political” (constitutive) nation, on the aspirations for creating a great, both ethnically and religiously (Catholic) pure Croatia. As long as it is like this, it should be known that Croatia will not be able to abandon genocide, and it will not give up the ancient aspirations of expanding its state borders – to the detriment of its neighbouring ethnic and state areas – in order to improve its not-really-enviable geopolitical position” (p. 6).

## 1. The Vatican Roots of the Anti-Serbian Genocidal Politics

Many people throughout the world could not understand the Croatians’ genocidal crime against the Orthodox Serbians during World War II, whose monstrous criminal methods and techniques greatly surpassed those of Hitler. It was impossible for them to understand that something like that could have actually happened, that it was possible, and especially the reasons for it. Thus it is necessary to study those events in a longer historical continuity, through the phases of the manifestation of criminal ideas, through the political promoting of criminal intentions and through the approaches to committing massive crimes. “As long as the question of the genocide over the Serbians in the Independent State of Croatia is considered in shorter temporal units, we will not have the necessary explanation of the phenomenon, but will shift the blame from one environment to the other, from one regime to the other, or to religious communities, or to some eminent figure. It will happen, as it has already happened, that the genocide over the Serbians, committed by the Ustashes, will be explained even by some racial characteristics of the Croatians, by the supposedly brutal acts executed in Croatia by the governing regimes between the two World Wars (1918-1941), the so-called Greater Serbian hegemonic politics and the January 6<sup>th</sup> Dictatorship. It was often attempted to justify and devalue the Ustashes’ crime, for the sake of peace at home; to establish a balance of guilt between the perpetrators and their victims” (p. 11). The roots of the anti-Serbian genocidal politics go back as far as the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, to the time of the massive-scale Serbian settlement in the uninhabited and devastated Croatian lands. “As they had settled on the lands of the Croatian feudalists, both spiritual and secular, the Serbians were exposed to a two-sided pressure: the pressure of being converting both to serfdom and Uniatism. They fiercely opposed it, as that would fundamentally change their social position, and they wanted to keep their status as free peasants and soldiers – boarder guards (*Krajišnici*) – at all costs. Famous for their religious intolerance □□ that was the characteristic of the entire feudal Europe at the time the Croatian nobles, in addition, enacted a special law at their council in 1608, which only recognised public rights to the members of the Catholic religion on Croatian state territory. The law followed the well-known slogan ‘whose land – his religion’. The Zagreb bishops in particular stuck to this motto, as well as other feudal landowners, as it was related to their functions and their positions in a class society. The principle expressed in this motto suited them not only for religious, but also for economic reasons. Namely, the Serbian Orthodox population, unlike the Catholic one, was not obliged to pay various

taxes to the Catholic Church and its clergy. Having kept the status of free peasants even after moving to Croatia and joining the military border-guard system a huge number of Serbs did not become serfs. Accordingly, they were not obliged to pay numerous feudal taxes, unlike the majority of the Croatian population. In order to sway them to this, the Croatian feudalists used all means available, not hesitating even over physical clashes with the tough and insubordinate ‘Orthodox schismatics’” (p. 15-16).

### a) Antagonism, the Precursor to Genocide

How much religious intolerance – underpinned with economic motives, greed and envy – came into play is proved by the fact that in 1700, Ambroz Kuzmić, as a property administrator of the Zagreb diocese, wrote that it would be better to massacre the Vlachs than let them settle, since, in every aspect, they harm the country and the Royal Highness, which would never find peace or tranquillity with the schismatics. “Clearly, they should have been massacred, since they were neither serfs nor Catholics, and they adamantly rejected the status of feudal subjects, with all its obligatory burdens. . . Accordingly, as early as the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we come across the information that the feudal circles of Croatia, for reasons of class and religious antagonism, were prepared for genocide over the Serbian Orthodox population who inhabited their lands – but under special conditions, and against the feudalists’ will, impinging on their rights as feudal masters. Even then, judging by the conflicts between the Serbian population settled in Croatia and the Croatian nobles, it was obvious that the Serbians in Croatia were uninvited guests, and not only were they unneeded, they were also undesired. They were treated as intruders. That attitude towards the *Krajišnici* (those inhabiting the Krajina regions), first of all the Orthodox Serbs, has been handed down from generation to generation, and is still present today. The crucial role in this belonged to the Croatian and Slavonian feudalists, both spiritual and secular. They maintained their powerful influence even after the collapse of feudalism in 1848 – in the middle-class and capitalistic society – on which they transmitted their attitudes and their burdens from the earlier periods of history. Due to that, not only did the old misunderstandings not stop; they were transferred into the new social and political system, which they poisoned, burdened and eroded with all their might. (p. 16-17).

In order to partially illustrate the ranges of the Croatian antagonism towards the Serbs in Dalmatia, where it was much weaker than in Croatia and Slavonia, Krestić quotes a fragment from a letter of Đorđe Nikolajević, a priest from Dubrovnik, in which he complained that the hardened Croatian chauvinists threatened that they would cut the Serbs from Dubrovnik to pieces. That letter is kept in the Historical Archive of Zadar, among the documents of the Orthodox Dalmatian eparchy, and it shows that the flames of the Croatians’ hatred subsided when the news about the reactions of the Orthodox Serbs from Kotor reached their initiators. As the protopope states, “the Serbs from Kotor sent word to the people from Dubrovnik not to use violence against their brothers there, because if they touched even one of them, they would not leave even one Catholic alive. However, this threat could not subdue the enraged people from Dubrovnik, until the second message came (which, if realised, would be very serious) that in the town of Budva, ten thousand Montenegrins had embarked on a ship, and were coming to visit them and ask what they were planning to do with the Serbians” (p. 17-18). In the same year, according to the testimony of the district chairman of the Serbian Orthodox



municipality, the people from Zagreb were openly threatening that they would massacre all the Serbians there when they heard about the election of a Serbian governor at the May assembly in Sremski Karlovci. “The antagonism between the Serbs from the Krajina and the Croatian feudalists, both spiritual and secular, lasted till the collapse of the class society, but over time it had changed and transformed. The attitude of the military circles in Vienna and Graz had a special significance for their relations and the antagonism that bore genocidal ideas, as they were always, and above all, preoccupied with the state and dynasty’s interests, so they sometimes supported the *Krajišnici* in their fight against the Croatian nobles, and sometimes those nobles against the *Krajišnici*. Anyway, through their politics, the high military circles of Austria greatly contributed to the antagonism of the relations between the Serbs from Krajina and the Croatian feudalists” (p. 18-19).

Although a number of the Serbs from Krajina converted to Catholicism over time, the relations between the Orthodox and Catholic *Krajišnici* were generally good, and the populations of the Orthodox and Catholic religion were united in their opposition against the avaricious demands of the feudalists. However, over a longer period of time, the conversion of Serbs to Catholicism meant their denationalisation, and later their acceptance of the Croatian nationality, through the artificial imposition of a new national consciousness.

### **b) A Hundred-Year Red-Tape Fight for Croatia**

The absolute identification of the religious and national element led to the instrumentalisation of the ex-Serbs (the newly-formed Croatians) in the fight against their Orthodox compatriots; and parallel to that, to the systematic indoctrination from the platform of basing the Croatian nation and its demographic volume, not on a natural and historically developed ethnic community, but on an arbitrary construction of a political nation, and on a reference to a historical right which stemmed from ancient feudal legal acts. “The entire history of the Croatians within the state framework of Hungary (from 1102) and Austria (from 1527) is pervaded with incessant debates on the state and legal status of Croatia. The aim of those debates was to emphasise and prove that Croatia had kept its independence even within the borders of Hungary and Austria, that having merged into new countries it had not lost its state uniqueness. The more the Croatian country was getting smaller and narrower in political practice and in life, the more it was emphasised and justified in the debates conducted by the Croatians. Having conducted the red-tape state and legal fight against the Hungarians, the Croatian became true experts in that sphere. Even when their statehood was reduced to threads, and even when those threads were cut when Croatia became a just regular region of Hungary, the Croatian politicians, with remarkable persistence, emphasised that the real status should be distinguished from the legal one. With all their might, they insisted on proving what was difficult and impossible to prove that in a legal aspect, the discontinuity of Croatian statehood had never occurred. Because of those centuries-old debates with Hungarians, Croatian history and politics were deeply pervaded by state rights and historicism. That burden did not disappear, even when Croatia seceded from Austro-Hungary and became a part of the first and second Yugoslavia” (p. 23-24). Even though such politics originally had a defensive character in relation to the Austrian and Hungarian pretensions of assimilation, they gradually assumed aggressive and conquering

characteristics concerning the Serbs and their national rights. That proved the Croatians to be far more unscrupulous than the Austrians and more brutal than the Hungarians. As Krestić estimates, “. . . in defence of ‘the historical rights of the Croatian nation’ in order to ‘realise the Croatian state rights’, that is to form a great and independent Croatian country, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Croatia, an ideology appeared an ideology of uncompromising, exclusive Croatian nationalism, which has always directed the blade of its intolerance, most often and most severely, at the Serbs. Moreover, following the model of the Hungarian class politics from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, expressed in the motto that in Hungary there could only exist one nation the Hungarian one, the majority of the Croatian politicians has considered from the beginning that, on the territory of Croatia, there has only existed one ‘diplomatic’, that is ‘political’, or as considered today ‘constitutive’ nation, and that is the Croatian one” (p. 24-25).

### **c) The Croatian National Thought, the Relapse of Feudalism**

Since the Serbians never accepted to be a part of such an imagined Croatian political nation, nor to renounce their own, firmly rooted national identity that has resisted great historical temptations, the political gap between the Serbians and Croatians was unbridgeable. That led to “. . . incessant, severe confrontations between them, and intolerance, which in certain Croatian middle-class and suburban circles assumed anti-Serbian genocidal characteristics. Many reliable data unquestionably confirm that the crisis in relations between the Croatians and Serbians, at the time of the break-up of the second Yugoslavia, was caused by the situation in that republic the power was in the hands of political parties and personalities who nourished a national-political ideology based on the idea that, on the Croatian state territory, there could only exist one nation the Croatian constitutive one” (p. 25). Following this aspect, the possibility of cooperation with other South Slavic nations was accepted only under the condition that a Croatian and Roman Catholic hegemony was achieved over them. For the sake of objectivity, it must be mentioned that some of the eminent Croatian intellectuals, like Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac, Andrija Torkvat Brlić and August Šenoa, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, warned about the historical failure of such a policy, but they hopelessly remained in the minority. “The ardent advocates of the policy based on the Croatian state right were conscious that the right itself was one of the main factors spoiling the relations between the Serbs and Croatians. Despite that, and precisely because of that, they firmly stuck to that right, finding it more significant than agreement and concord with the Serbs. The most convincing evidence can be found in the draft of the agreement on common political appearances of the Croatian Folk Peasant Party and the Justice Party” (p. 30). What was setting the stage for these retrograde ideas and ideologies was the fact that Croatia “. . . kept a half-feudal character in its social and political aspect during the entire second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The former feudalists, especially wealthy noble landowner families, mainly of foreign origin, still played a significant role, due to their capital, powerful connections and reputation. Due to that, many principles that were valid in the class society were still in operation. Only by this can the state and historical rights of Croatia be explained as a starting point in the programmes of all Croatian civil political parties until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Having lived according to the regulations of that right, a feeling was nourished in the Croatian society that was deeply engraved in the consciousness of the

majority of Croatian intellectuals. That feeling, that conquered them all, still dominates their consciousness, and accordingly, the state and historical right provides the starting point of every activity of most of the Croatians that are connected with politics” (p. 31).

Krestić considers that that kind of Croatian national thought cannot be reconciled with moral, civil-democratic opinions in any way, since it has the essential characteristics of a relapse of a feudal society. Accordingly, the contemporary Croatian politics could not have been anything else but “. . . non-democratic, exclusively Croatian and rigid anti-Serbian” (p. 32). Until World War I, the existence of the Serbians on the territory of the old kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia was negated, while Frano Supilo claimed that there were no Serbs in Dalmatia either. “In order to realise this political fiction that there were no Serbians in Croatia in practice, many administrative-political and cultural-educational measures were taken. Due to this assignment and those intentions, in certain statistical representations, the Serbians were not designated according to national affiliation, which was the case, for example, with an incomparably less number of Gypsies and Jews. The Serbians were designated according to religious affiliation as the Croatians of the Greek-Eastern religion. Since the aim was to create a homogeneous Croatian ‘political’ nation – which meant an ethnically pure Croatian – the Serbian name was left out wherever possible and in every possible way. Thus, for example, the Serbian Orthodox Church was regularly called ‘Greek-Eastern’ and ‘Greek non-integrated’. In certain circles, especially in the *Pravaška* (Justice Party) and *Frankofurtimaški* press, the Serbians were never called by their national name, but by various derogatory ones, like: the Vlachs, Gypsies, Greek-Easterners, Skipetari (that is, *Šiptari*<sup>26</sup>), Byzantines, *dotepenci*, a brood, the Vlachian brood, the Orthodox brood, the so-called Serbians, the ones who christen themselves Serbians, the ones that take root where they do not belong, and so on. Ante Starčević called them: ‘muddy bastards’, ‘despicable servile creatures’, ‘a brood ready for the axe’, ‘snakes in the grass’, ‘Austrian dogs’, ‘unleashed dogs’, ‘trash’, etc. The language itself rarely bore the adjective ‘Serbian’; it was either Croatian-Serbian or Croatian or Serbian. As a rule, the name Serbian was avoided, so it was called Croatian, national, our language, Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian and Yugoslavian. For the same reason, in order to create a unique Croatian ‘political’ nation and an ethnically pure Croatia, the whole educational system was in the service of Croatianisation since 1874. The Cyrillic script in many different ways, often brutally, was suppressed and put out of use. The Serbian flag and the Serbian state emblem, as national symbols, were forbidden” (p. 37-38).

The Croatian clericals and national ideologists were the most bothered by the Serbian name and Serbian religion, and those Serbians who would accept to renounce their name and religion were automatically pronounced Croatians. Thus, the Croatians themselves contributed to the fact that that formerly real ethnic term got a new designation, and that it practically refers to the Serbian Catholics. “It is well-known that, everywhere in the world, wherever there was a massive destruction of a nation’s name, that was a sign of a physical attack on that nation. It was considered to be a public stigmatisation and finger-pointing at the ones who were a nuisance and who should, by any means necessary, be banished from the unwelcoming environment. The destruction of the Serbian name in Croatia has always been accompanied by incessantly, publicly emphasising that the Serbians are traitors; a disrupting factor of the Croatian society and Croatian politics; ‘a

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<sup>26</sup> the Albanians

national trouble'; 'that the Croatians are not Serbian brothers, because the Serbians are the brothers of dogs'; that they are a *hajduk* and plundering nation, wily and cunning in a Byzantine manner; and that 'Serbdom is dangerous because of its views and its racial constitution', since 'the mood for conspiracies, revolutions and overthrows is set in their blood'. That is how the Serbians were abused and satanised in the past, and in the same way, and even worse, they are still satanised today, under the 'HDZ' rule of Dr Franjo Tuđman" (p. 40-41). Here Krestić also gives concrete examples of the general satanisation of the Serbians by the spokespersons of Tuđman's regime. In particular, on 20 August 1996, the program *Wherever the Serbian Hordes Pass* was broadcast on the Croatian television. In it, the editor, Jerko Tomić, said the following about the Serbs: '. . . that they are inhuman, that even the religion of Saint Sava could not help them, that they are pig traders, Chetnik pests, worse than cattle, coarse Serbians with dirty paws, Satan's drummers, a civilization of the barbeque spit and *rakijetina*<sup>27</sup>, toothless monsters, dirty fur cap-wearers, pitiable misery, garbage, Serbian-Chetnik vampires, human evil, hordes, creatures, disease, leprosy, 'unsalted Jovans'<sup>28</sup>, furious unleashed Chetnik beasts, the carpet of Nazism; that they came to Croatia a hundred years ago, that they were kissed up to the Turks, and that they exterminated the Jews even before the arrival of Hitler's followers to Belgrade!" (p. 41). In addition, Krestić states that the mayor of Petrinje said in August 2001, as *the Globus* from Zagreb reported, that the Serbians could not live in Croatia '. . . as long as there is at least one Croatian breathing air in his lungs and walking on this earth'" (p. 41). Promising that she would liberate Croatia from the Serbian garbage, she said that the Serbians are ". . . neither human nor animal □□ animals do not deserve to be compared with them" (p. 42). As Krestić states in 1866, a reporter of Strossmayer's newspaper *Pozor* ". . . even ominously threatened Serbians that if they insisted on emphasising their national uniqueness, the Croatians '. . . from the West would persecute them with the idea of national unity against their will, we will tear down all the borders that they put up, with a testimonial force; we will destroy all the obstacles that they set up to the unity of the nation, with the power of an entire civilisation, which God made unique. If it is necessary for the country, we will change our name, state existence, change the politics, all in the spirit of the Western civilisation; but, even then, it will only be one nation', the Croatian, of course. In accordance with these aspirations and threats, *Pozor* condemned all the efforts of the Serbians for keeping the national uniqueness" (p. 43).

#### d) Pavelić and Tuđman, the Alfa and Omega of the Same Crime

In World War II, the Croatians started to do exactly what Strossmayer's *Pozor* had planned, and continued on with it in the 1990s. Pavelić initiated the genocide of the Serbians, and Tuđman finalised it. Now, the Croatian politicians in power renounce Tuđman, and attack Pavelić. The butcher's work having been done, they have changed their policy and swear by the ideological values which are in the spirit of the Western civilization. Krestić deserves great merit for productively denying the generally present delusion about Strossmayer's Yugoslav national feeling. "When the Serbians openly expressed their fear of assimilation and Croatianisation, *Pozor* saw it as a 'product of

<sup>27</sup> abusive word for *rakija*, the Serbian national drink – a kind of a plum brandy

<sup>28</sup> an abusive name for Serbians, at the time of salt shortages, and Jovan being a typical Serbian name

true Byzantism'. Strossmayer's National Party advocated the unity of the Croatian and Serbian nation only under the condition that the Serbian people be merged with the Croats. In order to realise this more easily and faster, *Pozor* raised its voice against the founding of any Serbian institutions and societies in Croatia" (p. 43-44). Therefore, *Pozor* and the National Party denied even the existence of the Serbs in Croatia. "They actually negated the Serbs' national individuality, thus, they did not call them Serbs, but rather 'Orthodox Croats'. With the intention of preventing the spreading of the Serbian national consciousness in Croatia, and also with the intent of developing the Croatian national feeling using all means possible, the members of the National Party tried to put a stop to the founding of any special Serbian institutions, societies and organisations. It is worth remembering that after World War II, the Croatian Communists, using many excuses that remind one a lot of the writing of *Pozor* in 1867, tore down all the Serbian national institutions that had been founded during the war 1943-1945. After abolishing the Serbian Cultural Society, *Prosvjeta*, on 23 May 1980, the Republic Conference of the Socialist Association of the Working People of Croatia gave an explanation according to which it was acceptable, as completely natural and justifiable, 'that our ethnic nationalities' – that is national minorities in Croatia – 'independently develop institutions and clubs', but 'it is not acceptable that the members of a nation found those institutions anywhere in Yugoslavia, and especially not the Serbs in Croatia or the Croats in Croatia. It is not necessary to additionally emphasise that the Serbs were deprived of that right only in order to remove all the obstacles that stood in the way of their faster assimilation and Croatianisation" (p. 44-45).

Krestić describes a fervent Croatian protest, when in 1866, a group of Serbian members of the parliament, led by Jovan Subotić, proposed that the Council should use the term "the Croatian-Serbian" nation instead of the expression "our nation" when addressing the ruler. "The Serbs who advocated the change were suspected of stirring up discord, suspicion, provocation, breaking up the Council, hindering development, abusing the Croatian's patience, spreading disunion in a nation that is one, and they want to make it two. The Croatian members of the parliament thought that adopting Subotić's proposition would inflict injustice on 'the Croatian name', and that the Serbs, by insisting on their name, conducted 'a truly aggressive policy; that they intended to conquer the lands in the Triune Kingdom'<sup>29</sup>, to execute the Serbianisation of Croatia initiated by Vuk Karadžić" (p. 46-47). On that occasion, the basic doctrinaire thesis was repeated that Croatia was exclusively the land of Croats, that only the Croatian political nation resided in it, and that the Serbs in Croatia were a part of that nation, so they could not have any constitutive status. "Precisely because of the fact that they severely opposed Subotić's proposition, not wanting to share state sovereignty with the Serbs (not even indirectly) nor to accept the political individuality of the Serbs by the introduction of the Serbian name into the Council's address" (p. 47). The most fervent in representing these attitudes were the political followers of Joseph Georg Strossmayer and Franjo Rački from the National Party. In Krestić's view, "the historians who dealt with this period of time and these problems did not live up to their professional and scientific duties. Instead of unmasking the evil, they suppressed it, and thereby embellished it. Accordingly, they nurtured the evil, in the belief that it would not

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<sup>29</sup> the Kingdom of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia

significantly hurt science, but rather be useful to politics and the Yugoslav thought. Time showed that their behaviour led to the detriment of not only science, but also of politics, the nation and the state. The Yugoslav national identity of Strossmayer's type was glorified, even though it was not Yugoslav, but Croatian and Greater Croatian, wrapped up in a Yugoslav package. The state created on the foundations of the apocryphal Yugoslav national identity could not have been stable or long lasting. Based on false ideological foundations, it was doomed to failure since the moment of its creation" (p. 48-49).

### **e) Infinite Anti-Serbian Hatred, The Unifying Political Programme of All Croatian Parties**

All the Croatian political parties completely agreed on the negation of Serbian national rights. "At the time of the rule of Ban Ivan Mažuranić, there was a real, brutal confrontation with the Serbians from Pakrac and other places, who did not hide their national feelings, who supported the movement of the United Serbian Youth, collaborated with *Zastava(The Flag)* from Novi Sad, educated the community in order to collect donations for that newspaper, founded the Association of Serbian Craftsmen, used the Serbian state emblems and the Serbian flag on special occasions, and had the Serbian language as a subject in the Serbian teachers' school in Pakrac. Ban Ivan Mažuranić estimated that all those activities spread the ideas of the Serbdom, which caused hatred and discord 'between the Catholic and Greek-Eastern populations'. Moreover, Mažuranić concluded that, by these said actions, the Serbians wanted to '... provide, from a state and legal viewpoint, an unjustifiable supremacy and political predominance for the Serbian element in Croatia and Slavonia'. In order to prevent all that, the suspects from Pakrac, Karlovci, Osijek and Daruvar were arrested, and those who were employed were dismissed from duty without the right of employment on the state territory of Croatia and Slavonia. Mažuranić's anti-Serbian measures clearly hinted at the future directions of Croatian politics, which were based on the Croatian state and historical right and the institution of a 'political' nation. Very soon, it turned out that the Serbian name itself represented 'a political offence' in Croatia; and that all that was Serbian should be eradicated in order to create an ethnically clean, religiously unique Catholic Greater Croatian state" (p. 56). That caused a deep international hatred between the Croats and the Serbians, and the well-known historian of the time, Pero Gavrančić, stated that there existed "an insidious, furtive, repulsive fight of one existence against the other, without rest or end" (p. 58). As early as 1895, Gavrančić foresaw that this could lead to a bloody military confrontation. "Both times when the Croats obtained 'their independent little states' there was a bloody feast whose victims were the Serbians. The hatred towards them was expressed in the most brutal way, but with a clear objective to create an ethnically clean and biggest possible Croatian state" (p. 58). Krestić demonstrates that the famous benefactor, Miss Adelina Paulina Irbi, irritated by the massive Croatian persecutions of Serbians at the time of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian uprising, wrote: "The only motive for that persecution is the inhumane hatred of the Croats towards the Serbians. Just as the Catholics in Bosnia are useful to the Turks against the Serbians, the Croats in Slavonia are useful to the Hungarians, again against the Serbians" (p. 60).

The infinite anti-Serbian hatred became the basic foundation of the Croatian national existence. “The greatest sowers of the seeds of hatred, the ones who shaped that hate into state, national and political programmes, who gave it the characteristics of a fight between various races – Eugen Kvaternik and Ante Starčević – are accepted as the greatest patriots and nationalists in the Croatian community. By this act, the seed of hatred between Croats and Serbs are deeply sown in their beings. Since one party is ready to glorify and follow the mentioned leaders, the other party fears them with reason, because they feel the tough consequences of their destructive effect. When we bear in mind everything mentioned, then it is clear that the national integration of the Croats, after the Revolution in 1848/49, has taken an opposite course from the one that the Illyrian Movement took. Namely, their national integration processes acquired all the characteristics of the Greater Croatian policy, both the ones within the frames of the *Pravaška* (Justice Party) ideology, and the ones within the framework of the movement that was developing under the Yugoslav name” (p. 61). The Serbs opposed this as best as they could. A great number of the Serbian intellectuals were forced to leave Croatia, and mainly to go to Serbia; however, “. . . the majority of the nationally conscious Serbs decided to confront the Greater Croatian attacks, to resist the brutal Croatianisation and to stand up in the defence of the Serbian name and the Serbian national uniqueness” (p. 67). The Serbs turned to the formation of their own political parties and the printing of national newspapers, which enraged the Croatian ideologists even more, and sped up their machineries for the serial production of historical lies and slurs. “According to the widely spread, unscientifically-based opinions of Starčević’s *pravaši*, the next *Franko-furtimaši*; and their spiritual followers, Pavelić’s Ustasas, who relied on the Croatian state and historical right, the Serbs in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia had been created in an artificial way □□ through the mediation of the Serbian Orthodox Church and religion, helped by the priests, monks and teachers. According to that hideous claim, which had clear Greater-Croatian and assimilation aspirations and objectives, the Serbian national identity, which had been created and sustained by religion, consciously tore apart the Croatian national identity in order to hinder it from developing and reviving the national and state tasks. In the view of the nationally exclusive Croats, the Serbs in Croatia are ‘the Croatian renegades, Italian and Hungarian allies’, ‘the *stafaža* of the foreign element against the freedom and the unification of Croatia’, ‘the sons of that cursed tribe that spreads hatred, massacres and murders in all places, that, while coveting power, viciously destroys everything that comes their way, thinking that that will serve to frighten the Croatian nation’. The Serbs are angry snakes, ‘from which you are only safe when you cut off their heads’. Since the Serbs in Croatia are not really Serbs, but Croats of the Orthodox religion; since they are Croatian waste and the allies of the Croatian enemies, the Italians and Hungarians, they should be kept in order, forced by fair means or foul to renounce the Serbian state idea, and accept the Croatian one” (p. 73-74).

Eugen Kvaternik called Serbs a religious brood and blood traitors, falsely accusing them of being in collusion with Vienna or Pest. “We should certainly bear in mind the fact that the Serbs in Croatia were imputed with treason at the moment of their greatest loyalty, nationalism and patriotism, at the time when they, thanks to their high political consciousness, led the way in the tough opposition fight against Austro-Hungary and the system that it had imposed on the Croats. Once constructed, the accusation about their alleged treachery against Croatian interests would be constantly

**Comment [Z4]:** Translator’s note. This is possibly a Turkish word, its meaning in Serbian is unclear, therefore it was left in the original

used against the Serbs. It would be a stigma that would be unscrupulously impressed on them with a well-thought-out aim. That stigma was intended to impose an obligation on the Serbians to always, on every occasion and during any activity, proclaim and prove themselves loyal citizens of Croatia patriots, not traitors. They were to be obligated to think less about their own, Serbian national interests, and more about Croatian ones; otherwise, they could not escape the stigma of being traitors. That stigma was intended to create complexes in them, burden them and, in that way, make them weaker and obliged to always justify and affirm themselves. Some social-psychological and political scientific studies would doubtlessly confirm that the incessant and well-thought-out stigmatisation yielded results among the Serbians in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, it created a type of obedient people (indeed, in a small number, and mostly in intellectual circles), who, while too conscientiously proving their just behaviour, became even greater Croatians than the Croatians themselves, judging by their feelings and mentality” (p. 77). In a letter to Mihovil Pavlinović, Kvaternik insisted that the most severe stance should be taken towards the Serbians in Dalmatia, which stance had already produced results in Croatia and Slavonia. In June 1869, while writing the letter, he hinted at a battle for eliminating every trace of Serbdom, and the expansion of the Croatian country to Kosovo and Albania. “He did not hide his unjustified and sick hatred towards the Serbians, whom he considered Byzantines, Easterners, barbarians and far from brothers. Despite his severe and passionate hatred and contempt towards them, he wanted, and advocated with all his might, that they should become Croatians. Those who did not accept this, who felt they were Serbians (and that was the majority of them), Kvaternik openly threatened with physical destruction. By so doing, he became one of the first advocates of genocide over the Serbian nation in the Triune Kingdom, among the middle-class politicians of Croatia. He sowed that morbid seed, which was later, after he died, accepted, scattered and cultivated, and its crops were reaped by the Franciscans, Ustashas and Tuđman’s members of the HDZ. Tuđman himself bragged that this vicious seed, which had been thrown on the ground and which had the promise of fruit, was Kvaternik’s, when he wrote that ‘the youth is starting to become us’” (p. 78).

#### **f) Pavelić’s Plan for the Destruction of the Serbians, Based on the Study of the Armenian Holocaust**

Mihovil Pavlinović was also a great hater of the Serbians, though not the greatest in Dalmatia. “The prominent Croatian politician, Franko Supilo, like Kvaternik and Starčević, thought that the issue of the Serbians in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia can and must be solved – if there was no other way, then by their physical destruction” (p. 80). He found that in politics, everything was allowed, even the use of the worst possible means. The other Croatian politicians considered the Serbians unwelcome too, not hesitating to openly express their intention of exterminating them at every cost, as they could not assimilate them voluntarily nor forcefully. Krestić provides the statements of a great number of distinguished Croatian politicians, which are completely similar in their expressing the wish to eliminate the Serbians, no matter how. “If we compare the stated evidence about the plan of the Croatian politicians in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for solving the issue of the Serbians in Croatia with the facts about how the Ustashas and Dr Franjo Tuđman solved the issue, then it is clear that they are in every way unbreakably connected in a logical and organic relationship; it is



also clear that the Croatian political thought has always been – as it is today – deeply interwoven with the idea of genocide” (p. 85). Ante Pavelić was just a means for the execution of the criminal project that the Croatian politicians and intellectuals had been preparing, analysing and masterminding for hundreds of years. However, Pavelić had drawn up a concrete plan of the genocidal destruction of the Serbians even before the war, which was ready for use as soon as the first occasion for its comprehensive execution came up. “As early as the autumn of 1940, a year before World War II, Vlatko Maček, the then Vice Premier of the Yugoslav government in Belgrade, found out about this plan. He received information that Pavelić, during his confinement in Siena, Italy, had prepared a plan for a Serbian massacre in Croatia, ‘. . . after having studied the Armenian holocaust in Turkey for years’. Despite the fact that everything had been brought to Maček’s attention and that he had seen the plan, he did not inform the government or his political partners from the Peasants’ Democratic Coalition, who represented the Serbians in Croatia. There are some indications that he informed Archbishop Stepinac on these ‘impious plans’, asking him to influence Pavelić and his men to give up on carrying out those criminal intentions” (p. 88-89). However, Stepinac kept quiet, because Pavelić’s plan fitted into Stepinac’s personal and broader Vatican vision of the liquidation of the Serbian schismatics. “It is not so well-known that the Communist authorities of Croatia, right after the war ended in 1945, did more to harm than to help the return of the Serbians the refugees from Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia who had escaped the Ustasas’ knives. The federal authorities of Croatia at the time were glad that the number of Serbians had considerably decreased. They reluctantly took coercive measures to evict the Ustasha families from Serbian homes and lands” (p. 89).

### **g) Ethnic Cleansing as the Official Policy of Modern Croatia**

In order to show that, even in today’s time, nothing had significantly changed in Croatian national politics, Krestić draws attention to Tuđman’s presidential advisor, Prof. Dr. Slaven Latica, who published an article in the newspaper *Danas (Today)* on 12 September 1989, under the title *The Assimilation of the Croatian Serbians*, disclosing his and his associates’ contemporary political preoccupations concerning the aspirations for the completely ethnically clean Croatian state, which was to be extended to the neighbouring areas. “With this article, Latica tried to, allegedly scientifically, give an explanation of the inevitability of the Serbian assimilation in Croatia. What is more, he returned to the idea of ‘the Croatian political nation’, claiming that the Serbians in Croatia could choose between two paths. As he wrote it, they could either be ‘an organic part’ of the Serbian ethnic nation, or ‘a part of the Croatian political nation’. With this, Latica offered the Serbians what had been persistently and coercively imposed on them during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until 1905, when the Croatian-Serbian coalition was formed, and after that, by the *Frankovci*<sup>30</sup>. He offered them a path of renouncing their nationality in order to become a part of ‘the Croatian political nation’, that is ‘the constitutive one’. He offered them something that the Serbians in Croatia had never wanted, nor were ever able to accept, because they were aware that the path he offered was the path of national and political extermination. Up until 1918, the Serbians fiercely opposed that path, leading an uncompromising fight, with a firm belief that it

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<sup>30</sup> the followers of Josip Frank

was a fight for survival. The policy that Letica offered caused tribal discord between the Croats and the Serbs within the borders of Austro-Hungary, since it was an outline of all the confrontations between the two nations. Letica offered political solutions whose sources were in the Croatian state and historical right. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ruling circles of Hungary tried to impose those solutions on Croats, as well as Serbs; however, they opposed them in order to escape Hungarianisation. The solutions offered by one of the eminent members of Tuđman's Croatian Democratic Community were based on the well-known formula one country, one nation, one language. Since that formula was popular in the time of Austrian, Austro-Hungarian, and Pavelić's rule in the Independent State of Croatia, it is obvious that today's Croatian politicians find their sources in the times that are no more" (p. 90-91). According to the testimony of David Fischer, the director of the Institute of Foreign Policy, Franjo Tuđman announced before a diplomatic corps in Germany, in 1989, that when he became President of Croatia ". . . the ground in the Krajina would become red with blood" (p. 91). That degree of political hatred astonished Fischer, but that was only a hint of the bloodshed that would ensue in the beginning of the 1990s. "As soon as the Croats got their independent little state, and as soon as Tuđman became President, a bloody war, planned even before he became the leader of the state, was certain to happen, especially because the Croats did not have any reason to be afraid of anyone, but were even incited by various sides from abroad to the brutal confrontation – which they had been preparing for a long time, in every aspect" (p. 91-92).

After Tuđman's victory in the elections, the Croats violated the Serbian status of a constitutive nation with a unilateral change in the constitution; and along with that, they began arming themselves en masse and preparing for a critical confrontation with the Serbian minority. "According to the assessment of well-informed observers from Croatia itself, the aim of the war was not to repress the so-called Serbian-Chetnik rebellion, as it had been presented to the public, but the creation of an ethnically clean state, which had been dreamed of for a long time" (p. 92). According to the opinion of an eminent Croatian journalist, Jelena Lovrić, which she expressed in 1996, ". . . an ethnically clean state has been declared as a desired ideal by the state ruling circles. In Knin, the Head of state publicly bragged, in front of a lined-up army and turned-on cameras, that 'historical results' had been achieved 'we returned Zvonimir's town onto the lap of the motherland Croatia, as clean as it was in Zvonimir's time'. Thus, the liberation of Knin got a new dimension. It was not about the liberation from the Serbian rebellion any more, but about the cleansing of the Serbs. The message permeated throughout the whole ceremony in Knin, so it could not have been a slip of the tongue by the otherwise perceptibly nervous President. The Chief Inspector of the Croatian Army, General Ante Gotovina, said, for example, that 'Operation Storm' meant the termination of the centuries-old occupation of Croatia. And Drago Krpina, Tuđman's advisor for the liberated areas, exclaimed that Croatia had liberated the lands after a whole century of occupation not five years, calling 'Storm' the victory of all victories" (p. 92).

As early as 12 April 1992, at Ban Jelačić's square in Zagreb, Tuđman confessed that the Croats had sparked the war. He resolutely stated: "The war would not have happened, if it had not been Croatia's wish! Still, we estimated that only by war could we achieve Croatia's independence. That is why we held political conversations, and behind those negotiations we formed armed formations. If we had not done that, we

would not have reached our goal. So, we could have evaded the war, but only if we had given up our aim the independence of the Croatian state” (p. 92-93). These statements spoke for themselves, and the Croatian policy was publicly completely exposed. In Vasilije Krestić’s opinion, “. . . even if these statements had not been publicly presented, the outcome of the military operations under the names ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’, after which Croatia was ethnically thoroughly clean, unambiguously shows the aim by which Croatia decided to break up Yugoslavia, not being selective about the means. Now, when the long-standing desire to ethnically clean the state has been realised, Tudman and his associates are successfully opposing the return of the Serbians to their homes and their lands. To that end they enjoy the benevolence of certain world powers and the Vatican, which helped them in the action of ethnic cleansing. The demonization of the Serbians is being continued in the well-known style. They are showered with derogatory names from all sides. The slogan ‘hang the Serbs from the willow trees’ are incessant. The Greater-Croatian appetites have increased. Bosnia is still in the focus of Croatian interest. As in many times before, the Serbians are advised that they will only find salvation is if they swim across the Drina River. The Croatian policy has remained the same as it had been in the times of the *Pravaši*, the *Franko-furtimaši* and the *Ustahas*. It is imbued with a hatred that hardly anyone controls. Unhampered and incited from different sides, it represents a danger for the entire region, but for Croatians as well, in whose environment it has been nourished.

**Comment [cm5]:** Translator’s note. This is possibly a Turkish word, its meaning in Serbian is unclear, therefore it was left in the original

## 2. Serbian Statehood, the Cause of the Croatian Complex

Analysing some other roots of the Croatians’ anti-Serbian hatred, besides their different approaches towards the Habsburg dynasty, disputes over the possession of Bosnia and Herzegovina and envy over the leading role in the region of the South Slavs, Krestić states another problem that occupies the mind of all the Croatians, almost without exception. “That problem is the complex which bothered the political middle-class, and especially the provincial circles among the Croatians, being that the Serbians got two independent countries after 1878, and the Croatians, who were convinced that they were on a higher level of culture and civilisation, and who had the ambition to create the Greater Croatia and lead the liberation and unification, had a state more on the paper than in reality. As they only regarded the Serbians as their immediate and most dangerous rivals, they felt like every success of the Serbians was their own failure, and every Serbian failure was their own victory. The fact that the Serbians had two countries, and the Croatians none, made them feel not only inferior, but also envious and, what is more, aggressive. By using greatly aggressive measures, they wanted to – at the cost of the Serbs – make up for what they did not have. Consequently, the clashes were unavoidable, and their outcomes were multiply pernicious for both sides” (p. 99-100). The Croatians’ aggressive attitude towards the Serbians, sparked by the feeling of inferiority as a pure expression of a social-psychological pathology, “. . . was manifested in various ways, until it acquired clear, genocidal forms. And that aggression could only acquire such forms due to the fact that those who did not care about accord – and there were such people on both sides – poisoned relations to the extent that there was a great number of those among the Croatians who blamed the local Serbians for all the Croatians’ misfortunes. Accordingly, if the Serbians from Croatia had in many ways hindered the development of the Croatian state and its society, if they were an internal

enemy as the *Pravaška* and *Franko-furtimaški* press usually depicted them then, the clash with them was inevitable. The feeling of inferiority of certain Croatian civil circles to the Serbians, who had succeeded in creating two independent states, was even greater since the Serbians were generally superior in number to the Croatians. Bearing in mind the numerical supremacy of the Serbians over the Croatians, on those Croatians who especially stood out in their attacks on the Serbians and in their denying the Serbs' national uniqueness, the fear of possible assimilation was evident. That fear, which had a defensive character, brought about the aggressive attitude which led to the genocide over the Serbians in Croatia" (p. 101-103).

That Croatian fear of the numerous Serbian population was especially expressed when in 1881, the Military Krajina was demilitarized and included into the Banate of Croatia. Due to their great numbers, the Serbians began playing a very significant role in Croatian politics, but also in Austro-Hungary. Still, they also regularly supported all the Croatian demands to Pest and Vienna, asking in return only to be equally treated as an independent political subject. "Whenever they needed Serbians, and as long as they needed them, the Croatians were good to them, and made them promises; and not only did they not question the equality and the recognition of the Serbian political uniqueness, but the Parliament solemnly declared 'that the Triune Kingdom recognises the Serbian nation that lives in it as identical and equal with the Croatian nation'. When the danger disappeared, when the task was successfully finished, the same ones who had generously given promises and recognitions turned against them and acted as before, as if nothing had happened in the meantime; as if they did not have any obligations towards the Serbians. Having been used several times, and then let down and brusquely rejected, the Serbians perceived all the treachery of the Croatians. Consequently, they trusted them little; but, despite all the bitter experiences, forced by the conditions of life, they still let the Croatians deceive them, use them and beguile them, having the unfounded hope that the deceits would not be repeated. In this hundred-year-old game, the Serbians were always the losers in the political arena, and the Croatians always the winners. However, in a moral sense, the Serbians won the battles, and the Croatians always lost them. That kind of a relation between the losers and the winners yielded one more fruit: mutual contempt, antipathy and hatred, even pathological hatred, equally uncontrolled and dangerous for both sides and both nations" (p. 105-106).

When they started vying with the Serbians for the position as the unification primate and the leading role in the Yugoslav national and liberation activities, the Croatians based their own self-confidence on the conviction that they were culturally more advanced and, in addition to that, the Hapsburg dynasty cunningly assented to their ambitions. However, the Serbians already had two states and two armies, and did not even notice the imagined Croatian culture, so it did not occur to them that Belgrade could hand the role of the Piedmont of the Yugoslav unifying statehood over to Zagreb. Those cities grew into the centres of two opposing national policies which were becoming more and more hostile. The glorious Serbian victories in the Balkan Wars and World War I definitively settled all the dilemmas regarding that issue, thus the Serbians played the main part in the process of unification, and Belgrade became the unquestionable centre. "That victory of the stand of Serbia in dealing with the Yugoslav issue was received painfully among the Croatian circles, especially the nationally exclusive ones, who did not disappear from the stage after the First World War nor after the Second one. A tough defeat called for an even tougher revenge. Not only the

creation of the common state in 1918, but the way it was created as well, served as an inexhaustible source of discontent, intrigue and devastation of the country that had not been created according to the model of the mentioned Croatian circles. Its true creators, the Serbians, became even more despised and attacked by those who received the creation of Yugoslavia as the defeat of the Croatian state and its policies” (p. 107). Even before the creation of the Yugoslav country, Croatians were greatly bothered by the fast economic development of the Serbians in Croatia and Slavonia, the flourishing of their culture and their gathering within strong and well-organised political parties. At one point, Zagreb became a stronger Serbian culture centre than Novi Sad. “Since they were not ready to take up healthy competition with the Serbians, to confront them with their own achievements, the provincial *Franko-furtimaški* circles of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia made up for their incapability with destructive hatred, which was manifested on several occasions in anti-Serbian demonstrations in Zagreb and other towns of Croatia. Thus, even in the arena of the merciless capitalistic contest, which turned into a kind of fight between the two nations, the Serbians were seen as the permanently disturbing factor that was standing in the way of the development of the Croatian economy, society and politics, and more importantly, in the way of the achievement of their centuries-old wish the creation of an independent Croatian state” (p. 108).

It was the original Croatian national concept of statehood that impeded the united Serbian-Croatian permanent and agreed-upon Yugoslav state. “Having lost their state early and come under the rule of Hungary and then Austria, the Croatians had lived for more than 800 years under foreign rule, dreaming the dreams of restoring their statehood. Since they could not realise those dreams in practice, they fervently tried and spent vast, respect-worthy energy on keeping at least a minimal continuity of their statehood through formal legal documents, various pacts, sanctions, settlements, certificates, patents, royal conspirators, council decisions and other acts. Those 800 years of state and legal settlement-seeking fights left a deep scar on the Croatian mentality. The way they behaved within the borders of Hungary and Austria, and later Austro-Hungary, was the same way they behaved within the borders of the first and second Yugoslavia. Both Yugoslavias were temporary for them. Their ideal, as already mentioned, was an independent Croatia. Accordingly, they did not accept and consider Yugoslavia – in which they found themselves due to historical coincidences – as their own. After all, they invested in it exactly as much they were ready to defend it and accept it as theirs. The Croatians’ compromise-seeking behaviour toward Hungary and Austria was less detrimental for those countries and their nations than the same behaviour was for Yugoslavia. Within the frameworks of Hungary and Austria, the Croatians’ numbers, power and influence did not have any great significance. However, within the framework of Yugoslavia, they were a partner without which such a state was hardly imaginable. Familiar with this fact, and aware that the Serbians cared about the country, since it had brought them together, the Croatians used their deal-making experience to perfection, selfishly and unscrupulously forcing different kinds of concessions, all with the aim of achieving great conveniences for themselves. Accordingly, it turned out that Yugoslavia could only exist as long as the requests of the Croatians were fulfilled, as long as it suited them to live in a community to which they were not ready to contribute much, but from which they were ready to take away a lot. When we bear that in mind, then it is clear that both the first and the second Yugoslavias

were shaken by severe crises, and that they broke up according to scenarios in which the leading role of the destroyer belonged to the Croatians” (p. 109-110).

### **a) Physical Confrontations Presaging a Genocide**

The Viennese Imperial Court systematically supported anti-Serbian hatred, agitating the chauvinist activities of the Franciscans and clerics. Thus, this hatred was incessantly getting stronger and more intensive, manifesting itself through forms that were becoming more and more dangerous. “As time passed and the conflicts were multiplying and intensifying; apart from the various verbal attacks among which we find those with genocidal messages, like: ‘Hang the Serbs from the willow trees’, ‘Attack Serbs with axes’, and others the physical confrontations were also becoming more often, and they were intended to achieve the above mentioned slogans and destroy ‘the Vlachian brood’ (one of the derogatory and insulting names by which Serbians were labelled). Physical confrontation took place on several occasions during large anti-Serbian demonstrations” (p. 113). Especially severe were the anti-Serbian indiscretions of throwing stones and vandalizing during the visit of Emperor Franz Josef to Zagreb in 1895. “The opposition press in Croatia justified the anti-Serbian indiscretions with the argument that the Serbians had supposedly provoked it by displaying the flag of a ‘foreign country’ . . . What is more, the authorities observed the indiscretions with folded arms, using the excuse that they had not received orders to intervene” (p. 114-115). The Croatian Parliament persistently rejected putting the creation of legal acts that would guarantee the equal status of the Cyrillic script, the equal status of churches or, for example, the freedom of displaying the Serbian flag, on the daily agenda.

Again, those attitudes of ignoring the Serbian national individuality in the Banate Parliament were particularly expressed by the Franciscans; but the clericals, Strossmayer’s followers and all the others were right behind them, with the rare exceptions. “Full of hatred towards the Serbians, the Franciscans simply waited for an opportunity to publicly manifest it. The Serbians provoked them by persistently insisting on various demands, a determined defence against all possible attacks and insults, unyieldingness in advocating the Serbian state design and rejecting the Croatian one – which had its stronghold in Austro-Hungary – by its national vitality and by emphasizing Serbian nationalism, which defended them from Croatianisation. All together, in that kind of climate, this could appear to their opponents as a sort of provocation” (p. 118). Even more persecuting anti-Serbian demonstrations in Zagreb took place in 1899, during Zmaj’s Literary Jubilee, as well as in 1902, when for three full days, Serbian stores were destroyed, and Serbians’ apartments and the centres of the Serbian institutions were demolished. According to the testimony of Dr Ivan Ribar, the Croatian Ban Pavao Rauh and the leader of the Croatian Pure Party of Rights, Josip Franko, “. . . finalised an agreement which perpetrated the massacre and the banishment of all Serbians from Croatia, with permission from the highest military circles in Vienna, in the case of war with Serbia due to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (p. 126). The pogroms reached their climax during the Croatian hysteria after the Sarajevo assassination. Judging by all this, it is obvious that the outrageous genocide perpetrated by the Croatians over the Serbians in World War II was not “. . . a result of one system, this or that party, this or that personality, this or that community, but rather the conjunction of a whole chain of circumstances in a longer period of time. The genocide

over the Serbians in the Ustaša Independent State of Croatia is a phenomenon of its own kind, as a result of their centuries-long living together with the Croats. The long-lasting creation of the genocidal idea in certain environments of the Croatian society, which, as Dr Ribar testifies, had a rather wide base, deeply rooted that idea in the consciousness of many generations. Phenomena created over a long time, as a rule, disappear slowly and persistently endure” (p. 128).

### 3. The Croats Will Not Calm Down

The Croatian territorial megalomania, clearly expressed especially among the circles of Starčević and Radić, Ivo Pilar and Dominik Mandić, as its practical conductors had Ante Pavelić and Franjo Tuđman. Its minimal programme included – apart from Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srem and Boka Kotorska, although some authors included Macedonia as well. In an ideological and propagandist sense, “. . . they worked out a whole well-developed and well-established system. The Croats severely attacked and condemned every foreign demand and pretension on a desired territory. Among other things, and precisely connected with geo-mania, the Croats have employed the demonization of the Serbians ever since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to them, the Serbians are a nation of *hajduks* and a plundering people, sly and cunning in a Byzantine way. They are the bandits and Chetniks from Šumadija! The Croats are a cultural, humane and peacekeeping nation, and the territories that the Serbians covet – without foundation – belong to them; but the Serbians are a greedy people, a disturbing factor and a source of crises, turmoil and war. In that way, with remarkable persistence and well-thought-out tactics, without being impeded in any way, and often with the support of the short-sighted and moronic policies of Belgrade; they raised their Greater Croatian demands to the level of justified and legitimate rights. Having achieved this, they did not hide their readiness to achieve their national and state demands at all costs, even with the use of the most brutal force. The Serbians could not find adequate reasons for such behaviour by the Croats. Entranced with the idea of the Yugoslav national identity, honest and credulous defenders of brotherhood and unity, they were late in everything, discovering the truth with astonishment and with childlike confusion, wondering why the Croats hated them and did them wrong” (p. 134-135).

Vasilije Krestić ends his book with a warning to the Serbians that never again must they be light-hearted and incautious. “Having created an ethnically pure Croatia, the Croats came closer to the achievement of their geo-strategic aims related to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Without the Serbians in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, without that disturbing internal factor as they called them they will attack Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbians and the Muslims, with greater force, with less obstacles and set backs, and with a more favourable geo-political position. If the Serbians are unprepared when that happens, if they allow somebody to delude and deceive them with a new kind of Illyrianism, Yugoslavism, brotherhood and unity once more, they will have to pay dearly for their gullibility, short-sightedness, frivolity, lack of information and thick-wittedness; and they will never recuperate, because the ratio of strength will have been shifted to the favour of the Croats. Besides, it is utterly certain that Serbia, as a state, like Croatia, must ‘have their eyes and ears’ on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since it is so vital for Croatia. . . In addition, it is also certain that Croatia will not calm

down until it reaches the Drina River, and until it has extended itself right under Belgrade, and acquired Zemun” (p. 152-153).

## **V. The Croatians from Gradište as a Relic of the Original Croatian Nation**

In Gradište, below Vienna, lives the largest group of Croatians that escaped the Ottoman invasion and succeeded in keeping their national consciousness and cultural features. Ethnographic science has neglected the need for studying them for a long time, but in 1995, in Zagreb, a collection of scientific and publicist works, *The History and the Culture of the Croatians from Gradište* (Nakladni Institute *Globus*) was published. It is significant not so much for its quality of scientific analysis, as for the fact that the authors of all the texts are Croatians, nearly exclusively from Gradište.

### **1. The Foreword by General Tuđman and Cardinal Kuharić**

This book, according to the writer of the foreword, Franjo Tuđman, “. . . testifies about a somewhat forgotten ordeal, the fight and sacrifice of the Croatians during the hundred-year Croatian-Turkish War 1493-1593. At that saddest time of the Croatian history, rivers of Croatian refugees scattered in a several directions, especially into Hungary, Lower Austria, Slovakia and Moravska. The Croatians from Gradište are a living monument to that period of Croatian history. On the territory of Gradište, the ancient vernaculars and the original dialects of Bosnia, Slavonia, Pokuplje, Lika and other parts of the ancient Croatian kingdom still exist. For almost five centuries, Gradište has existed as a little Croatia, giving a unique trait to the relations between Croatia and Austria” (p. 7).

The author of the second foreword, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, states: “In the month of September 1931, in the archbishop seminary on Šalata, in my first year of high school, I met a boy who spoke the Ikavian dialect, similar to the vernacular of my Pribić region. The name of that boy was Kazimir Herceg. We were in the same class for eight years until we graduated. That is how I became familiar with the fact that in Austria lived Croatians as well, who had come there from Croatia a long time ago, fleeing from the Ottoman invasions. The priests accompanied them, and we can suppose that precisely those priests preserved their Catholic religion and the national consciousness that they were Croatians, by their preaching, catechism and cultural activity in the Croatian language. Far from their homeland, they lived their lives in a new home, developing their culture and nourishing their collectiveness. When the national language was introduced into the liturgy by the liturgical reform at the Second Vatican Council, the question of which language would be introduced into the liturgy of the Croatians from Gradište was asked – whether it would be our contemporary, literary language or their own language, bequeathed to them by their grandfathers who had moved to Austria. The Bishop of Gradište with the seat in Željezno, whose mother was a Croatian, and who spoke Croatian, German and Hungarian, considered that the Croatians from Gradište had the right to have their liturgical language be the language that they spoke, the language of their literature, but which is different from our Croatian language. When the Holy See proposed to the Mons. Stefan Laslo to take over the liturgical books from Croatia, he defended the right of the Croatian language of Gradište, so, finally, the Holy See



approved the printing of the liturgical books in that language. This also confirms that the Croats from Gradište diligently kept the heritage of their language, developed their culture in it, and the language saved them from assimilation into the language of their new homeland, Austria; otherwise, every trace of their existence would have been lost. Only in this way have they succeeded in keeping their identity for four and a half centuries” (p. 8). In the editorial introduction, it is made known that the works in this book represent the essential results of a scientific-research project that was entrusted to the Institute of Croatian History of the University of Zagreb as early as 1972.

## **2. The Emigration of the Croats into the Austro-Hungarian Border Region in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the Authorial Appendix of Josip Adamček**

Josip Adamček writes that “. . . the emigration of the Croats into today’s Austrian region of Gradište was only one stream in the big migrations of the Croatian people in the 16<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 13). The Croatian ethnic territory was directly in danger of the Ottoman invasions 1463-1593. Croatia and its noblemen were reduced to “the remnants of the remnants”, as Hungarian King Ludwig II put it. “The massive migrations from certain regions started when the Turks began to conquer or endanger them. The migrations were actually an escape from the Ottomans” (p. 13). Adamček classifies the migrations as internal and external. “The internal migrations include migration within the Croatian lands, from the areas that the Ottomans conquered to the protected and more secure parts of Croatia. In particular, we can mention the migration of the new population into Dalmatia, which was under the rule of Venice. Truthfully, a part of those immigrants immediately moved to Italy and Istra, due to the territory being too crowded. The bigger movements happened during the Turkish-Venetian War 1537-1539 and the Cyprus War 1570-1573. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the migrations of the Croats to Istra were intensified and, at the time, Istra went through a demographic crisis. Although contemporary researchers do not accept the former term ‘second movement’ of the Croats to Istra, they agree that the migration of the new population, triggered by the Ottoman wars, was very intensive. The internal migrations were of a great significance for the economic and social development of the parts of Slavonia and Croatia which the Ottomans had conquered as late as the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or which they had not conquered at all. In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the gentry and the other people from proper Croatia began to move to the Northeast. That is when the term Croatia spread as far as the Kupa, Sava and Una rivers. The colonisation of the new population extended to the Kingdom of Slavonia as well. The noble family of Keglović, who later became counts, moved from the county of Knin to Slavonia. They acquired huge feudal possessions in Hrvatsko Zagorje. The big Trakošćan feudal possession in Zagorje became the possession of the Drašković family in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, who had moved from the area near Knin. Many lower and middle noblemen moved to the protected regions of Slavonia. Many of them acquired lands and gradually got involved in the political life of their new homeland (the families of Patačić, Forčić, Berislavić of Vrhnika, Mladinčić, Dudić, etc.)” (p. 13-14).

Drawing attention to the fact that “. . . a great number of deserted settlements appeared on numerous feudal lands in Slavonia in the 1470s” (p. 14), Adamček gives the most characteristic examples of the devastated feudal lands of Dišnik, Dobra Kuća,

Kristalovac, Greben, Krapina, Trakošćanin, etc. “The appearance of such a big number of deserted settlements coincides time-wise with the great Ottoman invasions in Slavonia (1469-1479), when around 14,000 people were killed and enslaved. It seems that the mentioned Ottoman devastations were the main cause of the deserted feudal lands in Slavonia. However, some other reasons may have led to this huge depopulation. After that, when the defence system of the Banates of Jajce and Srebrenica was stabilised in Bosnia, the Ottoman intrusions in Slavonia were stopped. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, new surfs began to settle on the deserted feudal lands. A great part of those settlers were peasants from Croatia proper, which was intensively invaded in that period by the Ottomans” (p. 14) The settling of the new population was so intensive that Adamček gives an example of the feudal lands of Greben, from the county of Križevac, where, in 1516, only twenty settlements remained completely empty. According to the feudal law created in 1522 and kept in the Hungarian state archive, the feudal lands of Greber had a great number of new surfs. “Many of them were listed by surnames and nicknames that pointed out that they had come from Croatia proper. . . It seems that the settlers from the nearby hinterlands of Dalmatian towns came to the feudal land Velika in the county of Križevac around 1476” (p. 14). The names of the villages were associated with Benkovac, Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, etc. “We can only suppose that those villages arose after the settling of the people from Dalmatia, but the information in the feudal law from 1519 confirms that colonised peasants most probably lived there. However, there was still a disproportionately huge number of free people in those villages. The colonists from ancient Croatia are explicitly mentioned in a few more lands in Slavonia” (p. 15); for example, Brdovac and Donja Stubica. “In the entire 16<sup>th</sup> century, the feudal lands in Hrvatsko Zagorje were an important area of immigration of the new population. By the end of the century, the number of the vassal peasants on those feudal lands had increased. In 1598, on the feudal land Vinici, nearby Varaždin, there lived 723 families, while simultaneously, in the deserted county of Križevac, which could settle 50-80 feudal lands the size of Vinici, there lived only 1,150 surfs. In 1568, when a deserted village, Strmec, arose on the feudal land Vinici, it was immediately occupied by the land owner Petar Horvat with other newcomers from Croatia. . . Having analysed the archive sources, I confirmed that, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the number of surfs had been increasing even in the rest of the feudal possessions in Zagorje (Susjedgrad, Donja Stubica, Veliki Tabor, Krapina, Kostel, Lobar, Cesargrad, etc.). A considerable number of vassals was also recorded on the feudal lands between the rivers Sava and Kupa. Still, the sources do not mention that the increase in population was caused by the immigration from the regions conquered or threatened by the Turks, but it seems quite certain that such a big increase was not the result of the development of the local population. The feudal lands along the Kupa River, especially the regions south from the river, are considered to be important areas of the emigration of the population out from Croatia. However, bearing in mind the intensity of the Turkish invasions into that area, the population on those feudal lands was decreasing more slowly than it could be expected. The feudal lands Sisak, Petrinja, Gornji Gradac, Donji Gradac, Steničnjak and some others were concurrently areas of settlement as well. On some feudal lands, the decrease of the population started in the middle of the offensive of Hasan-Pasha in 1591, and on the feudal land of Sisak, the decrease started right at the beginning of it” (p. 15).

Those migrations caused crucial social consequences. As Adamček emphasises, “. . . the internal colonisation in the Croatian lands had great meaning for the unification of the noble families (a common council, the spreading of the Croatian name). Its result was also the gradual spreading of the Croatian name to the parts of Slavonia that the Ottomans had not conquered. That colonisation is also important because it refers to the emigration of Croatians out from their homeland. Namely, in many cases the emigration from Slavonia was only a phase in a population’s migration, who had already settled once into the more protected areas. Although the internal and external migrations are connected with the Ottoman wars, it should be emphasised that some other factors also influenced the emigration and depopulation of particular lands. Sometimes there were dense smokes on the feudal lands because of massive deaths, and the surfs also migrated due to hunger and too high feudal taxes” (p. 15). The vast epidemics of contagious diseases caused extinctions, and during years of hunger many Croatians moved to German lands. The feudalists took over the trade business from the peasants and constantly worsened their position, causing a growing number of peasant rebellions. Often, even the citizens were coercively turned into surfs, and their markets into villages, and frequently the lower gentry were made surfs as well. Due to heavy taxes and their intolerable position, the surfs from Podravina<sup>32</sup> even defected to the Turks. “However, in many places the peasants had already got involved in the defence of the country. They realised that the Turkish marauding invasions caused the greatest damage precisely to them, plundering and setting their villages on fire and carrying people off into slavery. At the time, the phrase ‘in the Turkish way’ began to be used in various sources, referring to the especially huge marauding invasions of the villages, that were sometimes perpetrated by the feudalists themselves. . . The Turks usually systematically ravaged the areas they intended to conquer. That was a part of their military tactics. As a rule, the fortresses of the gentry with their crew stood in the way of the Turks’ conquest up until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The local gentry sustained the crew. When the Ottoman formations ravaged the places near the fortresses in their marauding invasions, their crews became isolated. The means of their sustenance disappeared, and consequently the fortresses had to surrender during bigger invasions. Most often, non-regular cavalry formations, the so-called *akindžije*, carried out those invasions. They were sustained exclusively by their war-time pillaging. Ravaged regions thus appeared along the border between Croatia and Slavonia, which had been moving toward the northwest until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Ottomans set the villages in those regions on fire. They abducted the unprotected surfs and carried them off into slavery in Turkey. The prisoners could be sold there for a good price. The incessant fear of the Ottoman attacks decreased the economic activity. In many places, the peasants without military protection did not dare to cultivate the land and vineyards. The unbearable living conditions in the border areas forced its population, primarily the peasants, to leave their hearths and move to new homelands. Related to these ravages, we can also mention the deterioration of the position of the vassal peasants as one of the reasons for their migrations. In many cases, the population had a choice either to accept Turkish slavery or escape to safer regions” (p. 17).

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<sup>32</sup> the region along the river Drava

### a) Various Directions and Types of the Croatians' Migrations

Adamček draws special attention to the issue of the massive abductions of the Croatian population into slavery in Turkey, as a form of a coercive migration of the nation, considering the scope it had. The historical data on the issue, from as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, are rather rare, but very striking. “At the time of the conquest in Slavonia 1526-1552 they (the Turks note by V. Š.) regularly invaded not-yet-conquered places and abducted the peasants. When, in 1532, Sultan Suleiman was coming back from an unsuccessful campaign in Vienna, his armies took many captured peasants from Podravina, the areas near Križevac and the Požega basin. In the beginning of 1540, Krsto Međurički complained that the Turkish cavalry had invaded his marketplace Rača, set everything to fire and abducted his surfs. In fact, during an attack by the army on that cavalry, the captured surfs were freed. However, the cavalry carried off more than a thousand peasants to slavery from the feudal land Petrovina nearby Daruvar at the same time. In May, during an invasion of the feudal land Varaždinska Toplica, which was still far away at the time, they captured 500 people. In the beginning of the next year, they carried off 100 people from the surrounding area of the bishop fortress Dubrava to slavery, which also far away from the Turkish border. There are many similar data on many other Turkish invasions, as well. However, the number of Croatian peasants carried off into Turkish slavery cannot be even approximately determined. The abduction of people into slavery from the regions along the Una River began as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1540, the Turks thoroughly devastated the lands of the Zrinski counts in that area, but the abduction of the people continued. In 1599, a list was composed of the people who had been abducted into slavery from Pounje<sup>33</sup>, which was in fact the Croatian border at the time. . . The Turks had taken 4,151 persons during many invasions only in that year. The next year, they invaded the same region around thirty times. The lands of the abbey of Topusko were set to fire several times, and 300 people were abducted from there. In 1563, ‘by fire and sword’, they again devastated the lands between the Una and the Kupa rivers, which had not yet been conquered. This time, they abducted more than 500 people into slavery. There was a list of people that the Turks had carried off into slavery in 1565 from the municipality of Zlat (Slatsko polje) of the feudal land Steničnjak. It lists as many as 500 names. . . This naming of five hundred people children, women, etc. . . leaves one to only shriek at destiny. It synthesises the conditions under which the Croatian peasant lived along the Turkish border, and explains the reasons why he had to leave his native soil if he were to protect his family. Across the remaining part of Croatia proper, the Turks began to invade Kranjska (Carniola), Štajerska (Styria), Koruška (Carynthia). Istria and Primorje in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Those invasions were intensified in the end of the 1530s, and were usually carried out by cavalry formations of a thousand and more men. Most of the rapid cavalry invasions came from the Turkish stronghold Udbine. During their invasions of the internal Austrian regions, the Turks also ravaged the parts of Croatia that were in their way. Accordingly, as early as the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the feudal lands of the Frankopan family Modruša, Bosiljevo, Severin, Ogulin, Brod na Kupa, etc. were left almost completely uninhabited” (p. 17-19).

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<sup>33</sup> the area along the river Una

As for the external migrations, Adamček writes that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatians moved in three directions: to Italy across the sea, to the west (to the internal Austrian regions) and to the northwest to western Hungary, Lower Austria and Moravska. The first Slavonic colonies in Italy appeared as early as the Middle Ages. The population at that time emigrated across the sea due to economic reasons. From the 15<sup>th</sup> century to 17<sup>th</sup> century, migration to the Apennine Peninsula from Dalmatia, under the influence of the Turkish invasions, became quite large. Of the numerous Croatian settlements in Apulja, Marche and Abruzzi, only a small group of Molise Croatians was preserved. The settling of the Croatians into the internal Austrian regions was mainly in the dukedoms of Kranjska (Carniola) and Štajerska (Styria). The Croatian Parliament in Topuski in 1533, and then again in 1535, requested from King Ferdinand I that he prohibit the carrying away of surfs to Kranjska and Štajerska. . . The Parliament claimed that the feudal landowners from those lands were sending certain people among the Croatian surfs to persuade them to migrate. The Croatian gentry and noblemen, who had feudal possessions in Kranjska, had an important role in resettling the peasants to the mentioned regions. For example, in 1534, Baron Ivan Ungnad resettled a huge group of Croatian peasants to the feudal land of Krško. In 1547, the Blagajski princes bought the feudal land of Kočevje. It seems that they resettled their surfs there from the endangered Pounje. The refugees from that region are mentioned 1580-1590 nearby Brežice. The noble families of Jurišić, Lenković, Gušić and others settled in Štajerska. The noblemen Petar Salković and Desić resettled groups of Croatian peasants around 1570. However, surfs settled in the mentioned regions spontaneously as well. Indeed, the Turks ravaged those regions too, but life in those regions was still safer than living along the Turkish border. The Croatian settlers assimilated with the Slavic peasants in Kranjska and Štajerska. The escaping of the surfs to Kranjska and Štajerska is also mentioned in the beginning of the 17th century. On 13 November 1607, the Croatian Parliament complained that the local feudalists received 'run-away surfs and Croatians', and in 1619 it decided that negotiations should be initiated with the military commander of Štajerska concerning the Croatian surfs that had escaped to Štajerska. The greatest migration of the Croatians in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was to the northwest □□ to western Hungary, Lower Austria and Moravska. The settling to western Hungary, in particular today's Gradište, began after 1493, and certainly before 1515, when peasants with Croatian surnames had already lived on the feudal land Željezno. The individual and separate settlements of the Croatians, especially the noblemen, occurred in Hungary even before the period of Turkish invasion. After the fall of Bosnia in 1463, there were some refugees who fled before the Turks. Nevertheless, the great migrations began in the first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It seems that the settling of bigger groups of Croatians in Gradište, before 1515, was connected with the intensive Turkish devastation of Lika and Krbava. In 1527, the Ottomans conquered those regions. Between 1522 and 1527, the Croatians from Lika, Krbava and nearby Senja settled in the county of Šopron. The great emigration from western Slavonia started in the 1530s. In 1539, the nobleman Krsto Svetački complained that near his fortresses of Novska, Britvičevina and Subocka, there were no people, thus there was no one who could destroy those fortresses and keep them from falling into the hands of the Ottomans. In spring of the next year, the surfs from Petrovina and the nearby castles ran away towards the Drava *en masse*. On 13 September 1540, the Zagreb Bishop, Šimun Erdedi, complained that his feudal lands of Ivanić, Čazma and Dubrava had been terribly devastated. The Turkish invasions were so

often that ‘. . . the lands remained uncultivated, and the population had left the lands’. The Bishop did not mention where those people migrated to. In the mentioned cases, the peasants emigrated from their feudal lands spontaneously. However, organised migrations greatly influenced their migration to western Hungary. They was conducted by a group of noblemen who at the same time had lands both in western Hungary and in Croatia” (p. 19-20).

### **b) The Settling of the Croats into Western Hungary**

Further on, Adamček documents that the noble family of Batanija resettled their surfs, on several occasions, from Croatia and Slavonia to western Hungary with the permission from kings Ludwig and Ferdinand; then Count Tomo Nadeždi went from Slavonia to Gradište, and the counts Erdedi and the Zrinjski princes to Međumorje. “The organised resettling was also connected to the activities of the so-called ‘relocaters’. Those were the people who brought colonists from Slavonia and Croatia into particular villages, at the request of the gentry, and for a reward” (p. 23). Some of those relocaters, with special merits for the resettlements even received feudal lands as their reward. “Ms. K. Kučer divides the settling of the Croats in western Hungary into three periods: from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century until the 1530s was the beginning of their settling. In the second period, from the 1530s to the 1570s, the Croats settled *en masse*; and in the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century smaller groups of Vlachs began to settle as well. She determines three periods of Croatian settling in the area of today’s Slovakia: the first one in the 1540s, the second one in the 1550s (the climax was in 1552 and 1553) and the third one in the 1560s. It seems that the settling of the Croats in Hungary was not always synchronised with their leaving their homeland. Sometimes, they stayed for shorter or longer time on the feudal lands in the country before moving to their new home. The most intensive migration to the northwest was during the 1530s and 1540s from Slavonia, from the then county of Križevac. As evidence to this great migration serves a document from 1537 by King Ferdinand I, by which he allowed the Međumurje nobleman Gašpar Ernušt and Ivan Salaj to build a ship (a ferry), on the river Mura, between Legrad and Dubravica, that would take the refugees from Slavonia across the river to Hungary. The feudal lands in Slavonia remained deserted before the Ottomans conquered them. In 1538, Ivan Kastelanfi complained that there were no more surfs on his lands and that he fell into debt from sustaining the crews in his fortresses. Krsto Zempčej (Svetački) had four feudal lands that were no longer lucrative. In 1541, the King took over the defence of his fortresses Sirač and Podborje, On 21 March 1544, Petar Keglević complained that he did not have any more surfs on his lands around Ustilonja along the Sava and that, accordingly, he could not sustain that fortress. With great efforts, the advancement of the Ottomans was stopped at the confluence of the Drava and the Sava rivers in 1552, after they had taken Virovitica, Čazma, Dubrava and Ustilonja. In Slavonia, the Turks did not succeed in further conquests, but their formations were still carrying out plundering invasions. During those ravages, the remnants of the county of Križevac suffered, and then the eastern parts of the Zagreb and Varaždin counties did as well. The population of those regions continued with emigrations, even though the Slavonska Krajina was organised as a system of defensive fortresses in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 23).

### c) Demographic Crisis in the Safe Regions

The emigrations continued even in the places that had not fallen under Turkish control. “The huge changes in the population of the border area in Slavonia, which the Turks had not conquered, are shown in the depiction of the economic devolvement of the feudal lands of Koprivnice, Đurđevac and Prodavić from 1548. In 1520, there were 780-800 taxpaying estates on these feudal lands. By 1548, the old population of those lands had mainly settled into Hungary. A smaller number of inhabitants lived only in the town of Koprivnica. In the meantime, the defectors from the parts of Slavonia taken by the Ottomans arrived on the feudal lands. Their life was miserable, living on the Drava’s eyots and in fortresses. They cultivated small lands only under military protection, because otherwise the Turkish Armatoles would come and carry them off. Otherwise, everyone ‘. . . greatly feared and hid from the Turks and marauders that hunted people’. There was also a similar situation in the other lands in Slavonia close to the Turkish border” (p. 24). Adamček gives an example of a decision by the Zagreb Kaptol from 1579 to free its surfs in Varaždinske Toplice of the feudal taxes as an attempt to stop the migrations. Those measures were insufficient, and even more villages became deserted, and the process of depopulation in Slavonia persistently continued. There was a similar situation in the southern Croatian regions, as well. “The regions along the Una River and its hinterland (the area between the Una and the Kupa rivers) were regions of emigrations during the entire 16<sup>th</sup> century. Groups of peasants from those regions settled in Sopron County and Košeg from 1533-1543. The populations of Podzvizd and Vranograč moved to the county of Mošon. A large Turkish army warred against the Zrinski princes in Pounje in 1540. As a result, numerous feudal lands (Zrin, Gvozdansko, Pedalj, Kostajnica, etc.) were desolated. That attack and the many invasions from 1541-1545 were an incentive for the peasants who were not carried off to slavery to migrate from Pounje to safer regions. The conquest of Dubice in 1538 meant the first Turkish break through of the defensive system on the Una River. However, that system held off their attacks until the conquest of Kostajnica in 1556. There, the Turks immediately created a stronghold for their further conquest in Pounje and systematic devastation of the area below the river Kupa the feudal lands of Hrastovica, Petrinje, Steničnjak, Topusko and others. The preserved sources demonstrate that the population of the mentioned lands began to migrate in greater numbers precisely after the fall of Kostajnica. The feudal lands of Petrinja, Gradec Gornji and Gradec Donji – despite being close to the border on the river Una – recorded an increase in population until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Turks devastated those lands on two occasions (1512 and 1539). Some of the peasants had probably emigrated by then, but new people were constantly settling in their place. As late as 1554, deserted properties of the runaway (emigrant) surfs began appearing on the estates of Petrinje and Gradac. In 1564, the feudal lands were almost completely deserted. After the fall of Kostajnica in 1556, a new wave of migration started from the regions of the Una and the Kupa rivers to western Hungary. New colonists started arriving in the counties of Šopron, Mošon and Požun. The surfs from the lands of the Zrinski princes settled into Lower Austria, western Hungary and Moravska (the feudal lands Eberava, Verešvar and Drnholec). Apart from the lands of Petrinje and Gradac, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Turks also began to systematically attack the lands of Hrastovica, Gore-Letovanić, Steničnjak and the lands of the abbey Topusko. The surfs from those lands emigrated as well. After the Turkish

invasion at the end of the 1550s and the beginning of the 1560s, parts of the feudal land Hrastovica, south of the Kupa, were completely desolated. After that, the vassals only lived on the part of the land above the river Kupa, on which a new defensive line was created in the 1570s. In the invasions after 1556, the Turks thoroughly devastated the lands of the abbey Topusko, which was also south of the Kupa. They carried away a part of the surfs into slavery, and a part of them emigrated. In the tax census of the abbey's land Brkiševina from 1573, it is explicitly stated that seven estates were deserted... the vassals had emigrated due to their fear of the enemy" (p. 24-25).

#### **d) The Futile Prohibitions of Emigration**

Otherwise, in this, his authorial appendix to the scientific research project he titled *The Emigration of the Croatians into the Austro-Hungarian Border Region in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, Josip Adamček, in order to more impressively represent processed historical affairs, quotes a part of the content of a Franciscan petition to the King from 2 February 1561: ". . . they wrote, 'Our homeland is devastated, our leaders beheaded, the surfs killed, many places ravaged, women and girls raped, marriages destroyed, children murdered'. . . In their homeland, blood was shed everyday, and 'the remnants of today's nation are scattered all over the world'" (p. 25). The situation deteriorated in the following decades. "After the Cyprus War (1570-1573), the Turks resumed their offensive in the unconquered part of Pounje and Pokuplje. They continued to plunder the feudal lands, and then to conquer the isolated fortresses. By 1592, only the fortress Bihać remained on the river Una, so in the 1570s a new defensive system on the river Kupa began being built. The Turkish offensive in the 1570s and 1580s triggered a new wave of migration to Hungary. On 7 March 1574, King Maximilian II asked Ban Juraj Drašković to take certain measures in order to hinder the great migration of the nation from the other remaining parts of Croatia. This is probably related to the order by Archduke Karl, from the same year, that forbade the emigration of the surfs from the border areas. However, the surfs did not pay attention to the Archduke's prohibition. On 4 June 1575, Gašpar Alapić wrote to the Zagreb Kaptol about the intention of the peasants 'to collectively emigrate from these lands' (Pokuplje). His men, on the way from Zagreb, encountered a huge group of surfs from the Zagreb Kaptol 'that were migrating to Hungary'. When they tried to return them, they all fled and probably continued their journey later. On 4 April 1584, the Croatian Parliament also complained that the surfs from Pokuplje, or the region between the Kupa and the Sava, were emigrating to a great extent. The Parliament highlighted that the Croatian surfs had been forced to leave their lands and massively '. . . emigrate to various parts of the world, like Hungary, Austria, Moarvska, Štajerska (Stryria) and Kranjska (Carniola)'. At the time of the Turkish invasions in the 1570s and 1580s Nadasdy's<sup>34</sup> feudal land Steničnjak was completely devastated. The Turks started to invade that land as early as the 1540s. . . In February 1580, around 800 people were carried off to slavery. In 1580, a once rich market was completely burned down, and in the invasion in 1581, 300 more peasants were abducted into slavery. After that, the remaining population ran away" (p. 25).

Precisely those surfs that escaped from Steničnjak founded, in 1582, ". . . the village Stinjaki in Gradište. Some moved to the county of Križevac, but probably did not stay

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<sup>34</sup> a Hungarian family



there permanently. The refugees from Steničnjak settled nearby the newly-built Karlovac fortress in 1584” (p. 28). Historical documents record a great migration of the peasants from the bishop feudal lands Hrastovica and Sisak. “The Turkish offensive against Sisak 1591-1593 was the last one that caused a large migration from Croatia. It ended with the defeat of the Turks in a battle at Sisak on 22 June 1593. That victory stopped the Turkish breakthrough into Croatia and became a milestone in the long fight for the country. After a long war (1593-1606), the offensive power of Turkey was exasperated. The Croatian-Turkish border gradually became peaceful. There were no more Turkish invasions with vast destructions and massive abductions into slavery. Thus, the main reason for the mass Croatian migrations was removed. . . The attack of the Hasan-Pasha Predojević on Sisak in 1591 completely devastated the feudal land of Sisak. . . The surfs of Sisak ran away and scattered on all sides. At the time of Hasan-Pasha’s offensive, the surfs emigrated from other threatened feudal lands as well” (p. 28).

### 3. The Observations of Felix Tobler on the Initial Area of Settlement

In the study *The Settlement, Horizon and Changes of the Speaking Regions*, Felix Tobler draws special attention to the fact that Emperor Ferdinand I “. . . facilitated the migration of the Croatian vassal population with the help of administrative measures” (p. 31), especially in Lower Austria, while Hungarian King Ludwig II in 1524 “. . . granted a request by Franjo Batiani to settle his Croatian subjects on his lands Ening and Batian in south-western Hungary, since they could no longer live peacefully and safely in their homeland due to their fear of the incessant Turkish invasions” (p. 33). The role of the ruler was most significant in decreeing certain privileges and tax reliefs. “In order to facilitate the building of houses and settlements, and in order to stabilise the colonists in an economic sense, they were freed of all ‘state’ taxes and capitations for a certain time (between 3 and 12 years), with the exception of the tributes and capitations given to noblemen...” (p. 33). On the other hand, “. . . analogous with the abolishment of the ‘state’ taxes and burdens, which was approved to the colonists by the ruler in the beginning, the noblemen who had settled them freed them from the feudal duties for a few years as well. During the settling, the nobleman helped them mainly by providing them with the necessary timber for building houses, lending them grain for the harvest, and in many other ways” (p. 41). The Croatian Roman Catholic priests also had a significant role in making the migrations larger, as they migrated together with the people. Jozef Bred, in the study *The Spatial Range and the Consequences for the Image of the Settlement*, concludes: “The area that was encompassed by the Croatian colonisation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was considerably bigger than the area settled by the Croatians from Gradište today, which is limited to Gradište (except the district Jennersdorf, and some border parts of western Hungary. The original region of settlement extended to the Fischa in the Vienna basin, and included Moravsko polje, the Lower-Austrian Morava river basin, Toje (the region of the Morava) and south-western Slovakia on both sides of the Little Carpathians. A few offshoots can be noticed in the west, north and east as well. The outline of the entire area is set according to the edges and jutting parts of the Alps and the Carpathians, which, in this area of strong tectonic activities is connected by isolated ranges and chains of hills. . . The Croatians settled in the peripheral region of the Alpine-Carpathian middle highlands (Kiseg, the Little

Carpathians) in some extreme cases, but as a rule, they limited themselves to plains, and terraced, elevated and hilly lands. It strikes us that, for the Croatian colonization in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it was important that the climate, vegetation and wildlife had the characteristics of Pannonia, or at least seemed like Pannonia” (p. 43).

## 1. Jozef Bred on the Reasons for Settling Gradište

Bred states that the Croatians actually migrated to the former Slavic lands with a small Avarian ethnic stratum that had been Slavinised, and was accompanied firstly by a stratum of Germans, and later by Hungarians. The first stratum of Germans, of the so-called Carolingian colonisation, was not particularly numerous, but the other one, from the Ottonian colonisation in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, caused the German ethnicity to be the largest one. Consequently, the Germans achieved the language assimilation of the West Slavs. Though in an anthropological sense the Slavic ethnic base was considerably present, “. . . the Croatian colonization in the 16<sup>th</sup> century did not find here any traces of ancient Slavhood” (p. 44). “Simultaneously, the progress of the settlement in south-western Slovakia north from the Danube was a bit different, since the Slavic element had been preserved there” (p. 45). Jozef Bred notices that there, “. . . the Croatians that had settled in the German and Slovakian environment largely accepted the Slovakian language, as it was closer to their native language” (p. 45). The areas that the Croatians populated were either devastated by the Turkish invasions on Vienna, or by various epidemics and agrarian crises. This author gives a significant piece of information □□ that the Croatian migrations began as early as the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. “Between 1522 and 1527, the Croatian population from the region close to Senj and the highlands of Lika, Gacko and Krbava migrated to the county of Šopron” (p. 48). He finds evidence that, at that time, several West Slavic noblemen had already migrated with their surfs. “A proportionally dense forest cover in the south part of Gradište offered a space for founding new places from the ground up, and that was an opportunity that Franjo Baćan, in particular, used in order to settle the refugees from Croatia and Slavonia. He was not driven only by economic interests, but he, as the Croatian and Slavonian Ban, felt obliged to help the emigrants, as it is stated in the document about the foundation of the Church of St. Mikula” (p. 48). The extent of the migrations was so great that almost the entire Croatian nation had moved, and Bred classifies their settlements into main settlements and daughter ones. Afterwards, he divides the main ones into the newly founded ones on the non-populated areas, on the old homesteads, on the places of the destroyed previous settlements and on the forest clearings. Along with that, the existent populated places were enlarged, whereas the daughter ones are divided in the newly founded and the existent non-Croatian places where the Croatians settled. The Croatian ethnic entity was so large that, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in many places it assimilated the German and other non-Croatian population that they encountered. However, during the entire 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was a thorough process of Germanisation, Hungarianisation, Slovakianisation and Czechisation of the Croatians. The process of the intensive Germanisation of the Croatians from Gradište is going on even today. It is interesting that, in the largely Czech and Slovakian environments, the Croatians expressed much greater closeness to the German minority population. For this reason, they shared their same destiny after World War II, and were largely expelled to Germany. Jozef Bred writes about it: “The relatedness of the Slavic languages played a

certain role in the environment of various languages, as they enabled clear communication after living together for a short time. The Croatian villages in the purely Slovakian and Czech environments were rapidly assimilated. . . . After World War I, the newly founded Czechoslovakia recorded the Slovakian Croats only in an ethnographic and linguistic sense, but it dedicated special attention to the South-Moravian Croats in the district of Drinovica. The authorities were trying to break up the tight symbiosis between the Croats and the Germans who lived around them, but they did not have any permanent success. Accordingly, after World War II, they turned to the radical method of banishment □□ an offence that cannot be compared to anything in the entire vast areas of Croatian settlements in Diaspora” (p. 90). In a very comprehensive study, Bred gives an exhaustive review of the places where the Croats used to live, in various concentrations, in the regions of today’s Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as those where the Croats live even now.

### 5. Johan Sedok and Gerald Schlag on Historical Events

Felix Tobler analysed the social, political and economic development of the Croats in the Austro-Hungarian border area, and Johan Sedok analyzed the historical events at the time of the second rule of Franz Josef. In Sedok’s appendix, one datum draws special attention: in 1848, the army of Ban Josip Jelačić, during the campaign against Pest, and later against Vienna, mercilessly plundered not only German and Hungarian villages that were in their path, but also the villages of the Croats from Gradište. “Concerning this, a few cases of deaths are mentioned. Besides, the west-Hungarian Croats did not react differently from the Germans and Hungarians. We are familiar with the case of the murder of three soldiers in Frankenau, because that case provoked a lawsuit” (p. 142). As a school network was being developed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the issue of schoolbooks in the Croatian language arose. “Since the schoolbooks printed in Croatia were supposed to be introduced in the schools of the Croats from Gradište as well, they were familiar with the language and orthographic reforms in Croatia. Teachers, however, did not accept those books, but used the books adapted to the local language instead. By this, we can recognise the dawning of the Croatian national consciousness of the western Hungarian Croats from Gradište in the 1850s. It was a movement whose leaders were primarily priests and teachers, and it lasted throughout the whole period analysed here; and what is more, it was even intensified. At the time, the common literary language was appointed, being based on the chakavian dialect and the ikavian language variant; and starting in the 1870s, the Croatian orthography with its diacritic signs has been used” (p. 146). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Croats from Gradište started to join political parties, the peasants joined mainly the Christian-social ones, and the workers the social-democratic ones. “Since that time, there has been a division of the Croats in two political camps that lasts even today. However, even in this first developmental phase of the division, it was shown that the national problematic issue, that is the linguistic and minority policies, were not the primary life interests for the great majority of the Croats, just like today” (p. 153).

The break-up of Austro-Hungary caused new divisions among the Gradište Croats. As Gerald Schlag sets out in his authorial appendix *The Croats from Gradište 1918-1945*, there was “. . . a division of the Croats into two camps, and yet at first, the

national problem was not registered: travelling workers, that is the peasants from the northern parts of the country who worked for incidental earnings, were inclining to the German language to a greater extent, striving for professional prosperity. Politically, the trade unions and the Social Democratic Party soon became dominant, so in 1918/1919 they decisively opted for Austria. Accordingly, the peasants and travelling tradesmen from this region, who were directly connected with the Austrian sales market, advocated annexation to Austria. As already mentioned, the Croats in middle and southern Gradište were peasants, and remained loyal to their maternal language in their homogenous settlements. Their stand was conservative, marked by firm Catholicism. Here, religion and nationality were an inseparable whole. Thus, the Catholic clergy were not only the religious leaders, but also the only political leaders in those villages. Between 1918 and 1919, when the young democratic parties strove to include the whole country with their organizations, the villages of middle and southern Gradište were converted into the headquarters of the Christian Social Party. Under the influence of rectors, the people were loyal to Hungary regarding the issue of citizenship. . . . The issue of annexation to Austria was a trigger for the differences in political orientation, which had not been so important until then, but for which they all of a sudden came out so severely” (p. 157). With the revolution led by Bela Kun and the formation of the Soviet republic, the Hungarian external political positions were significantly weakened, so by the decision of the victorious countries and with the Treaty of Saint-Germain, Gradište was annexed to Austria in 1919. “It is interesting to mention that, during the negotiations over determining the borders of western Hungary at least in the first phase of the negotiations the Croats were actually the ones who indirectly played not-a-small role in the so-called Czech ‘Corridor Plan’. Even in the first phase of the peace talks in Paris, Czechoslovakian Minister of Foreign Affairs Baneš set out a plan that foresaw a Slavic corridor in western Hungary, similar to the one in Poland that gave it access to the Baltic Sea. It was supposed to directly link the Czechoslovakian Republic and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, as an access to the ports on the Adriatic, and thus to the world seas. This plan, which had appeared long before World War I among the Czech and Croatian circles, and which was discussed by Toma Masarik with the emigrant circles and the politicians of the Entente, based its demands on the Croatian linguistic clusters in western Hungary, to which was conferred the function of the bridges in this daring project. The plan for the corridor unfortunately came across the severe opposition of Italy, and, as the situation developed, the representatives of Great Britain and the USA rejected it as well, causing its failure. As for the Croats from Gradište themselves, who, after its failure, found out about some particular items of the plan from the press, they all dismissed it completely” (p. 162).

**a) The Euphoria of the Gradište Croats Regarding the Anschluss, and Their Opposition to Pavelić’s Intention to Move Them to the Independent State of Croatia**

Schlag then depicts how the Croats from Gradište “. . . loyally stuck to the class state and Šušnig’s government” (p. 186) in the 1930s. “Most of the Croats, of course, were consciously Croatian, but privately in their homes and villages. Naturally, the Croatian language was spoken there, ancient folk songs were sung and ancient customs treasured. In politics, however, economic and social issues were almost exclusively in

the foreground. The Croatian political nationalism barely developed with the majority of the village people; even for those who called themselves 'conscious Croats', the common, deep Catholic affiliation was in the foreground to much greater extent than a firm national stand" (p. 186). Since the middle of the 1930s, a greater number of Croats had been joining the national socialists. "The Croats, almost without exception, were going through a strong transformation regarding the Anschluss with the German Reich, that was invading like an avalanche. Also, in the Croatian villages there was an unbelievable euphoria over the parades, torches and manifestations" (p. 187). During those days of the Anschluss, *Hrvatske Novine (Croatian News)* wrote that ". . . even the Croats from Gradište, who had for centuries shared every effort and trouble with their German fellow citizens, did not want to stand aside while the latter ones were celebrating the achievement. We, the Croats, salute the Fuehrer as our Chancellor and we promise that we will faithfully serve his goals designated for the homeland" (p. 187). After the plebiscitary opting for the joining of Austria to the Third Reich, which took place on 10 April 1938, the editor of this Croatian newspaper got into even more euphoric mood, writing in the name of his compatriots: "We will go our true and determined way with our heads high. Unstoppable, we will all stand by Adolf Hitler, with deep gratitude because he most appreciates those nations, which, like the Croats, love and defend their nation and nationality. In that conviction, let 10 April 1938 be and stay the golden page in the history of the Croatian minority for all generations in the great German Reich of Adolf Hitler. On that historic day, the Croats demonstrated their loyalty and uniqueness" (p. 187). A panic arose among the Croats from Gradište in 1941, when they found out about the secret plan of Ante Pavelić to systematically move them to the region of the Independent State of Croatia. "It had been planned that all the Croats living outside the Croatian state should be returned to their ancient homeland in one big action of returning and exchanging. . . . When this was disclosed, those in the Office for National Minorities were terrified, and they composed an elaborate statement about their stand, trying to explain the futility of the project. They used as their argument the hundred-years-old common destiny of the Germans and Croats on the border of the Reich, and that, before 1938, many Croats were 'the underground' fighters among the ranks of the national-socialist movement, that the Croats in April of 1938 gave 100% of their votes for Adolf Hitler's Reich and, finally, that a few thousand Croats loyally and selflessly served the armed forces, many of them even having acquired high medals on the front" (p. 194). Since the German and the Croatian Ustasha governments in 1942 agreed on the moving of the Croats from Donja Štajerska (Upper Stryria) and Gornja Kranjska (Lower Carniola) to the Independent State of Croatia in exchange for the Germans from Kočevje, a new fear arose among the Croats from Gradište. As Gerald Schlag says, ". . . it caused a panic among the population, and in the south part of Gradište, even new the referendums were carried out in several Croatian municipalities in July and August of 1942, when the population opted 100% for German nationality" (p. 195). Finally, the Croats from Gradište demonstrated their loyalty to Adolf Hitler by the shedding of blood as well. "The war, which from 1939 involved the Croats (as well as all the other populations of the Greater German Reich), acquired a special aspect for the members of the Croatian population after the military campaign against the Balkans in 1941. Due to their knowledge of the language, they were transferred in larger numbers to the units that were functioning there as occupying forces – in the battles against the Partisans. As

translators, they were often in prominent positions. The ultimately brutal fight on the front demanded – even from them – the high tribute of blood, especially at the end of the war and the defeat of the German military forces” (p. 195).

## 6. Nikola Benčić on the Suppression of the Church-Slavic Language

Nikola Benčić in the study *The Religious and Cultural Life* says that “. . . all the researchers of the migrations of the Croatians from Gradište agree today that all ‘the newcomers’ came from the region between two rivers, the Kupa and the Una, then from Moslavina and Lika, indeed without proof of their origin from the littoral areas. That claim is important for explaining the appearance of the Church-Slavic divine services in Gradište. The ancient Church-Slavic liturgy was preserved only in the dioceses of Senj and Krčko, and partially in the other littoral areas” (p. 199). However, since the following generations of the Roman Catholic priests from Gradište were educated in Austrian and Hungarian theological schools, the Church-Slavic language very shortly disappeared. Concerning the huge differences in the literary language of the Croatians from Gradište and the ones from Croatia, who in the meantime had accepted the Serbian language as their own literary one, the literature of the Croatians from Gradište must be treated as independent. Nikola Benčić makes a similar conclusion in his second authorial appendix *The Script and the Literature*, where he writes: “Today, without more ado, can we talk about the literature of the Croatians from Gradište, which has as its foundation both a language that has developed out of the most prevalent dialect of the Croatians from Gradište, as well as a special partially considered and analysed problematic issue of the existence of national group” (p. 248). Although the German, Hungarian, Czech and Slovakian folklore influences were considerable in all the environments of “the aquatic Croatians”, as the Germans called them, still, the Croatians from Gradište had preserved their original ethnic characteristics much better than their compatriots that remained in the old regions. It can be strikingly envisaged in the studies of Lovra Županović on the musical culture, of Robert Sučić on the national customs, of Nives Ritig-Beljak on the oral literature, of Jerko Bezić on the folk music, of Ivan Ivančanin on the dances and dance customs, and of Jelka Raduš-Ribarić on the garments and the traditional artistic expressions. The Croatians from Gradište had almost no heroic folk songs, and Nives Ritig-Beljak draws attention to the opinion of Divna Zečević that the folk songs from Gradište about the battles and heroes “. . . reveal a noticeable similarity with the folk songs from the Croatian kajkavian regions. That similarity can be seen in the lyrical poems as well. The true splendour and particularity of this poetry, like the kajkavian one, can be seen precisely in the characteristic, soft and hazy, lyrical poems” (p. 345). As for the narrative oral creativity among the Croatians from Gradište is concerned, “. . . the most favourite are *šalne štorice*<sup>35</sup> about a sinful woman that has affairs with a priest and a blacksmith, about a sculpture of St. Florijan made out of human excrement, about a husband and a wife who beat a shadow thinking it is a ghost. . . There are the legends about serfdom, drudgery, counts who are always in a better position than the peasants, about Ban Jelačić and his soldiers who did not behave becomingly, about Esterhazi, Hitler, life ‘before the battle’ and ‘in the battle’” (p. 355).

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<sup>35</sup> humorous short tales

## 7. The Scientific Works of Other Authors

In his authorial appendix, Gerhard Noveklovski elaborated on *The Croatian Dialects in Gradište and the Neighboring Regions*, Laslo Hadrović on *The History of the Gradište-Croatian Literary Language*, and Johan Šučić and Jozef Vlašić on *Family Names*. Hadrović proved that the Gradište-Croatian linguistic-literary expression was standardised as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the religious literature. One fragment from the work of the most significant author of that time, Eberhard Kragel, could illustrate what the general Croatian literary language would have looked like today, if the Croats had not accepted the Serbian language through Gaj's reforms of their own language at the time of the Illyrian Movement. In particular, Kragel describes that paradise on earth as such:

*“In the Paradise on earth it was always spring, there were no harsh winds, no bad weather, no sudden changes, frost, or hail that caused damage; in the summer, there was no heat to bother the body, in the winter there was no snow or ice to be seen, and in the autumn the drought did not dry up small roses, but there was sagdar and from all sides equal and quiet solidarity during time; in this happy place the water was transparent as crystal, and sweet as honey, here the most beautiful (girls came and sat (. . .), here a man could hear nice singing and dancing, there was no sadness or trouble, no sick men, nor did death dare to come closer. In other words: in the Paradise on earth there was always happiness and pleasure, and on this happy place God placed our first father Adam”* (p. 470)<sup>1</sup>

In 1836, the Croats introduced the Serbian language as the literary one, and it was gradually accepted. “Although the regional literary languages had such strong roots in Croatia, the unification could not come immediately without problems. Instead, two ‘schools’ – the Rijeka orientation and the Zagreb orientation – defended their special status, especially on the issues of morphology. However, the basis of the linguistic problem had already been solved. The great authority Vuk Karadžić and the loyal follower of his ideas, Đura Daničić, as well as the ever stronger idea of South Slavic unity, and the leading role that the Croats wanted to secure in the future unique culture of the South Slavs, were all leading to a stronger coming together of the literary language to Vuk's standard. Accordingly, at the end of the previous century, they reached a final form in the sense of that standard. There was a similar situation with the reform of the orthography. . . The reformed literary language was still developing in a strictly purist manner. Instead of the usual foreign words, newly devised substitutions were largely introduced, the language was ardently being filtrated and new words were being formed – which culminated in the dictionaries of Bogoslav Šulek. The press and school contributed to the victory of the language reform” (p. 476).

That must have influenced the literary language of the Croats from Gradište. The aspirations of Fabian Hauser from 1857 were “. . . directed at the adaptation of the Gradište-Croatian tradition to the newly formed common Croatian language and, at the same time, a completely new, reformed orthography was to be adopted. However, it is

**Comment [Z6]:** Translator's note. In the original Serbian text, this passage is not separated or italicized. It has been formatted such and given a footnote to emphasize that it is meant to show what the Croatian language would look like today if Croatia had not accepted Serbian as its own. Being that it was left in old-Croatian in the original text, some parts were not translatable.

<sup>1</sup> This passage is in an old Croatian dialect, meant to show what Croatian would have looked like today had it not adopted Serbian as its own.

striking that he used the name ‘Croatian’ exclusively for the dialect from Gradište, whereas he called the common Croatian literary language ‘Slavic’, always and repeatedly calling for the consideration of the ‘Slavic’ language. Still, that should not confuse us. We are not talking about the Slavic language that was spoken in Koruška, Štajerska, Kranj, etc., but about a common literary language that was called ‘Illyrian-Croatian’, and that even Hauser on one occasion calls ‘Slavic-Illyrian’. Through the name “‘Slavic’ lives the memory of the times when the kajkavian dialect around Zagreb and Varaždin had been called the Slavic language. Even other scientists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century considered that dialect a branch of the Slavic language. Since Zagreb, as the seat of the Croatian national renaissance, was at the same time the central place of that dialect, Hauser probably continued to use the term ‘Slavic’ even for ‘the literary Croatian language’, in order to differentiate it from the language of the ‘aquatic’ Croatsians” (p. 477-478). Obviously, Hadrović here intentionally blurs the essence. The literary language in question was never called Croatian in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but Illyrian, or after the Treaty of Vienna Serbian-Croatian, that is, Croatian-Serbian. Hauser knew quite well that the language was not Croatian at all, but since it had been developed and perfected, it might become the common Slavic language. Otherwise, there were several attempts at the reformation of the Croatian language in Gradište, and at bringing it closer to the Serbian that the Croatsians in Croatia had accepted. Concerning this issue, Hadrović concludes that “. . . the Croatian problem with the language in Gradište has not been solved to this very day. There are two different opposing developmental courses. One wants to preserve the regional literary language in the literature, to maintain the ancient chakavian phonology and the morphological particularity (in declination and conjugation), enrich the linguistic treasure of neologisms, created by the local rules, and make it more suitable for the mediation of the contemporary culture and civilisation. The followers of that direction refer to a thorough demand for the literary language to be understandable to all strata of the population. The other course, on the other hand, advocates the closest relation possible with Croatian and, as the ultimate goal, a complete adoption of that language. Those tendencies are justified by the fact that the Croatsians in Gradište could adopt all the cultural achievements available to the Croatsians only through a radical reform of the language. The arguments and the counter-arguments, as I have already mentioned, have so far been balanced. . .

“As a result of repetitive attempts, made since the ‘50s in the previous century, the Gradište-Croatian language has become a truly mixed language in which the ancient chakavian foundation is becoming less visible. Apart from the grammar, the creation of a linguistic treasure has been developing as well. Besides the chakavian elements, there are numerous borrowed words from the contemporary literary language, as well as the neologisms in the language of Gradište. . . Everything considered, today that ancient literary language seems like a monument that has been often remodelled for centuries, which bears various styles that have changed, so that its original form can only be guessed” (p. 481-482).

### **A. More on the Croatsians from Gradište**

In 1983, the book *The Destiny of the Croatsians from Gradište through 450 Years*, by Bela Šrajner was published by the Croatian Cultural Society, with a longer version in the German language and a shorter one in Gradište-Croatian, which over time had been



influenced by Serbian to greater extent and was being transformed in that direction. In the foreword, Ivan Miler mentions the Croats from Gradište: “As a nationality small in numbers, we have lived for 450 years in today’s Austrian-Hungarian border region, as a remnant of the former great Croatian population – great by its number and its territory. For all this time, the Catholic Church has been our strongest foundation” (p. 249). He explains the aim of this book as the necessity of preserving the national identity, which is being exposed to faster assimilation and Germanisation. Šrajner starts his work with the historiographic description of the conditions under which the medieval Croatian state had collapsed; the decisions of the gentry to join it to Hungary; the large battles with the Turks on the Battle of Krbava in 1493, when the Croatian army took a beating and the feudal noblemen largely died; as well as the Battle of Mohács in 1526, in which the Hungarians and the Croats were defeated, and consequently Hungary was annexed to Austria.

### **a) The Croatian Gentry Accepts Foreign Sovereignty**

Most of the Croatian noblemen accepted the sovereignty of the dynasty of Habsburg, while a smaller part supported the Turkish vassal Jovan Zapolja. In two campaigns by Suleiman the Magnificent on Vienna in 1529 and 1532, the area surrounding the imperial capital, eastern Austria and western Hungary were thoroughly devastated, and the Turks carried off their complete populations to slavery, from which no one returned. “Consequently, the landowners were the first ones that took care to settle the Croatian peasants and surfs, as their lands were in the most endangered areas of Croatia and in the most devastated areas of Hungary. The King allowed it. . . That was the beginning of the settling from the regions of Lika, Krbava and Gacka. All the immigrants remained mainly in the surrounding areas north of Šopren. During the Turkish campaign against Vienna in 1529 and during the siege of Kiseg, once again, most of them died. The second and largest wave of immigrants took place in 1533, when the Turkish troops turned towards the East. That happened exactly 450 years ago. More than 100,000 immigrants started their journey in order to settle deserted borders, villages and lands. These settlers came from the area nearby Otočac and the valley of the Kupa, when Captain Nikola Jurišić, the brave defender of Kiseg, called on them; and the agents from Lower Austria and Štajerska allured them with promises, and finally their landowners demanded it from them. The third wave consisted of smaller groups, and lasted from 1537 to 1543; the fourth one 1556-1561 and the last one 1565-1579. These last four waves, lasting 14 years, finally completely populated all the deserted villages of the central and northern parts of Gradište, Marsveld and Moravska. In this treatise, we must limit ourselves largely to the destiny of the western-Hungarian-Gradište Croats and we do not have to follow the development of the Lower-Austrian, Slovakian and Moravski Croats” (p. 255).

Afterwards, the villages that were partially or completely settled by the Croats were listed. Those villages were north and south of the Danube, along the Austrian-Slovakian border, on the Slovakian side of the Morava, north of Novo Mesto, in Moravska and Slovakia, in the region between Bratislava and Trnava, etc. “The Croatian peasants and the lower gentry were leaving the old homeland in such great numbers that some Croatian areas were left without people and desolate” (p. 256). When we add the number of the Croats who died (during the Turkish invasion or who were carried off

to slavery) to the number of the Croatian emigrants, it leaves practically nothing left on the original Croatian territories. "In the battles with the Turks, Croatia not only lost a great part of its territory, but half of its population as well" (p. 257). The author precisely identifies the main regions from which the Croatians migrated. "Those were mainly the regions of Slavonia and the surrounding areas of Osijek and Požega, Virovitica and Križevac; furthermore, from upper Posavina, northern Bosnia and Pounje, the surrounding areas of Glina, Kostajnica and Petrinje; and finally, from the regions of Lika, Krbava, northern Dalmatia and Hrvatsko Primorje. According to the yet unfinished study of this entire migration, more than 200,000 people, who settled in around 200 villages, went to western Hungary alone. What is more, the reason of the migrations of the peasants and the townspeople was not only the fear of the battles with the Turks, violence, invasions and plundering; but there are also other reasons which are little known today. As we have said, the lords and the gentry of Croatia: the families of Drašković, Nadasdy, Kanizaj and Zrinski, as well as those of Hungary: Erdedi and Baćan, possessed the lands in Croatia and western Hungary. After the fall of Siget in 1566 and the conquest of Budapest, the western part of Hungary remained a free border, under the rule of the Habsburg dynasty, where everyone settled their peasants and surfs in every possible way. At that difficult wartime, these surfs were the greatest treasure of their homesteads" (p. 257-258).

### **b) The Franciscans' Role in the Croatian Migrations**

Still, those war and economic reasons were not the only ones that caused the mass Croatian migrations. "Apart from that, the cause of the movements *en masse* lies in the fact that the Franciscans from Croatia comprised the greatest part among the Croatian priests at that time. They shared the same province with the Franciscans from Hungary and Slovakia, and before the battles with the Turks, they had good connections and relations with the monasteries and churches of this area. Since this area was familiar to them, they easily made the decision to join their people on their journey. Their *Povincijals* gave them their approval and support. These migrations, especially the second wave, were organised and well prepared. The people with their priests transferred and transported from Croatia everything portable in their lands, together with books, church equipment, flags and the everyday equipment of the folk crafts and artisanship. For this reason, in the villages where they were in majority, the Croatians left their own mark on the public life of western Hungary in the beginning! Beginning with the Croatian language, the books in the glagolitic script and ideas; to the new, then unknown crafts, artistries and a special, great interest and knowledge about the viniculture. Legend has it that the Croatians in Hata came largely from northern Dalmatia and Lika; while the Croatians from Vulkadoline and Poljanci were largely from Primorje. The Croatians from the middle part of Gradište, Dolinje and nearby Copren were from northern Bosnia. *Velikoborištofci* greatly believe this, as well. The Erdedi family settles their surfs from the regions of Moslovina, Gaca and Koprivnica on their lands surrounding Rotenturm and Rokunac. The Baćan family settled their surfs from the surrounding areas of Koprivnica to southern Gradište" (p. 258).

It is an interesting fact that, together with the Croatians, a number of Serbians migrated as well, though a small number, called the Vlachs, who spoke the shtokavian dialect, while the Croatians spoke the chakavian one. Šrajner calls that small group

Croatians as well, although it is not such an error in the modern perspective, because the Croatian majority soon and easily assimilated them, as soon as they converted to Catholicism; but originally they were not Croatians. Concerning this, Šrajner says, “Among the old trade centres Rohunac<sup>36</sup> and Šlajning, at the southern foot of the Kisege hills, there is a cluster of Croatian villages whose population the local Croatians and Germans have called ‘the Vlachs’ even to this day. These Vlachs settled here along with the other Croatians in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, comprising one homogeneous Croatian group. The difference between the Vlachs and the neighboring Croatians and Germans is that these Vlachs were free, or ‘*libertini*’, not surfs on the lands of the gentry. Thus, in the beginning they only took up caring for domestic animals, cattle, and later, trade. Over time, when they also started to cultivate the soil and fields and to clear vineyards, they lost their position of freedom. The Vlachs largely came from northern Bosnia. One of their villages is called ‘Bošnjakov Brig’, and even today many of their surnames are ‘Bošnjak’” (p. 258). Though it was not his purpose, Šrajner discloses that those Vlachs were Serbians in reality, when he says: “Having migrated from the surroundings of Kostajnica to the valley of Pinka, the shtokavians were in majority here” (p. 258).

**Comment [cm7]:** Translator’s note. The name could not be verified in the available sources. Suggested spelling Schleining

### c) The Lack of a Conscious Closeness to Other Croatians

In 1846, Fran Kurelac visited the western Hungarian Croatians, noting down their folk songs and customs, thus in the book titled *On My Life and Journey with the Hungarian Croatians*, published in Zagreb in 1871, he wrote, with a considerable amount of surprise and wonder: “When you look at the women and men of Croatian origin, one has to admit that they are healthy, strong and, especially in the county of Šapron, tall and beautiful. They are richer than the local Hungarians and Germans. They are of our blood, from the same tribe, of the same language, all chakavians” (p. 265). In 1868, the Croatians from Gradište decided to reform the orthography and grammar of their language. Then, “... the teacher Mihovil Naković published a circular letter concerning a unique Croatian orthography, which was signed and accepted by all the Croatian teachers. This declaration is the birth certificate of the Gradište Croatians’ contemporary literary language’s orthography. The language is a special chakavian-ikavian dialect, based on the pronunciation and language of the 16<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 268). That the Croatians from Gradište completely lacked a consciousness of a unity with the Croatians from the Banate is testified by their attitude towards Ban Jelačić and his soldiers, while they were crushing the uprising of the Hungarians and the riots in Vienna. As Šrajner emphasises, the Croatians from Gradište “. . . are known to have stuck with the Hungarian rebels, because in the village Frankenau, they killed three of Jelačić’s soldiers. Since it was not during a battle or a fight, the rebels who had committed the killings were taken to court in Šapron after the revolution, escorted by the entire village. Three men were sentenced to death and were hanged, others received sixty lashes on their backs and behinds, and Farnik himself was sentenced to one year in prison for having stirred up the people. A similar attitude of the population is supposed to have been present in other Gradište villages as well, so we can conclude that at that time, every stronger connection with the Croatians from the south had been severed. The

<sup>36</sup> Rechnitz

awareness that the Croatians from Gradište were a part and a small offshoot of a greater mother nation had been suppressed to a great extent” (p. 266).

Bela Šrajner also mentions the initiative after World War I to include Gradište to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, but this was not supported by the Croatians from Gradište. “The Czech and Yugoslav politicians, and especially the Czech revolutionary movement, the *Advanced Youth*, had the idea of a wide passage, a bridge or a corridor, across western Hungary, across the villages where the Croatians lived, with a width of 30-40 kilometres. This bridge would connect the newly formed Czech Republic in the north with the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, later Yugoslavia, in the south” (p. 271). Considering the fact that the Croatians from Gradište did not possess a consciousness of a unity with those who are today called Croatians in Croatia, such an idea could not be based on a unique national identity. Ignac Horvat tried to outline that problem more mildly in 1930: “We have to connect more closely with the Croatian nation in the old homeland and take from them everything that we have lost, exchange with them our cultural wealth, as it is a custom and necessity for all civilised nations. Still, we want to preserve our cultural individuality as the Croatians from Gradište” (p. 277). Although he constantly complains about the Germanisation and the Hungarianisation of his compatriots, Šrajner demonstrates that the Serbian-Croatian language was unacceptable in schools for the Croatians from Gradište. “The most difficult problem has always been the language it is a Croatian-Serbian literary language, which was imposed on them, and which many of them rejected. That fact helped the assimilation” (p. 312).

Mirko Berlaković, in a review of the development of the press of the Croatians from Gradište, states that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Friar Gašpar Glavonić, editor-in-chief of the *Kerstjansko Catholic Calendar*, wanted “. . . to bring the language of the Croatians from Gradište closer to the southern Croatian literary language” (p. 335). In parallel with that, “. . . Gaj’s orthography reached Gradište as early as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 335). Berlaković finds it lamentable that the national consciousness of the Croatians from Gradište was not so “firm” as to feel the necessity for beginning to use that language spoken by today’s so-called Croatians in Croatia, but he still advocates the learning of the “Croatian literary language” – actually an artificially corrupted Serbian language – so that it would be easier for them to use contemporary Croatian literature. “For centuries, the language of the Croatians from Gradište has developed differently from the Croatian language in the old homeland. After World War II, there were attempts at bringing it closer to the Croatian literary language, that is at linking the literary language to the people from Gradište as well. However, the national consciousness of the Croatians from Gradište was not firm enough for the people to accept it. Accordingly, the writing rules would persist in our beautiful, pure language, adapted to the Croatian literary one, but sticking to the grammar of the language of Gradište. Our wish remains that the Croatians from Gradište will have an adequate command of the Croatian literary language to have access to the rich literature of the mother nation” (p. 338).

In the last chapter of the book, which is dedicated to the relationship of the Croatians from Gradište towards Croatia, Šrajner emphasises that among the Croatians from Gradište, “. . . the knowledge that they had come from the south, from a craggy region, somewhere close to the sea, has never disappeared. The Croatians in the south, in the old homeland, would later be called ‘*Hrvačani*’, and they considered themselves the

authentic Croats” (p. 345). That is completely natural and justifiable, because the people in the south were not Croats, but Hrváčani, which means the Croatianised Serbs. There were also political tensions and intolerance between them, because the Croats from Gradište were always loyal and faithful to the Hungarians, while the ones from the south, the would-be Croats, sometimes intended to resist the Hungarianisation, and abusively called those among them who were Hungarian followers “*Mađaroni*” (pro-Hungarians). Šrajner unambiguously states that, “As the Croats from the Banate (Kingdom) of Croatia constantly fought against Hungarian violence, they showed suspiciousness and animosity towards the *Mađaroni*, the Croats from western Hungary, the enthusiastic Hungarians. The Croats from western Hungary did not dare or could not stay connected with those rebels. As ‘good Hungarians’, they hated the Croatian cops at the time of Maria Theresa, and the Croatian troops of Ban Jelačić who were heading towards the Imperial Court in order to ask for help during the revolution in 1848” (p. 345). In 1878, when the musician Franjo Kuhač was visiting those Hungarian Croats, showing an interest in the melodies of their folk songs, “. . . he was slapped in the face by the harsh remark of a Croatian clergyman, that the Croats in Hungary were not ‘the friends of the Agramits’” (p. 346). “Agramits” was an old form of addressing the people from Zagreb, and the entire Gradište within Austro-Hungary administratively belonged to Hungary.

## VI. Cornwell’s Monograph on Pius XII as Hitler’s Pope

In 1999, the British historian John Cornwell published the book *Hitler’s Pope* (*Službeni List SRJ*, Belgrade 2000), as a result of an intensive study on the political role of the Roman *pontifex maximus* in World War II, initiated by the casual remark: “. . . how can a reasonable man be a Catholic today, considering the fact that the Catholic Church has supported the most infamous right-wing rulers of the century □□ Franco, Salazar, Mussolini and Hitler” (p. 7). As a professor at the Jesuit College in Cambridge, Cornwell intended, as he himself states in the foreword, to defend the personal integrity and pontificate of Pope Pius XII, that is Eugenio Pacelli (his name before he was elected Pope), by thoroughly studying all the aspects of his work. Accordingly, he wanted to defend the role of the Roman Catholic Church in possibly the most difficult period of world history. However, something unexpected happened, which Cornwell describe as follows: “In the middle of 1997, as I was bringing my research efforts to a conclusion, I found myself in a state that can only be described as moral shock. The material that I had gathered and that had given me a wider picture of Pacelli’s life influenced me not to free him from the criticism, but to accuse him even more. Having encompassed Pacelli’s career from the beginning of the century, my research shaped a story about aspirations to realise an unprecedented papal power, which around 1933 involved the Catholic Church in complicity with the darkest forces of the time. What is more, I discovered evidence that, even from the very beginning of his career, Pacelli had expressed unquestionable antipathy towards the Jews, and that his diplomacy in Germany during the 1930s betrayed the Catholic political associations that could have threatened Hitler’s political regime and hindered his Final Solution. Eugenio Pacelli was not a monster; his case is far more complicated and tragic. An interest in his life comes down to a fatal combination of high spiritual aspirations that were conflicted with an immense will for power and control. His portrait is not that of an evil character, but of a character of fatal

moral divergence separating power from Christian love. The consequence of that separation was a corroboration with tyranny, and in the final analysis, with violence” (p. 8).

## **1. A Portrait of the Psychopathic Personality of Pope Pius XII**

Cornwell considers the influence of this Pope on the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century wrong and fatal, and the possible reasons for this, alongside the autocratic church structure and the dogma on the Pope’s infallibility, were the personal character flaws of the man who asserted his narcissism, womanly vanity, screeching voice and awareness of his own supremacy. The psychopathic traits of his character were probably partially influenced by his extremely weak physical constitution and his being brought up under the excessive dominance of his mother. Still, Pacelli was highly intelligent. Very early, he expressed racist tendencies, and he exposed them in a highly open form before the arrival of the Allied troops in Rome, demanding from the British Ambassador to the Vatican that “. . . there should not be one coloured Allied soldier in the small number of troops that would be placed in Rome after the occupation” (p. 95). After World War I, Pacelli was appointed the Apostolic Nuncio in Munich, the capital of Bavaria, and later, in Berlin for the whole of Germany. He provided great help for the improvement of the ultimately unenviable international political position of Weimer Germany, at the same time dedicating himself to expanding Catholic Action and developing the extremely Catholic Centre Party, and crucially contributing to Ludwig Kaas’ becoming its leader in 1928. Kaas was a Roman Catholic priest and his close friend and associate, a loyal exponent of the papacy.

For a considerable amount of time, Pacelli worked on a project of the Vatican-German concordat, coming across the fierce opposition of not only Protestant, but some of the Catholic circles as well, due to his extremely authoritarian stands. “In 1933, Pacelli found a successful partner for the negotiations over the German concordat in the figure of Adolf Hitler. Their agreement authorised the papacy to impose a new church law on the German Catholics, and provided generous privileges for the Catholic schools and clergy. In return, the Catholic Church in Germany, its parliamentary political party and its numerous political associations and newspapers, ‘voluntarily’ withdrew, following Pacelli’s initiative as a social and political action. The abdication of the German political Catholicism in 1933, which Pacelli negotiated and achieved from the Vatican with the approval of Pope Pius XI, secured the rise of Nazism without the opposition of the most powerful Catholic organisation in the world. It was completely different from the situation 60 years before, when the German Catholics had opposed a widespread campaign, hindering Bismarck’s *Kulturkampf*. On 14 July 1933, at a government meeting, Hitler himself bragged that Pacelli’s guarantee on non-intervention freed the hands of the regime to solve the Jewish issue” (p. 14).

### **a) The Concordat with Nazi Germany Opens the Doors of the Holocaust**

From the preserved and pedantically kept minutes of the sessions of Chancellor Adolf Hitler’s government concerning the concluded concordat, it is obvious that Hitler “. . . expressed his view that this should be seen as a grand success. The concordat gave

Germany an opportunity and created an atmosphere of trust, which was especially significant in the current fight against international Judaism” (p. 14). According to Cornwell’s competent opinion, “. . . the Pope’s support of Nazism – in Germany and outside it – helped seal the destiny of Europe” (p. 14). As Pacelli was returned to the Vatican at the end of 1929 and appointed Cardinal of the State Secretary at the beginning of the following year the most powerful function after that of the Pope’s – his negotiations with Hitler at the beginning of the 1930s “. . . cannot be analyzed separately from the development of the ideology of papal power throughout the entire century, or separately from Pacelli’s behaviour during the War and his attitude towards the Jews. The post-war period of Pacelli’s pontificate during the 1950s was the apotheosis of that power, when he ruled the monolithic, triumphalist Catholic Church that was confronting Communism in Italy even behind the iron curtain” (p. 14).

Otherwise, the Roman Catholic Church had always preached blind hatred towards the Jews, hardened and blinded anti-Semitism, which it now easily harmonised with the Nazi anti-Semitism, though their original concepts were rather divergent. “There are significant differences between the 19<sup>th</sup> century racism inspired by distorted social Darwinism, and the traditional Christian anti-Judaism that has been present since early Christianity. The kind of racist anti-Semitism that would enable the Nazi’s Final Solution was based on the idea that the Jewish genetic material was by nature biologically inferior, hence the evil logic that their extinction would be beneficial on the path to national greatness. In the late Middle Ages, the Spanish Jews were excluded from the ‘pure’ community of Christian blood, and questions were asked concerning the status of the native ‘natural slaves’ in the New World at the time of the European conquest of America. However, racist ideas were never a part of Orthodox Christianity. By and large, the Christians ignored the racial and national origin in their search for converts. The Christian antipathy towards the Jews was born out of the conviction, dating back from the early Christian Church, that the Jews had killed Christ – in fact, that they had killed God. The earliest Church Fathers, the great Christian writers during the first six centuries of Christianity, demonstrated an express tendency for anti-Judaism” (p. 30-31).

Although the Jews were insulted, underrated, specially taxed, arbitrarily punished, discriminated against, their synagogues set to fire, cast out from the Christian social environments, often plundered and murdered, “. . . we can rightly ask the question why the Christians did not exterminate all the Jews in that early period of the Christian empire. According to the Christian belief, the Jews had to survive and continue their wanderings in the diaspora as a sign of the curse that they had brought on their people. From time to time, in the first millennium, the popes demanded the lessening of, but never the cessation of the persecution, or a change in their feelings toward them. In the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Innocent III summarised the papal point of view of the first millennium: “His words let his blood be on us and our children brought the hereditary sin on the whole nation, that has followed them as a curse wherever they live and work, when they are born and when they die”. The Fourth Council of the Lateran, which was held under Innocent III in 1215, set forth a demand that the Jews had to wear caps on their heads that would differentiate them from others. Having been stripped of social equality, banished from their land, excluded from the public services and most trade activities, the Jews had scarce alternatives, such as money lending, which was forbidden according to the Christian law. Authorised to lend money according to specifically fixed

interest rates, the Jews were cursed as “bloodsuckers” and “usurers” that lived off the debts of the Christians. The Middle Ages were a period of unprecedented persecutions of the Jews, which were sometimes bridled by the more enlightened popes. The crusaders considered it part of their mission to torture and kill the Jews on their way to and from the Holy Land. The practice of coercive conversions and baptisms, especially of Jewish boys, was widely prevalent. One of the main goals of the new orders of preachers was the conversion of the Jews. The Franciscans and the Dominicans got into an argument over the right of the ruler to coercively proselytise to the Jewish children, as an extension of their authority over the slaves on their lands. According to the Franciscans, who followed the theologian Duns Scotus, the Jews were slaves by a divine decision” (p. 32).

For centuries, Roman Catholic Europe nourished the prejudice that the Jews tortured and sacrificed Christian children in their religious rituals, basing the so-called “blood accusation” on this. There was an entire “. . . myth developed that the Jews stole holy wafers, the sacramental bread that became ‘the body and blood’ of Christ during Masses, so that they could perform some horrible rituals. At the same time, allegations of ritual murder, human sacrifice and the desecration of holy wafers triggered the belief that Judaism includes the use of magic with the aim of the subversion and the final destruction of Christianity. The execution of the Jews accused of ritual murder was followed by the liquidation of entire Jewish communities, which were accused of performing magical activities that had caused the Black Death and other big and small plagues. . . One pope of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Paul IV, established a ghetto and required that the Jews wear yellow ribbons. . . The Papal States continued to take repressive measures against the Jews during the long period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As we have seen, during a short flurry of liberalism, when Pius IX was elected he abolished the ghetto, but he restored it soon after when he returned from his exile in Gaeta. The Roman ghetto finally disappeared when the Italian state was founded, despite the fact that ‘the ghetto area’ survived as a residential quarter for the poorer Jews in the city until World War II. In the meantime, anti-Semitism had been smouldering and from time to time flaring up, until the papacy of Leo XI-II, when Pacelli was a student. The most persistent form of antipathy was concentrated on ‘the stubbornness’ of the Jews, which was a subject of Pacelli’s pretentious teacher, Signor Marchi. As a matter of fact, there was an extraordinary coincidence between Pacelli’s place of origin and the myth about the heart of stone, which shows the importance of customs in the persistence of a prejudice. . . There was an old and firmly rooted belief of the Catholic theologians that if the Jews would only listen to the reasons of the Catholic religion with an open heart, they would immediately see that they had been wrong and they would convert. . . The importance of the accusations of blind Jewish stubbornness was in its strength to solidify the widespread belief of many Catholics (they were not aware of anti-Judaism, let alone anti-Semitism) that the Jews were responsible for their own hardships. That viewpoint encouraged the officials of the Catholic Church during the 1930s to close their eyes while anti-Semitism was raging in Germany” (p. 32-34).

## **2. German Anti-Semitism Rooted in Catholic Prejudices**

The traditional Roman Catholic anti-Semitism was consequently deeply rooted, and formed the consciousness of the new generations of Vatican high officials, especially



when Pius IX proclaimed himself infallible and introduced the complete centralisation of the Church with an autocratic hierarchical investiture. “Even more extreme forms of anti-Judaism flared up among the Catholic intellectual circles in Rome during the rule of Leo XIII, which undoubtedly influenced the future priests at the Catholic universities. Once again, blood accusations were made in numerous articles, published from February 1881 until December 1882 in *La Civiltà Cattolica*. They were written by the Jesuit Giuseppe Orella de San Stefano, claiming that the murder of children at the holiday Passover was ‘quite an ordinary’ thing in the East, and that the use of a Christian child’s blood was a general law ‘that rested on the conscience of all Jews’. Every year, the Jews ‘crucify a child’, and in order to make their blood effective, ‘a child must die in pains.’

“In 1890, *La Civiltà Cattolica* once again drew attention to the Jews in a series of items published in the form of pamphlets under the title *Della Questione Ebraica in Evropa* (Rome, 1891), whose goal was to point out the contribution of the Jews in forming the modern liberal national-state. The author accused the Jews of inciting the French Revolution with their ‘artifice’ in order to achieve civil equality, and that they have since held the key positions in the economies of most states, with the aim of controlling and establishing ‘their poisonous campaigns against Christianity’. The Jews are ‘a despicable race’. They are ‘. . . a lazy nation that neither works nor produces anything, that has lived by the sweat of other men’s brows’. In the conclusion, the pamphlet calls for the abolishment of ‘civil equality’ and demands the segregation of the Jews from other nations. Although there is a significant difference between racist anti-Semitism and religious anti-Judaism, this text, published in Rome at the time of Pacelli’s education, embodies the flourishing of vicious antipathy. The fact that a leading Jesuit magazine, which enjoyed papal protection, incited those views points out their possible scope and similarity with the stands of the authorities. Those prejudices could have hardly been hostile towards the racist theories that would reach their climax during the ferocious Nazi attack on European Judaism in World War II. In reality, these Catholic prejudices probably triggered certain forms of the Nazi anti-Semitism” (p. 34).

### **a) Hitler’s Lesson from Bismarck’s Confrontation with the Catholics**

At one time, Bismarck had huge political problems because of a confrontation with the Roman Catholic Church, carrying out his own concept of the cultural fight for the sake of the spiritual renaissance of the German nation. Accordingly, his successors had to draw some kind of moral. “Adolf Hitler realised early on how dangerous opposition to Catholicism could be for the development of national socialism. In his book entitled *Mein Kampf*, he wrote that a confrontation with the Catholic Church in Germany could have fatal consequences” (p. 105). That is way he was constantly careful that the National Socialist Movement he led not be entangled in religious debates, bearing in mind that the Catholics comprised more than a third of the German population, and after the Anschluss of Austria and the Czech Republic almost half. Although he was privately a supporter of the eradication of Christianity in Germany, undoubtedly out of politically opportunistic reasons, “. . . he directed himself towards the careful use of the power of churches for his own benefit” (p. 106). In the 1920s, on the other hand, all the stronger Catholic circles and their Centre Party persistently agitated against the national socialists, considering their ideology impossible to connect with Christian teachings.

The German bishops usually did not hesitate to openly ascribe hatred, lies and bloodlust to national socialism. “However, this fierce and unified front of the Catholic Church in Germany was not in conformity with the viewpoints of the Vatican □□ the viewpoints that were gradually formed and presented by Eugenio Pacelli” (p. 110).

Alongside the ill Pius XI, Pacelli had already taken the reigns of the Vatican foreign policy in his hands, and in 1929, the Holy See had already come to an agreement with Mussolini and the Italian fascists. “Upon the signing of the Lateran Accords at the elections in March 1929, the Vatican urged the priests throughout Italy to support the fascists, while the Pope spoke about Mussolini as ‘a man sent by Providence’” (p. 113). Hitler, who was at the time still an oppositional politician, publicly supported that agreement, emphasising that it had been easier for the Vatican to realise it with the fascist than with the liberal-democratic regime. When, in 1924, there was a danger of the fall of Mussolini’s government, the Holy See forbade the National Party to unite with the social democrats concerning that issue and the *Duce* was saved. “After 1930, when the Centre Party in Germany needed more than ever to stabilise itself by co-operating with the social democrats, Pacelli was putting pressure on the leaders of the Centre Party to avoid the socialists and to co-operate with the national socialists. To the extent that the national socialists declared an open war both on Socialism and Communism, Pius XI and Pacelli were considering the advantages of a temporary tactical alliance with Hitler, which Hitler would completely take advantage of when the time was right. Soon, it would be obvious to what extent this potential pact with the devil of Nazism was a result of the fear for the future of the Church in Germany, and to what extent it was a tactic for achieving the goals of the papacy” (p. 115).

### **b) The Enthroning of Hitler by Pacelli’s Order**

When Pacelli returned to the Vatican and took one of the highest positions in the curial hierarchy, Ludwig Kaas was constantly travelling from Berlin to Rome and back, receiving from his close friend evermore precise instructions concerning his activities. “The political destiny of Germany to a great extent depended on the standpoints and the activities of the Centre Party, in which Kaas, as the party leader and Pacelli’s associate, had considerable influence” (p. 115).

Gradually, Pacelli put stronger pressure on the Centre Party to co-operate with Hitler. Upon coming to power, Hitler rushed to conclude a concordat with the Vatican following the model of the Lateran Accords, so that he could subsume the German Catholics in the service of the programmatic aims of the Nazi regime through their church organisation. “The German concordat would never have been concluded if the bishops had not accepted to renounce their criticism of national socialism. Nor would there have been the German concordat if the Centre Party had not, before its withdrawal, given legality to the enacting of the Enabling Act that would enable Hitler’s dictatorship. During the period of the Weimer Republic, no government ever came close to accepting Pacelli’s conditions for concluding the concordat. Only with the help of dictatorial coercion, with the Fuehrer who was directly working with State Secretary Pacelli in the Pope’s name, could that agreement become reality” (p. 130). Although immediately before that, Hitler had expressed worry because of the strength of German Catholicism and had hoped that, with the help of the Vatican, he could cause the dissolution of the Centre Party, suddenly, as early as March 1933, he received encouragement and support

directly from the Vatican. “In a note to the German envoy in the Vatican, Pacelli warned the Fuehrer about the recent words of praise that the Pope had spoken concerning the attack of the Reich’s Chancellor on Bolshevism” (p. 130). Immediately after that, Kaas, “. . . who did not start anything without Pacelli’s confirmation, offered ‘a complete break with the past’ and ‘the co-operation of his party’. Future events would show to what extent Kaas, in other words Pacelli, would draw an equal sign between the support for the Enabling Act and the beginning of negotiations over the German concordat. At the same time, these events would reveal the extent Thus, with the direct help of the Holy See – that is with the help of the votes of its exponent, the Centre Party □□ Hitler acquired practically dictatorial authorisations, as desired by two-thirds of the members of Reichstag. Among other things, he had the right to enact laws on his own, without the approval of the Parliament, and to conclude international agreements. As for himself, Pacelli persistently neutralised the oppositions of the German bishops to the Nazi regime, although some of them had previously publicly declared themselves as its irreconcilable opponents. “The legality of the Constitution of Hitler’s government was mentioned for the first time in *L’Osservatore Romano*. Therefore, the legality that Hitler had wanted, and that Kaas had approved under Pacelli’s persuasion, was now an incentive that would persuade the Catholic bishops to support Hitler’s regime. . . . The concerted statement of the bishops, conciliatory towards the Nazis, was hurriedly published on March 28 all over the country” (p. 134).

The reactions of the public were various, but the incipient process of the Catholic-Nazi concordance could not no longer be stopped. “The Nazi press welcomed the statement as support to Hitler’s policy, without explaining the incompleteness of the statement which the hierarchy had left. The politicians of the Centre Party were astonished, because it seemed as if the bishops were saying that they preferred the Nazis over the Catholic Centre Party. The reaction of the Catholic believers was widespread confusion and the feeling of being betrayed. . . . After returning from a conversation he had with Pacelli at the beginning of April, Kaas published an editorial in which he praised Hitler’s speech in Reichstag as a logical continuation of ‘the idea of unity’ of the Church and the state. He stated that the country was in the process of evolution, during which ‘. . . the unquestionably great formal freedoms’ of the Weimer Republic had to give way to ‘. . . the harsh and undoubtedly temporary great state discipline in all walks of life. The Centre Party, as he went on, was obliged to co-operate in that process as ‘the sower of future’. As if he wanted to justify the unusual easiness and speed at which the hierarchy had confirmed the regime, and to emphasise Pacelli’s role in that, on April 20, Faulhaber wrote that the bishops were stuck in this tragic situation ‘. . . due to the stand of the Vatican””(p. 135).

### **c) The Signing of the Concordat despite the Persecution of the Jews**

On 1 April 1933, a Nazi boycott of Jewish firms and stores started throughout Germany, accompanied by sporadic robberies, beatings and even murders. “While Hitler was negotiating with the Christian representatives about the future relations between his regime and the churches, after this systematic and comprehensive persecution of the Jews, not a word of protest was uttered by Germany nor by Rome” (p. 136). Giving the reasons for why the Catholics should not protest, even though the Nazis were also persecuting the Jews who had been converted long ago, the Munich Cardinal Faulhaber

wrote to Pacelli that the Jews could help themselves. Cardinal Bertram gave a similar reply to a call to help the Jews, emphasising that “. . . there are immediate problems that are much more important the schools, maintenance of the Catholic associations, sterilisation” (p. 136). Despite that amount of passivity of the German cardinals, archbishops and bishops, what is most important here is that Pacelli “. . . was thoroughly informed by Faulhaber about the initiation of the persecution of the Jews, precisely at the moment when he was about to start serious negotiations concerning the concordat with those who had perpetrated such crimes” (p. 137). As his own pledge for the achievement of the concordat, Pacelli initiated the dissolution of the Centre Party and accepted a provision concerning the prohibition of priests to engage in political activities. “That was the only remaining democratic party in Germany, and the fact that it disappeared voluntarily, and not due to a coercive liquidation, had immediate and far-reaching consequences. The party’s consent to its own dissolution, together with the seeming agreement of the bishops to the existence of a one-party state, was a circumstance that gave a boost to the Nazis, and an even greater number of Catholics into the bosom of national socialism” (p. 144).

As for himself, “. . . Pacelli never gave up his hostile attitude towards the Catholic political parties that were independent from the Holy See” (p. 144). On 20 July 1933, the concordat was finally signed by Pacelli and von Papen, and “. . . the mere fact that the Vatican signed that agreement demonstrates that a Catholic moral acceptance of Hitler’s policy existed, both inside and outside the Vatican, despite Pacelli’s rejection of it on the 26 July. Second, the contract urged the Holy See, the German hierarchy, the clergy and the believers to keep silent concerning any problem that the Nazi regime considered political. To be exact, since the persecution and the extinction of the Jews became a shaped policy in Germany, the contract legally bound the Catholic Church in Germany to keep silent concerning the crimes against the Jews” (p. 147-148).

#### **d) The Coalition of Anti-Semitic Powers**

There is no doubt that, considering Pacelli’s achievement of favourable conditions for the education of Catholics by the same German government that had unscrupulously revoked the educational rights of the Jews, introducing allowed quotas for the matriculation of non-Aryans in all schools, the “. . . papacy, the Holy See and the German Catholics inevitably became accomplices in the racist and anti-Semitic government. The second example of Catholic co-operation with the regime started on April 25, when thousands of priests all over Germany became a part of the bureaucracy for anti-Semitic testifying, which provided details on blood purity through the registers of marriages and of birth. That was a part of the bureaucracy that was following the quota systems for Jews in schools, at universities and in public service, and above all in the judiciary and medicine. These testimonies would finally enact the Nuremberg Laws<sup>38</sup>, the system of the Nazi government for distinguishing the Jews from the non-Jews. The co-operation of the Catholic clergy in that process would continue during the Nazi regime, and in the end, it would connect the Catholic Church, as well as the Protestant churches, with the death camps. However, in the case of the Holy See, there was far more guilt, since the scope and the pressure present in the centralised application

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<sup>38</sup> German: Nürnberger Gesetze

of the Canon rule, which Pacelli had enlarged and strengthened so much during his career, was not used as a means of opposing the process. In reality, the case was quite the opposite of it” (p. 148-149). As Cornwell estimates, “. . . that was the reality of the moral abyss into which Pacelli, the future Pope, led the once great and proud German Catholic Church” (p. 149). The work of not only the political, but also the expressly apolitical Catholic associations was hindered, which in many ways facilitated the Nazi’s totalitarian control of the German society. “The signing of the German concordat signified that German Catholicism had started to even formally accept its duties according to the provisions of the contract, which it imposed on the Catholics as their moral duty to obey the Nazi authorities. Thus, the Catholic critics fell silent. The great Church, which had laid the foundation for the creation of an opposition, restricted itself to a sacristy. . . Nothing even resembling the agreed protest appeared in Germany, not even concerning the problems of trampling on the provisions of the contract itself” (p. 151).

On several occasions, referring to the comprehensive persecution of non-Aryan citizens, Pacelli discretely asked the German authorities to protect those German Catholics “. . . who had converted from Judaism to the Catholic religion, or who were the descendants of the first generation, or descendants from the Jews who had converted to Catholicism and who were equally exposed to the social and economic ordeals, for reasons known to the Reich” (p. 153). This makes it obvious that the Vatican State Secretary and the future Pope was not at all guided by any humanitarian reasons or doctrinal Christian philanthropy. “The mere fact that Pacelli created such a differentiation certainly demonstrates his diplomatic collusion with the pan-anti-Semitic policy of the Reich” (p. 153). After the disoriented and frightened German bishops declared in August that the concordat should be ratified without delay, it was realised in September with an official ceremony. “The ratification of the concordat was celebrated in Germany in a Mass of gratitude in the cathedral of St. Hedwig in Berlin, served by Papal Nuncio Orsento. The Nazi flags mingled with the traditional Catholic standards, and at the climax of the Mass, *The Horst Wessel Song* was sung inside the church and transmitted through megaphones to the thousands of people standing outside. Who could have suspected that the Nazi regime got the blessing of the Holy See? In fact, Archbishop Greber even went so far that he congratulated the Third Reich on the new era of reconciliation” (p. 153). Nevertheless, the frequent persecutions of the Catholics forced the bishops to complain more often to Pacelli about the actions of the Nazi regime, and some even daringly “. . . proposed that the Pope should make a strong protest and even stop the application of the concordat. That would have been a step towards resuming the initiative and removing the possible resistance that could have had unpredictable consequences for Hitler, even in this last phase” (p. 154). However, even though Pacelli himself felt uncomfortable concerning the arrogant Nazi behaviour in everyday life, he stopped the protests with the statement “. . . that the Holy See is ready to accept Hitler’s Reich, regardless of the violations of the human rights in it, no matter the offences to the other creeds and religions, as long as the Catholic Church in Germany is left alone” (p. 154). The German diplomat Butman came to Rome with new, emptier promises, and it was “. . . Pacelli who dissuaded the Pope from directing a protest to the whole world” (p. 155). Such a protest was expected to be a part of the Pope’s Christmas address at the end of 1933, but Hitler sent a note to Rome on his intentions, promising new negotiations and guaranteeing that he would make it possible

for “. . . the Holy See to choose the bishops using its own methods, as well as for the young priests to be liberated from military service. Still, there was not a word about the persecution of the Jewish converts Catholics, nor about constructive progress related to the issue of the associations. Nevertheless, it was enough for Pacelli to convince the Pope to give up his criticism of Hitler’s regime in his Christmas address” (p. 157).

### 3. Pacelli’s Support to Franco and Mussolini

When on 30 June 1934, in the so-called “Night of the Long Knives”<sup>39</sup>, Hitler liquidated not only his party’s dissidents but the distinguished Catholic activists, especially the leaders of the Catholic Action and the Catholic sports organisations, as well the editor of the Catholic weekly newspapers, “. . . the murderous nature of the Nazi-gangster regime was obvious to everyone. To the disgrace of the German hierarchy and to the even greater disgrace of Pacelli, who continued to limit them, the Catholic bishops did not utter a word of protest against this massacre of the courageous Catholic leaders,” (p. 159). For the next two years, Pacelli, as the Pope’s pet and desired heir, had a few tours to Latin America, Europe and North America, particularly supporting the Spanish *Caudillo*<sup>40</sup> Francisco Franco and his bloody confrontations with his political opponents. “The Holy See did not condemn Mussolini’s attack on Ethiopia on 3 October 1935, nor did Pius XI restrained the Italian hierarchy from enthusiasm over war” (p. 167). Likewise, it could happen that, for example, Bishop Terasina would declare: “Oh, *Duce!* The Italy of today is the fascist one and the hearts of all the Italians are pulsing together with yours. The nation is ready for every sacrifice in order to secure the triumph of peace for both the Roman and the Christian civilisation. . . God bless you, *Duce!*” (p. 167). As Cornwell comments, “. . . those outbursts seemed to be saluting the union between the Holy See’s vision of the Church as a universal ‘independent society’ and Mussolini’s fantasy about an incipient empire on earth. Though Pius XI told a friend in September that a war with Ethiopia would be ‘detestable’, his later statements on this issue were diplomatic and vague, without a clear condemnation” (p. 167). On 15 September 1935, Hitler “. . . passed the Nuremberg Laws, which determined German citizenship, preparing the way for shaping the Jews’ position concerning parental rights and marriage. Again, there was not a word of protest from Pacelli” (p. 171).

At the urging of three German cardinals and two bishops, based on the data of 17 infringements of the concordat by the Nazi authorities, at the beginning of 1937, the Pope published an encyclical entitled *With Great Concern*, condemning the behaviour of the German government towards the Roman Catholic Church. “The encyclical came too late and did not condemn national socialism and Hitler specifically. The logistics of publishing, however, reveals the capacity of the parish networks throughout Catholic Germany and the scope of their unused potential for protesting and resistance. The document was smuggled into Germany, where it was secretly printed in twelve different printing houses” (p. 173). However, though the encyclical opposed the divinisation of a race, nation and state instead of sincere faith, “. . . there was no clear condemnation of anti-Semitism, even related to the Catholic Jews” (p. 174). Even on that occasion, the Roman Catholics expressed their propensity for anti-Semitism regarding faith, unlike the

<sup>39</sup> German: Nacht der langen Messer or "Operation Hummingbird"

<sup>40</sup> a Spanish word usually used to designate "a political-military leader at the head of an authoritarian power."

Nazi anti-Semitism of blood and origin. The authorities struck back with repressive measures, but what is most important is that the Church “. . . had enough strength to shake the regime” (p. 175). The following days, it was demonstrated that Hitler’s regime “. . . did not need to be much afraid of German Catholicism, as long as Pacelli was pulling the strings, to the extent that it even disparaged the harsh tone of the Pope’s public message” (p. 175). When on 16 July 1937, the German Ambassador to the Vatican, von Bergen, visited Pacelli, he reported to his ministry in Berlin: “The Pope’s behaviour is strikingly opposite from the viewpoints of the Cardinal State Secretary that he set out during my visit on the 16<sup>th</sup>, a day before the Pope’s speech. . . The conversation was of a private nature. Pacelli greeted me in a friendly manner and assured me during the conversation that the normal and friendly relations with us would be re-established as soon as possible. This especially referred to him, who had spent 13 years in Germany, and who had always demonstrated the greatest sympathy for the German people. He would be ready for conversation with distinguished figures at any time, like the Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Prussian government, Goering” (p. 175).

### **a) There is no Papal Blessing for the “Lower Races”**

At the end of May 1938, Pacelli came to Budapest to attend the international Eucharistic congress, exactly at the peak of the anti-Jewish campaign that the Hungarian authorities were conducting according to the Nazi model. “Not only did Pacelli not mention the flourishing of anti-Semitism in Hungary, but, at this most significant Catholic gathering of the year, he did not even direct a word of criticism at the regime on the other side of the border . . . The Pope’s representative at the Eucharistic congress clearly made it known that ‘the universal love’ he that he had preached about at the gathering did not include the Jews” (p. 176-177). In November 1939, at the personal initiative of Hitler, the largest anti-Semitic pogrom ever recorded in the entire Germany took place during the so-called “Crystal Night”. Around 800 Jews were murdered, 26,000 sent to concentration camps, Jewish property was destroyed and the synagogues were demolished; and right after that, the authorities carried out even more restrictive measures that denied them their human rights. “After ‘Crystal Night’, not one word was heard from the Vatican or the German hierarchy. . . As we have already seen, the Pacelli’s policy was public silence and private indifference concerning the Jewish issue. The correspondence between the German hierarchy and Pacelli’s office always repeated the same viewpoint: the Jews had to take care of themselves. However, there are indications that in later events, Pius XI was inclining towards a more sympathetic, yet reticent stand concerning the Jews’ sufferings” (p. 179-180). Very old and sick, a few weeks before his death, the Pope was intending to publish an encyclical against Nazi racism and anti-Semitism, but Pacelli stopped him when the text had already been finished, although it expressed the viewpoint that the Jews were responsible for their own destiny due to their murdering Christ. This unofficial document, which was seemingly supposed to protect the Jewish nation, literally reads as follows: “. . . blinded by their dream of earthly treasure and material success”, the Jews deserved “. . . their secular and spiritual doom, . . . which they have brought upon themselves” (p. 182). The Roman Catholic Church made it known that it was bothered by the Nazi ideology’s deviation from Christian teachings, but that the Church was not at all interested in the

Jewish secular problems. “It indicated that the Jews had brought their problems upon themselves, not due to their religion, not due to their race, but exclusively due to their secular, egoistical, political and material reasons, for which they are now paying the price. Consequently, the defence of the Jews, as ‘Christian principles and humaneness’ would demand it, might have included the unacceptable compromises, one of which is allying with, and even supporting Bolshevism, by disrupting some countries’ fight against it” (p. 182).

### **b) The Vatican’s Sabotage of the Resistance in Germany**

Cornwell mostly reproached the Roman Catholic Church in Germany for its passivity during Hitler’s dictatorship, giving the examples of a few very successful public protests in which the Catholics had the leading role, such as the protest against removing the crucifix from schools, or the protest against the euthanasia of mentally ill people. “If these protests had been repeated and spread to many places all over Germany from 1933 and later, the history of the Nazi regime might have had a different course of events. If the Catholics had protested, maybe the ‘Crystal Night’ and the rise of anti-Semitism might have been different, as well as the destiny of the Jews in Nazi Germany, and, in fact, all over Europe. At least three distinguished historians of that period came to that conclusion: Nathan Stoltzfus, J.P. Stern and Gunther Levi” (p. 189). Cornwell himself insists that “. . . the given examples of Catholic protests show what could have been achieved by disregarding the Vatican Primate and inciting people to a collective protest and resistance” (p. 189). Moreover, an entire list of other examples shows “. . . that public opinion influenced the Nazi regime even when Hitler’s power was at its climax. If the German public had been motivated against other crimes in relation to the other problems, the course of history might have been different. In some places, the Catholics successfully resisted in great numbers, with the support of the clergy and the bishops, when their close ones were being transported to gas chambers. Without the deadening hand of Vatican control, the resistance could have spread all over the country from the very beginning. And if the Catholic bureaucracy had not turned its back to the spreading of anti-Semitic propaganda and persecutions, that terrible destiny might have spared the Jews” (p. 190).

Many Roman Catholic high Church officials went further even than Pacelli in ingratiating themselves with Hitler. The Vienna Archbishop and the Austrian Primate Cardinal, Theodor Innitzer, “. . . mustered up the courage to warmly greet Hitler in Vienna after his triumphal arrival in the capital. Afterwards, he even publicly expressed satisfaction with Hitler’s regime, even before the plebiscite was held” (p. 193). In September 1938, when Mussolini’s regime passed anti-Semitic racist laws after the German model, setting a deadline of six months for the Jews to leave Italy, there was not one serious voice of protest from the Roman Catholics. Immediately upon his election as the new Pope under the name Pius XII in 1939, Pacelli directed a greeting message to Adolf Hitler: “To the respected Mister Adolf Hitler, the Fuehrer and Chancellor of the German Reich! At the beginning of our pontificate, we want to assure you that we will stay loyal to the spiritual wellbeing of the German nation entrusted to your command. . . During the many years we have spent in Germany, we did everything in our power to establish harmonised relations between the Church and the state. Now, when the duties of our pastoral service have enlarged our abilities, we pray even more eagerly to achieve



that aim. With God's help, let the prosperity of the German nation and its advancement in all spheres be realised! (p. 200) The luxurious celebration of Pacelli's enthronement on 12 March 1939, the praises showered on him in the newspapers of many Catholic countries, and the faith in his peacemaking and diplomatic nimbleness seemed to represent an orchestrated escape from the truth and the dark clouds which were just beginning to gather over humanity. "From the beginning of his rule, Pacelli's approach to Hitler exceeded diplomatic courtesy, and the German bishops realised this. His unusually friendly letter to 'the respected Hitler' crossed with the 'warmest greetings from the Fuehrer and the government'. In the following month, on 20 April 1939, at Pacelli's express wish, Archbishop Orsenigo, the Berlin Nuncio, organised a gala reception for Hitler's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Those birthday greetings, initiated by Pacelli, immediately became a tradition. On every April 20 during the several fateful years that remained to Hitler and his Reich, Cardinal Bertram from Berlin had to send 'the warmest greetings to the Fuehrer in the name of the bishops and the dioceses in Germany', to which he added 'cordial prayers which the Catholics of Germany send to Heaven from their altars'" (p. 201).

### c) The Deadly Silence of Pope Pius XII

Even Pacelli's first moves from the papal throne testified to his hypocrisy and immorality, even while he verbally advocated peace and proposed initiatives for peace. "Pacelli's plan was clear from the start. He did not have the intention to warn the Nazis and the fascists to abide by the law. The policy of appeasement, which he designated with a phrase that would echo for years 'the Pope is working towards peace' defined the character of the Vatican's initiatives before the public. . . The lofty, pontifical preaching did not go further than abstractions and general points. . . On Good Friday, Mussolini invaded Albania with the intention of fortifying Italian power and to pre-empt the possible German threat to the Balkans. Pacelli did not utter a word of protest or support. Was that a sign of strict neutrality? Only a week later, on a Vatican radio programme for the Spanish believers, as Pacelli was praising Franco, he revealed the extent of his bias. Addressing the Spanish bishops, he asked them to unite in 'the peacekeeping policy' according to ' . . . the principles taught by the Church and proclaimed by the generalissimo<sup>41</sup>: namely, justice for crime and generous goodness for the misled'. He told them, speaking 'as a father', that he felt sorry for ' . . . those who were misled by false and distorted propaganda'. Two weeks earlier, he had sent a telegram to Franco congratulating him on 'the victory of the Spanish Catholics'. That was a victory that had taken half a million lives and that would take many more yet" (p. 214-215).

Although Poland had for centuries been a hardened and even blinded Catholic country, at the climax of German pressures, the Roman Pope turned his back to it, leaving millions of Polish believers in the lurch. "Standing by Germany, in the light of the 'injustice' of the Treaty of Versailles, Pacelli indicated that Poland could yield to the pressure of the peace conference that was to be held under the auspices of the Vatican" (p. 215). In the beginning, Mussolini was thrilled with the Pope's idea, but he soon changed his mind, so Pacelli gave up the peace conference. "At the same time, Pacelli announced that Great Britain was impeding mediation with its guarantee of defending

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<sup>41</sup> The supreme commander of the combined armed forces [Italian]

Poland. Pacelli's readiness to persuade Poland to sacrifice itself in order to appease Germany made the Foreign Office assume that the papacy had renounced their moral authority". (p. 220). Having started the aggression against Poland on 1 September 1939, Hitler phoned the Pope to explain to him that the Polish themselves were guilty for the attack. "During September, Pacelli kept quiet, thinking about the terrible news coming from Poland, which had 35 million Catholic souls. . . According to the opinion of the English and the French, the lack of a firm condemnation was confusing. The Polish Ambassador to the Vatican was desperate, but determined that Poland had to use the services of the Holy See in order to inform the world what was going on in his country. He convinced the Polish government to send the Polish Primate, Cardinal August Hlond, to Rome. Hlond arrived on September 21, when Pacelli warmly greeted him. However, the Pontiff still refused to speak on behalf of Poland" (p. 223).

Instead of words of harsh condemnation of the Nazi aggression, the Polish could only hear hypocritical expressions of comfort and false condolences from the Vatican high officials. "It was not enough. The Polish pilgrims expected a fierce condemnation both of Germany and of Russia. They were embittered and their disappointment echoed all over Rome. Hlond visited the cardinals of the Curia, trying to gain their support. Their Eminences mainly listened to him sympathetically, but nothing changed. Then, Édouard Daladier, the French Prime Minister, raised his voice of discontent. He telegraphed his Ambassador to the Holy See, expressing his surprise that the Pope had omitted to issue a condemnation. He emphasised that the Pope should open the eyes of the Italian nation the silence, he said, was actually a sign of approval. Describing the rage of the Polish in Rome, Osborne reported that there was a talk that ' . . . the Pope's statements from the beginning of the war pusillanimously evaded mentioning the moral dilemmas that had come up" (p. 223-224). Finally, the Pope responded with an encyclical from October 20, fifteen days after every form of resistance of the Polish had been brutally quashed, but there was no clear and unambiguous condemnation of Hitler's regime contained in it. In March 1940, the Pope received German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joachim von Ribbentrop, who was in Rome visiting Mussolini. The content of the conversation between Pacelli and Ribbentrop was rather empty, so the Italian Ambassador to the Vatican, Dino Alfieri, informed Mussolini " . . . that Ribbentrop wanted to be received in the Vatican only because of domestic politics especially to impress the large Catholic masses in Germany and to use that reception in order to notify the world on its favourable outcome for Germany" (p. 229). At one moment, it seemed that Pacelli was secretly in league with the German conspirators against Hitler who were led by General Ludwig Beck, the former Chief of Staff of the German General Staff, but that remained simply fruitless conspiratorial guess work.

Pacelli incessantly prayed for peace and often congratulated Mussolini in public on his "peace" initiatives. "When Hitler attacked Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg on 10 May 1940, Pacelli found himself under the pressure of London and Paris to condemn this violent breach of international law, and to hinder Italy's entry into the war using all the means in his power. Tardini sketched out the Pope's letter that condemned the attack on ' . . . three valuable, small nations . . . without provocation and reason. . . We have to raise our voices in order to condemn evil and injustice once again'. Still, Pacelli thought that the sketch of this letter would infuriate the Germans in all probability, and dismissed it. Instead, he sent a telegram to the three sovereigns Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg, expressing his condolences and sympathy. They warmly received the

telegrams, but the powers on both sides of the European stage did not like them. London and Paris reproached the Pope for not having condemned the aggression immediately, while Rome and Berlin accused him of political interference at the time of a difficult crisis” (p. 232-233). Likewise, Pacelli experienced one more inconvenience □□ on one occasion, a fascist mob threw stones on his car in a street in Rome, which led him to not leave the Vatican in the future.

#### **d) The Panicky Fear of Pius XII for His Own Life**

When Italy formally entered the war against France and Great Britain on 10 June 1940, Cardinal Mallone, as the Vatican State Secretary, at the Pope’s order, demanded London to promise that the English aviation would not bombard Rome. Mallone was scared when he saw that his town was within range, considering the fact that one Allied plane appeared over Rome, showering the Italian capital with propaganda leaflets. However, its mere appearance warned that bombardment was not technically impossible. The leaflets fell on the Vatican territory as well. “For Pacelli, it proved that the RAF<sup>42</sup> had the range and probably the intention of razing Rome and the Vatican to the ground. He was hardly able to issue an appeal in Italy’s name, but he asked Mallone to appeal in London for the violation of the Vatican territory, and immediately continued to put pressure on Osborne (the British Ambassador to the Holy See note by V. Š.) to convince his supervisors in London not to bombard Rome. As the months passed, the exchange of messages became more extensive” (p. 235). Though the British High Command had not for even a moment considered bombing the Vatican, “. . . London thought that it ill befitted a Pope, the head of a neutral state (as the Vatican claimed to be), to intervene on behalf of Rome, which was part of Italy. Was this not an indication that they were using it as a means of the propaganda of the fascists?” (p. 236). That was one more element of the Pope’s essential discrediting due to his lack of elementary moral criteria. “Among the Italian historians at the time of World War II, it was a common belief that, during the period of animosity that concerned Rome, Pope Pius XII was stubbornly possessed with one problem more than with anything else the preservation of ‘the Eternal City’ from air bombardment. In other words, it appeared to his critics that he put the preservation of Rome above all other cities in Europe that were facing the horrors of *Blitzkrieg*, deportation, torture and ‘the Final Solution’ itself. For this reason, the issue of the bombardment of Rome justified the allegations about Pacelli’s inertia and sinful silence, and about the other problems during the war. At the same time, he refused to condemn the bombardment of the cities like Coventry in England, or to demand the preservation of other places of religious and artistic importance. His critics concluded that he was guilty of double standards, of having scandalously unbalanced priorities, that he possibly feared being bombarded in the Vatican” (p. 235). The British were becoming more enraged because of Pacelli’s refusal to condemn the bombardment of civilians. “The situation reached its climax in the middle of November 1940, when Coventry and its old cathedral were heavily damaged by bombardment. Osborne asked Pacelli to condemn these attacks, but his efforts resulted in the Portugal Ambassador’s visit to the Foreign Office, who asked the British not to bombard Rome as a sign of retaliation. The humiliating nature of this appeal infuriated the London officials and

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<sup>42</sup> *The Royal Air Force (RAF)*

stopped them from their intention to once again ask the Pope to condemn the air strikes of the Luftwaffe” (p. 236-237).

#### 4. The Genocide of the Serbians, the Greatest Crime of Pius XII

In the chapter entitled *The Friend of Croatia*, in the section *The Criminal Regime of Catholic Croatia*, Cornwell elaborates on Pacelli’s responsibility for the campaign “. . . of terror and extermination that was carried out by the Croatian Usthas on two million Serbian Orthodox Christians and a smaller number of Jews, Romanies and Communists, between 1941 and 1945. The act of ‘ethnic cleansing’, before that terrifying expression come into fashion, was an attempt to create a ‘pure’ Catholic Croatia through coercive conversions, deportations and mass exterminations. The tortures and murders were so horrifying that even the hardened German soldiers noted down their horror at it. In comparison to the recent blood shedding that was happening in Yugoslavia during the writing of this book, Pavelić’s slaughtering of the Orthodox Serbs remains one of the most horrifying civil massacres known in history” (p. 238). Cornwell says that the Vatican knew about all those crimes, but Pacelli evaded intervening to protect innocent victims, which made him an accomplice. “The historical heritage that justified the creation of NDH (the Independent State of Croatia) was a combination of loyalties to the papacy, which go back a thousand and three hundred years, and a feeling of burning hatred towards the Serbians because of past and present injustices. The Croatian nationalists nourished hatred towards the Serbian predominance that excluded them from the professional services and an equal opportunity for education. As the Croatians saw it, the Serbians were guilty of favouring the Orthodox religion, of encouraging the schism among the Catholics and of systematically colonising the Catholic regions with Orthodox Serbs. Both the Serbians and the Croatians put an equal sign between ethnic and religious identity the Orthodox Serbs versus the Catholic Croatians. At the same time, the Jews in the region were condemned on the basis of their race and their connections with Communism, Freemasonry and the alleged encouragement of abortion. Pacelli decisively supported Croatian nationalism and confirmed the Ustasha understanding of history in November 1939, when a group of Croatian pilgrims came to Rome to advocate the canonisation of the Croatian Franciscan martyr, Nikola Tavelić” (p. 239).

Under the Croatian regime, the Serbians were slaughtered *en masse*, systematically plundered and coercively converted to Catholicism. “From the beginning, the public actions and the viewpoints regarding the ethnic cleansing and the anti-Semitic programme were familiar to the Catholic episcopate and *the Catholic Action*, the laymen’s organizations that Pacelli so ardently supported as Papal Nuncio in Germany and as the Cardinal State Secretary. These racist and anti-Semitic measures were also known to the Holy See, and accordingly to Pacelli, at the moment when he was greeting Pavelić in the Vatican. What is more, these actions were familiar precisely at the moment when secret diplomatic relations were established between Croatia and the Holy See. The central characteristic of this essentially religious war was the appropriation of the deserted or captured Orthodox churches by the Croatian Catholics. The Curia discussed this issue, and the rules of conduct were set forth. Still, from the very beginning, there had been other crimes about which the news spread quickly from mouth to mouth. Soon, it was clear that Pavelić was not exactly the spitting image of Himmler and Heiderich, since he

did not possess their cold-blooded aptitude for the bureaucracy of mass killing; however, the Ustasha leaders set about perpetrating massacres with a brutal and random barbarism that hardly has a precedent” (p. 240).

### a) An Audience of Loyalty to Pius XII

Cornwell briefly describes the massacres of the Serbians in the villages of Bjelovar, in Otočac and in the church in Glina. “Four days after the massacre in Glina, Pavelić, the so-called leader, went to Rome to sign (under the pressure of Hitler) a state agreement with Mussolini, which granted Italy the right to take the Croatian districts and towns on the Dalmatian coast. During that same visit, Pavelić had an audience of ‘loyalty’ with Pius XII in the Vatican, and the Independent State of Croatia was *de facto* recognised by the Holy See. Abbot Ramiro Marcone, from the Benedictine Montevergine Abbey, was immediately appointed Apostolic Legate in Zagreb. . . It is clear that the rapid *de facto* recognition (during the war, the Vatican evaded the recognition of new states) occurred due more to the position of Croatia as a bastion against Communism than to its policy of murder. Regardless of that, from the very beginning, it was known that Pavelić was a totalitarian dictator, a puppet in the hands of Hitler and Mussolini, that he had passed a series of racist and the anti-Semitic laws, and that he was prone to coercive conversions from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. Above all, Pacelli was aware that the new state had not been, as Jonathan Steinberg writes, ‘. . . the result of the heroic uprising of a Godly nation, but of external intervention’. As the whole world knows, the Independent State of Croatia was a consequence of Hitler’s and Mussolini’s strong and illegal attack and annexation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (which had official diplomatic relations with the Vatican). And now there was Pacelli, holding Pavelić’s hand and giving him his papal blessing” (p. 241). Cornwell leaves open the possibility that the Holy See had found out about the Croatian crimes some time later. “Still, the details of the massacres of the Serbians and the practical elimination of the Jews and the Romanies had been familiar from the beginning, and even later, to the Croatian Catholic clergy and the episcopate. Indeed, the priests often called the tune in this matter” (p. 241-242).

Listing the huge numbers of murdered Serbians, Jews and Romanies, Cornwell wonders “. . . how was it possible that, despite strict authoritarian relations of power between the papacy and the local church the relation of authority whose establishment Pacelli had worked so hard on there was not an attempt from the Vatican centre to stop the killings, coercive conversions, the taking of Orthodox possessions? How was it possible that when the perpetrators of the crimes became generally known within the Vatican, as it would be seen, Pacelli did not isolate the Holy See from the Ustasha actions and condemn the perpetrators immediately and decisively?” (p. 242). The next section is titled *The Vatican Is Familiar with the Situation in Croatia*. In it, Cornwell insists on the role of Stepinac, saying, “From the very beginning, the Zagreb Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac (whose beatification in Rome is currently underway) completely agreed with the general aims of the new Croatian state, and was working on getting the Pope to accept it. He visited Pavelić personally on 16 April 1941, and listened to the statement of the new leader, who said that he would not ‘. . . be tolerant’, as Stepinac wrote in his diary, ‘towards the Serbian Orthodox Church, because, as he saw it, it was not a church, but a political organisation’. For this reason, Stepinac thought that ‘the leader was a sincere Catholic’. On the same day, Stepinac organised a dinner for Pavelić

and the leading Ustashas, in order to celebrate their return from exile. On April 28, on the very day when 250 Serbians were massacred in Bjelovar, the pastoral letter of Stepinac was read from the Catholic pulpits, summoning the priests and believers to co-operate with the leader. How could Stepinac be so naïve and not figure out what such co-operation might mean? . . . The priests, Franciscans as a rule, conducted the massacres. Many went armed, killing passionately. Father Božidar Bralo, known for always carrying a machine gun, was accused of having danced around the bodies of 180 massacred Serbians on Ali-Pasha's bridge. Certain Franciscans committed murders, set houses to fire, plundered villages and devastated the land of Bosnia, leading gangs of Ustashas. In September 1941, an Italian reporter wrote about a Franciscan whom he had seen south from Banja Luka, where he was leading an Ustasha gang, holding a crucifix. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, there are photos of the crimes: a woman with her breasts cut off, eyes taken out, genitals mutilated, as well as photos of the tools used for the butchering: knives, axes, meat hooks" (p. 242-243).

### **b) Cornwell's Outrage at the Character of Archbishop Stepinac**

Stepinac was familiar with all the crimes, and was the chief actor in the conversion process. "In the post-war period, there was a lot of talk about the personal sanctity of Archbishop Stepinac, the Catholic Primate, and his protests against the persecutions and the massacres. Nevertheless, even if we believe his innocence regarding his forgiving the murderous racial hatred, it is clear that he and the episcopate approved of the disregard of religious freedom being equated with complicity in the violence. Stepinac wrote a long letter to Pavelić, in which he talked about the violent proselytization and slaughters – which the writer Hubert Butler translated from the transcript in Zagreb in 1946. It states the approval of his brothers the bishops, together with a letter from the Mostar Catholic Bishop, Dr Mišić, expressing the historical wish that the Croatian episcopate approved the mass conversions to Catholicism. The bishop starts with the statement that, ' . . . never have we had such a favourable opportunity to help Croatia save countless souls, as we have now'. He enthusiastically writes about the mass proselytization. But then he says that he rejects the 'narrow-minded' understanding of the authorities, who catch even the converts and 'hunt them like slaves...'

The letter reveals the moral derangement present in the behaviour of the bishops who used the defeat of Yugoslavia by the Nazis to enlarge their power and spread Catholicism in the Balkans. One after the other, the bishops were approving the proselytization, while admitting that there were no point in throwing whole loads of schismatics into chasms. The incapability of the bishops to separate themselves from the regime, of condemning it, of excommunicating Pavelić and his cronies, was a consequence of their indecisiveness to miss a possibility acquired thanks to 'a favourable opportunity' to build a Catholic fortress of power in the Balkans. Likewise, the Vatican and Pacelli shared the same hesitation over neglecting the possibility of realising Catholic predominance in the East. . . Pacelli was better informed on the situation in Croatia than on any other region in Europe, outside Italy, during World War II. His Apostolic Legate Marcone travelled between Zagreb and Rome at his own wish, and the military planes were at his disposal for travelling to the new Croatia. In the meantime, the bishops, some of them with seats in the Croatian Parliament, freely communicated with the Vatican and managed their regular *ad limina* visits to the Pope

in Rome. During those visits, the Pontiff and certain members of the Curia could ask about the circumstances in Croatia, as they surely did. Pacelli had other private ways of informing himself, among which were the daily BBC radio programmes. During the war, Ambassador Osborne watched them attentively and translated them to the Pope. The BBC often reported on the situation in Croatia” (p. 244-245).

### **c) The Mean Silence of the Ustasha Mentors from the Vatican**

As a concrete example of such reporting by the British national agency, John Cornwell provides a fragment of a report from 16 February 1942, in which he emphasises: “The worst crimes are being perpetrated in the proximity of the Zagreb Archbishop. The blood of their brothers flows like a river. The Orthodox people are being coercively converted to Catholicism and we have not heard a word of protest from the Archbishop. Instead, there are reports of his participation in Nazi and fascist parades” (p. 245). The Holy See did not pay attention to this. It exclusively cared about acquiring more Catholic sheep in its mindless flock. “The flood of instructions to the Croatian bishops from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, which particularly protects the Catholics of the Eastern rite in that region, indicates that the Vatican was familiar with the coercive conversions from July 1941. The documents refer to the insistence of the Vatican that the future converts to Catholicism should be rejected, if they seek baptism for the wrong reasons” (p. 245).

The Vatican remained deaf and dumb concerning the ordeal of the Jews on the territory of the fascist Croatian state. “On August 14, the chairman of the Jewish community Alatrija wrote to Cardinal Mallone, begging him in the name of thousands of Croatian Jews, ‘. . . the citizens of Zagreb and other centres in Croatia, who have been arrested for no cause, deprived of their property and deported’ . . . The letter appeals for the intervention of the Holy See to the Italian and Croatian governments. There is no recorded response or action by the Holy See” (p. 245). There is a whole list of other examples that “the crimes” and “slanders” were generally known to Rome in the summer of 1941, and the Holy See had the channels through which Pacelli could check on and influence the events” (p. 246). Apostolic Nuncio Ramiro Marcone, “. . . mainly spent his time in Croatia at ceremonies, lunches, public parades and taking pictures next to Pavelić. It was clear that he had been appointed in order to appease and encourage” (p. 246). The Croatian diplomatic representatives in the Vatican were Nikola Gušinović and Ervin Lobković. “These arrangements were half-secret, because the Holy See was still maintaining diplomatic relations with the royal Yugoslav government in exile” (p. 246). Even though the Vatican officials possessed a lot of data on the atrocious Ustasha crimes at the beginning of 1942, “. . . the Holy See was nevertheless slowly establishing official relations through the Croatian representatives” (p. 246).

The World Jewish Congress and the Swiss Jewish Community were trying to get the Holy See interested in “. . . the persecutions of the Jews in Germany, France, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia. The organisations took special care over the Pope using his influence in the last three, which were connected to the Holy See through strong diplomatic and ecclesiastical relations for example, in Slovakia at that time, the president was a Catholic priest. . . The aide-memoire, whose transcript is kept in the Zionistic archives in Jerusalem, was published by Saul Friedlaender, in his collection of the documents about Pacelli and the Third Reich. In October 1998, Gerhard Riegner, the

surviving signatory of the memorandum, revealed in his published memoirs . . . that the Vatican had excluded this document from eleven volumes of the published war material □□ indicating that, for more than half a century after the war, the Vatican was still refusing to admit what it had known about the Croatian crimes in the early phase of ‘the Final Solution’, and when it had found out about it” (p. 247). Anyhow, the key men in the Vatican State Secretariat Mallone, Montini and Tardini, must have known for sure all the details of the bloody events in the Ustasha state, but they listened to the Croatian political representatives patiently, were generously compliant with them and only sometimes expressed mild criticism. The French Cardinal Eugène Tiseran was more harsh in a conversation with Rušinović, accusing the Croatian Franciscans of terrible behaviour and the direct participation in the slaughters of the Orthodox Serbians. Despite that, “. . . the leaders and the representatives of Pavelić’s regime were still in Pacelli’s good books” (p. 248). Cornwell lists a greater number of the Pope’s cordial audiences, during which he received various Ustasha delegations and always talked about Pavelić with approval, sending him warm regards and blessings. The Pope was preoccupied with bigger plans and projects.

## **5. “Barbarossa”, an Opportunity for Converting Russia to Catholicism**

In Hitler’s campaign against the Soviet Union, the Pope saw “. . . an opportunity for Catholic evangelisation, following in the tracks of the implacable force of the *Wehrmacht* as he advanced towards Moscow. It offered the prospects of bringing the old clash between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy to an end” (p. 249). The Pope was certainly not alone in his proselytistic visions. “Franz von Papen, the former Catholic Vice Chancellor, was thinking about the possibilities of introducing Catholicism in the newly conquered regions” (p. 249). The Roman Catholic Church had started making proselytistic plans for the Russian territory much earlier. “In 1929, when Pacelli was appointed Cardinal State Secretary, Pius XI founded the Vatican ‘Commission for Russia’. Afterwards, in the same year on the Vatican territory, he opened the ‘Pontifical Russian College’, known as *Russicum*, and the ‘Pontifical Ruthenian College’, where the participants were trained for service in the Soviet Union. Other institutions also secretly participated in training people for a Russian mission, including the abbey from Grotto Ferrat, near Rome; the abbey Sevtonj in Belgium; and the abbey Velehrad in Moravska. Some of the most powerful church orders □□ the Redemptionists<sup>47</sup>, the Assumptionists, the Jesuits and the clergy of various orders in Poland □□ created their own programmes within the plan for the secret evangelization in Russia” (p. 251). The realisation failed, because the Nazis would not allow proselytization on the occupied territories until the war was over.

### **a) Genocide Ensures a Catholic Bridgehead towards the East**

However, the coercive proselytization of the Serbians in Pavelić’s Croatia was certainly a part of that extensive plan. “The possibility of attracting masses of the Orthodox ‘schismatics’ to conversion, through their close connection with the Catholic

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<sup>47</sup> better known as Trinitarians



Eastern rite, explains Pacelli's compliant policy towards Pavelić and his murderous regime. If he had confronted Pavelić's coercive conversions, deportations and massacres with condemnations and excommunications, the existence of the Croatian bridgehead towards the East would have been in danger. Patience, indulgence and collusion were the options that Pacelli had obviously chosen. For Pacelli, ecumenism had only one meaning — that the separated Christian brothers realise their mistake and return to one whole community with the Pope and Rome” (p. 253). The role of the Ustasha Croatian state in the penetration towards the Eastern Christian countries was so highly rated in the eyes of the Vatican high officials that the Holy See zealously engaged in the post-war rescuing of the Croatian war criminals who had perpetrated crimes and massacres with the blessing from the Roman Catholic clergy. “The research conducted by the Allies after the War reveals that the stolen treasure of the Ustashes who were on the run amounted to around \$80 million, a considerable part of which was in gold coins. The proof that the Vatican was in collusion with the Ustasha regime implies the hospitality of pontifical religious institutions, the provision of accommodation, and safes for storing the Ustashes' treasure, a considerable part of which had been stolen from the victims of destruction the Serbians and the Jews. During the war, the College of Saint Jerome in Rome was a home for the Croatian priests who were theologically educated under the auspices of the Vatican. Later, it was the place of the supreme headquarters of the post-war Ustasha underground, providing refuge for the Croatian war criminals. The Ustashes here were provided with false passports and identities in order to escape being arrested by the Allies” (p. 253-254).

## **6. All the Dictators Born and Brought Up as the Catholics**

Alongside the long tradition of anti-Judaism nourished by the Roman Catholic Church, its theology and ideology, Cornwell draws attention to the fact that in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, “. . . Catholicism was related to expressly right-wing nationalism, corporatism and fascism, which supported anti-Semitism or participated in anti-Semitism on racial grounds. Practically every right-wing dictator of that period was born and brought up as a Catholic above all, Hitler; Horthy; Franco; Pétain; Mussolini; Pavelić and Tiso (who was a Catholic priest). There were isolated but significant cases of Catholic bishops who expressed their anti-Semitic views, even while the persecution of the Jews was gathering momentum in Germany in the middle of the 1930s” (p. 269). Accordingly, in 1936 the Polish Primate, Cardinal Hlond, declared that the Jewish issue would exist as long as there were the Jews. “The Slovakian bishops, for example, published a pastoral letter that repeated the traditional accusations that the Jews were God-killers.

“During the war, there was evidence of anti-Judaism, even anti-Semitism, at the heart of the Vatican. The leading Dominican theologian and neo-Thomist, Garrigou-Lagrance, was a theological adviser to Pacelli and at the same time a firm supporter of Pétain. He was a close friend to the Vichy Ambassador to the Holy See. In a well-known telegram, the diplomat told his government that the Holy See was not against the anti-Semitic laws, and he even named the original notes from Thomas Aquinas that had been gathered by the Roman neo-Thomists” (p. 269). The Pope persistently kept silent regarding the numerous transports of the Jews into concentration camps and their mass liquidations in crematoriums, gas chambers and deliberate starvations. At the same time,

when more than forty thousand French Jews were deported to Auschwitz, “. . . Pacelli warmly greeted the work of Marshal Pétain and showed a lively interest in the government actions that were a sign of a fortunate renewal of the religious life in France” (p. 276). Admittedly, the Pope once mentioned the hundreds of thousands people who had been sentenced to destruction due only to their nationality or race; and that was all. “That was not only a vague statement. The gap that can be noticed between the enormity of the liquidation of the Jewish nation and this form of vague words is shocking. He could have been referring to many categories of victims of the numerous warring parties in the conflict. The conscious use of unclear language was intended to appease the ones who advocated that he should protest, and at the same time, to evade offending the Nazi regime. But, these considerations were veiled by implicit denying and trivialisation. He reduced the unfortunate millions to ‘hundreds of thousands’ and erased the word Jews, emphasising the qualification ‘only sometimes’. The expressions ‘the Nazis’ or ‘Nazi Germany’ were never mentioned anywhere. Hitler himself could not have wished for a more veiled and innocuous reaction to the greatest crime in the human history from Christ’s vicar” (p. 280).

### **a) Loyalty to Hitler Until the Last Moment**

Such an attitude of the Pope represents a combined expression of the traditional Roman Catholic aversion towards the Jews, giving primacy to the Vatican aims based on Hitler’s expected penetration towards the East, and the personal anti-Semitism of Pacelli. “Pacelli showed a secret antipathy towards the Jews, which was conspicuous even when he was 43 years old in Munich, and it was both religious and racial. This circumstance is quite opposite to the later claims that he respected the Jews, and that he had had the best intentions during the war, although he had made some mistakes. From 1917, . . . Pacelli and the service he was responsible for showed antagonism towards the Jews based on the conviction that there was a connection between Judaism and the Bolshevik conspiracy to destroy Christianity. As it is well known, Pacelli’s concordat policy prevented a potential Catholic protest in defence of the Jews (regardless of whether they were Christian converts or not), as a matter of ‘external’ interference. At a government meeting on 14 July 1933, Hitler himself admitted that the German concordat provided an opportunity to justify the extermination of the Jews. From the middle to the end of the 1930s, while he was rejecting the racist theories, Pacelli omitted to approve the protest of the German Catholic episcopate against anti-Semitism. He did not even try to influence the process in which the German Catholic priests were collaborating in issuing racial certificates in order to identify the Jews, which gave necessary information in the Nazi’s persecutions. . . The various evidential materials clearly show that Pacelli believed that the Jews had brought the ordeal upon themselves. Mediation on their behalf could have dragged the Church into an alliance with the powers – above all the Soviet Union – whose final aim was the destruction of the institutional church. For this reason, when the war began, he was determined to distance himself from every appeal in the name of the Jews on the level of international politics” (p. 283).

Through the Pope’s war-time behaviour, the original centre and the strongest organisation of Western Christianity showed the real face of its ideology, “sincere” piety and false, beguiling glibness. “The failure to pronounce a sincere word about the Final

Solution that was underway showed to the world that Christ's vicar had not been affected by sympathy and rage. From this point of view, he was the ideal pope for Hitler's horrible plan. He was Hitler's pawn. He was Hitler's pope" (p. 284). The Pope spoke out only when there was no more Hitler and when the Nazi pressures stopped. "The original obligation to condemn 'the Final Solution' was postponed until the moment when Pacelli's conscience was 'liberated' from such pressures. All in all, not only did he fail to explain and excuse his silence, but he later asked to be given credit for the moral supremacy of having spoken openly" (p. 284).

In public appearances, the Pope flagrantly bragged that in his time he had condemned the anti-Semitic persecutions. "His complicity in 'the Final Solution', due to his omission to issue a fitting condemnation, was topped off by a subsequent attempt to present himself as a distinguished defender of the Jewish nation. His pretentious self-justification from 1946 reveals not only that he was the ideal pope for the Nazi 'Final Solution', but a hypocrite as well" (p. 248). When the Germans occupied Rome after the fall of Mussolini, and, in October 1943 started a mass deportation of the Roman Jews to Auschwitz, which passed directly by the Vatican walls, the Pope again kept quiet. On that occasion, German Ambassador to the Vatican, Baron Ernest von Weizsäcker, officially reported to Berlin on the behaviour of the Roman Pontiff: "Though under pressure from all sides, the Pope did not let them push him into a demonstrative criticism of the deportation of the Jews. Even though he must know that such an attitude will be used against him by our enemies and in the Protestant circles in the Anglo-Saxon countries, with the aim of anti-Catholic propaganda, he has still done everything possible, even in this sensitive matter, in order not to strain the relations with the German government and the German authorities in Rome" (p. 296-297). Never did Pacelli turn to God in favour of his Jewish citizens, either with one public prayer or with a Mass. "This spiritual and moral silence regarding the crimes perpetrated in the heart of Christianity, in the shadow of the life of the first apostle, exists even today and all Catholics are accomplices in it" (p. 301). However, the Berlin Archbishop, Cardinal Adolf Bertram, upon receiving the news of Hitler's death, personally ordered that all the rectors in his archdiocese ". . . should hold a solemn ceremony as a sign of remembrance of the Fuehrer and all those members of the *Wehrmacht* who have fallen in the battle for our German fatherland, together with the most sincere prayers for the nation, the fatherland and the future of the German Catholic Church" (p. 301).

## **Part Two**

### **The Phantasmagorias of Croatian Historians**

#### **I. Croatian History According to Vjekoslav Klaić**

Vjekoslav Klaić (1849-1928), whose mother was a German, is considered the founder of contemporary Croatian historiography, and in his extensive work, he skilfully combined indisputable research efforts and romanticist national ideology, so he did not hesitate to compensate for the voids that endangered the set-in-advance, ideal model with far-fetched interpretations and assumptions. From Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, he borrowed the principle that a scientific truth must be subordinate to the national consciousness and the idealistically constructed historiographical nation-building paradigm. For this work, his solid education and upbringing in the German spirit and in the German language provided him with a developed capability of systematising the gathered material, and logically situating an expressed tendentiousness in its interpretation and explanation. In the abundance of his published works, the most significant is *The History of the Croats* in five volumes, which covers the period from the settlement in the Balkan Peninsula until 1608. Later, Vjekoslav Klaić became a subject of dispute by the most hardened Croatian national ideologists, even because he wrote that the Croats were a Slavic nation and that they display the traditional Slavic national resilience, defiance to the enemy and a love for freedom in their character. Even though Klaić too belongs to the list of historiographic forgers, the forgeries of the later historic pamphleteers would exceed his to that extent that, today he can look innocent, chaste and naïve compared to his successors.

## 1. Klaić's Megalomaniac Cartography

Klaić's exposition of Croatian history starts with an absurd statement that corresponds to the stands of his predecessors Pavle Riter Vitezović, Baltazar Adam Krčelić, Ivan Švear and Tadija Smičiklas; that statement says that ". . . according to the research of the best Croatian historians, the Croatian nation occupied a rather vast territory in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, with the following borders: the Bojana River (nearby Skadar) on the south, the Bosnia or the Vrbas River on the east, the Danube on the north (from the mouth of the Drava to the mouth of the Sava) and the Drava, the Sana River on the west, the Istrian Mountains (the Raša River in Istria) and the Adriatic Sea. If we look at the map, we see that we should include the following states and regions of today in the Croatian country Montenegro, the entire Dalmatia, western Bosnia, Herzegovina (apart from Novi Pazar), Croatia and Slavonia, one part of eastern Kranjska (Carniola) and eastern Istria" (Vjekoslav Klaić: *The History of the Croatsians*, Book I, Nakladni Zavod of Matrix Croatica, Zagreb 1974, p. 27). There is no evidence, but he does not need it. It is probably enough for him to refer to the research of "the best Croatian historians". It is enough that the imagination of one of them creates the desired phantasmagoria so that everyone then swears to it as an undisputable fact and chorally repeats it as a credible truth. Klaić adds to the statements of those "best Croatian historians" that ". . . the town of Sarajevo in Bosnia is certainly the place furthest to the east in the range of the former state of Croatia" (p. 27-28). At the same time, he appropriates Mostar, Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska. What is more, he is one of the preachers of a legend about two Croatian countries, Posavska (Transsavian) and Primorska Croatia, and the patron of "Red Croatia" as the project that includes Zeta and Travunija as well. He says that the Croatsians ". . . founded two chief principedoms, one in the north part (Posavska and Panonska Croatia, later Slavic country or Slavonia), and the other one in the south part (Dalmatian Croatia or White Croatia). Both regions competed among themselves several times, so there were unpleasant situations, for example when in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Borna, the prince of the Dalmatian Croatsians, stood beside the Franks against his own brothers, against Ljudevit, the prince of the Croatsians from Posavina. Even in the later centuries, the disagreement between the Slavic country and southern Croatia broke out several times, and only in the recent period has the live consciousness of the Croatian nation been able to remove the fence placed by nature in order to separate the medieval world from the one in the Balkans" (p. 29). The thing is □□ Klaić purposefully neglects the fact that the Croatsians, being exclusively chakavians, spoke a different language from the population in the Slavic country or Slavonia, who were originally, all the way to the eastern parts, exclusively kajkavians, like the Slovenians. The truth is, those Slavonians were ethnically closer to the Croatsians than the Serbians were, considering the fact that the Croatsians (chakavians) and the Slovenians (kajkavian) belonged to the Western-Slavic national-linguistic branch, and the Serbians (shtokavians) belonged to the Eastern-Slavic branch. Apart from the Slovenians, the Croatsians were also directly related to the Polish, the Czechs and the Slovaks; and the Serbians to the Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians and Macedonians. It is a significant fact that the Slovenians appeared in today's Slovenia and Pannonia in the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and that the Croatsians came there as late as the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century

### a) The Appropriation of the Serbian Identity by Pseudo-Historiographical Equilibristics

Although the more credible historical data indicate that the original Croatia extended around Krakow in today's Poland (Great or White Croatia), Vjekoslav Klaić attempts to identify it with the vast Slavic country of King Samo, who in 623 rose up in arms against the Avars and, after the victory, was named king by the wish of the people. Accordingly, he writes, "Only in that way did he found a strong and vast Slavic country between the Frankish state and the Avar rule, that included the entire Czech Republic of today, Moravska, a great part of Halič and a great part of today's Alpine countries (especially Štajerska (Styria), Koruška (Carinthia) and Kranjska (Carniola)). In that vast country, there were many Slavic tribes, one next to the other, led by their tribal princes and grand zhupans (Valjuh, Dervan). Still, all those tribes recognised King Samo. The name of that large country was not recorded, but it is not unlikely that it could have been named, after the most eminent and the bravest tribe, Great or White (i.e. free, liberated from the Avars) Croatia" (p. 47).

Klaić calls the Croatians "the most powerful people" in Samo's country, whom in 627 Byzantine Emperor Heraclius summoned to liberate ". . . the Roman province Dalmatia, and possibly Pannonia from the Avar rule which dominated the Slavs, . . . and maybe settle there and defend it from future barbarian invasions" (p. 47). Further on, he writes that seven or eight tribes of "the noble Croatians", led by five brothers and two sisters as tribal chiefs (Klukas, Lebel, Kosenc, Muhlo, Hrvat, Tuga and Buga), after passing through Pannonia and entering into Dalmatia, started ". . . a bloody fight with their present rulers □□ with the Avars and the Slavs dominated by them. The war lasted several years. Finally, the Croatians won. They defeated the Avars and the dominated Slavs and conquered the entire Dalmatia. From then on, the ancient Roman province Dalmatia was ruled by the noble Croatians" (p. 48). Here, Klaić corrects Constantine Porphyrogenitus, claiming that the Serbians followed the Croatian's lead concerning the migration from their original homeland to the Balkan peninsula, hence writing, ". . . the Croatian example influenced the other Slavs on the north to move to the Balkan peninsula. They were the people most related to the Croatians, by blood and according to their language, and accidentally called the Serbians. They settled on the north right next to the Croatians in the land of Bojki (Bojki is still the name of the Eastern-Galic Ukrainians)" (p. 49). It is not a coincidence that he claims the Serbians to be most closely related to the Croatians, by blood and according to their language, and that their names are different only accidentally, because by so doing, it was easier for him to appropriate and Croatianise entire parts of the Serbian nation and their Balkan regions.

However, Klaić, probably conscious of his pseudo-historiographical equilibristics, and unable to corroborate the oral tradition and fairy tales with credible historical sources, not abandoning the use of his planned speculations, has to admit that only one of the alleged seven "Croatian" tribes was exclusively called Croatian (Hrvat), while the other ones ". . . did not only have different tribal names, but also differentiated in their languages and customs. They were ethnographic tribes" (p. 50). Whatever the term "ethnographic tribes" means here Klaić himself does not understand, but it is important that he notices the difference in the language and the customs, though evading the essential information that the basic linguistic difference between the Serbians and the Croatians is in that the former speaks shtokavian, and the latter chakavian. Allegedly,

the first tribe settled in northernmost Dalmatia, and Klaić supposes that they could have been called Bužani. “The second tribe, undoubtedly the one led by Hrvat himself, which was known as the Croatians or White Croatians, settled in the more southern part, namely from the southern end of Velebit and the Zrmanja River to the Cetinje River to the south, and Duvanjsko Polje to the east, and to the sea to the west. That region kept its specific name during all the future centuries Croatians or Croatia” (p. 50-51). Those regions are the only ones on which there are credible historical testimonies about the existence of the Croatians and Croatia, and then again come the phantasmagorias by which the Serbian lands are appropriated: “The third tribe, with an unfamiliar name, occupied the region of Neretva (also called Pagania and Maronia, later Krajina, and today Primorje). That small region comprised only three counties (Makarska, Rastočka, Dalenska), and its population was especially proud and brave. . . Other tribes settled in the region to the south of Neretva, all along the coast of the Adriatic sea, namely, in three regions □□ Zahumlje, Travunja and Duklja” (p. 51).

### **b) One Important Confession in the Sea of Fabrications**

It is very important that Klaić at this point confesses that the Serbians founded the original Bosnia. Stating that the Croatians could not expand to the interior, he explains that they were not “. . . able to move further, because the Serbians were settled there in the counties of Zagorje, having founded two chief regions □□ Raša and Bosnia. Since they could not find a village in the littoral Dalmatia, the Croatian tribes were forced to move again to the north, into ancient Roman Pannonia, especially in the areas along the Kupa River and then between the Drava, the Danube and the Sava rivers. The number of the Croatians who went that way is unknown, but, as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century, there was a legend that one part of the Croatian tribe had left ancient Dalmatia, and populated Pannonia and Ilirik” (p. 51-52). There are not any data on the sources according to which he writes about those alleged ancient oral traditions, and he especially unskillfully explains the ostensible Croatian symbiosis with the Slavonians: “There is no doubt that only a smaller part of the Croatian tribes went towards Pannonia where they met many Slavic natives and smaller number of Avars. The Croatians, who were considerably inferior in number to that population, were not able to completely suppress the original settlers. They settled next to those Slavs, or Slovinians, as they called them, and later, over time, they blended into one. Consequently, the Slavic or the Slovinian name prevailed, so in the later centuries the country itself was named the Slavic country (Slovinians), or following the foreign model Slavonia. In that Slavic country, two regions appeared” (p. 52). Klaić says that those two regions were Slavonia and Srem. There was no evidence that the Croatian tribes moved to Slavonia directly after arriving to the Balkans, and in later centuries from Dalmatia, but for Klaić evidence is not even necessary.

From Priest Dukljanin, Klaić took the fairy tale about the Croatian council in Duvanjsko Polje and the alleged presence of the Byzantine Emperor’s and the Pope’s envoys, where the acceptance of Christianity was decided on in the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Klaić claims that the Serbian tribes were present at the council as well, led by their zhupans; that it lasted twelve days and that many provisions on the church organisation were passed, as well as many other secular laws. In the end, the ultimate lie, which would serve as the base for numerous newer fabrications was : “The principal

issue was to determine, as accurately as possible, the borders of the Croatian and Serbian regions, as well as the frontiers of the Latin towns, in order to know what belonged to whom. The envoys of the Byzantine Emperor composed a division, which was accepted by both the Croatian and Serbian princes and zhupans. The ancient Roman Dalmatia was divided. From then on, Dalmatia included only those eight towns directly along the coast and on the three islands where the remaining number of the Latins lived □□ all the other parts of the land belonged to the Croatians and the Serbians. All the land along the sea from the Raša in Istria to the Bojana would be called Croatia (Primorje), and it was divided into North or White Croatia, and South or Red Croatia (the regions of Neretva, the land of Humlje, Travunja and Duklja). The land directly behind the Croatian land belonged to the Serbians and that Serbia (Zagorje) was accordingly divided into two regions: Raša and Bosnia” (p. 55-56). That this is a notorious lie can testify the fact that, even a thousand years later, never again anywhere in the world were ethnic divisions done in this way. The more serious historians of today agree that there are no historical data on the alleged council in Duvanjsko Polje around 670, and, after a few pages, Klaić himself admits that “. . . since the Croatian tribes agreed with the Byzantine Emperor on occupying the ancient Roman Dalmatia and one part of Pannonia, founding several bigger and smaller regions, they were not mentioned in history for more than a hundred years. Still, there were no reasons to mention them a lot” (p. 61).

The only Slavic tribe that was called Croatians, and, as Klaić admits, that was settled in the region between the Zrmanja and the Cetina rivers, he calls “the white or free Croatians”, that were divided into some twenty counties. Although there are no creditable historical data for the entire 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, Klaić follows the lead of his imaginative pseudo-historiographic predecessors and handles utterly unreliable statements, like the one that one of the first princes of “White Croatia” was Porga, who ruled in Bihać; then, that the rule of those first Croatian princes gradually spread to the north of Istria with sporadic confrontations among the counties. The nature of Klaić’s “historiographic” manners are shown in the following excerpt, in which he himself admits that he does not have any information available, but that it does not disrupt him in creating a story about a seeming expansion to the south and the east, after a successful expansion to the north: “There is no doubt that after that success, the princes of White Croatia insisted on spreading their power to the southern Cetina River in the regions of Red Croatia. Still, there is no certain information on that. The legend only has it that in 688, the White Croatian prince Radoslav defeated the Arbanassi power (the descendants of the ancient Illyrians) and that, apart from Bosnia, he conquered all the lands to Leska in Albania, and accordingly became a great ruler. Although this story is not confirmed, it still indicates that the White Croatian princes tried to include under their rule all the Croatian regions that had been founded on the territory of the ancient Roman province of Dalmatia” (p. 62).

### **c) Ascribing the History of the Serbian Nation in Pannonia to the Croatians**

Similarly, he writes about the destiny of the supposed Croatians in Pannonia, and at the same time he grieves: “The position of those Croatian tribes who had populated the former province of Pannonia got considerably worse. First, they had difficulty surviving due to the greater number of the original South Slav settlers, and later the violent and



barbarous Avars were still a great problem for them” (p. 62). If those eventual Croatian groups could not survive in the region of the original Slavic settlers, then that means that they were assimilated by the related South Slavs, that is the Slovenes, and naturally accepted kajkavian as their language, and then, as a unique Slavic community suffered under Avar slavery. Klaić writes that one part of the Croatians settled near Sirmia in today’s Srem, and after the failed uprising against Avar tyranny under Prince Kuber in 758, they all migrated to Byzantium. It might have happened that, from a certain region at a certain time, a smaller group of the Croatians did actually settle in the interior of Byzantium, because the serious scientists in the north of Epirus found a few toponyms that testify to an ancient Croatian presence. However, it is unbelievable that Klaić himself first admits that the Croatians in Pannonia were a negligible minority among the original Slavic settlers, but then he treats everything that happened to those Slavs under the Avar rule primarily as Croatian history. When Charlemagne, the Frankish King, penetrated into Pannonia in 791, all the local Slavs joined him in the battle with the Avars, and probably that small number of Croatians as well, if they had preserved their identity up to then. When, after five years, the Avars were definitely defeated, Slavonia was a part of the Frankish state. In 799, when the Franks advanced on the authentic Croatians, many Slavs from Pannonia constituted a part of the Frankish army. Klaić writes that in the fight at Trieste the Frankish army was held off and its Commander, Margrave Erik, died.

According to Klaić, in 800, when the Pope crowned Charlemagne the Roman Emperor, the Croatians recognised him as their supreme ruler, and he gave them internal autonomy. In 814, they paid homage to his son and heir Ludwig the Pious, as well. The series of future circumstances is an opportunity for Klaić to treat the parallel events in Slavonia and Croatia as Croatian history. “Prince Borna ruled in White Croatia at the time, and Prince Ljudevit ruled in the South Slav country<sup>2</sup> (Slovinska zemlja) in the town of Sisak. Both of them were eminent heroes and great governors, but eager for others’ possessions. Both of them ingratiated themselves with the Emperor and the Frankish gentfolk, trying to establish rule over all the Croatians. The Frankish gentfolk noticed that discord and envy of the Croatian princes. In particular, the cunning Margrave Kadaloh stirred up the envy of the Croatian princes in order to make them hate each other completely. He would support Borna although he was wrong, and then he would stick by Ljudevit again, although he was right and did not need help. In this way, two brothers by God and of the same language, two unfortunate Croatian lands, fell out with each other, which was favourable for the foreigner, who, not having kept the promise of Charlemagne, behaved tyrannically all over the unfortunate country and interfered in the Croatian domestic affairs” (p. 64).

There is no doubt that great animosity existed between the neighbouring Princes, Ljudevit and Borna, but there is no evidence that both of them were Croatians. Ljudevit was a South Slav (Slovinac), and only Borna a Croatian. Unquestionably, there was a discord between brothers, because the Croatians and South Slavs belonged to the Slavic nation, even of the same, Western Slavic branch, but Croatianhood could not have been their unique ethnic denominator. The general denominator was Slavdom, and Croatianhood was its special category, a lot narrower, numerically and spatially limited

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<sup>2</sup> This South Slav land and people are also sometimes referred to as “Slovinia/Slovinian” (“*Slovinska*” in Serbian.

strictly to that territory where this term perhaps appeared, and that was exclusively that region which Klaić calls White Croatia.

#### **d) The Croatianisation of the Serbian Nobility, or Why the Croatians Do Not Remember Prince Ljudevit**

As the available sources testify, Ljudevit rose up in arms and defeated the Frankish army in the South Slavic country in 819. Klaić states that the Slovenians from Karantanija and the Serbians from the Timok region came to the rescue, while the “White Croatian” Prince Borna was on the Frankish side, “. . . because he hoped that after the fall of Ljudevit, he would unite Ljudevit’s country with his own principedom. It was decided to attack the South Slavic country from two sides Balderih was to penetrate from the west, from Karantija, and prince Borna from the south, from White Croatia.” In the clash with Balderih, Ljudevit withdrew undefeated, but the Croatian army of Prince Borna took a beating at the Kupa River, and then Ljudevit penetrated into the deep interior of White Croatia. “Terrible fear reigned then in White Croatia. Borna did not even dare to confront or meet with him in an open field. He placed the children, women and the elderly, as well as the more valuable possessions, in the fortified towns in the centre of the Croatian parishes, and he himself, with the most distinguished heroes, began to engage in guerrilla fighting in those mountainous areas, attacking Ljudevit from behind, from the flank, and accordingly, incessantly disturbed his army, day and night” (p. 66).

Expecting a new Frankish attack, Ljudevit was back from Croatia already at the beginning of 820. At the same time, Emperor Ludwig summoned a Frankish state council in Aachen. “It was rather seriously discussed how to crush the uprising in the South Slavic country (Slovinska zemlja), which, after the unsuccessful military operation from the previous year, had gathered ground to that extent that all the Slovenians supported Ljudevit” (p. 67). Ljudevit penetrated into Karantija in order to oppose the new Frankish army, but he had to retreat very soon. Three Frankish armies penetrated into the South Slavic country and devastated it. Still, they did not succeed in occupying Ljudevit’s fortification. Only as late as the beginning of 822, there was a great Frankish invasion, during which Ljudevit “. . . realised that he could not oppose it, leaving behind his capital Sisak and escaping across the Sava and Bosnia to Serbia, where a zhupan provided him with a place to stay” (p. 68). The South Slavic country was finally conquered and annexed to the Friulian margraviate.

The editor of this book of Klaić’s, Trpimir Macan, says in a special note: “According to Einhard’s annals, Ljudevit found refuge ‘with the Serbians’. Supposedly, it was today’s Srb, which was the centre of a separate county” (p. 68). Bearing in mind the location of the town of Srb in Lika, it is completely clear how small the territory of the original Croatia – “White Croatia” as Klaić writes – was, adding unquestionably Serbian lands under “Red Croatia”, according to which the Serbians would be “the Red Croatians”. Having groundlessly Croatianised the Prince of the South Slavic country, Klaić states further on: “Unfortunate Ljudevit was ungrateful to his host in Serbia. He killed him, stole his town and his county and became a ruler of both. Because of this, he had to flee from Serbia. He escaped to White Croatia and found refuge with Ljudemisal, the uncle of his opponent Borna (who had died in the meantime – Prim. V.Š.). Still, Ljudevit had him secretly killed . . . The later Croatian legends that the Byzantine

Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus recorded in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century did not remember the heroic and unfortunate Ljudevit any more, and even less his sad destiny” (p. 68). The Croatians did not remember Ljudevit even for a few more hundred years, because he had never belonged to them; but the objective historical sources remembered him without any features of the supposed Croatian identity. Even in the future centuries, Slavonia had nothing Croatian.

### **e) Exaggerating the Role of the Barely Known Tomislav**

The Croatian Prince Borna was succeeded by his nephew Vladislav in 821. According to the agreement from 821 between the Byzantine Emperor Michael and the Frankish-Roman Emperor Ludwig, Croatia belonged to the Franks, and the littoral towns with a Latin population belonged to Byzantium. Since the episcopal centres had been in those towns up till then, the Pope, “. . . fearing that the Dalmatian bishops – as Byzantine subjects could dissuade the Croatians from Rome, decided to establish a special diocese in White Croatia that would be subjected directly to the Holy See, and not to the Split Archbishop” (p. 71). Accordingly, a Croatian diocese was established in Nin in the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. In 835, Vladislav was succeeded by Mislav, who waged war with the Venetians, and approved that the Nin diocese would belong to the Split metropolitanate, after having arranged it with the Byzantine Archbishop from Split. Klaić ascribes to Mislav that he extended his land to Bosnia, all the way to the Drina, and at the time of Trpimir, his successor in 834, Klaić says that White Croatia “. . . extended from the Sava and the Kupa to the Cetina in the south, and from the sea to the Drina in the east. The position of the regions of Neretva and the land of Hum at the time of Trpimir is not familiar” (p. 76). In 852, Trpimir confirmed Prince Mislav’s deed of gift to the Split Archdiocese, and that Trpimir’s charter is “. . . the oldest kept document of the Croatian rulers” (p. 77). Domagoj, his successor in 864, excelled in waging wars against the Venetians and plundering along the Adriatic coast, for which Pope John VIII severely reproached and warned him.

Two years after Domagoj’s death, his son Inoslav ruled, and then Zdeslav, a descendant of Trpimir, seized power. In 878, “. . . Zdeslav came to Constantinople, where he asked Basil to help him get to the prince’s throne, promising him in return that he would be his vassal and that he would recognise Patriarch Fotije as the spiritual ruler of the Croatian nation. The Emperor greeted him with open arms, helped him, and after that, Zdeslav imposed himself as Prince in White Croatia” (p. 85). Klaić found confirmation that Zdeslav had been completely subjected to the Byzantine Emperor and the Constantinople Patriarch in the document by Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Then, the proselytism of the Croatians was finalised and the Emperor decided that the Dalmatian town had to pay a tribute to the Croatian Prince. Klaić supposes that the Pope’s envoy to the Bulgarian Prince, who had spent some time in Croatia, was secretly stirring up the local bans and zhupans so that they rebelled in 879, deposed Zdeslav and made Branimir their Prince. Branimir distanced himself from Byzantium and won over the Croatians for Rome again. The Pope saluted this with two epistles. The newly elected Bishop of Nin was soon consecrated in Rome, but the Dalmatian towns and their dioceses did not pay attention to the Pope’s call and remained faithful to Byzantium. In 887, some Slav priests came to Croatia, since they had been exiled from Moravia, where the Pope had forbidden the liturgy in the Slavic language. As Methodius’s pupils, they brought the

Slavic liturgy and the ecclesiastic books, which thus took root in Croatia. After Branimir, Mutimir became the Croatian Prince.

In 910, Tomislav became the Croatian Prince. “We do not know anything about Tomislav’s origin who his father or mother was” (p. 98). The Hungarians, who had appeared as early as the time of Branimir, destroyed the great country of Moravia and occupied the entire South Slavic country, that is Slavonia, and encroaching on the Croatian borders as well. They invaded Croatia several times, but they were held off. Klaić writes about it: “Prince Tomislav gladly defended his principedom from the Hungarian invasions. But that was not all. Chasing the Hungarian troops from the land of his fathers, he victoriously came to the South Slavic country, where the people greeted him as their saviour. The Hungarians fled through Zagreb, Požega, Vukovar, and behind Vukovar they swam across the Danube and returned gloomily before their King Arpad. Consequently, Tomislav joined all the flat land to his country, so that it extended from the Drava to the Danube. The Slavic Croatians cheerfully and with gratitude adhered to the blood of their blood, to their saviour. The South Slavic country became the Banate of Croatia. Under Prince Tomislav, the land was governed by a South Slav Ban, whose seat was in the ancient town of Sisak, in that town whose former Princes were Ljudevit, Ratimir, Mutimir and Braslav. In that way, Prince Tomislav united the South Slav country with White Croatia and fulfilled that for which Ljudevit and Borna had shed so much brotherly blood a hundred years earlier. The fame of Tomislav spread everywhere where the Croatian heart and language could be found. The people gathered like a flock under his flag, and thus Tomislav was able to create an army, the kind of which was rare in Europe. . . It is not surprising that the rulers of the neighbouring Croatian and Serbian regions competed for his affection and, what is more, that some of the Princes of Red Croatia fled under his aegis. In particular, Mihajlo Višević, the proud prince of the land of Hum, was close to recognising Tomislav as his master” (p. 99). Without proof, Klaić says what part of Slavonia Tomislav penetrated into, arbitrarily proclaiming the Slavonians as Croatians, although he states at the beginning of the book that only a negligible number of Croatians settled in the Slavonian land and blended with the original Slavic settlers. Again, he mentions the princes of some Red Croatia, which even its supposed population has never heard of; and for serious historical science, it has never been disputable that Mihailo Višević was a Serbian ruler, whose family line claims descent as early as from the period of the original Serbian homeland, from the time before the settlement.

According to Klaić, in order to win over Tomislav as an ally against the Bulgarians, the Byzantine Emperor entrusted him with the protection of the Dalmatian towns, obliging them to pay a tribute to the Croatian ruler, to whom he even gave the title of his consul. Tomislav used that in order to win over the Dalmatian bishops to join the Latin Church and subject them to the Pope. “Following his advice and persuasion, the entire Dalmatia distanced itself from the Constantinople Patriarch and joined Rome again” (p. 101). In 925, Tomislav defeated the army of the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon, who had tried to conquer Croatia. “Having defeated the Bulgarians, Prince Tomislav united all the big and small Croatian and Serbian lands that existed into one big country, which included all the Croatian and Serbian people and all the Latin towns along the sea coast (Dalmatia). . . Immediately after the victory over the Bulgarians, all the Croatian people were summoned to gather at Duvanjsko Polje, where there was going to be a great council (assembly). The bans and župans, the envoys of the Roman Pope, the ruler of

Split with his regional leaders, and the Red Croatian and Serbian grand zhupans, who had recently recognised Tomislav as their head ruler, were to come. Prince Tomislav was to be crowned the King of all the Croats and many other affairs were to be settled” (p. 104). Within the Croatia of Tomislav, there were no Serbian lands, so this is Klaić’s most exposed lie. As for the supposed council at Duvanjsko Polje, there are no historical traces; but that does not prevent Klaić from describing it very imaginatively and in great detail. He even invented a song that was supposedly sung during the coronation. Klaić “knows” what kind of clothes and equipment the people had at that imaginary celebration, what was said by who; but regarding Tomislav, “. . . we do not know how and where he died, or where the mortal remains of the founder of the Croatian country are buried” (p. 107).

### **f) The Fierce Fight over the Language of the Divine Service**

The annexation of the Dalmatian Latin towns to Croatia sparked a fierce fight between the Latin and the Slavic priests over the language of the divine service. The Latin bishops even demanded that the Croatian diocese of Nin should be abolished, considering its founding illegal, and that the entire Croatia should be ecclesiastically subordinated to the Split Archbishop. The Croatian Bishop Gregory and his *glagoljaši*<sup>51</sup> priests decisively opposed this. As Klaić states, for this reason, Tomislav summoned a church council in Split in the year of his coronation, in order to settle all the issues. It is interesting to mention here another example of Klaić’s and Macan’s (although he was a bit more moderate) infinite megalomania. Klaić writes that in 925 “. . . the ecclesiastic-Croatian districts of the Neretva, Zachlunia, Travunja and Duklja (Doclea) came under the aegis of King Tomislav, as well as some of the Serbian districts that would later be ecclesiastically subordinated to the Constantinople Patriarch. Tomislav did not want those provinces to stand by the Eastern Church any more, but by the Roman Church. In particular, he had to decide whether the old dioceses of those districts of Stona, Dubrovnik and Kotor – would be re-subordinated to the head of Split as they used to be, or whether to turn one of them into an archdiocese” (p. 109). Trpimir Macan corrects him in some places, so in the footnote below the text, he indicates that, “Klaić’s data on the reach of Croatia, at least its supreme rule on such a big area, were not founded in sources. Of the east regions, Croatia included Bosnia and the district of the Nerenta; and Zachlunia was tightly connected to it” (p. 109). There is not a single piece of historical evidence that Bosnia and the district of the Nerenta have ever been a part of the Croatian state, and as for Zachlunia it could have been tightly connected to Croatia only by seawater or by the surf of big waves.

The Church council in Split actually did take place in 925, but from the letters addressed to him by Pope John X it is clear that it referred to the Slavic land, and not only the Croatian one, so Tomislav and Mihailo are exclusively referred to as the King of the Croats and the most illustrious Prince of the people of Hum, respectively. On that occasion, the Pope addressed all Slavs, saying that their language was barbaric and that the divine service had to be held in the Latin. Among other things, the council decided that the Croatian diocese of Nin was to be subordinated to the Split archdiocese, to which Bishop Gregory of Nin energetically opposed. A two-year debate ensued in

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<sup>51</sup> priests who use the Glagolitic missal (the liturgical book)

Rome, but the Pope tended to evade declaring himself decidedly on the issue, so he summoned a smaller council regarding Croatia and Dalmatia in Split, unlike the former one that involved all the Slavic countries. At the council in 927, it was decided to abolish the diocese of Nin. The new Pope, Leo VI, confirmed the decision by subjecting the entire Croatia to the Split archdiocese and placing Gregory as the Bishop of Skradin. Tomislav, who had supported the diocese of Nin as the Croatian national church, backed down on it after the Pope's decision, and Gregory of Nin did not fight for preserving the Slavic language as the language of the divine service, but only for the preservation of the diocese of Nin, in which he did not have support. Concerning this, Macan mentions the following: "During the national fights in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Gregory of Nin was conceived as the fighter against the efforts of the Latin clergy to suppress the divine service using the Glagolitic script. However, among the council's documents, his opposition regarding the issue is not mentioned anywhere. His protest referred only to the matter of the primacy of the Split archdiocese and the survival of the diocese of Nin" (p. 115).

**Comment [Z8]:** Translator's note. In the original text, this is written as the 19<sup>th</sup> century (XIX), but it seems like a mistake, as the period being discussed addressed is the tenth century. It may be a mistake by the author, by a mistake during formatting, etc.

### **A. The Forging of Biographies of the Croatian Gentry with the Aim of Proving the Unity and State-Legal Continuity of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia**

Eating his own words regarding Bosnia, Klaić writes that having succeeded Tomislav around 930, Krešimir kept his father's state strong and mighty, but we now realise that Bosnia was not a part of Croatia. As for Krešimir, ". . . the perfidious ban of Bosnian caused him the most grief, taking three counties along the Croatian-Bosnia border, namely Uskoplje (Skoplje), Luna (Dnoluka) and Pliva. The young Krešimir made war on the ban, defeating him somewhere in Vrbas, and finally forced him to leave his banate and escape to Hungary" (p. 116). Of course, Klaić does not know when that happened or the name of the ban. Otherwise, Krešimir was succeeded by his son Miroslav, a minor, in 945, who Regent Pribina killed four years later, stealing his crown. Croatia was crumbling apart, which suited Grand Zhupan Časlav. "Having resumed rule as the grand zhupan in Raša and other districts, he now joined the banate of Bosnia, and afterwards, the Church-Croatian districts and provinces who preferred to be subjected to the restorer of the Serbian glory rather than to the ban a murder. In the end, the unfortunate Ban Pribina was only left with White Croatia, with the South Slavic country (Slovinska zemlja)" (p. 117). Around 970, Krešimir's younger son, Držislav, defeated Pribina and proclaimed himself King. He waged war against the Venetians, on whose side was his brother Svetoslav, nicknamed Suronja. In 988, the Venetians ruled the entire Adriatic coast, which had belonged to the Croatians until that point. Still, Držislav succeeded in re-conquering Biograd, and also Split two years later, and then he died. He was succeeded by Krešimir II who took his brother Gojslav as his co-ruler. He re-conquered all the Dalmatian towns and islands. The Venetians conquered some of the islands again in 1018. The next year, Krešimir II recognised the supreme rule of Basil II, the Byzantine Emperor.

Krešimir II was succeeded by Stjepan, the son of Svetoslav Suronja, in 1035. The next year, Byzantium regained the entire Croatian-Dalmatian coastal area under its rule. After a few years, Emperor Constantine Monomakh gave the Latin Dalmatian towns to Stjepan, the Croatian King, through an agreement. In 1044, the Venetians began a war against the Croatians, and after six years, they seized Zadar. In 1058, Stjepan was

succeeded by his son Petar Krešimir IV. It is interesting that Macan impugns many of these data of Klaić's regarding the dynasties, but that is of no great importance for us. Further, Klaić writes that Stjepan was succeeded by his son Petar Krešimir in 1058, and that Croatia was much smaller than at the time of Tomislav. "The Red Croatian districts had been separated from White Croatia since the uprising of Ban Pribina for the whole century, and only recently (1042) did Stjepan Vojislav unite Duklja (Doclea), Travunja and the district of Hum into one independent state, that was later named the Kingdom of Doclea. The banate of Bosnia had been independent for a long time as well, while the banate of Srem still remained a Byzantine province after the sad death of the unfortunate Ban Sermon. So, Petar Krešimir ruled only the banates of White Croatia and Slovinia in the beginning, and some of the towns of the Latin Dalmatia, especially Split and Trogir, recognised his rule" (p. 129).

Petar Krešimir primarily tried to seize all the other Latin towns from the Venetians, ". . . so that the Croatian state would again encompass the entire coastal area from Istria to the Cetina River" (p. 130). Having achieved that and having resumed his reign over the coast to the mouth of the Cetina River, he added the title of King of Dalmatia to his title of King of Croatia. His unofficial capital was Biograd, by the sea. Without any historiographical foothold, Klaić insists that the South Slavic country, from the period of Tomislav's reign to that of Petar Krešimir, was a part of Croatia, and he calls its ban the king of Croatia. However, the South Slavic (Slovinian) bans had hereditary titles and such a strong international reputation that, for example, the Slovinian Ban Zvonimir married Jelena, the daughter of Hungarian King Béla, in 1065.

Klaić ascribes to Petar Krešimir the coercive annexation of the principedom of Nerenta, which stretched to the Neretva River and which was independent until then, as well as the islands Brač, Hvar and Vis, and, he supposes, Korčula too. Further on, ". . . his rule extended from the Drava to the Neretva, from the sea in the east to Vrbas and maybe to the Drina" (p. 135). Maybe to the Drina, and maybe to the Volga – it does not cost Klaić anything to keep guessing! Since Petar Krešimir did not have a male heir, Klaić claims that in 1075, the new king became Slavac Svačić, who failed to stabilise his power, and soon, the Normans from southern Italy defeated him and carried him off to slavery, from which he never returned. Macan notices that it was not Slavac, but Petar Krešimir IV who paid ransom for himself to the Normans by handing over a great number of the Dalmatian towns to them. In the same year, 1075, Dmitar Zvonimir became King, whom the Pope crowned through the mediation of an envoy. Answering the call of Pope Gregory VII, Dmitar Zvonimir, King of Croatia and Dalmatia; and Hungarian King Ladislaus intervened with their armies in Carinthia (Koruška) against the German King and Emperor Henrik IV in 1082. The Croats were defeated by Henrik's Duke Leopold. However, Macan states that the data on that war are a historiographical forgery and that in that year, Dmitar Zvonimir, on the Norman's side, intervened in the war against Byzantium and its ally at the time, Venice. Dmitar Zvonimir died in 1089. "However, the later version of the story tells that Zvonimir did not die a natural death, but that the South Slavs killed him, namely the citizens of the South Slav (Slovinian) banate, where he had ruled as ban at the time of Krešimir" (p. 144). At one time, Tomašić wrote that Zvonimir had cursed the Croats at his death to never have a ruler of their own nationality, for having treacherously killed him. Macan claims that Zvonimir died a natural death, though there are no more reliable historical sources that could testify to the way he died.

In 1079, Stjepan II, elected by Petar Krešimir, ascended the royal throne. Klaić previously wrote that Slavac Svačić had snatched his crown. He died after two years. A great turmoil ensued in the country due to the lack of an heir to the throne. During fights over the crown by a few rivals, Petar Svačić seized the throne. Zvonimir's widow, Helen the Beautiful, turned to her brother, Hungarian King Ladislaus, for help. As early as 1091, Ladislaus conquered the banate of Slovinia, placing it under rule of his nephew Almosh, the son of Béla. In 1094, he formed the Slovinian diocese with the seat in Zagreb, considering the fact that Sisak, as the former Slovinian capital, had been demolished. A Czech, Duk was placed as Bishop, and thus Zagreb appeared in history. Klaić writes that after Ladislaus's death in 1095, the Croats succeeded in re-conquering the Slovinian banate, but at the same time, they lost control over the Latin Dalmatia, and in 1097, it was annexed to the Venice. Klaić states that in 1102, Hungarian King Coloman sent an envoy to the Croatian aristocrats with the proposition of clinching an agreement on his ascension to the Croatian royal throne. Afterwards, the Croatian gentry summoned the nation to a council, which decided that Petar Svačić should renounce the throne. Petar Svačić supposedly did not agree to this, confronted them at Gvozd, and was killed. Trpimir Macan notices that those data are greatly obsolete, because Coloman defeated the Croatian army as early as 1097 at the mountain Gvozd, and Petar Svačić was killed on that occasion. In 1102, he supposedly clinched a deal *Pacta Conventa* with the Croatian gentry, according to which, as Macan states further on, "Croatia was tied to Hungary through the royal figure, but it still preserved its state-legal independence, expressed by the separate coronation of the Croatian King; and Croatia had its own council, its own Ban or Herzog as the royal envoy, its own tax, currency and army" (p. 152).

### 1. The Invention of "Red Croatia"

Giving a summary of the creation and development of the Croatian state at the time of the later rules, Klaić again lays claim on Duklja or Zeta, Travunija, Zachlunia, Neretva, the South Slavic country (Sloviniska Zemlja) and Srem, and then states, ". . . as early as the middle the of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the coastal regions from the Neretva to the Bojana rivers separated from it and joined Serbia, so that in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a unique country was created, familiarly known under the name Red Croatia. In the beginning, it ruled the Serbian regions, but later, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it was subjected to the Serbian state, and separated itself from White Croatia once and for all" (p. 155). There is absolutely no evidence that something called "Red Croatia" existed at any time or anywhere, and it could not have existed particularly in the 11<sup>th</sup> century as a unique country in the coastal areas between the Neretva and the Bojana rivers. There, at that time, existed the state of Serbia under Stefan Vojislav, who ruled from 1031 to 1051.

In the following years, upon conquering Croatia, Coloman seized all the other Dalmatian towns and islands. His son and heir from 1116, Stjepan II, started to rapidly abolish the privileges that Coloman had been giving to towns with special charters. The dissatisfaction of the Latin population encouraged the Venetians to begin a war and re-conquer that which the Hungarians had perfidiously taken from them. In the beginning, they successfully seized all the towns, but the Hungarians, together with the Croats, re-conquered them in 1117. In 1125, the Venetians again seized this coastal area to the north of Split. Only Biograd remained under Hungarian rule, but soon the Venetians



razed it to the ground. The outcome of those fights would cause Zadar and the more northern islands to remain firmly under Venetian rule, and Split and Trogir with the more southern islands under Hungarian rule. The situation remained unchanged for years, and Klaić prattles on about the general Hungarian history and the clashes between the dynasties in a great number of pages, though the Croats had almost no role in that. Béla, the Hungarian King, seized Bosnia under his rule in 1135, for which Klaić says that it is “a former Croatian district”, and continues: “It is known that, before the royal Croatian family died, Bosnia had come under the rule of Bodin, King of Doclea (Duklja), who posted his envoy, Prince Stjepan, in his acquired banate. Now, all of a sudden, we find Bosnia under the rule of King Béla the Blind” (p. 181-182). Otherwise, starting from 1138, the Hungarian rulers added to their royal title that they were the kings of Rama, by which they had designated Bosnia.

Since Béla the Blind was succeeded by his minor son Géza in 1141, the country was ruled by Belus, the vice-regent, and for eighteen years he was its absolute ruler. Klaić writes that Belus had been primarily a Herzog, “. . . and later changed the titles of the highest honour in Hungary and Croatia: at one point he was Ban of Croatia, at another, the Palatine of Hungary, and sometimes both. We know little about the origin of this extraordinary man. Kinnamos, the Greek historian, writes that he originated from Dalmatia in a broader sense, so we can conclude that he was either a Croatian or a Serbian. Belus also had the daughter of the Serbian Grand Zhupan Béla Uroš as his wife, namely the sister of Queen Helen, so according to that, he was an uncle to young King Géza. Now we realise how a Croatian could have become the key man in the whole rule” (p. 183). Trpimir Macan notices this: “Belosh, Bjelosh, Bjelush was the son of Uroš I, Zhupan of Raška, the brother of Helen, Béla’s wife, and the uncle of Géza II. Accordingly, he was a Serbian” (p. 183). In the Byzantine-Hungarian war of 1165, Byzantium conquered the entire Dalmatian coast, except the Venetian lands, and directly after that, Croatia fell into Byzantine hands. When Stephen III, the Hungarian King, collected himself, he succeeded in defeating the Byzantine regent in Split. “After the defeat, the entire Croatia and, together with it probably Bosnia, separated from the Byzantine Empire” (p. 195). Still, the Hungarians restored their control over Croatia and Dalmatia. In 1167, Byzantium began its reign again, and Croatia and Dalmatia were under its rule for the following thirteen years. So were Bosnia, Srem and Slavonia, as well. The Srem of the time included Bačka too.

From this period, there is an interesting event that took place in Nerenta, when Arnerije, the Archbishop of Split, whom the Pope had installed in 1175, was killed. He confronted the famous Kačić family from Nerenta, whom Klaić unjustifiably calls Croatian, and claims that the tribe of Kačić ruled “. . . in the county of Poljička, a part of Krajina and the town of Omiš at the mouth of the Cetina river” (p. 199). This was a border area, and Omiš was always to the south of the mouth of the Cetina, as the traditionally border river that separated the Serbians from the Croats. “What caused the dissension were some areas, namely the village of Srinjane at the foot of the mountain Mosora, on which the Kačić clan had laid their claim on the one hand, and on the other, Archbishop Arnerije claimed it for his own diocese” (p. 199). When, at the beginning of August 1180, Arnerije wanted to seize the village Srinjane, “. . . Prince Nikola Kačić met him there, together with his brothers, cousins and the whole clan. Kačić surrounded the Archbishop with his people and all started to yell at him: ‘What do you think you are doing, you evil leader? What are you plotting against us? If you do not

disappear immediately, you can be sure that this will be the last day of your life'. But, that did not frighten Arnerije, who replied defiantly: 'This land is not yours, but the Church's. You snatched it by force'. This caused a real uproar; Kačić and his tribe reached for stones and threw them at the Archbishop until they covered him with stones. While the Kačić family was throwing stones, both the bailiffs and the other men who had come with the Archbishop fled towards Split to tell the citizens about this misfortune. Astounded, the citizens took weapons, dashed towards the mountain of Mutogras (*Monte Grasso, Debelo brdo*), some of them by sea, some by land, where the misfortune had occurred. Afterwards, the Kačić family escaped and the people from Split cleared away the stones and took the dead body of their Archbishop to Split, where they buried him solemnly. Afterwards, they built a little church at the same place where the Archbishop had died, and it still stands there today" (p. 200).

### **a) Lamentation over the Nonexistent Dual Titles in Hungary**

After the death of the powerful Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus in 1180, "... the Serbian Grand Zhupan Stefan Nemanja immediately proclaimed himself independent, no longer accepting the Byzantine supreme rule. Nemanja's nephew Miroslav, Prince of Hum, became so violent that he began to agitate Croatia and Dalmatia. As for Bosnia, Ban Kulin appeared on its stage immediately in 1180, whose sister was married to the Prince of Hum. All those rulers, liberated from the fear of mighty Manuel, endeavoured to extend their power and their lands" (p. 202). In those circumstances, Béla III, the Hungarian King, also "... had to think quickly so that the Serbian and the Bosnian rulers would not go ahead of him and nestle in the Croatian lands. For this reason, probably as early as 1180, but certainly by 1181, he used all his force to return the separated Croatia, with Dalmatia and Srem, under his rule. It was a complete success, because everywhere, the population gladly returned under the flag of their King; thus he recovered the lands of the Croatian kingdom without shedding blood" (p. 202-203). Béla even succeeded in seizing Zadar from the Venetians, and Klaić says that his greatest merit was that "... he had reunited the entire Croatian kingdom under his sceptre, and that he had his son Emerik crowned King of Croatia and Dalmatia, which no other heir of Coloman's, as far as it is known, had ever done" (p. 209).

In the quibbles between the Hungarians and the Venetians, the Princes of Krk, the Frankopans, distinguished themselves, being at one moment on the one side, at the other moment on the other, and later their family would play the most significant role in Croatian history. As for Emerik, his father, Béla III crowned him while he was still alive, because he was afraid that, Emerik having married for the second time with the French Princess Margaret, somebody could deny him his right as heir to the crown when his father died. There is not any evidence that Emerick was actually crowned as the Croatian King. He was crowned the Hungarian King and his father's co-ruler. Otherwise, Klaić's blathering about the Hungarian-Croatian rulers seems very sad. They were all the Hungarian rulers, and Croatia had no individuality as a part of the Hungarian country.

Ascending to the throne in 1196, King Emerik gave up his earlier friendly policy towards the Serbians and the Bulgarians, and made intensive attempts at subjecting them, having been influenced by the Roman Pope. "The Roman Popes used all their

force to unite the entire world under the glory of their sun, to exterminate the heterodoxies, and then to take the sectarians (schismatics) under the wing of their Church. In that sense, they were particularly interested in the Balkans Peninsula, in the Serbians and the Bulgarians, who belonged to the Eastern Church. They wanted to take the sectarians under the wing of the Catholic Church, and alongside with that, they were active in exterminating the heterodox Bogomils and Patarenes, who had been nested throughout the entire peninsula, and especially in the banate of Bosnia. Since their spiritual power was not enough, they needed the help of the secular sword as well. The most eager and the most reliable helpers to them were the Hungarian-Croatian kings, the loyal adherents to Rome, who, regardless of this, interfered in the Balkan affairs due to political motives. Consequently, it happened that, since the time of King Emerik, there existed a sort of alliance between the Roman palace and the Hungarian-Croatian rulers, directed against the political and religious freedom of the Balkan nations” (p. 211). However, in 1197, a civil war between the brothers Emerik and Andrew broke out, in which the main battles took place in the South Slavic country (Slovenska zemlja). Croatia and Dalmatia deferred to Andrew in 1198, when he conquered the South Slavic country. After an unsuccessful attempt of settling the disputes, the Pope excommunicated Andrew from the Church in the same year, and in the next year, Emerik won, so after a while he reconciled with his brother and entrusted him with the governance of Croatia and Dalmatia once again. After a renewed dispute, Emerik imprisoned Andrew.

Considering the fact that in 1202, Emerik proclaimed himself King of Serbia as well, Klaić writes that: “. . . that title belonged to the Hungarian-Croatian rulers for the following centuries as the sign of their supreme governance over Serbia, though they did not actually use it in practice” (p. 218). Since the Serbian lands recognised the supreme rule of the Hungarian King on several occasions, following the example of the Croatian historiographers, the Serbians could have called the Hungarian Kings the “Hungarian-Serbian Kings”, as many of those kings were of considerable Serbian blood, and not Croatian. Similarly, Emerik might have been called the Hungarian-Croatian-Serbian King. Nevertheless, he was only the Hungarian King, and the Croatia of the time was a part of the Hungarian territory. In the same year, when Emerik was penetrating into Serbia, the Crusaders and the Venetians conquered Zadar, plundering it thoroughly and tearing down its fortification. After Emerik’s death, Andrew seized the throne in 1205 and started an unsuccessful Crusade campaign; and in 1220, a new civil war broke out between Andrew and his son Béla, who was Herzog and Governor of Croatia and Dalmatia – Hungarian provinces. His father had finalised his coronation while he was still a baby in order to secure that he would be the heir to the throne. On the occasion of the reconciliation between the gentry and the Church high officials at the assembly, Andrew issued the Gold Bull in 1222, which primarily regulated the relations between the ruler and the gentry. According to the feudal custom of that period, he named his full title “by God’s grace” King of Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, Rama, Serbia, Halič and Vladimirska.

When upon the death of Andrew II, his son Béla IV ascended the Hungarian throne in 1235, and Béla’s brother Coloman became the new Herzog of Croatia and Dalmatia. Coloman was remembered by a bloody Crusade that he waged at the Pope’s order against Bosnia and Hum from 1234 to 1273, while his coastal towns severely clashed with the people from Omiš, the Kačić’s, the pirates from Nerenta, but the Bogomils as

well. In 1241, the Mongols catastrophically defeated the Hungarian army and seized all its territories on the left side of the Danube. Afterwards, they spread across the entire South Slavic country (Slovinska zemlja), conquering Zagreb and penetrating into Croatia. Béla IV found refuge in Trogir, and the Mongols, who killed everyone in their path, appeared below the ramparts of Split, and after they unsuccessfully besieged Klis and suffered a great defeat by the sea at Raba, they withdrew after one more defeat at the foot of the Velebit mountains. Macan emphasises that the data on those two battles are historiographical forgeries, stating that the Mongols were defeated at Šibenik. In 1243, the Venetians seized Zadar again and populated it with their own people, because the original settlers had abandoned it and settled in Nin.

In 1243 and 1244, the towns of Split and Trogir waged wars against each other twice. All the neighbouring Croatian noblemen aligned with Trogir, and the endangered people of Split chose Mateja Ninoslav, the Bosnian ban, as their Prince, who helped them with his large army. Andrew, Prince of Hum, and the people from Poljica with the Kačić family, aligned with Split. Upon that, Béla IV dispatched Herzog Dionysius to Split and Poljica, and he himself conducted a war campaign against Bosnia. After a bloody siege, the people from Split capitulated, and there is no historical testimony of the war affairs in Bosnia. Here it is important that Trpimir Macan draws attention to the fact that, after the invasion of the Tatars, Béla IV regulated that the Croatian kingdom of the time should be governed in the following way: “A herzog (commander) of royal blood shall govern the Kingdom, and two bans shall be subjected to him one Croatian-Dalmatian, and the other South Slav (Slovinian). If there is not a royal herzog, his governance shall be in the hands of the Slovinian ban as the ban of the entire South Slavic country (Slovinska zemlja), and the Croatian-Dalmatian ban shall be subjected to him and shall be called the maritime ban accordingly” (p. 267). However – as even Klaić mentions in a few places – among the numerous original charters, a herzog of the Croatian Kingdom is not mentioned anywhere, but rather “the herzog of the entire Slavonia” (p. 278)..

## **b) The Inclusion of Slavonia in Croatia without Historical Evidence**

Henrik Gisingovac, Ban of the entire Slavonia, organised a rebellion of the gentry against Ladislaus IV the Cuman, the Hungarian King, and proclaimed his younger brother Andrew the new ruler. Still, the rebellion was crushed. When Joachim Pektar became ban of the entire Slavonia, bloody clashes between his supporters and his opponents broke out in 1276 and 1277. His supporters were concentrated in the South Slavic country (Slovinska zemlja), and his opponents in Croatia. From the South Slavic country, he went south with his army in order to “conquer the barbarian Croatian people” (p. 286), but he died during that campaign. The new ban of the entire Slavonia became Henrik Gisingovac, Jr. at the end of 1277, and Prince Pavle I Šubić became the maritime-Croatian ban of Bribir. Otherwise, starting from 1275, the herzog of “the entire Slavonia, Dalmatia and Croatia” (p. 286) was Hungarian Prince Andrew.

It is interesting that Croatia and Slavonia were struck by a civil war in 1277, in which many noblemen were fighting against each other and creating general chaos. The blood shed was so unbearable that the entire Slavonia was punished with an ecclesiastical interdict in 1281, since the Zagreb diocese had also been involved in the confrontations. The general atmosphere did not calm down until 1284. In 1291 as well, the Croatian and Slavonian gentry divided and had conflicts against each other, because some of them

supported Andrew III the Venetian, the then-Hungarian King, and a part of them supported the claimant to the Hungarian throne, Carlo Martel, Prince of Naples. The Pope supported the claimant, thus crowning him a year later. Because of that, the Dalmatian, Croatian and Zagreb Slavonian bans generally supported him. Moreover, the Slavonian noble family of Gisingovac and the Šubić Princes of Bribir stuck by him too. Carlo Martel had good chances to actually seize the Hungarian throne, but in 1295, he caught the plague and died. Not long after that, the Zagreb Bishop Ivan died as well, so King Andrew III soon positioned the loyal Mihail from Erdelj (Transylvania) in his place, who immediately began the persecution of the King's opponents. The King appointed his uncle Albertin Morosin Herzog of the entire Slavonia and seized many lands from the Gisingovac family. He got the support of the noble family Babonić, so he stabilised his rule quite firmly.

Even the Pope of the time, Boniface VIII, was not passive. In 1297, he proclaimed Carl Robert, the son of Carl Martel, Hungarian King, thus he immediately engaged the bishops and priests to work on the realisation of his will, deposing the ones who did not obey. Since the noble group that supported him got stronger, Carlo Robert came to Split in 1300, where Archbishop Petar formally greeted him. Afterwards, Ban Pavle Šubić escorted him from Croatia to Slavonia, after having taken him to Zagreb, where Archbishop Gregory of Ostrogon had anointed and crowned him Hungarian King. In January 1301, King Andrew died, so afterwards, all over Slavonia, Carl Robert “. . . was enthusiastically greeted and named King by the aristocrats, noblemen and people” (p. 313). With Andrew's death, the Hungarian Dynasty of the Arpads died out. Summarising their hundred-year-old rule over the Croats as well, Klaić again interprets the historical facts in a strained way, writing in the language of his wishes, not actual facts. In that regard, although Croatia had no independence or autonomy whatsoever, he concludes, “Considering the Croatian state a heritage of their family, the Arpads did not include it to the mother country Hungary. King Ladislaus wanted to create a *sekundogenitura*, placing his nephew Almoš King in the occupied part of Croatia, so that his family line would rule that kingdom independently from the main family line. Still, his heir Coloman gave up on that thought, crowning himself with the Croatian royal crown. All the descendants of the Arpads considered Croatia with Dalmatia a unique kingdom, although it was no longer mentioned that any one of them would individually crown themselves with the Croatian crown. Still, there were data according to which we could guess that some of Coloman's heirs in the 12<sup>th</sup> century themselves married, or had their sons married, to Croatian royalty” (p. 315). We could “guess”!

The fact that Croatia and Slavonia never had united church organisations testifies that there was never a tight connection between them. While the entire Croatia was subordinated to the Croatian-Dalmatian Archdiocese in Split, the Zagreb Diocese, which encompassed the entire Slavonia, was subordinated to the Hungarian Archdiocese in Kalocsa. As for Dalmatia, it encompassed “. . . only the coastal municipalities Zadar, Trogir and Split at first, then afterwards, the towns of Corfu, Rab, Pag and Osor on the islands. However, they started to include the southern islands Brač, Hvar and Kočula as parts of Dalmatia, and even some formerly Croatian ones in the littoral area, like Šibenik and Nin, because they were completely organised according to the model of the Dalmatian towns” (p. 315). Klaić thinks that the fact of the ecclesiastical separation of Slavonia from Croatia was “. . . the cause of a soon and administrative separation from

Croatia, and the reason for it to be considered a unique district (territory) as well. First, it was called a banate or duchy, and later even a kingdom . . . while the foreigners (especially the Roman Popes and the rulers of Naples) included it within Hungary” (p. 316). The essential problem is that Klaić has no evidence that Slavonia was ever an administrative part of Croatia. It is important that Klaić himself admits that the Croatian bans were only Hungarian regents, and not rulers whatsoever. At one time, even Belus, undoubtedly a Serbian, was a ban. The Slavonian ban had the right to mint his own coins, *banovacs*, while the Croatian-Dalmatia ban did not. The Hungarian King reorganised the counties and personally appointed zhupans. The towns in Slavonia were organised according to the German model, while in Croatia, especially in the littoral area, they were organised according to the Latin model.

### c) The Intrigues and Mutinies in the First Half of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century

The ascension of Carl Robert to the Hungarian throne in 1301 considerably strengthened Pavle I Šubić, the Croatian-Maritime Ban, and made him the untouchable ruler of Croatia and Dalmatia. Klaić claims that Bosnia was subordinate to him as well; only the Frankopan Princes opposed him in the north, since Dujam Frankopan had contributed to the instalment of Carl Robert, and thus earned his gratitude. Klaić supposes that the bloody confrontations between the Šubić and the Frankopan family sporadically broke out at the time, due to their constant envy and fights for power. The Babonić Princes dominated Slavonia, whose power spread even to Kranjska (Carniola). In eastern Slavonia, the Gorjanski Princes, the lords of Đakovo and Požega, were gradually becoming stronger. Ladislaus IV the Cuman, the Hungarian King, handed the governance of Mačva, Bosnia, Srem, Belgrade and Braničevo over to Stefan Dragutin, the former Serbian King, which were at the time under the Hungarian supreme rule. Since Dragutin and his son Vladislav firmly supported Carl Martel, on 19 August 1292, Carl II, King of Naples, issued a charter to Vladislav as a sign of gratitude, by which “. . . he handed over to him and to his heirs the duchy of Slavonia for all times (only if they remained loyal to the King), except the land of Ban Radoslav (Babonić) and his brothers; also, the lands within the district in the possession of Prince Ivan of Krk, the Princes of Modruš and Vinodol and their brother, as well as of Prince Dujam, the nephew of the mentioned Prince Ivan” (Book II, p. 14).

Even after 1301, the Dalmatian towns, the Gisingovac Princes of Slavonia and the Zagreb Bishop Mihajlo were against King Carl Robert. The estates of the Gisingovac family were mainly to the north of the Drava, except Koprivnica and some other estate in the county of Križevac. The Hungarian and Erdelj (Transylvanian) aristocrats, who had their own claimant to the throne, were opponents of the new King as well. In 1302, a civil war broke out in the interior of Hungary and Slavonia, and the next year, the Pope judged in favour of Carl Robert, the son of Naples Queen Maria, who was the daughter of Hungarian King Stjepan V and the sister of Ladislaus the Cuman. It was as if the Pope’s verdict added even more fuel to the fight, in which Slavonia suffered the greatest destruction some of its districts were completely devastated. When Većeslav, the Czech Prince, gave up the fight for the Hungarian throne, Bavarian Duke Oton appeared as a new claimant. In 1305, he was crowned in Stolni Biograd as well, and a new civil war broke out. Carl Robert did not secure himself on the throne until 1307. However, the next year, Stefan Dragutin tried to seize the Hungarian crown with the help of a few

Hungarian aristocrats, which caused new clashes. Only with the mediation of the papal legate did the Hungarian gentry calm down, thus Carl Robert was crowned again in Buda in 1309.

The Croatians were on the sideline of all these conflicts, in which the Slavonians had suffered the most; and when the conflicts ended, the King appointed Stjepan Babonić as Ban of the entire Slavonia. Pavle I Šubić had tried to install his brother Mladen I as the Bosnian ban, but the Bogomils killed him in 1304. Afterwards, Pavle tried to install his son Mladen II, but the fierce riots in Bosnia continued. Using the weakness of the Venetians due to their war with Pope Clement V, in 1311, Pavle Šubić seized Zadar and brought it under the Hungarian crown once again. His son Mladen II, whom he had previously installed as the Bosnian ban, was elected Prince of Zadar. The next year, after his father's death, he became the Croatian-maritime ban and continued to wage war with the Venetians. When in 1319 Carl Robert started a war against Serbia, Mladen II Šubić sent an army as a help from the west, for which Klaić says that it suffered “. . . a lot of damages from the sons of Branivoj” (p. 38). Pope John XXII was thrilled when Carl seized Mačva, so he called the other Catholic rulers to join his fight against the Serbian schismatics. Carl Robert joined the counties of Srem, Vukovar and Bodroš to the banate of Mačva, which he had annexed to Hungary again after almost 40 years, and posted Pavle Gorjanski as Ban in 1320. Otherwise, Mladen II failed in keeping Zadar, so that most important Dalmatian town was once again under the Venetian rule as early as 1313. The next year, Mladen and his brothers proclaimed themselves Venetian citizens too. The local Croatian aristocrats began putting on airs even more, while Stjepan Kotromanić, the Bosnian Ban and his aristocrats strongly opposed Mladen. Although the Serbians did not have success against the main part of the Hungarian army, it is obvious from Klaić's text that they defeated the troop of Mladen II Šubić. “It seems that Ban Mladen suffered adversity on this occasion too. In June 1319, he reconciled with Uroš Milutin, the Serbian King, to whom he had to give hostages, among them his own brother. The Serbian King then handed over those hostages to the Dalmatians, who would keep them in their town until the Ban fulfilled all the promises he had made. Namely, the Ban had given his word that he would return something to the King, which is not recorded” (p. 43). The hostage was Mladen's brother Gregory.

Considering that Mladen “. . . came out of the fight with the Serbian King weaker than he had been before” (p. 44), the Croatian Princes and the Dalmatian towns, which had been subordinated to him until then, started to plot conspiracies to overthrow and execute him. Mladen executed a few conspirators, still the Venetians came to the rescue of Šibenik and protected it from the fuming Ban. In 1321, Trogir separated as well, asking the Venetians for help. In 1322, Mladen summoned a council of the Croatian aristocrats, but they refused to support him and asked the King to help them in the fight with the Ban. Ivan Babonić, the Slavonian Ban, and Stjepan Kotromanić, the Bosnian Ban, took actions against him. His own brother Pavle II also betrayed him, having entered into an alliance with the Frankopans and the people of Trogir. The Hungarian King arrived in Knin as well, so he captured Mladen and took him to Zagreb, where every trace of him was lost. Now, the King proclaimed Ivan Babonić Ban of the entire Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia, but the Croatian gentry did not recognise him. In 1323, the King ordered Nikola Omodejev, the Slavonian Ban, and Stjepan Kotromanić, the Bosnian Ban, to subdue the rebel Croatian Princes, having previously deposed Ivan Babonić, who had proved himself incompetent of that position. When the new ban

arrived, the situation in Croatia slightly calmed down, but as soon as he returned to Slavonia, new confrontations between the Croatian gentry broke out again, who had divided into two camps, led by Mladen's brother Juraj II and Duke Nelipić. Juraj was defeated, but the Bosnian Ban continued with the fighting in order to revenge him. In 1324, Mikac Mihaljević, who was of Ukrainian nationality from north-eastern Hungary" (p. 57), was appointed as the Slavonian Ban. The King gave him the broad authorisation to bring peace among the Slavonian noblemen, and then sent him to Croatia and Dalmatia.

Accordingly, the Šubić family and the Frankopans took Mikac's side, and the Venetians and the Dalmatian towns supported Nelipić. However, although he had received help from the Bosnian Ban's army, Mikac was unsuccessful in this campaign, so after bloody battles and great losses, he retreated. Nelipić remained the lord of the entire Croatian territory from Lika and Krbava to the mouth of the Cetina River. His ally, the Venetians, captured the entire littoral area from the Zrmanja to the Cetina rivers. Only Skradin and Omiš remained in the hands of the Šubić family, and Stjepan Kotromanić seized Imotski, Duvno, Livno, Glamoč and the Nerenta Krajina to the Cetina. He annexed the Krajina, with Imotski, to Hum, and the other regions made a special district □□ the Zapadne Strane<sup>54</sup> or Završje. Regarding this, Macan noted that the only correct name is Završje, and that the name Zapadne Strane was taken from the titles of the Croatian rulers in 1377. Although reduced to a smaller space, Croatia was for a while practically an independent state under Nelipić. During that time, Slavonia was once again shaken by an internal war in 1327, caused by the mutiny of the nephews of Ivan Babonić against Ban Mikac. After great bloodshed, the Slavonian aristocrats reconciled after a mediation by the Zagreb Bishop. In 1333, a mutiny broke out in the entire Zagreb Diocese against the Bishop's efforts to more efficiently gather the church tax – the tithe – and the Croatian situation was not defused for seven years.

Soon, the Šubić's became stronger again, especially Juraj's son Mladen III, with the help of his uncle Pavle II, which brought Prince Nelipić and the Dalmatian towns even closer in the aim of confronting them. Having entered officially into an alliance with Šibenik, Trogir and Split, Nelipić started a war against Prince Mladen III by attacking Klis. At the beginning of the next year, peace was nevertheless reached through a compromise, and soon the Šubić family allied with the Venetians; and Nelipić broke up the earlier friendship when his brother Ivan endangered Trogir. In 1336, the war between the Šubić's and Nelipić was again revived. Nelipić captured Ostrovica from the Princes of Bribir, thus coming dangerously close to Zadar and Nin, which worried the Venetians. Being pressured by the Venetians, Nelipić returned Ostrovica to the Šubić's, along with monetary compensation. Some Croatian princes, dissatisfied with Nelipić's self-will, asked Carl Robert for help; but he remained passive. Then, the Šubić's turned to Stjepan II Kotromanić, the Bosnian Ban, and Stefan Dušan the Mighty, the Serbian King. Vladislav, the Ban's brother, married Mladen's sister Jelena in the same year, and Mladen III married Dušan's sister, Jelena, as well. Moreover, he also strengthened their friendship with the Venetians. Nelipić successfully defended himself from the Bosnian Ban, and then attacked the Dalmatian towns. The Frankopans remained alone in their loyalty towards Carl Robert, the Hungarian King, until his death, and then after 1342, they were loyal to his son Ludwig I the Great. In 1343, Nelipić reached peace with the

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<sup>54</sup> "West Sides".



Venetians and died the next year, leaving behind his underage son Ivan, the heir, and his widow Vladislava.

King Ludwig considered Nelipić's death a valuable chance to recover control over Croatia, but the Venetians made a proposal that all the Croatian gentry should unite around Vladislava and connect with the Dalmatian towns in order to hinder the penetration of the Hungarian King. In 1344, Ludwig sent Nikola Bašić, the Slavonian Ban, with the army, and he soon arrived at Knin. In the middle of the siege, Vladislava offered to submit to the Hungarian King, after which the Ban decided to return, taking her envoy. Under the influence of the Venetians, she later backed down on her offer to Ludwig. That infuriated the King and in 1345, he personally started a war against Croatia. Prince Budislav Ugrinić, who was related to the Šubić's, joined him, while the other Croatian princes took the Venetian side. Soon, the Slavonian and the Bosnian Bans arrived with their armies as the King's advance guard. Vladislava submitted to the King and handed Knin and some other towns over to him, and the King gave all the Nelipić family's lands of to her son Ivan. Ivan was loyal to him from then on, and the Kurjaković's deferred to him as well. The King gave up on the attack on the Šubić's, but he left Ban Nikola in Knin with a troop and a new title: the Ban of all of Slavonia and Croatia. The Dalmatian towns also soon deferred to the Hungarian King, even Zadar. In August 1345, the Venetians attacked Zadar with a strong army. The Šubić's were on the Venetian side, and the Frankopans were on the side of the people of Zadar. At the King's order, Nikola Banić and Stjepan II Kotromanić came to the rescue of Zadar, but with insufficient forces, and they were inclined to making a deal with the Venetians. It was claimed that they received a bribe to not join the battle. In May 1346, when the people of Zadar were at the end of their strength after the long and exhausting fights, King Ludwig arrived with a great army. In a fierce clash, the Venetians won, though much weaker. Ludwig did not have space to deploy his army, and he used too big a cavalry and too small an infantry. After the defeat, he returned home, and the people of Zadar still resisted the Venetians, until, a few months later, they were exhausted by hunger and forced to an unconditional surrender.

In 1347, the Šubić Princes decided to submit to King Ludwig and surrender the strategically extremely important town of Ostrovica. In return, the King gave the town of Zrinj in Slavonia to the Šubić's, where a part of the family moved to and acquired a new surname □□ Zrinjski, whose first Prince was Juraj III, the son of Pavle II. The family broke apart over the issue of an alliance, because Mladen III remained loyal to the Venetians as the ruler of Klis. In 1348, the plague caused mass extinction in the littoral towns. It was the cause of the death of Mladen III in Trogir, who left behind his underage son Mladen IV and brother Pavle to govern the estates, especially the towns of Klis, Skradin and Omiš, until his son became of age. In 1349, the King appointed his younger brother Stjepan as Herzog of the entire Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia; and the following year Herzog Stjepan appointed Pavle of Ugao as the ban and his deputy in Croatia. In 1351, the King appointed Stjepan Lacković, Duke of Transylvania, as the Croatian, Slavonian and Dalmatian ban. Starting from that year, the Slavonian feudalists acquired the right to participate at the assemblies of the Hungarian gentry, by which the Slavonian noblemen received equal status to the Hungarian noblemen, unlike the Croatian and Dalmatian noblemen. Until then, there had never been united councils of the Croatian and the Slavonian gentry held, but they had been always held separately. In 1355, Ludwig seized Omiš, and then a race started between him and the Venetians to

**Comment [Z9]:** Translator's note. The name of this place could not be confirmed in the available sources. It could possibly be Uglo.

seize the remaining two towns of the Šubić's: Klis and Skradin. Jelena Šubić, the Duchess of Klis, turned to her brother, Serbian Tsar Dušan, for help, and he sent her a strong army detachment headed by Duke Palman, while Skradin was taken over by the Serbian Duke, Đuraš the Wealthy. "However, the people of Skradin did not like the Serbians at all – that is why a Venetian troop soon entered Skradin as well, probably sent for by Prince Pavle III and his wife Katarina, supposedly to defend it from the invasions of the Croatian troops together with Đuraš. Thus, the Venetians united with the Serbians in defence of Skradin" (p. 140). Klis was firmly surrounded by the Hungarian troops, commanded by Croatian Ban Nikola, helped by Ivan Nelipić, the Prince of Cetina. In the fight against the Ban, the Venetians killed an entire Croatian clan of the Čubranić's and some other Croats. Since they could not defend Klis, Duchess Jelena with her family and garrison left it and went to Serbia, but her son Mladen IV became a hostage to the Croatian Ban. At the time, Tsar Dušan died, so Serbian Duke Đuraš withdrew as well, handing Skradin over to the Venetians. The Šubić's were reduced to only Bribir and its neighbouring parish as their homeland. The Hungarian-Venetian war continued.

#### **d) Laying Notorious Lies in the Foundation of Dubrovnik**

In 1356, Ludwig gathered a big army in Zagreb under the excuse of preparing a campaign against the schismatic Serbs, but he went towards the west, through Kranjska (Carniola) and Friuli in order to directly invade the Venetians. After significant military successes, the King demanded that the Venetians should leave all of Dalmatia. In the middle of 1357, Split and Trogir separated from the Venetians and subjected themselves to Ludwig. Šibenik followed its example, and soon did Zadar, Nin and all the other islands. With a peace treaty, the Venetians renounced the entire Dalmatia and sovereignty over Dubrovnik to the Hungarians. In the same year, Ludwig forced the Bosnian ruler Tvrtko to renounce the Lower Regions and the land of Hum to the Neretva, to the Hungarians. Ivan Ćuz, the Croatian ban, was the regent of all of Dalmatia, Croatia and the annexed regions. Here, Klaić lays a new historiographical lie: "After the peace in Zadar, the town of Dubrovnik also came under the rule of King Ludwig. The living wish of the people of Dubrovnik thereby came true, who had been trying to get rid of the odious Venetians for a long time and to unite with Croatia and Dalmatia, with who they had once formed a union at the time of the Croatian national dynasty. The head of the Hungarian-Croatian party in Dubrovnik was Archbishop Ilija Saraka, who was eagerly driven by the wish to exterminate the schismatics and the Patarnes in Serbia and other countries of the Balkan Peninsula with the help of the Hungarian and the Croatian King" (p. 152-153). Even Trpimir Macan partially corrects him in this when he notices that Dubrovnik was ". . . a part of the unit of Dalmatia, and it alternately recognised the supreme rule of Byzantium, Normandy and Venice" (p. 153). It was a Byzantine unit, which does not have the same territorial meaning as the Hungarian or the Venetian Dalmatia: Dubrovnik was never united with Croatia and Dalmatia at the time of the Croatian national rulers, nor did it have any traces of the Croatian national identity. Archbishop Ilija Saraka was a venomous Catholic who wished for the extermination of the Orthodox people and the Bogomils, but he never possessed any Croatian national feelings.

Having stabilised himself in the western part of the country and having consolidated the royal rule, Ludwig turned to Serbia “. . . in order to take revenge for the constant invasions in Mačva, and to please the Pope, who had incessantly yearned for a Crusade against the Serbian schismatics and the Patarenes in Bosnia. That Pope, Innocent, was completely embittered when in June 1356, Ludwig attacked the Venetians instead of Serbia, with his army that had been gathered in Zagreb for a Crusade” (p. 160). A war broke out in the autumn 1358, but Ludwig returned from Serbia in 1359, where a Serbian nobleman had supposedly recognised the supreme rule of the Hungarian King. Klaić guesses that it could have been Lazar Hrebeljanović. “The Serbian nobleman was promising that he would embrace the Catholic religion, and that he might even recognise the supreme rule of the Hungarian-Croatian King” (p. 161). Having received the news on Ludwig’s invasion in the northern part of Serbia, Vojislav Vojinović, the Prince of Hum, immediately attacked the people of Dubrovnik as Hungarian vassals, in a sign of retaliation. Ludwig even threatened Bosnia. “The Hungarian historians say that the King initiated a Crusade against Bosnia, especially in order to exterminate ‘the countless multitudes of heretics and Patarenes’, who had completely gathered ground and nearly suppressed the Catholic religion; but there is not the slightest doubt that the King started the war out of political reasons” (p. 162). In 1363, Tvrtko defeated the Hungarians, whose army consisted of many Croatian nobleman. “On that occasion, the Ban received the greatest help from Vukac Hrvatinić, the Grand Duke of Bosnia, the father of the famous Hrvoje” (p. 163). Since Ludwig was not able to militarily defeat Tvrtko, he stirred up the Bosnian aristocrats against him, which caused a mutiny in 1366, which politically decreased Tvrtko’s power. Tvrtko was even deposed, and then, with Ludwig’s help, resumed his position in Bosnia, with a renewed vassal relationship.

#### **e) The Complete Demolition of the Construction of the Continuity of Croatian Statehood under Foreign Rulers**

In 1365, Ludwig conquered a part of Bulgaria, the district of Vidin, on the grounds that the Hungarian rulers had also possessed the title of Bulgarian King ever since 1270. Klaić writes that afterwards, the Hungarian King sent “. . . eight Franciscans from Bosnia, who started converting the schismatics and the heretics (the Patarenes) in Bulgaria to the Catholic religion. The Bulgarian people actually did gladly respond to the proposition of the Franciscans the aristocrats together with the people gathered in crowds to receive the holy cross. The Patarenes appeared to be the most eager. Thus it happened that those few Franciscans brought more than 200,000 Bulgarians under the wing of the Catholic Church in fifty days. Still, that was not even a third of the local population” (p. 167). Ludwig formed a special Bulgarian banate, which did not last long. He even became the Polish King, still intensively interfering with the political affairs of Naples, which was the reason why he neglected the situation in the southern Hungarian regions, provoking new problems.

In 1370, he again attacked Bosnia unsuccessfully, after which Tvrtko very rapidly consolidated himself and reconciled with his younger brother, who had been manipulated by the Pope and the Hungarians until then. By his maternal line, Tvrtko was a descendant of the Nemanjić’s, so after the death of Tsar Uroš, he interfered in the disputes over the state inheritance. Together with Prince Lazar, he defeated Nikola Altomanović and divided his lands. He seized Travunija from the Balšić’s and decided

to proclaim himself King. “To some extent, that did belong to him, since he was a descendant of the famous Nemanjić’s on his mother’s side, and, in addition, he possessed part of the Serbian motherlands” (p. 200). Accordingly, in 1377 “. . . without consulting anyone, he went to Mileševa and there, at the grave of St. Sava, he was crowned with ‘the double crown’ – the Bosnian and Serbian crown. He had possessed the Bosnian crown for a long time, and he inherited the Serbian one from his ancestors – ‘the Serbian gentry’. Due to that coronation, from then on he appropriated not only the rights of the Bosnian bans, but also the duties of the Serbian rulers. In order to emphasise his right to the Serbian throne, he named himself ‘King of the Serbs’, which all the Bosnian rulers did after him. While he was earlier called simply ‘Tvrtko, Ban of Bosnia by God’s grace’, after the coronation he was called ‘Stefan Tvrtko, King of Serbia, Bosnia and Primorje, by Christ Our Lord’. The other rulers also recognised the new Bosnian and Serbian King right away. The people of Dubrovnik were the first to recognise him as the King of Serbia, who started paying him a yearly tribute of 2000 *perpers*, which they had been giving the Serbian rulers on St. DMITAR’S day until then. The Republic of Venice recognised him as the ruler of Serbia, so from then on they called him the ‘Serbian King’ in the official documents” (p. 200-201). Klaić does not mention that, apart from those three territorial designations, Tvrtko was also the King of the Zapadne Strane. Still, he states that Tvrtko added the name “Stjepan” – actually Stefan to his name. “Following his example, all the later Bosnian Kings used the same name, as the Serbian Tsars and Kings used to do” (p. 201).

The most important consequence of Tvrtko’s coronation was that Bosnia severed all legal-political relations with Hungary, even formal ones. “Among the Bosnian gentry, who had helped Stjepan Tvrtko in his subsequent ventures, the prince of the Lower Regions, by the name of Vukac Hrvatinić, was certainly the most prominent. In 1363, he defended the town of Sokol together with the entire parish of Pliva. In the following years, Vukac Hrvatinić became the Grand Duke of the Bosnian kingdom. Still, he died either in 1378 or 1379, leaving behind several sons, by the names of Hrvoje, Vuk, Dragiša and Vojislav, who were called the Vukčić’s after his father. As Croatia’s neighbours, they greatly influenced the affairs of the Croatian kingdom in the later years. The most prominent was Hrvoje, whom King Stjepan Tvrtko appointed as his father’s heir with the title of the Grand Duke of Bosnia by a charter issued on 12 March 1380, in the royal palace at Moištra, giving him three villages in the parish of Lašva” (p. 202). In that charter, as Klaić informs us, Tvrtko gave himself the following title: “Stefan Tvrtko, by God’s grace, King of the Serbians, Bosnia, Primorje, the land of Hum, Donji Kraj, Zapadna Strana, Usora, Sol, Podrinje and further” (p. 202). Moreover, he says that afterwards, “. . . the Grand Duke Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić married Jelena, the daughter of Ivan Nelipić, Prince of Cetina, and became a Croatian aristocrat as well” (p. 202). Still, Klaić does not mention that Nelipić’s daughter, as a Catholic, married Hrvoje, a Bogomil.

Evaluating the forty-year rule of Ludwig I, Klaić emphasises his firm centralism, his complete differentiation of Slavonia and Croatia as Hungarian provinces and his introduction of a rule, which was strictly applied starting from 1356, that “. . . a particular ban should rule Croatia and Dalmatia, and a different ban should rule Slavonia” (p. 220). Klaić himself indicates that it is senseless to additionally call the Hungarian ruler the Croatian King in the true meaning of the word, stating with bitterness that, “Ludwig set out to blot out, or at least to suppress that ancient lineage of

Princes, who had been the representatives of the Croatian people before him, and accordingly the initiators of the public life in Croatia. As he hated every other authority except his own, he treated those ancient Croatian princes, whose origin and rule were older than his own young dynasty, with the outmost ruthlessness” (p. 220).

The Šubić’s, Nelipić’s and Kurjaković’s were the ones who suffered the most. “Therefore, all the members of the Croatian aristocracy, those former feudal princes, were either pulverised, or the loyal, submissive subjects of the royal highness. Their resilient strength was crushed at least for a while. Additionally, there were two ways that Ludwig impeded them from resurrecting. First, the King strived to create a new aristocracy out of state and court officers like in Hungary, that would only serve him, and whose glory and progress would be tightly connected to his dynasty. For that reason, with iron determination, he excluded the members of the old, feudal prince families from all the state and court offices. During all the forty years of his rule, not a single member of the Croatian feudal aristocracy held the office of ban. The King gave the office of ban exclusively to the lower gentry in Croatia and Dalmatia, as well as in Slavonia. That gentry had previously gained merit for the King either on the battle field or as court officers or governors in other districts (especially in Transylvania). Even then, the King did not take the noblemen from the Croatian districts in the southern part of Gvozd, but exclusively from Slavonia – mainly those men who had lived in the southern part of the Drava only for a generation or two, and who had family and lands by the Drava in Hungary” (p. 220-221).

The sporadic exceptions in this case indicate the depth of the problem even more drastically, in which the construction of the supposed continuity of the Croatian statehood under the foreign rulers collapses. The state identity and individuality was completely lost when the original Croatian territory found itself within the Hungarian state. The feudal system was the only thing temporarily preserved – it was taken over, and then gradually transformed following the criteria of loyalty towards the ruler and the central power. “The family of Gorjanski was the only one of the old natives decorated with honours by the King, attaining the highest power and glory precisely due to loyal service to the family of Anžuj. However, apart from those natives, the Banić’s (Banfi) of Lendava, the Lacković’s, Čuz’s, Seč’s Sečenj’s, Cudar’s and Bubek’s were elevated, and the King generously provided them with lands in Slavonia, hoping that they would be a great support to his daughter one day. Only in the last years of Ludwig’s rule, the descendants from an old native family, namely the brothers Horvat (Ivan, the Ban of Mačva, and Pavao, the Bishop of Zagreb) acquired power and reputation as well” (p. 221).

Considering that, Trpimir Macan draws attention to the fact that the Horvat family is not at all Croatian, but Hungarian. “That family comes from the Hungarian parentage of Bančo. They got the surname Horvat after the town of Horvati close to Stari Mikanovci, to the southeast from Đakovo” (p. 221). Even that toponym Horvati testifies that the settlement of the Croatians in Slavonia was exceptional in earlier times. “The second means which the King used in order to hinder the possible rise of the feudal Croatian princes was the fact that he began to favour the lower gentry in Croatia in the southern part of Gvozd, who were divided into clans and who were always opposed to the feudal princes. On the one hand, this brought back the memories of the time when there had not existed the feudal princes, but the *zhupans* had been at the head of the noble clans, and on the other hand, the provision of the parish courts of the gentry was brought into use.

**Comment [cm10]:** Translator’s note. The name could not be confirmed, so it was left in the original

Accordingly, with this re-organisation, the lower gentry became extremely strong and influential, along with the support of the kingdom against the feudal princes and their predominance. If we bear in mind the lawsuits conducted before the King's mother Elizabeth in Zadar in 1360, especially the one between the Grubić noblemen from Cetina and Prince Ivan Nelipić, we can easily conclude that a hue and cry was raised against the Croatian princes at the time" (p. 221).

After Ludwig's death in 1382, his 12-year old daughter Maria was crowned Queen, while her mother Elizabeth took over the governing of Hungary. A Croatian nobleman from Vrane near Zadar, and Ivan Paližna, the chief of the knights of the Order of St. Ivan, organised a mutiny against the Queen in 1383. Immediately, Elizabeth and Maria came to Dalmatia with the army ready to crush the mutiny, while Paližna escaped to Bosnia. Not long after that, the riots of the gentry spread through Croatia and Slavonia. Consequently, Stjepan Macković, the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban, was deposed in 1384 and Maria issued a solemn charter that confirmed all the former rights of the aristocrats. The mutiny was immediately crushed in Dalmatia and Croatia with brutal measures, but it broke out even more in Slavonia when the Zagreb Bishop joined it and it spread to the other parts of Hungary. The main motives were the unacceptability of the women rulers and the omnipotence of Nikola Gorjanski, the Hungarian Palatine. The aristocrats did not approve of Maria's fiancé Sigismund, the German Prince, either. The Bishop's brother, Ivan Horvat, proclaimed himself Ban of the entire Slavonia, and what gave preference to the rebels was that they advocated placing Carlo from Durres, the Naples King and Ludwig's close cousin, on the throne. Elizabeth and Maria arrived in Požega, where they received the envoys of the French King and arranged Maria's marriage to the King's brother Louis, Duke of Orleans. With the mediation of Nikola Gorjanski, the Queens achieved the support of King Tvrtko, to whom they handed over Kotor so that he would give up helping the rebels. Afterwards, they began negotiations with the aristocracy and they reached a peace agreement in 1385. However, everything was ruined when the offended Sigismund penetrated Croatia with an army. The gentry immediately sent Pavle Horvat, the Zagreb Bishop, to bring in Charles of Durres.

#### **f) The Splitting of Serbian Bosnia at the Time of the Battle of Kosovo**

Soon, Carlo arrived in Zagreb via Senj and continued his journey towards Stolni Biograd. Maria and Sigismund were married immediately in Buda, but her husband escaped to the Czech country and left her in the lurch. Charles of Durres came to Buda and the gentry named him the Governor of Hungary, and soon after that, a council for electing him King was assembled. At the begging of 1386, Elizabeth and Nikola Gorjanski organised the murder of Charles of Durres. Slavonia rebelled again, so the Queens together with Gorjanski tried to crush the mutiny. The insurgents ambushed them, killing Gorjanski and capturing the Queens. Ban Ivan Horvat took over rule in Slavonia, Croatia with Dalmatia, Mačva and the Banate of Severin. He gave away Croatia and Dalmatia to Ivan Paližna. Sigismund came to Hungary to take over power and the supporters appointed him Captain of the Kingdom. With the army, he came to Slavonia in order to crush the mutiny. In 1387, the insurgents killed Queen Elizabeth in Novigrad at Zadar, having strangled her before Maria. "This was the sad end of the eminent daughter of Stjepan Kotromanić, the Bosnian Ban, and a nephew of King

Tvrtko. The Croatian rebels utterly hated that witty and courageous woman, maybe especially because the Croatian blood ran in her veins. They could not forgive her for having killed the Croatian elect in such a traitorous manner out of fear for the future of her child” (p. 261). The civil war continued with complete intensity and, in general, the gentry were not divided according to nationality. Still, the number of Maria’s opponents was considerably larger in Croatia and even more in Slavonia. In the same year, the Hungarian gentry crowned Sigismund King in Stolni Biograd.

Upon the coronation, Sigismund decided to initiate another military campaign in Croatia and Dalmatia in order to free his wife Maria. He found an ally in the Venetians who called for the loyalty of the Dalmatian towns to the King and sent a fleet to support his army on the land. Ivan Frankopan took the King’s side, unlike his brother Stjepan, who supported Charles of Durres. The King sent his army to Ivan Frankopan, and with the help of the Kurjaković, he defeated Ivan Paližna, the Croatian Ban, while Sigismund’s other troops attacked his followers. Paližna was forced to release Queen Maria from imprisonment in Novigrad. Sigismund met Maria in Zagreb. Afterwards, by the autumn of 1387, the mutiny was gradually suppressed in all the Hungarian regions. A certain number of the insurgent noblemen escaped to Bosnia, whose King Tvrtko had succeeded in re-conquering almost all the territories that had been seized by Ludwig. That stirred his ambition to conquer the entire Croatia and Dalmatia. The town of Klis was the first one to recognise him as its King, and also the town of Vrane, where Ivan Paližna kept his power. Under the pressure of Tvrtko’s army, which had devastated the surroundings of Split, it recognised the supreme power of the Bosnian King as well. The followers of Ladislav Lacković, the then Croatian Ban, besieged Vrana, but Tvrtko came to the rescue of Paližna by devastating the surroundings of Zadar, as well, and hindered the siege. Then, Tvrtko and Paližna seized Ostrovica and started besieging Nin. Afterwards, Trogir was subjected to Tvrtko, who named Paližna his deputy in Croatia with the title of Ban. As the people of Split were trying to evade their obligations, Tvrtko attacked them again in 1338. The endangered Split initiated a motion for forming an alliance with all the Dalmatian towns and the Croatian noblemen against Tvrtko. Klaić states that, in that year, Tvrtko already possessed the entire Croatia, with good prospects of the surrender of Dalmatia.

Consequently, Sigismund appointed Ladislaus Lučenac, the Slavonian Ban, as Duke of the Hungarian army and Governor of Croatia and Dalmatia, sending him against Tvrtko. In 1389, Vlatko Vuković defeated him. Sigismund did not pay any greater attention to those affairs as he had big problems in eastern Hungary and was trying to use the consequences of the battle of Kosovo in order to seize new lands in northern Serbia, the part he was invading with the army. In the new attack, while Vlatko Vuković was in Kosovo with the army, the Slavonian Ban took some other footholds from Tvrtko. Tvrtko sent a new army in Croatia, which, after the initial failures, successfully defeated Sigismund’s followers. Then, Tvrtko appointed Ivan Horvat, the former Slavonian Ban in exile, as his Governor in Croatia. Soon, the Dalmatian towns were subjected to him as well, so Tvrtko ruled the entire Croatia and Dalmatia from the Cetina to the Velebit. Klaić supposes that the Kurjaković’s, the Princes of Krbava, were subjected to him as well. Only Zadar remained loyal to Sigismund. The successful conquests were an incentive for Tvrtko to add the title of King of Croatia and Dalmatia to his ruler’s title. On that issue, Klaić draws the following conclusion. “Now, he was the ruler of a great part of the lands under the crowns of Zvonimir and Dušan, so he

achieved what the Croatian and Serbian rulers had strived for in vain, namely □□ to unite the Croatians and the Serbians under their sceptres into one state. Bosnia, which used to depend on Serbia at one time, and then on Croatia at another, became a centre that gathered the particular parts of Croatia and the Serbian country” (p. 295). Trpimir Macan refutes this conclusion in his comment, stating that “. . . we cannot talk about that kind of aspirations of the Croatian and Serbian rulers, and this formulation of Klaić’s reflects the political opinion of his time” (p. 295).

In 1391, Croatia and Dalmatia recognised Tvrtko’s heir Dabiša as their ruler as well, who appointed Vuk Vukčić as the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban. However, Ladislaus, King of Naples, then appeared as a claimant to Croatia and Slavonia, trying to win over Vuk and his brother Hrvoje for his own interests. At the same time, he named Ivan Horvat as his Governor for the entire Hungary, and addressed many Hungarian aristocrats – for whom he knew that they were dissatisfied with Sigismund – with various offers and promises. He even got in contact with Bayezid, the Turkish Sultan, in order to coordinate their interests and activities towards Hungary. In 1392, Sigismund appointed Prince Ivan Frankopan as the Slavonian Ban and gave him the assignment of recapturing Croatia and Dalmatia for Hungary, extending his authorisation as Ban even to them. It was in their favour that, in the same year, Vuk, Dabiša’s Ban, had severely confronted the Croatian gentry who supported Ladislaus of Naples, the son of Charles of Durres. As the people of Zadar had been subjected to Dabiša in the meantime as well, Ivan Frankopan began his actions by besieging Zadar, which he was not able to conquer until his death at the end of 1393. Then, Butko Kurjaković became the new ban and Zadar was subjected to him without fighting. In the same year, Dabiša reconciled with Sigismund, who recognised him as the Bosnian King, and Dabiša gave him Croatia and Dalmatia in return, recognising that Sigismund would succeed him as the ruler of Bosnia after his death. However, the Bosnian King soon changed his mind and ordered Vuk Vukčić to gain back rule over Croatia and Dalmatia and helped Ivan and Pavle Horvat invade Slavonia from Bosnia at the same time.

In 1394, Sigismund attacked Bosnia with his army. The new Ban, Nikola Gorjanski, followed him. He conquered the town of Debor and captured the Horvat’s and other disobedient Slavonian noblemen, who had their foothold in this town. Dabiša asked for peace right away, recognising Sigismund’s supreme power. Having crushed the resistance of Ban Vuk Vukčić, Nikola and Ivan Gorjanski occupied the entire Croatia and Dalmatia □□ Nikola renounced the position of Ban of Mačva and became the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban, while Detrik Bubek became the Slavonian one. The death of Queen Maria in 1395 shook the recently consolidated power of Sigismund again. Maria’s sister, Polish Queen Jadвига and her husband Wladyslaw Jagelo declared their pretensions over Hungary. In the same year, Dabiša died and the Bosnian gentry did not want to recognise the provisions of the Đakovo Agreement, according to which his successor was to be Sigismund. They brought Dabiša’s widow Jelena Gruba to power. Since the situation in western Hungary was also unsettled, Sigismund summoned a General Council of the entire Croatian and Dalmatian gentry in Nin in 1397. Consolidation was extremely important there, as the Turks had already conquered the entire Slavonia in 1396, thoroughly plundered it and withdrew □□ right after Sigismund’s tough defeat at Nikopol. The King barely saved his life at the battle of Nikopol, so he returned to Hungary via Constantinople by ship and spent some time in Dalmatia and Croatia, whose situation was a motivation for him to summon a council. In



Slavonia, he was met with dissatisfaction, because many noblemen had died at Nikopol and the land was devastated. Stjepan Lacković expressed the greatest dissatisfaction, for whom Klaić supposes that he had let down the King at the battle of Nikopol. Lacković acquired a large number of followers rather soon, because few believed that Sigismund could ever return. The insurgents started negotiations with Ladislaus of Naples and the Turks.

Having arrived in Slavonia, Sigismund summoned a council of the gentry right away in February 1397, in Križevac, where his followers were in the majority, while, after a mass fight, Stjepan Lacković and his nephew Andrija were cut by swords. His followers barely escaped, and after hearing the news, Lacković's soldiers attacked the people of Križevac by storm. However, when they threw the dead body of their leader from the ramparts, they ran away. Having returned to Buda, Sigismund appointed Detrik Bubek, the then Slavonian Ban, as Palatine of Hungary; and Nikola Gorjanski as the King's Deputy and Ban of Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia. To Count Herman of Celje, who had faithfully accompanied him during the entire campaign, he gave the great estate lands in Slavonia and the town of Varaždin. He settled many foreign noblemen on the former lands of the Slavonian gentry as well.

The situation in Hungary had not yet been consolidated, when Hrvoje Vukčić penetrated Slavonia, which motivated Sigismund to assail the Croatian lands, but the Bosnian Grand Duke defeated him, crossing the Una River and seizing the county of Dubica. The dissatisfaction of the Hungarian gentry with Sigismund's bringing German, Czech, Polish and Italian noblemen reached the climax in 1401, when they arrested him by a conspiracy in the palace and enslaved him in Višegrad; and many foreigners were exiled. Palatine Detrik Bubek, the former Slavonian Ban, took over power. The noblemen soon divided into four groups on the issue of bringing a new king to the throne. Some, especially the Slavonians and the Croats, wanted Ladislaus of Naples; some wanted Wladyslaw Jagel, some wanted the Habsburg Duke Wilhelm, some wanted themselves. Confusion and chaos ensued, which enabled the consolidation of Sigismund's followers more easily, and then Nikola Gorjanski tried to reconcile the King with the opponents. The King was released from the prison, and he summoned a council of the gentry afterwards, at which he committed not to avenge anyone's disloyalty.

**Comment [Z11]:** Translator's note. The original text reads Wladyslaw (Vladislav), but it seems like an error, as the Ladislaus was the ruler of Naples at the time.

### **g) Sigismund's New Campaigns and Defeat in Bosnia**

In 1402, Nikola Gorjanski became the Palatine of Hungary based on his deserved merits. Sigismund caused a commotion among the gentry again at the end of that year by announcing that he would be succeeded by Albrecht, a Habsburg Duke, since he had no male heirs. Under great pressure, the Council at Pozsony finally accepted the King's decision. As soon as the Council ended, great riots broke out throughout all of Hungary. Since Ladislaus of Naples had already appointed Hrvoje Vukčić as Ban of Croatia and Dalmatia, Hrvoje, helped by Stjepan Dabiša, the Bosnian king, began a conquest of Croatia and Dalmatia as early as 1401, after the people of Split had seized Omiš from him. In 1402, Sigismund appointed Bishop Eberhard as the new Slavonian Ban, and Emerick Bubek as the Dalmatian-Croatian one, and then involved both of them in the war against Hrvoje. Having received support from Pope Boniface IX, Ladislaus of Naples sent five galleys and one brigantine to Dalmatia, headed by his vicar Alojzije

Aldemarisco. Aldemarisco sailed to Zadar, where the Zagreb Archbishop, the Knin Bishop and some friars swore an oath of allegiance to Ladislaus. Afterwards, he met with Hrvoje, with whom he joined forces in order to occupy the fortifications. All the towns except Skradin surrendered immediately. Directly after that, a mutiny against Sigismund broke out in other parts of Hungary. Archbishop Ivan Kaniški joined the mutiny, as well as Prince Nikola Frankopan. As early as the beginning of 1403, the majority of the Hungarian gentry stuck with Ladislaus. The Kurjaković's were the only ones of the Croatian gentry who remained faithful to Sigismund; Prince Pavle Zrinski was the only Slavonian nobleman, as well as Zagreb Bishop Eberhard, the Berislavić aristocrats of Požega and Ivan Morović, Ban of Mačva. At the peak of the fierce civil war, Duke Hrvoje attacked Slavonia, and the followers of Ladislaus seized rule over the main part of Hungary.

In August 1403, Ladislaus crowned himself Hungarian King in Zadar, where he stayed three months but did not dare to go to Buda, although all the Hungarian gentry and almost all the bishops had gathered in Zadar, convincing him to go on that journey. Ladislaus's fear of coming to Buda made it easier for Palatine Nikola Gorjanski to strengthen and embolden Sigismund's followers. Sigismund gathered an army, acted openly against the Pope and set about confronting his political opponents, promising at the same time general amnesty for all the outcasts who immediately bowed before him and repented. Most of the Hungarian, especially the Slavonian noblemen, returned to the King's camp. Soon, only Croatia and Dalmatia remained under the control of Ladislaus of Naples. Ladislaus was terribly frightened, so he appointed Hrvoje Vukčić as Vice King of Croatia and Dalmatia and ran away to Naples afterwards. Hrvoje nevertheless received a blow from a side that he had not expected. Bosnian King Ostoja reconciled with Sigismund and recognised his supreme power. Hrvoje stirred the Bosnian gentry to a mutiny and besieged Ostoja in the capital Bobovac. In 1404, Ostoja escaped from Sigismund and asked for help, and then the Hungarian King sent Ivan Morović, Ban of Mačva, to intervene in Bosnia. Morović occupied Bobovac and brought Ostoja back to the throne, who reconciled with Hrvoje after that. The reconciliation was only ostensible, so the Council of the gentry in Visoko in May 1404 deposed Ostoja and brought Tvrtko II to the throne.

In 1405, Sigismund attacked Bosnia with his three armies, deeply penetrating it, but was soon defeated. Sigismund's second campaign failed as well, though his army devastated a large part of Bosnia. He finally succeeded in calming down Slavonia completely, while in Croatia, Prince Nikola Frankopan joined him again and conquered the island of Rab. In an armed confrontation, Ladislaus's galleys re-conquered Rab. In 1406, Sigismund appointed his new father-in-law, Herman of Celje, as the Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. Not long after that, Ivaniš Nelipić, the Prince of Cetina, joined Sigismund, but then returned to Hrvoje even sooner, demonstrating double volatility. After a change on the papal throne, Pope Gregory summoned all the Christians in 1407 to help Sigismund in a Crusade against the Turks, the Manichaei and other heretics. In 1408, Sigismund attacked Bosnia and the Bosnian army, severely defeating them at the town of Doboj, capturing Tvrtko II as well and executing many noblemen. After that battle, many Croatian and Dalmatian aristocrats rushed to defer to Sigismund, and among the first ones was Ivaniš Nelipić. This time, even Hrvoje Vukčić opted for him, and what is more he became a godfather to the King's recently born daughter. Only Zadar with Novigrad, Vrane and Pag remained loyal to Ladislaus of

Naples. However, Sigismund lost Bosnia again, when King Ostoja ascended to the throne. Consequently, Ladislaus of Naples sold the entire Dalmatia to the Venetians for 100,000 ducats.

In the introduction to the third volume, Klaić repeats that the inhabitants of Croatia were called Croatians even in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and those of Slavonia were called Slavonians. The ethnic structure changed to a certain extent only in Dalmatia, considering that the Croatians gradually populated the littoral towns, and sometimes the islands as well. Still, it was a novelty that the Vlachs and the Morlachs began to settle in Croatia and Dalmatia in this century. Here, Klaić mentions that the Vlachs originally represented the Latin population, “. . . but many Vlachs, who had populated the Bulgarian and Serbian lands, blended slowly into the Slavs with whom they lived” (p. 23). At the time, the name Vlachs was kept with a change in the meaning, because it had referred to the cattle breeders, who did not engage in farming, but lived as semi-nomads. In addition, they carried out the transfer of various goods by caravans with horses and mules. Klaić states that it was Mladen Šubić II who, as early as 1320, engaged the orders of the Vlachs in his army. The Turkish conquests caused their larger migrations from the Serbian countries. “During the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Vlachs spread out all over Croatia, from the Cetina and Neretva rivers all the way to the Velebit mountains, and even started to penetrate the districts of the Dalmatian towns, but not the islands” (p. 23). In fact, that was the first mass settlement of the Serbians on the territories of Croatia and Dalmatia. What is more, they were Serbian cattle breeders, whose property was portable from the beginning. Even at that time, the Dalmatian towns demonstrated great animosity towards them, accusing them of theft and violence. “However, all the threats were useless: the Vlachs were coming to Croatia in greater numbers, and they mainly populated the mountain areas. At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the entire Croatia, from Gvozd to the Neretva, was over-populated with Vlachs, so that from then on, the Vlachs were more often mentioned as a special category of the population, alongside the Croatians” (p. 24).

### **h) The Manipulation of the Vlach Settlers, the Classic Method of the Croatian School of Forgery**

Here, it is most interesting that Klaić explains that the Vlachs were already Croatianised in Serbia, so that they came to Croatia as authentic Croatians. “With the migration of the Vlachs to Croatia, the ethnographic and class conditions in that kingdom changed to a certain degree. It is emphasised that a proportionally small number of the authentic Vlachs settled in Croatia, namely those who still spoke the Latin language (the remnants of those Vlachs lived on the island of Krk until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and they can be still found in Istria around the lake of Čepić. The Čići in Istria are nothing but Croatianised Vlachs). A great majority of the Vlachs who settled in Croatia during the 14<sup>th</sup> century were only the descendants of the authentic Vlachs, whose several generations had lived in Serbia and Bosnia and were Croatianised afterwards. That is why the newcomers were not different from the Croatian natives by their vernacular (language), but only by their profession and social position. The majority was of the Eastern-Greek religion (the Vlach schismatics), but there were Catholics, or at least those who soon accepted that religion” (p. 24-25).

It is obvious that Vjekoslav Klaić ignores and hides the fact that those Vlach settlers spoke the Serbian language, that is the shtokavian dialect, and therefore they were different from the Croats they found there from the very beginning, since the Croats spoke the chakavian dialect, about which literally all their preserved historical documents and monuments testify. Of course, a linguistic symbiosis of its own kind must have ensued, in which the shtokavian dialect would prevail, but probably in the variant that adopted the ikavian pronunciation from the south-chakavian dialect. Otherwise, the social differentiations between the Vlach-Serbian newcomers and the Croatian whom they found there would last for a long time, which Klaić confirms as well. “The Vlachs, settled in Croatia, lived in the mountain *katuns*<sup>1</sup> and accordingly they are sometimes called *katunars*. They had their own community, their own princes, dukes and even judges. They chose their princes themselves, or a nobleman (lord) on whose property they lived appointed them. The Vlachs in the parish of Cetina, whose lords were the Nelipić’s, chose their prince themselves and even their duke for war” (p. 24).

### **i) The War with Venice, and the Turkish Invasions**

In 1410, Sigismund penetrated Bosnia, where King Ostoja with his noblemen temporarily subjected themselves to him, but as soon as the Hungarian King left, they deserted him again. The next year, Sigismund decided to tear Bosnia apart, so he left the Lower Lands, with Jajce, to Hrvoje; entrusted Ivan Gorjanski with Usora and Ivan Morović with Sol. Since the Venetians seized Nin, Rab, Cres, Pag and Lošinj in the meantime and threatened to occupy the entire Dalmatia; and since Karlo Kurjaković, the Croatian Ban, was not capable defending it himself; and on top of that, since Sandalj Hranić had sold Skradin and Ostrovica to them; King Sigismund had to set about confronting the Venetians in 1411, as he was always preoccupied with the German, the Czech and the Polish affairs. He sent the army to Istria and Furlanija, seizing many Venetian footholds, while Ban Kurjaković succeeded in seizing Skradin. In the next year, Kurjaković died, so Sigismund appointed Petar Alben, the owner of Medvedgrad and the nephew of the Zagreb Bishop and the Supreme Hungarian Chancellor, Eberhard, as the new Croatian Ban. At the same time, he brought Pavle Čupor of Moslavina to the position of the Slavonian Ban, which had been vacant for three years.

In 1412, the Šubić’s succeeded in seizing Ostrovica from the Venetians. However, when the Hungarian army, after having successes in the beginning, was defeated at Mota, and many Croats and Slavonians left it, having come back from Furlanija; and when even Šibenik after a long siege fell in the Venetian hands due to an internal mutiny, Sigismund himself had to join the war as well. Via Furlanija, he devastated many Venetian regions but suffered great losses as well, so with the Pope’s mediation he accepted to make peace for five years in 1413. Sigismund used the armistice in order to deal with Duke Hrvoje Vukčić, whom his enemies Pavle Čupor, the Slavonian Ban; and Petar Alben, the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban accused of being in collusion with the Turks and the Venetians, considering his conversion from the Bogomil to the Catholic religion at his old age a fake one. Sigismund summoned all the local Croatian, Slavonian and Bosnian noblemen to usurp Hrvoje’s lands, but they succeeded only in taking Split and the estate lands in Slavonia from him. Because of that, Hrvoje actually asked the Turks

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<sup>1</sup> Summer pastures.

for help. The Turks came and devastated all the regions all the way to Zagreb, staying for some time only in the parish of Uskoplje, and in 1415 they brought the former King Tvrtko II to power, who spread his power with great speed. Many Turkish troops penetrated Croatia then, directly threatening Split, Trogir and Šibenik. In 1415 at Lašva, the Turks heavily defeated the Hungarian army, predominantly comprised of the Croatian, Slavonian noblemen and the noblemen of Mačva. Many were captured, like Ivan Gorjanski, Ivan Morović, Pavle Čupor, Vladislaus Tutošević, Petar Henriković, Franko of Đula, etc. Hrvoje brutally killed Pavle Čupor, the Slavonian Ban, himself. After that victory, the Turks with Hrvoje intruded Slavonia and devastated it all the way to Styria. In the same year, Hrvoje died, and his widow Jelena married King Ostoja, having previously handed over Omiš and the Krajina of Nerenta to her brother, Prince Ivaniš Nelipi.

The King's long absence from Hungary at the time of the Church Council of Constance created the conditions for new clashes between the Slavonian aristocrats and the mutual usurpation of the estate lands, with many threatening plundering and destructions. In 1418, a new Croatian-Hungarian war broke out. The people of Poljica took the Venetian side and endangered Split. Soon, a plague broke out and caused the extinction in the Dalmatian towns. The Hungarian army was constantly losing the territories in Istria and Furlanija. Consequently, Sigismund sent the Slavonian Ban, Dionysius de **Marcalius**, to Furlanija; and Albert of Veliki Miholjac and Ungvar, the Croatian Ban, to come to the rescue of the endangered Trogir. The army of Ban Dionysius was soon smashed, and the entire Furlanija and Istria were conquered, while the Ban escaped to Zagreb. In 1420, the Venetians conquered Trogir first, after which Split surrendered, so they ruled over the entire Dalmatia and left only Senj and Krk, under the rule of Nikola Frankopan, to Sigismund, as well as the Krajina of Nerenta in the south.

**Comment [Z12]:** Translator's note. The spelling of this name could not be confirmed in the available sources. Therefore, the suggested spelling is given here

In 1423, the King appointed Herman of Celje as the Slavonian Ban for the second time, but the internal confrontations of the Slavonian noblemen continued. In 1426, Prince Nikola Frankopan was appointed the Croatian Ban, who was deeply conflicted with the family of Celje ever since Count Fridrih of Celje killed his wife, Elizabeth Frankopan, Nikola's niece and Ulrich's mother. Otherwise, Nikola Frankopan bragged that his family was of Italian origin and constantly tried to preserve the best relations with the Venetians as possible. He acquired the title of ban primarily because he had lent a large sum of money to Sigismund, and in return, the King gave him almost the entire Croatia as a pledge, apart from the lands of the Kurjaković's and the Nelipić's. He was politically weakened when his wife Doroteja, Palatine Nikola Gorjanski's daughter, died, and Queen Barbara, Herman of Celje's daughter, despised him. Frankopan got the support of the Pope, so in 1431, Sigismund renewed his title of ban with a new money supplement. The next year, Nikola Frankopan died, and his sons Ivan and Stjepan succeeded him at the ban's position, while the estate was divided among seven more sons.

Upon the death of Herman of Celje in 1435, Sigismund appointed Matko Talovac, the then Captain of Belgrade who was Governor of the Zagreb diocese as well – as the Slavonian Ban. In the meantime, the Frankopans inherited all the estate lands of the Nelipić family as well, because Ivan Frankopan married Nelipić's daughter Katarina. However, in 1435, Sigismund asked Ivan to hand him over all Katarina's estate lands, because, as the King, he inherited all the estate lands of the princes without male heirs.

Since Ivan refused that order, the King took away the title of ban from him and ordered Matko Talovac to get the better of him using force, promising him a reward for all those estate lands. The next year, Talovac reached Sinj with an army and conquered it, but he had to return quickly due to problems in Zagreb. Still, at the end of that year, Ivan died, and Marko Talovac hurried again to usurp the widow Katarina's estate lands, in which he succeeded this time. Sigismund did not let him disturb the other Frankopans, so Stjepan Frankopan remained the Ban of Croatia and Dalmatia for some time longer.

### **j) Civil War in Hungary**

In 1437, Sigismund was succeeded by his son-in-law Albrecht of Austria. Matko Talovac was suppressing the family of Celje to a great extent, accusing them of being against the new King, and the King himself deposed Stjepan Frankopan, the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban, and posted Petar Talovac, Matko's brother, in his position. The national intolerance, due to the increasing number of foreign settlers, reached such proportions that the infuriated Hungarians perpetrated a true slaughter of the Germans in Buda in that year. The German elective princes chose Albrecht as the German king, so consequently, he became the father of the Habsburg dynasty. In 1439, the council of the Hungarian nobles strictly limited the ruler's rights and decided that all the German clerks should be dismissed from the state service. Not long after this, King Albrecht died. His widow and Sigismund's daughter, Elizabeth, took over the rule, and immediately brought her reliable cousins to the principal state positions. In the following year, 1440, the aristocrats forced the Queen to marry the 16-year-old Polish King Wladyslaw at the Council of Višegrad. After a month, she bore Albrecht's son, Ladislaus the Posthumous, and then arrested the main advocates of her marriage, Matko Talovac and Emerick Markal. Ulrich of Celje firmly took the Queen's side, but Talovac soon managed to escape from prison, so the aristocrats grouped into two confronted camps. When Wladyslaw Varnenčik I had already entered Hungary, Elizabeth crowned her son Ladislaus the Hungarian King in Stolni Biograd. Clashes even ensued, in which the followers of the Polish King prevailed. The Hungarian Council pronounced the coronation of Ladislaus the Posthumous invalid and appointed Wladyslaw as King. Elizabeth was very exhausted, and only Friedrich of Celje, Ivan Jiskra and the Frankopan brothers remained faithful to her.

However, the German King Friedrich III offered his help to the Queen, who was not wavering, so many aristocrats, who had just sworn allegiance to Wladyslaw, started to support her. Among them was Dionysius of Seč, the Archbishop of Ostrogon; and Ladislaus Gorjanski, the Ban of Mačva. A civil war broke out, in which Elizabeth's followers achieved a significant success. Having agreed with the Frankopans, Stjepan Vukčić, the Bosnian Grand Duke, attacked Talovac's estate lands in the Krajina of Nerenta and conquered Omiš and Poljica. The mercenaries of the family of Celje prevailed in Slavonia. Still, Ivan Hunyadi, the Ban of Severin, and Prince Nikola Iločki both loyal to Wladyslaw – defeated Ban Gorjanski, which brought him the victory. However, the Princes of Celje defeated him the next year, so the King had to reconcile with Friedrich and Ulrich. The war was raging even in 1442, so the Pope sent his legate to mediate. A peace agreement was concluded at the end of the year, and three days later, Elizabeth died. As the contemporaries largely commented, she had been poisoned. The next year, Wladyslaw successfully waged wars against the Turks, but in a new,

poorly thought-out campaign, he died at Varna in 1444. In Hungary, the clashes between the camps of Janosh Hunyadi and the Princes of Celje ensued after his death. With the Council's decision from as late as 1446, after long quibbles between the aristocrats, 6-year-old Ladislaus the Posthumous was brought to power and Janosh Hunyadi became the Hungarian Governor.

Since Ban Matko Talovac died in 1445, Friedrich and Ulrich of Celje used all means to seize the entire Slavonia and the estate lands of the Zagreb diocese. They proclaimed themselves the Slavonian Bans by their own will, and waged a bloody war in order to conquer many Slavonian towns, because Ivan Talovac, Prior of Vrane, opposed them decisively and energetically until he was killed. They appointed Benedict as Bishop of Zagreb again, as their stooge. For this reason, the Council of Stolni Biograd authorised Governor Hunyadi to crush the family of Celje militarily, and that brought new killings and destructions to Slavonia. After some successes in the beginning, Hunyadi was stopped and forced to compromise. The Princes of Celje remained the Slavonian Bans, but they ceded the Priory of Vrane to Hunyadi's nephew, which laid the foundation for him to become the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban. In 1448, Hunyadi started a war against the Turks, and while passing through Serbia, his army plundered the population, devastating it and setting it on fire. He suffered a catastrophic defeat and barely saved his head. Bans Ivan Sekelj and Franjo Talovac were killed. Despot Đurađ captured Hunyadi and let him go under the condition of returning all the usurped estate lands in Hungary, paying the damages for all the committed evil deeds and swearing to not cross the Serbian territory during his military campaigns without the Despot's consent. Because of this defeat, riots broke out in all the southern Hungarian provinces again. In particular, in Croatia, Ban Petar Talovac had a confrontation with the Frankopan brothers. The true reconciliation between the Hungarian Governor and the Serbian Despot would take place 3 years later, because the relations became strained when Pope Nicholas V issued a bull in 1450, with which he absolved the Hungarian gentry from the contractual oath, and proclaimed the Despot's actions dishonest, inhumane, irrational and inappropriate.

As the Croatian-Dalmatian and Slavonian Ban, Ivan Sekelj was actually a sort of Vice Governor over those two banates. The Slavonian Bans of Celje did not defer to him at all, while Croatian-Dalmatian Ban Petar did purely formally, so only the county of Križevac and a part of the Zagreb county were effectively under Sekelj's power. His death in war spared him the troubles related to the lack of actual authority. Hunyadi was gradually winning over the Frankopan, Zrinjski and Kurjaković families. Petar Talovac had internal problems with Duke Ivanac Novaković, so he was ready to offer the northern half of his maimed banate to Sekelj, but this never took place. He was threatened by Stjepan Tomaš, the Bosnian King, and the families of Frankopan and Kurjaković never recognised him as Ban. It was only favourable for him that the Frankopan brothers disputed among themselves over the division of the estate land. He waged a successful war against Novaković, but an unsuccessful one against Tomaš Tvrtković, who in 1450 seized Ostrovica. As the Venetians strove to seize Klis from him, Petar Talovac was forced to settle with Hunyadi, and in 1453, he died. Then, the King appointed Ladislaus Hunyadi, the Governor's son, as Ban of Croatia and Dalmatia, but he never came to his banate. Tomaš Bojničić, a nobleman from Plavno, performed the Ban's tasks and a real Ban did not exist for the following four years.

As late as 1453, King Ladislaus the Posthumous abandoned his guardian Friedrich III, German King and Roman Emperor, and came to Buda where Ulrich of Celje became

his guardian, while he proclaimed Hunyadi as Captain of the entire Hungary. Soon, Ladislaus chased away Ulrich of Celje, who even lost power in Austria, so he returned to his father Friedrich in Slavonia, trying to seize the position of Croatian-Dalmatian Ban as well. In 1454, he tried to gain control over the Kurjaković Princes of Krbava, but his army was smashed. However, he tried again to force them to hand Ostrovica to him, so Gregory Kurjaković recognised him as the Ban. As early as 1455, Ulrich of Celje officially gave himself the title of Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, and then fiercely confronted Janosh Hunyadi. He successfully re-conquered Austria and Vienna, so Ladislaus Gorjanski, the Hungarian Palatine, and Nikola Mlečki deferred to him. It was then when he regained the King's favour. Still, the Council of the Hungarian Gentry at Đur reconciled Ulrich of Celje and Hunyadi, at least seemingly. The King officially recognised Ulrich as the Croatian-Dalmatian and Slavonian Ban, and issued a charter to his long-standing ally, Herzog Stefan Vukčić, giving him the town of Split, otherwise firmly kept in Venetian hands. However, Pavle Kiš, the Castellan of Klis; and the sons of the former Ban Talovac placed themselves under Venetian protection.

Since Janosh Hunyadi died in 1456, right after the successful defence of Belgrade, in which the other Hungarian lords left him in the lurch, Ulrich of Celje became the most powerful lord in the country and was appointed the Supreme Captain of Hungary. Still, Ladislaus, Hunyadi's son, killed him in Belgrade at the end of that year, and the entire family line of Celje died out with his death. There was a scramble and usurpation on his properties. In Slavonia, Henning Chernin, a Susedgrad landholder, acquired predominance. Nikola Iločki became the new Slavonian Ban, but since he was too preoccupied with the affairs in Transylvania and Mačva, Ivan Markal, the *Zhupan* of Virovitica, was appointed the Ban's assistant. Croatia had no Ban for a longer while, that is why the family of Kurjaković, Bosnian King Stefan Tomaš and Herzog Stefan Vukčić scrambled for predominance. When King Ladislaus approved the execution of Ladislaus Hunyadi in 1457, a fierce civil war broke out. The King got away to Vienna, and then went to Prague, where he died, at age 18, probably due to having been poisoned.

The King's death defused the civil war in Hungary, and the Hungarian lords wanted to bring a Hungarian to the throne, in order to sever every state relation with the Czech country and Austria, which had caused huge damage to their national interests in the past. In 1458 in Pest, after a period of quibble, the elective council chose a new King □□ Matthias Corvinus Hunyadi, Janosh's younger son; and his uncle, Mikhail Silagyi, as Governor for five years. The 18-year-old King immediately ordered Jan Vitovac, the Slavonian Ban, and Toma Sekelj, Prior of Vrane, to prepare themselves to subject all the royal lands in Croatia and Slavonia. However, before they set off on this journey, they got into a conflict over precedence, so the King himself had to reconcile them. In 1459, Pavle Špirančić and Petar Zob became the Bans of Dalmatia and Croatia. In the same year, the King deposed Palatine Ladislaus Gorjanski. Consequently, Gorjanski organised a conspiracy against the King together with the two most powerful lords, Nikola Iločki and Mikhail Silagyi, but those allies abandoned Gorjanski not long after that. In 1459, Gorjanski, together with his followers, asked Friedrich Habsburg III, the German King and Roman Emperor, to ascend the Hungarian throne. Ban Jan Vitovec and Prince Martin Frankopan joined them. The Croatian-Dalmatian Bans, Zob and Špirančić, took the side of King Matthias, but not one member of the families of Frankopan, Zrinski, Kurjaković, Blagajski, and not even Toma Sekelj came to a convention of the lords,



summoned by the King in Buda. Friedrich III proclaimed himself the Hungarian King, and on that occasion, Nikola Iločki became the godfather to the King's son Maximilian, who had just been born. After that, Matthias took away all Iločki's titles, deposed Vitovac and appointed Toma Sekelj as the Slavonian Ban. A civil war broke out and the followers of Friedrich won in the first battle. The war was fierce even in Slavonia and Croatia. The Frankopan brothers divided, so Martin sided with Friedrich, while Stjepan sided with Matthias. At the peak of the fighting, Gorjanski died and his family took Matthias's side again. Jan Vitovac and Nikola Iločki re-joined his camp, as well. For Matthias, the most valuable was the support of Pope Pius II, nevertheless, that caused chaos among the Hungarian gentry that supported Friedrich. However, the followers of Friedrich consolidated their power with foreign help the next year, so the wheel of fortune continued to spin until the end of the war in 1462, which gave an opportunity to some lords to change camps several times.

With the Pope's mediation in 1462, an armistice was achieved, and the next year, there was lasting peace, with compromised solutions of the property problems. In 1463, Bosnia fell under Turkish rule and the Turks beheaded its last king. Queen Maria escaped to Croatia, but Pavle Špirančić, the Croatian Ban, robbed her there, "making himself famous" with this misdeed for all times. In the same year, the Turkish troops were intruding into Croatia and the Venetian Dalmatia, plundering and setting fire. They defeated the army of Croatian Ban Špirančić and captured him; reached Senj and devastated Krbava and many Frankopans' estate lands. Stjepan Frankopan became the Croatian Ban at the time. From Slavonia, King Matthias invaded Bosnia with an army and soon conquered Jajce from the Turks. As Klaić states, he appointed Emerick Zapolja as the Bosnian Governor, but since Zapolja could not gain any income, the King appointed him Ban of Slavonia, Dalmatia and Croatia, while the Ban of Slavonia and Mačva was Nikola Iločki, Duke of Transylvania.

In 1464, the Turks ravaged Bosnia again, and even intruded into Croatia, devastating the estate lands of Stjepan Frankopan, and abducted his son to slavery. King Matthias did not cease the anti-Turkish activities, but in 1465, he had to deal more seriously with the settlement of the affairs in Slavonia and the regulation of the relations between its landholders. He had to depose Emerick Zapolja because he proved to be incapable. Nikola Iločki became Ban of the entire Slavonia at the time and the King appointed Petar Zob, again, and Ladislaus de Diznosa as Croatian Bans, additionally giving them the titles of Bosnian Bans, that is the Bans of Rama. The next year, Matthias appointed Ivan Thuz of Laka as Ban and Supreme Captain of Bosnia, Croatia and the entire Slavonia. The Ban of Slavonia was Jan Vitovac again, and Pavle Božičković was the Croatian Vice Ban, who immediately set off to conquer the separated towns of Klis and Senj, on which the Venetians had set their sight. The towns surrendered without a fight.

**Comment [cm13]:** Translator's note. The spelling of this name could not be confirmed in the available sources. Therefore, the suggested spelling is given here

## **2. Turmoil in the Hungarian Province of Slavonia during the Second Half of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century**

In 1467, there were bloody confrontations between the clergy and the gentry in Slavonia, behind which stood Osvald Thuz, the Zagreb Bishop of the time. The bloodshed took place during a session of the Synod in the St. Stephen church in Zagreb. The next year, the King intervened, demanding from the Slavonian gentry to pay the Church tithe to the diocese regularly, having ordered the Ban to punish disobedient. In

addition, various conflicts within the gentry itself continued, and the population was languishing in the increasingly bigger taxes that the King had decreed in order to finance his military campaigns. During that time, Croatian Ban Thuz successfully gathered all the Hungarian properties in Croatia under the central power, but afterwards, he was absent for a long time due to being preoccupied with problems on his properties in Slavonia. Ladislaus Markus, the Vice Ban, replaced him, but with no authority among the aristocracy. The families of Frankopan and Kurjaković repeatedly got into bloody conflicts, and then the bloodsheds among the Frankopans themselves started, related to the usurpation of the estate lands. In 1468, the Turks continued with the plundering invasions and the pillage of the Venetian Dalmatia and the Hungarian Croatia and Slavonia. They usually did not siege the fortified towns, but after each invasion, they abducted many people to slavery. Even the Venetians felt so threatened that they started reconciling the quarrelling parties of the Croatian princes, although they had been systematically stirring them against each other previously. When the strategic town of Senj was directly endangered by the Turks, the Venetians asked the Pope to help in the reconciliation of the Frankopan and Kurjaković families.

In 1469, the King appointed Ivan Thuz and Bishop Ivan Česmički as the Slavonian Bans, while the ban's position in Croatia was vacant. Matthias was simply not much interested in the destiny of Croatia, because he was preoccupied with conflicts in the Czech country. In the same year, the Turks pillaged the entire Croatia, and via Croatia, they invaded into Carniola, all the way to the ramparts of Ljubljana. Only when the Turks withdrew with a great number of slaves did Matthias decide to intervene, because there was a danger that all the Croatian princes might join the Venetians, who had helped them with money and armoury. He sent an army to subject the Frankopans first. Precisely during the fight between the Frankopans and Blasius Podmanicky the Hungarian, the King's Captain, the Turks were pillaging the Croatian territory again during their fourth campaign, having crossed the Kupa, arrived in Slavonia, and almost reached Zagreb, which had been preserved by the flooded Sava river by pure coincidence. As soon as the Turks withdrew, the war between Blasius and the Frankopans continued. The winner was Blasius the Hungarian, who conquered the mentioned Senj. The war continued in 1470, because the Frankopans received the help of the Venetians and Friedrich III, the German King. In the end, Friedrich reconciled King Matthias and Prince Stjepan Frankopan II in Vienna, but the Frankopans definitely lost Senj. Then, the King appointed Blasius the Hungarian as the Ban of Bosnia, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. In the same year, 1470, and in the following one, the Turks invaded Slavonia, reaching the Drava, while they pillaged Croatia and Dalmatia all the way to the ramparts of Split, Šibenik and Zadar, reaching Ljubljana and Kranj to the north. Consequently, Blasius the Hungarian entrusted the further defence of Croatia to Vice Ban Pavle Tar. He himself was concentrated on the defence of Slavonia, together with Slavonian Ban Damjan Horvat of Litva, since the Turks had completely broke the Jajce-Belgrade defence line, by having erected the powerful fortress of Šabac. At the same time, the Turks occupied the remaining parts of Herzegovina, while Matthias settled Vladislav Vukčić and Iivaniš Vlatković, who had been his vassals until then, as the noblemen in the counties of Križevac and Zagreb.

In 1471, the Archbishop of Ostrogon and the Bishops from Pečuj and Zagreb raised a great mutiny of the gentry against King Matthias, which soon reached such huge proportions that, out of 75 Hungarian counties, only 9 remained loyal to the King,

including the Archbishop of Kalocz. The insurgents offered the Hungarian crown to Kazimir, the Polish Prince. Having been informed on the conspiracy, Matthias succeeded in bribing and winning over many noblemen to return to his camp. The state council gave him its support, so he stabilised his power as early as 1472. He proclaimed Nikola Iločki as the Bosnian “King” in order to strike back at the “King” whom the Turks had appointed; and Damjan Horvat as Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. In Croatia, Žarko Dražojević, the Prince of Poljica, conquered Klis and parts of Cetina with Venetian help, so Ban Pavle Tar attacked the regions of the Dalmatian towns in return. During those fights, he almost died by a Venetian rifle. In 1472, the Turks invaded and pillaged Croatia three times, especially the Frankopans’ districts. Pope Sixtus IV tried to reconcile the Venetians, the Frankopans, the Kurjaković’s, Petar Zrinski and the King’s Captain in Senj in order to confront the Turks with united forces in the future. The effects were weak, because the Turks, passing through Croatia in 1473, invaded Carniola, Styria and Carinthia, which were under the rule of the German King and the Roman Emperor. In the same year, Matthias gave the banate of Slavonia to Ivan Ernušt for life, while he confirmed the election of Damjan Horvat as the Ban of Croatia and Slavonia. In 1474, the Turks invaded Slavonia several times, devastating everything in their way, and especially Zagorje. During a new invasion, Croatia and Slavonia were severely damaged, and the population was abducted to slavery *en masse*, so that many regions remained deserted.

When, in 1477, Matthias started a war against the German King and the Roman Emperor, invading Austria with an army, Juraj Vitovac, the Prince of Zagorje, invaded Styria via Slavonia at the same time, devastating everything to Maribor, while Stjepan II and his son Bernardin Frankopan invaded Carniola via Croatia, destroying everything in their way. During that campaign, the Turks devastated Croatia again. In the same year, Nikola Iločki died, so the Turks could invade Croatia and Slavonia via one part of Bosnia more easily, reaching not only Carniola, Styria and Carinthia, but Furlanija as well. Then, Ladislaus of Egervár, the new Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, was helpless in confronting the Turks, and only the Slavonian gentry recognised his authority as ban, while the Frankopan, Kurjaković, Zrinski and Blagajski Croatian princes ignored him and independently co-operated with the Venetians. Matthias had to summon the Council of Slavonia and give Slavonia the right to organise its own defence from the Turks, and to choose a Provincial Captain who would command its army. The Council was held in 1478, and Vuk Grgurević Branković, the Serbian Despot, attended it as well, to whom the King had previously given some bigger estate lands in the counties of Križevac and Zagreb.

### **a) The Armed Confrontations of the Slavonian and the Croatian Gentry**

It seems that after that, Slavonia was more protected from the Turks to some extent, while the Frankopans were reckoning one with another in Croatia, and the Turks continued to invade. With Venetian help, the Croatian princes succeeded in defeating the Turks once again, which infuriated Matthias even more than the possible news that the Croats were alone and defeated, thus he wrote in a letter to the Venetian Doge that Anž Frankopan was an outlaw, and that his brother-in-law Prince Karlo Kurjaković was a thief and a marauder. In 1479, the royal army, headed by Ladislaus of Egervár,

attacked Frankopan and seized all his towns and estate lands, and he barely escaped to the Venetians. Consequently, Ivan Frankopan VII, Prince of Krk and Anž's uncle, occupied the towns of Novi and Bribir, attacking Vinodol. Matthias sent an army under the command of Blasius the Hungarian that suppressed Ivan II and forced him to retire to Krk. In 1479, together with the people of Senj, Blasius started the preparations for disembarking on Krk. The next year, he disembarked on the island and besieged Omišalj. After its conquest, he seized the town of Krk. The Venetians sent their fleet in order to defend Krk, but they started the fight only when Prince Ivan VII officially surrendered Krk under their rule. All of a sudden, the force ratio was changed, so after a period of bleeding, Blasius had to give up the siege of Krk. The Venetians even blocked the food provision from the continent and he was bereaved both of the boats and ships. Only when he surrendered Omišalj and the entire war loot to the Venetians, they took Blasius and his army across to Senj and Vinodol. In order to get him out of the way, the Venetians transferred Prince Ivan Frankopan VII among the Venetians as well, so the Frankopans finally lost the island of Krk. Upon his return, Blasius the Hungarian finalised the occupation of Vinodol, including under the royal power the entire littoral area from Senj to Trieste.

Croatia and Slavonia suffered Turkish invasions in 1480 as well. During one such campaign, they pillaged south-western Hungary via Slavonia and Međumurje. On several occasions, the Turks suffered defeat during those undertakings as well. Then, Matthias attacked Bosnia, together with Ladislaus of Egervár, the Slavonian Ban; Petar Dojčin, the Bosnian Ban; and Vuk Grgurević, the Serbian Despot. Bloody battles were fought all the way to today's Sarajevo; many Turks were killed, everything in the way was set to fire and destroyed; but Matthias's army suffered great losses as well. The campaign was ended with a return to Slavonia. Upon the return, the King stayed in Zagreb, trying to settle the situation in anarchy-stricken Slavonia due to the tyranny of the lords. He ordered that a great Slavonian Council should be held in 1481. The Council composed a census of the lords, gentry and ordinary people who were accused of different crimes, thus the General Royal Court issued the death sentence to many of them, even to noblemen. Later, Matthias granted pardons at certain requests, for example, to the Babonić Balgajski princes, the Frankopan princes of Zagreb County, etc., abrogating all the sentences in the end. In 1482, Blasius the Hungarian was appointed the Slavonian Ban. The Turkish invasions lasted during all of 1482, and a particularly great Turkish invasion in Croatia took place in 1483, when they crossed the Una and divided into three troops, invading Carniola and Carinthia as well, and returning with a great loot, without any resistance. Still, the Ban of the time, Matthias Geréb, and Vuk Grgurević ambushed them at the Una River and severely beat them. Prince Bernardin Frankopan and his close cousins Ivan Cetinski and Mihailo Slunjski excelled in the fights. Afterwards, Sultan Bayezid offered peace to Matthias for five years, which the King accepted.

Matthias Geréb, the Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, was a close cousin of the King's, so he remained at that position for six years. The Ban is remembered for inciting the Croatian and Vlach plundering incursions into the Dalmatian towns' properties under Venetian rule. The Venetians fought back with their own incursions into the Croatian parishes and districts. The Croatian Ban at the time was Perusith Gáspár, and Grand *Zhupans* Petar Bočkaj of Rasinja and Mihailo Kerken of Beloševac became the Slavonian Bans. It is interesting that, when Matthias started a war against the

German Emperor and occupied Vienna and most of the parts of Styria, Carniola, and Carinthia, the Princes of Zagorje Juraj and Velizar, Jan Vitovac's sons – rebelled against him and aligned themselves with the Emperor. The King sent a troop headed by Jakov Sekelj, the Captain of Styria, Carniola, and Carinthia. The insurgents were defeated and the King seized all their estate lands. When Matthias died in 1490, an elective council was summoned, which elected the new ruler Wladyslaw Jagelović II, the son of Polish King Kazimir VI and the grandchild of the earlier Hungarian King Albrecht Habsburg, on his mother's side. The new King took on many obligations under an oath, but for us, the most interesting oath is that to nobody else “. . . but the Hungarians – and only those Hungarians who truly deserved it – would he give and confer the positions of Duke of Transylvania; *Zhupan* of Sekúl, Temes and Pressburg; then, Ban of Slavonia, Dalmatia and Croatia; as well as of Severin, Belgrade, Jajce and other places, and even the governance over the fortresses of the Krajina and the royal towns” (Book IV, p. 206). It is more than obvious that all the lords and the gentry who were appointed either as Croatian-Dalmatian or Croatian Ban, and sometimes as Ban of both these provinces, were considered Hungarians and they identified themselves as such.

### **b) The Croatian Landholders Divided Between the Germans and the Hungarians**

After the coronation, the new King confirmed the election of Ladislaus of Egervár as Ban of Slavonia, Dalmatia and Croatia, but he appointed Ivaniš Corvinus, Matthias's illegitimate son, as the Slavonian Herzog. Meanwhile, Roman-German Emperor Maximilian, as the competing claimant, invaded Hungary and easily conquered it, even Stolni Biograd, thus he finally reached Buda. Many Croatian and Slavonian landholders aligned themselves with him, among whom the most important were Prince Ivan Frankopan IX Cetinski, Nikola Frankopan VI Tržачki, Prince Mihailo Blagajski, all the descendants of the Talovac Bans, etc. According to Klaić's opinion, the loyalty to King Wladyslaw II declared by Ban Ladislaus of Egervár and Karlo Kurjaković, Prince of Krbava, as well as Prince Bernardin Frankopan, crucially contributed to the fact that Slavonia and Croatia were not completely aligned with Maximilian. The German army even conquered Zagreb without a fight at the time. However, Maximilian was getting short of money for paying mercenaries, so he had to give up the conquest of the strongly fortified Buda, and returned to Austria. Wladyslaw II was engaged in a war with his brother Ivan Albert, whom he attacked in the Czech country and Moravia. With their father's mediation, the brothers finally reconciled after huge bloodshed. Now, Wladyslaw II had a free hand to set about liberating the territories that Maximilian had seized. Furthermore, Herzog Ivaniš Corvinus got an assignment from the King to banish the Germans from West Slavonia and Zagreb. The well-fortified German crew in Zagreb soon received reinforcement from the Emperor, but Ivaniš and Ban Ladislaus of Egervár defeated those new troops in front of the town. Afterwards, in March 1491, the taking of Zagreb by storm began, whose German troops were defeated. Soon, all Maximilian's troops were banished from Hungary, and a peace agreement was concluded the next year, which implied, among other things, the amnesties of the Croatian and Slavonian landholders, who had previously aligned themselves with Maximilian, and it even approved that they could serve the German Emperor in the future. One of the most important items of the peace agreement proposed that Emperor Maximilian Habsburg

should ascend the Hungarian royal throne if Ladislaus II died without leaving behind a male heir. The Hungarian Council in Buda in 1492 confirmed that provision in particular; still, as Klaić states, the landholder nobles of Croatia and Slavonia – 63 Barons, lords and noblemen in total – signed this provision in a special document.

### **c) The Consequences of the Defeat on Krbava Field**

Although the Council's decree confirmed the former "rights and freedoms" of all the kingdoms and provinces within Hungary, and accordingly of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia; Slavonia additionally received special privileges, like the one proposing the taxes reduced to half of the regular amount prescribed for Hungary. On the other hand, Croatia was in the biggest trouble. As the armistice expired, starting from 1490, the Turks incessantly attacked Croatia, but often western Slavonia as well. In 1491, the Bosnian Pasha invaded Carniola via Croatia and Slavonia, but his army was defeated on the way back. The Turks suffered an especially grave defeat at Udbina, where the Frankopans excelled again, Ivan Cetinski and Mihailo Slunjski in particular. In addition to that, the Turks were defeated at the Una River, so they did not appear on those territories in 1492. During that standstill, fights broke out among the Frankopans themselves, but the Frankopans clashed with Ban Ladislaus and Herzog Ivaniš as well. Having become considerably stronger, the Frankopans tried to return all the usurped properties, quibbling among themselves over predominance. They waged especially tough fights over the town of Senj. The King appointed Emerick Derenčin and Ivan Bot of Bajna as Croatian Bans, whose task was to clamp down on the Frankopans' conquest of Senj.

Ban Derenčin drove Bernardin Frankopan from Senj, and he escaped to Brinje. Ban Ivan Bot died during the siege of Brinje. During the fights over Brinje, a great Turkish army raided Croatia. Hadum, the Bosnian Pasha, had previously penetrated into Carniola and Styria via the Una and the Kupa, thus he returned with huge loot and many slaves. Setting fire to and killing everyone on their way, the Turks besieged Modruša, which was a seat of the Bishop of Krbava and Modruša. After receiving the news, Bernardin reconciled with the Ban, so Emerick Derenčin gathered a significant army of many Croatian and Slavonian noblemen on Krbava Field at Udbina. There, the Turks severely beat him on 9 September 1493, capturing and abducting him, as well as many landholders and ordinary people, to slavery. As one contemporary at the time of the battle writes, and Klaić quotes him, presenting the situation in Croatia after that catastrophic defeat, that ". . . almost the entire country was devastated and deserted, because all the people had risen up publicly against the Turks, except the ones who were not able to join them due to their old or young age, sure that they would slaughter the Turks, which they had managed several times before at the same place" (p. 232). Further on, he describes that in Croatia ". . . such unprecedented sorrow and grief reigned that even a heart harder than stone would begin to cry over their ordeal, since many fathers and mothers had lost their sons and daughters the sons were killed, and the daughters were taken away; many women became widows" (p. 232).

The consequences of the defeat were far-reaching. The Bishop of Krbava and Modruša transferred his seat to the littoral town of Novigrad, ". . . and the remaining population in southern Gvozd started to find refuge in the more secure areas, especially in Slavonia between the Sava and the Drava rivers. However, the victorious Turks strove

to exterminate the remaining Croatian lords and to annex the Croatian country to their rule. Unwilling Croatian princes and gentry began to plan and work on escaping from a sure doom” (p. 233-234). The remaining Croatian noblemen, disappointed with the attitude of Ladislaus II, asked Emperor Maximilian for help. The King appointed Ladislaus von Kaniža as Croatian Ban, for whom he knew that he was loyal to the German King and the Roman Emperor. Having become the Slavonian Ban as well, von Kaniža went to Slavonia first to organise the defence from the future Turkish attacks. In 1494, von Kaniža tried to win over “. . . the Slavonian nobles so that they could defend not only their own kingdom with their troops, but to go to the south in Croatia as well, and even further, wherever it was necessary. Still, the Slavonian nobles opposed this, and when the Ban wanted to carry it out coercively, they sent two representatives to Buda right away to file a suit against him” (p. 236). The King forbade the Ban to force the Slavonian noblemen to war outside the Slavonian borders, because that would be against all the current customs and the Slavonian laws. Upon that, von Kaniža went to Croatia and dealt with the fortification of the town of Senj first, and afterwards summoned a Croatian Council in Bihać on the Una River. Crying for help, the Council addressed the Pope. While the maimed Croatia was trying to organise and recover itself to some extent, there was a new civil war in Slavonia, again due to the attempts of some lords to usurp Herzog Ivaniš Corvinus’s property. Palatine Stjepan Zapolja, Zagreb Bishop Osvald Thuz and others rose against Ivaniš, thus vast devastations ensued.

In that year, the Turks forced the Sava by Mitrovica, then they set off for Zagreb, plundering and destroying everything and abducting to slavery everyone in their path. While the troops were still in Slavonia, Bosnian Pasha Hadum attacked the Croatians again. The Blagajski Princes made a deal with the Turks and let them pass through their lands without fighting. The widow of Karlo Kurjaković made a deal with them as well, only Prince Bernardin Frankopan resisted them. In that year, Prince Wladyslaw II made a three-year armistice with the Turks, and then committed himself to crushing of the conspiracy of Palatine Stjepan Zapolja and Herzog Lovro Iločki, who possessed huge lands in Mačva, Srem and Slavonia to the Austrian border, and who was suspected of being in collusion with the Turks. At the end of 1494, the King, with great forces, conquered Ilok. The King’s followers started to conquer Lovro’s towns in Slavonia, and Đurađ Branković, the Serbian Despot, occupied Mitrovica. The next year, the King dealt with settling of the affairs in Slavonia and organising its defence from the Turks, by helping the defence of Jajce and a part of western Bosnia under Hungarian control. At the time, he appointed Ladislaus von Kaniža as the Croatian Ban, but he did not stay at that position very long, because the King soon appointed Ivaniš Corvinus as Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. Lovro Iločki aligned himself with Wladyslaw II in the end, but he was deprived of many properties. Due to the disobedience primarily of the noblemen of the Križevac and Virovitica counties, Ivaniš Corvinus could not come to his banate without an army. He appointed Ivan Đulaj as the Slavonian Vice Ban, who did not possess any property in Slavonia, which caused the additional dissatisfaction of the Slavonian landholders. Since his authority among the lords was very weak, Ivaniš decided to connect with the Frankopans by marrying Prince Bernardin’s daughter. This really did make him stronger for a short while, thus Ban Ivaniš spent most of the time in Bihać and Zagreb, trying to organise the defence of Slavonia and Croatia. However, due to the incessant schemes of Stjepan Zapolja, he lost the support of King Wladyslaw.

In 1497, Ladislaus II appointed Juraj of Kaniža as the new Ban, but Ivaniš Corvinus refused to comply and renounce his position of the Ban. The rule of two Bans lasted for a certain period, but at the end of 1498, the King reconciled with Ivaniš and appointed him Ban for life. As the armistice had expired, the Turks, divided into two columns, raiding Croatia in 1499, but Ivaniš defeated both of them, which discouraged the Turks from new campaigns for a while. Still, sporadic clashes took place, because the Venetian-Turkish war was going on, in which the Bosnian Pasha devastated the region of the towns Zadar and Nin, but was unsuccessfully besieging Hungarian Ostrovica. In 1500, the Bosnian Turks pillaged the surroundings of Nin, Zadar, Trogir and Split again, while the Croatian Vice Bans, Marčinko of Knin and Pavle Štrbac Kosulić of Ostrovica, as well as Duke Žarko Dražojević, opposed them. When the three of them raided Herzegovina in a counterattack, the Turks suddenly surrounded and defeated them, and they barely managed to get out alive. In 1501, the Pope, the Venetians and the Hungarians formed an alliance for the war against the Turks. Josip Sam, Captain of Temes, led an army against Serbia, where he inflicted a heavy defeat on the Turks, and then returned to Belgrade. Ban Ivaniš led another other troop, while the Frankopan's, the Kurjaković's, the Zrinski's and other princes joined him. They inflicted a heavy defeat on the Turks at Jajce. The next year, the Turks besieged Jajce, but again without success. At the end of 1502, the Venetians concluded a peace agreement with the Sultan, and in the middle of 1503, Wladyslaw did the same, and what is more – for the period of seven years. In 1504, Ban Ivaniš died, and just before that, Wladyslaw II had had two strokes. Consequently, Prince Bernardin started working on designating his five-year-old grandchild, Ivaniš's son Krsto or Christopher, as the heir to the throne, considering the fact that the King only had a daughter, Ana. Meanwhile, Krsto suddenly died in 1505, thus stories were concocted that Queen Ana had poisoned him.

### **3. Dalmatia's Becoming a Constituent Part of Hungary**

As the King did not agree to promise that his 2-year-old daughter Ana would marry Jovan Zapolja, Stjepan's son, the Hungarian nobles raised a mutiny and endangered the King in 1505. Soon, a new Council was summoned, which decided that a foreigner should not be brought to the Hungarian throne under any circumstances and that the King must in any case belong to "this Scythian nation" (p. 269). However, after secret negotiations, Wladyslaw II arranged the marriage of his daughter Ana and Ferdinand, the younger son of Emperor Maximilian Habsburg. Since Maximilian came to the Hungarian borders with an army afterwards, Wladyslaw II was forced to prepare himself for a war. When Maximilian raided the Hungarian territory, Ivan of Kaniža, Anž Frankopan of Brinje and Ivan Karlović (Kurjaković) of Krbava joined him. After the German successes in the start, the Hungarian landholders had to nevertheless accept an armistice. Precisely at that time, the Hungarian Queen bore a son, Ludwig, so the reasons for the quibbles over the potential heir to the throne disappeared, and peace was made. The next year, 1507, the Hungarian Council proclaimed Jovan Zapolja as Supreme Captain of Hungary, while the royal power was limited with an obligatory requirement that there had to be approval from the State Council for every decision. Dissatisfied, Wladyslaw II secretly agreed with Maximilian again.

In 1508, the Council approved the coronation of 2-year-old Ludwig. After the death of Ivaniš Corvinus, the King appointed Andrija Bot of Bajna and Franja Balaš of Đarmat



as Bans of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, but the Slavonian nobles did not recognise them. The King yielded to some extent, so instead of Balaš, he appointed Marko Mišljenović. Soon, both Bans lost the King's trust, so in 1508 he appointed new Bans □□ Juraj of Kaniža and Ivan Ernušt of Čakovac. However, the deposed Bans refused to abide by the King's decision, so for the next two years, there were practically four Bans. It happened that mainly the landholders in Slavonia recognised Kaniža and Ernušt, and those in Croatia supported Bot and Mišljenović. While the German-Venetian war was raging and, among other things, Rijeka had fallen into German hands (which the Venetians would practically destroy when they re-conquered it), Andrija Bot of Senj and Bernardin Frankopan of Vinodol, in collusion with Maximilian, were attacking Krk and raided Istria, but in the same year, 1509, the Turks invaded Croatia and pillaged the Frankopan properties. Princes Ivan Karlović, Juraj Mrasinjski, Nikola Zrinski, Antun Blagajski and some others took the Venetian side. With their mediation, the Venetians reconciled with Bot at the end of the year.

### **a) The Hungarian Ultimatum Given to Venice for Ceding Dalmatia**

In 1510, the Hungarian Council demanded from the Venetians to return Dalmatia to Hungary in the form of an ultimatum, and since they refused it, it was decided to form an anti-Venetian alliance with the German Emperor and the French King. However, the Hungarian-Venetian war did not ensue, because the Hungarian Treasury was empty, and Prince Ivan Karlović had refused to lead the Hungarian army against his friends, the Venetians. Both the Germans and the Venetians were trying to win over the Turks as their allies in the war. Klaić sums up the consequences of those sporadic alliances like this: "Whether the Turks helped the Emperor or the Venetians, the Croatian regions, through which the Turks passed, were the first ones to suffer damages" (p. 293). Even Ivan Karlović, Prince of Krbava, was in collusion with the Turks, and he helped them raid the Frankopan property in 1511. As the Ban's position was vacant again, the King appointed Palatine Emerick Perenyi as Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia in 1512, and Franjo Balaš and Franjo Hedervary as Vice Bans. Then, despite a concluded peace agreement, the Turkish invasions into Slavonia and Croatia became more frequent. Perenyi successfully imposed his authority as Ban both on the Slavonian and on the Croatian lords, so he began the preparations for the defence of these Hungarian provinces. He appointed Ivan Karlović as Vice Ban and Captain of Dalmatia and Croatia. Then, after one raid the Turks firstly occupied the banate of Srebrenica, the former Usora, and afterwards invaded Croatia. The Ban ordered an immediate sending of help from Slavonia to Croatia, ". . . but the Slavonian counties and the governor of the Zagreb diocese denied him their troops" (p. 299). In 1513 as well, the Turks pillaged Croatia, endangering Knin and Senj and occupying a few smaller towns. Since the Ban soon fell ill, the King entrusted the defence of Slavonia and Croatia to Petar Berislavić, Bishop of Vetricum and State Treasurer.

Petar Berislavić quickly gathered an army, so together with Mihail Frankopan Slunjski, Nikola Zrinjski and Franjo Berislavić advanced on the Turks, whom they met at Dubina on the Sunja River and defeated them. Since the defeat did not dispirit them, in 1514, the Turks reached Skradin and attacked Knin. As the Pope called for a Crusade in the same year, many peasants gathered in Hungary who, when their hopes of actually going to war were dashed, raised a rebellion against the gentry, killing and plundering

on all sides. On that occasion, the Bishop of Cenad was even impaled. Jovan Zapolja's role in crushing this mutiny was crucial, and he brutally took revenge on the peasants afterwards. The position of the vassal peasants was significantly deteriorated throughout all of Hungary. In that year, 1514, Berislavić was appointed the true Ban. The Slavonian Vice Bans were Baltazar Baćan and Gáspár Alapić. The Ban's first duty was to nip the peasants' rebellion in Slavonia in the bud, and then he had to settle the disputes of the quarrelling Slavonian landholders. During that period, the Turks invaded Croatia three more times, devastating Krbava, having conquered Karin and besieging Petrušić, and afterwards they returned to Bosnia without any obstacles. When, in 1515, the Turks reached Senj, Ban Berislavić set off to confront them close to Šibenik and awaited the promised Czech army. Aid to Croatia was denied again by “. . . the Slavonian nobles gathered at the Council of Križevac in April, saying that they were obliged to defend only their own kingdom according to the old custom, so they did not have to cross the Sava and shed blood for the Croatian towns of the Krajina” (p. 309). In May 1515, the Turks heavily defeated Ban Berislavić's army.

#### **4. The Hungarian Province of Croatia under Turkish Attack**

King Wladyslaw II Jagelović died in 1516, having arranged previously the marital contracts of his children with the German Emperor in Vienna and having performed the weddings. His son and heir, Ludwig II Jagelović, was ten at the time, and the Hungarian Council did not accept the guardians chosen by his father, but designated the State Council to execute the power until the King came of age. The lords remained divided into the group supporting Emperor Maximilian as the King's guardian, and the group that wanted Jovan Zapolja, the powerful Duke of Transylvania, as Governor. There were even bloody confrontations among them, so the entire situation in Hungary was utterly unsettled. The lords succeeded in posting Stephen Báthory as Palatine, while the lower gentry ardently supported Zapolja; thus the intrigues lasted for a long time. During that time, Ban Berislavić had troubles, because the gentry constantly caused problems, and the Turks were invading Klis and Skradin in 1517. Prince Ivan Karlović was so endangered that he offered three of his own towns in Croatia to the Venetians in exchange for some properties in Lombardy. The personal enemy of Ban and Bishop Erdedi, Toma Bakač Erdedi, Hungarian Primate Cardinal, was incessantly working against him. Croatia did not receive any kind of help from the other Hungarian lands. In order to wane the pressure a bit, the Ban gathered a smaller army in 1518 and raided Bosnia, defeating the Turks in one battle; nevertheless, he had to return immediately, because his force was too weak for a more serious campaign. During a Turkish invasion in 1519, the properties of Prince Ivan Karlović were damaged the most, but so were the other Croatian regions. “Ban Berislavić was seriously worried again, and even more so because the miserable population of those areas were escaping all the way to Buda, seeking the protection and help of their King” (p. 341). That mass escape of the remaining Croatian population became unstoppable and resulted in the fact that almost all the Croatians had migrated from Croatia to the north in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1520, when Ban Berislavić was killed, the Turks raided Croatia several times, setting fire and plundering, reaching Istria during one invasion and even Flanders during a later one.

When Sultan Suleiman II started a campaign against Belgrade in 1521, the Bosnian Turks raided Croatia and the Dalmatian Venetian towns again. The Croatian Ban at the

time was Petar Keglović. Upon the fall of Šabac, the Turks crossed the Sava and pillaged Srem and eastern Slavonia. While the Hungarian lords remained with their arms folded, and while the King was gathering an army in a limp manner, Belgrade fell too, so the Turks settled there, keeping the towns in Srem. The next year, there was certain standstill on the global level. “Nevertheless, a small war on the borders of both countries was raging more fiercely than ever, and Croatia in particular suffered heavy damages, so it seems that the Bosnian and other *sandžaks* would tear it apart and wipe it out completely” (p. 358). While the internal Hungarian political affairs were being burdened by the constant intrigues between the lords, the banate of Severin fell into Turkish hands in 1524. The quibbles among the gentry became even fiercer from then on, lasting until the Battle of Mohacs. Nobody thought about Croatia’s destiny starting from 1521. “It seems as if the King was thinking of leaving Croatia once and for all at the time, and that the Venetian deputy Orio had spoken the truth when he said that the King had once told him that Croatia meant nothing to him” (p. 378). It made Princes Ivan Karlović, Bernardin Frankopan and Nikola Zrinski – already strongly connected among themselves through ramified family relations at the time – think about their own destiny together. The Sultan’s deputy came to visit them on several occasions, so at the time, “. . . the people were muttering about the Croatian lords’ bargaining with the Turks, about the future submission of the entire Croatia from the Sava to the sea to the Sultan, and about paying tribute to him” (p. 378). Their requests for help fell on the deaf ears of the Pope, the Hungarians and the Venetians. In 1522, Knin surrendered to the Turks, upon which all the people of Skradin abandoned their town, so the Turks conquered it completely deserted. Then they besieged Klis. In the meantime, the Ban at the time, Ivan Karlović, was confronting the Frankopans of Slunj. The Austrian Archbishop finally sent Count Nikola Salm to the rescue of the then Croatian Ban, Ivan Karlović, so they defended Bihać and Krupa together. The Turks kept raiding, but they could not conquer any more Croatian towns. Thus, Archduke Ferdinand acquired a greater reputation than the Hungarian King on the territory of Croatia. In the autumn of 1523, when he thought that the Turks would not attack during the winter, the Austrian Archduke withdrew his forces. The Turks took advantage of that and organised several plundering campaigns. They succeeded in conquering the strategically important Ostrovica, and dangerously besieged Klis. Klis received help from Senj, so the Turks were defeated. Still, Udbila suffered grave damages again. In April 1524, the Turks pillaged the lands of the families of Karlović, Zrinski, Blagajski and Frankopan, and penetrated into Carniola.

As Klaić writes, “Precisely those last raids were the reason why the Croatian people started leaving their wretched homeland, as concluded from King Ludwig’s charter from 17 May 1524. With that, he let the Croatians, who could not live peacefully and securely in the Croatian Kingdom due to fear and the incessant Turkish invasions, settle in Hungary on the estate lands of Franjo Batthyány, the King’s butler, and build houses. While the people were running away *en masse* to more secure regions, the Croatian gentry were ingratiating themselves with Archduke Ferdinand to a greater extent, and were looking for protection from him and his governors in the Austrian lands. Not only Ban Ivan Karlović, but the Frankopan Princes, Prince Nikola Zrinski and Prince Stjepan Blagajski as well, and even the lower gentry, offered their services to the mentioned Archduke and Bernardin Ričan, his Supreme Captain, who had replaced Count Nikola Salm” (p. 392).

Furthermore, apart from the then Ban Ivan Karlović, King Ludwig II appointed Ivan Tahi as the Ban of Slavonia and Croatia, but the Slavonian and the Croatian gentry never recognised him. When Tahi usurped some of his towns, Ivan Karlović entirely aligned himself with Ferdinand, and almost all the Croatian noblemen followed his example. In the meantime, the Slavonian noblemen were quibbling among themselves and usurping the estate lands of the deceased Serbian Despot, Franjo Berislavić. In 1525, the King appointed Franjo Batthyány as the new Ban of Slavonia and Croatia. In the same year, the Turks pillaged almost the entire Croatia, occupying and setting the town of Bag, at the foot of Velebit, on fire. “On this occasion as well, many people were abducted to slavery, and many of them started to migrate to foreign lands. One part went to the neighbouring island of Krk, which was under Venetian rule; and another part escaped to Italy, where they settled in Apulia, Marchi and Abruzzo. There is no doubt that the present Croatian settlers in the Italian province of Molisa are the wretched descendants of those refugees, because even now they mention Prince Ivan Karlović in their songs” (p. 405). The remaining Croatian noblemen did not recognise Ban Franjo Batthyány, but only the Austrian Archduke as their master, so Batthyány could only gather the Slavonian nobles.

Before the great Turkish raid in 1526, a huge number of the defectors from Serbia came to Hungary. Among them, the most eminent was Duke Pavle Bakić. The Hungarian lords hoped that “. . . that all the defectors would follow Bakić’s example and that the entire Turkish Bosnia, Serbia and Bosnia would be deserted in a short while, and consequently, that the power of the Turkish state would finally diminish” (p. 418). In regard to that, Trpimir Macan adds his comment: “While many residents of the Croatian kingdom were leaving their homeland and were settling in Hungary and the Austrian lands, especially in Italy, still, the residents of the Turkish Empire were coming to the Croatian lands not only the Christians, but the Muslims as well, who were converting to the Christian religion. Those new residents were called defectors (*pribeg, prebeg*)” (p. 418). With a huge army, the Turks easily occupied Srem and, after besieging Petrovaradin, they conquered it as well. Apart from the mobilisation of the forces in Hungary and Transylvania, King Ludwig ordered that the entire Slavonia, including all the serfs, should take up arms. Very few Croatian lords appeared at the Battle of Mohacs, although the King had been hoping to see the celebrated Prince Krsto Frankopan until the last moment. He had served Austrian Archduke Ferdinand in the previous battles, and the King had appointed him as his Principal Duke.

Frankopan did not respond to the King’s request for military action for two probable reasons: the first was that the King had kept him in Buda’s prison for a short time because the Prince had hit Archbishop Salkaj while the Archbishop was presiding over the state council in 1525; the second probable reason was that he did not believe in the power and organization of the Hungarian army.

As Klaić specifies, King Louis II received the support of only three thousand cavalymen and three thousand infantrymen from Slavonia, under the command of Ban Batthyány, Ivan Tahi, Ivan Banfi and Simon Erdődy, the Bishop of Zagreb. “The Croatian aristocrats who arrived for the battle were: Mihailo Zrinski and Matija II Frankopan Slunjski, then Franjo Jožefić, the Bishop of Senj, Grgur Orlović, the Captain of Senj, and Juraj Kobasić, a relative of the Bishop of Senj. The great majority of the Croatian lords and nobility did not arrive; after considerable discussion with Archduke Ferdinand, they stayed with Nikola Jurišić, Commander in Chief, in their homeland,

which also needed defending. With the arrival of Slavonian and Croatian companies, the whole army of King Louis II barely amounted to 26-28,000 men; the army had up to eighty cannons, some of which were given to the King as a gift by the city of Vienna” (p. 423). The Ottoman army outnumbered the Hungarian army at least five to one and had an incomparably larger number of cannons at its disposal. The Hungarian army, which was comprised of many Serbs, Bohemians and Polish, was catastrophically defeated, and the King himself was killed while trying to escape.

### **a) Klaić’s Unconscious Acknowledgement of the Dissimilarity Between Croatia and Slavonia**

Summing up, at the beginning of the fifth volume - on the general Croatian and Slavonian political circumstances during the 15<sup>th</sup> and in the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries - Klaić thoroughly explains which regions were encompassed by Croatia and which belonged to Slavonia. In relation to that, he writes: “The increasing losses of the Kingdom of Croatia to the south of Velebit gave a reason for the gradual spreading of the Croatian name in the northern part of Gvozd towards the Kupa, Sava and lower Una Rivers. While Croatia comprised only Modruš, Plasi and Drežnik (with Slunj) in the northeast of Gvozd in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, by the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the part of Zagreb County that lay to the south of the Kupa and Sava Rivers that once used to be part of counties of Gorica and Gora, began to be known as Croatian. Running away from the Ottoman invasion, many members of the Croatian nobility and many Croatian people from the southern regions found shelter here and so the whole area from Gvozd to the Kupa and Sava Rivers (between Sisak and Dubica) in the north and the Una River in the east, was increasingly considered Croatian in a narrow sense. The towns of Bihać, Krupa, Kostajnica, Zrin, Topolica or Topusko, Steničnjak and Dubovac, which used to be in Slavonia, were already in Croatia at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. According to a manuscript from 1469, the Kingdom of Croatia was at the time divided into the upper and lower parts. Upper Croatia comprised the parishes in the region from Radobolje on the Cetina River to Otočac and Vrhovine under Gvozd; Lower Croatia encompassed the area from Brinj, Modruš and Drežnik to the Kupa and Una Rivers” (p. 13). Besides, “in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there were four counties in the old Croatia, to the south of Gvozd, namely Lika, Luka, Knin and Poljica Counties. However, in Lika County, many towns were conquered by Princes of Krbava or the Frankopan family so “the Prince or county head of the King’s court among the members of the noble Mogorović family in Lika,” possessed a relatively small region, while the main towns (Počitelj, Belaj or Bilaj, Barleta and Novigrad or Novi) were in possession of hereditary princes. Poljica’s County or County Poljica again fell into the final possession of the Venetians in 1444. Therefore, only two genuine counties (Knin and Luka) remained in Croatia until even they, partially or completely, fell under Ottoman rule in the first quarter of the 16th century” (p. 24).

Apart from those four counties, the Croatian territory encompassed principalities under the rule of hereditary princes, the most significant of which were the Frankopan family, the Kurjaković family, the Nelipić family, the Talovac family, etc. As far as Slavonia is concerned, “after that, the Kingdom of Slavonia remained confined to the land between the Drava and the Sava Rivers (that is, the Kupa River) and thus mainly encompassed four counties: Zagreb, Varaždin, Križevci and Virovitica. In the 15<sup>th</sup>

century, the county that expanded most was Križevci County, which encompassed a great part of Podravina, almost to Valpovo and Osijek. Even though Požega, Vukovo and Srem Counties were considered parts of Slavonia at that time, they were not under the direct rule of the Croatian and Slavonian bans. Thus Požega County was often under the government of dukes of Usora, while Vukovo and Srem Counties were initially under the government of the ban of Mačva, and then under the government of the bans and captains from Šabac and Belgrade” (p. 13-14).

### **b) Bargaining with the Religion of the Croatian Citizenry**

What is of great importance here is the manner in which Klaić presents the structure of the Croatian citizenry of that time and his attempt to forcibly and artificially present the Vlachs as Croatian people: “In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the number of Vlachs and Morlachs dramatically increased in Croatian territory, especially in the Kingdom of Croatia itself, in the south of the Kupa River. They moved from the inland to the islands (Krk island) and, from there, to the Austrian and Venetian Istria. An exceptionally large number of Vlachs and Morlachs was mentioned around 1412 on the estates of the princes of the Nelipić family, namely in the counties or principalities of Cetina (in the vicinity of the towns of Sinj and Travnik), Posušje (in the vicinity of the town of Čačvina), Petrovo Polje (the town of Ključ) and Odorje (the town of Zvonigrad) on the Zrmanja River, as well as in the vicinity of the towns of Omiš, Klis and Kamišac. Those Vlachs helped the Nelipić family in their battles against the Venetians and enjoyed special privileges in return” (p. 26). When the Nelipić family died out, their estates were taken over by Anž Frankopan, who passed a special statute for the Vlachs in Klis in 1436, thus confirming all their previous rights. “Since the statute was drafted in the Croatian language and was written in Cyrillic, there was no doubt that those Vlachs spoke Croatian at that time. This is also proved by the names mentioned in the statute, such as Viganj Dubrovčić, Ninoje Sanković, Tomas Ročević, Matijaš Vuknić, Milić Ostoić, Dragić Prodanić, Blaž Kočić, Hrelja Golešević, Vukat Voinović, Ivaniš Grobačić, Budan Grubšić, Bilosav Dražević, Jelovac Draživojević, Radivoj Vitković, Bulat Kustražić and Ivan Poznanović. Some articles of this statute stated that ‘the Croats shall not keep any Vlachs, save for one locksmith’, as well as ‘not one Serb shall declare oneself as a Vlach, nor shall any Vlach declare oneself as a Serb’, clearly prove that those Vlachs could not be regarded as part of either the Croats or Serbs” (p. 26-27).

Both Serbian and Croatian are Slavic languages, thus being so similar that there are no great difficulties when it comes to establishing meaningful communication. However, the Vlachs that settled there did not speak Croatian, but Serbian, for if they really spoke Croatian, the Croatian language (Chakavian) would not become so suppressed in subsequent historical periods, so as to be eventually reduced to being spoken in only a couple of villages and islands. We saw in the previous volume that Klaić himself confirmed that the term “Vlach” had already changed its meaning in Serbian countries, no longer referring to members of the autochthonous Roman citizenry, but to cattlemen. The Turks used the term Vlach for all Serbs, while the Morlachs were auxiliary detachments of the Turkish army and frequently border guards recruited from the Orthodox Serbs who were, in return, released from their serf duties. It is evident that all the cited names of the Vlachs are purely Serbian. As regards the provision of Frankopan’s statute that prohibited the Serbs to declare themselves as Vlachs, it

pertained to the Serbs who were serfs of the Croatian nobility and who were the natives in the town of Srb and in some other Croatian regions as well. The Croatian nobility did not impose feudal service on the Serbs – Vlachs who settled there subsequently, but they also did not free their Serbian serfs who were native there with a status of partial slavery. Moreover, even Klaić himself confirmed that the Vlachs who arrived there had their own princes, so the Vlachs in Lika founded their own municipalities and courts.

Basing his arguments on the fact that, in 1433, the Vlachs in Lika issued a document on behalf of their municipality as a guarantee that they would not inflict harm of any kind on the Franciscan Monastery of St John above Medak, Klaić says: “it could be surmised that they themselves were Roman Catholics” (p. 28). Well, if they were indeed Roman Catholics at that time, why would they provide written guarantees against the plunder and robbery of their own monastery? That kind of religious respect should go without saying. “The Vlachs from Lika afterwards scattered over the entire Mountain Velebit, all the way to Senj ... An exceptionally large number of Vlachs gathered together in the Dinaric Alps” (p. 28). Following his phoney methodology, Klaić writes that, “Certainly those Vlachs had already been Croatized, for their names included such as Radić Guljević, Radmil Babić, Mozgota Guljević, Radovan Skalić, Matija Terehimčić and Toma Kalčić” (p. 28). All those Vlachs were bound to do military service under the command of the Croatian Ban, so the ethnic structure of the Ban’s army was already significantly changed at that time. “The Ottoman invasion of Serbia, Bosnia and the Hum region (Herzegovina) was the reason for the migration of people from those regions into the still protected Croatian Kingdom. Following 1427, when Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković gave up Mačva with the towns of Belgrade and Golubac to King Sigismund, the Serbian people increasingly started to move to Hungary and eastern Slavonia, especially to Srem. That migration of the Serbs or the Rascian people gained in intensity even more when the Turks turned Serbia into a pashalic after the fall of Smederevo (1459). The fall of Bosnia (1463) and of Herzegovina (1482) were additional reasons for the extensive migration of the Croatian people from these regions to Croatia and Dalmatia, even to Slavonia. The fugitives from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina who sought refuge in free Croatian regions during the Ottoman invasion were called *pribjezi* (*pribeg* or *prebeg*). In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, there had already been a lot of *pribjezi* in the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia. Serbian Despot Vuk Grgurović (Zmaj Ognjeni Vuk) was among them, together with one branch of the Herzogs of Saint Sava from Herzegovina, Hum’s Princes Vlatković, and other noblemen accompanied by masses of commoners” (p. 30). Unfortunately, Klaić does not have any proof that even a single Croat from Bosnia and Herzegovina, running away from the Ottoman Turks, found refuge in Croatia.

### **c) Unfounded Theories about the Nonexistent Croatian Language**

Something else is more important here – something that Klaić had already mentioned in the fourth and specified in the fifth volume: “When Croatia became increasingly exposed to Ottoman intrusions after the terrible Battle at Krbava (1493), the displacement of Croatian people began too. At first, the residents of south Croatia began rushing across Gvozd to, at the time, still sheltered Slavonia, particularly to the areas between Gvozd, the Kupa, Sava and Una Rivers, which were then given name of Croatia. In the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, especially after the fall of Knin (1522),

Skradin (1522) and Ostrovica (1523), the first migrations of the Croats to foreign countries were reported. On 17 May 1524, King Louis II informed Francis Batthyány, who was in charge of the King's subordinates, that "the Croats who could not reside peacefully and safely in our Kingdom of Croatia because of fear and the constant intrusions and invasions of the overly savage Ottoman enemies, whose houses, abodes and all buildings were burnt to the ground and whose property and all possessions were plundered by the said deadly enemies" were allowed to settle in the King's property in Hungary. In 1527, the Croats ran away again, across the sea to Italy, where they established settlements in the regions of Apulia, Marchi and Abruzzo. Lamentable remnants of those Croatian fugitives live in the Italian province of Molisa even today and, in their poems, they mention the prince and ban of that time, the famous Ivan Karlović. In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup>, due to these migrations, many Croatian people came to the coastal towns of Dalmatia and Croatia (Nin, Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, Split, Omiš), which were under Venetian rule, as well as to the free municipality of Dubrovnik. As a result of this, Croatian element began to prevail in those Dalmatian towns where, until 1420, the majority of the inhabitants had been of Roman origin (Zadar, Trogir, Split, Dubrovnik), especially among the commoners" (p. 31-32).

How come the Croatian element was in Dubrovnik? Since the fall of Lastovo under the rule of Dubrovnik, only slight and almost insignificant traces of that element could be found and, in Lastovo, a specific local dialect had developed as a result of the intermingling between people speaking the Chakavian dialect and those speaking the Shtokavian one. Only a couple of books written in the Chakavian dialect from the Dalmatian towns reached Dubrovnik, and that was all. Dubrovnik did not have any Croats anywhere in its immediate neighbourhood and so, even in the rich archive of Dubrovnik, Klaić could not find anything that might serve as a basis for his false thesis. However, he is right when he writes that "under Venetian rule after 1420, Italian started to spread again in the former Croatian towns, such as Šibenik, Omiš, Hvar and Korčula. Generally, in all the towns of Venetian Dalmatia (and Croatia), Latin, i.e. Italian (the Venetian dialect) was used in the public life of that time, while Croatian was used a lot in private life and among family members. It could be said that the great majority of the inhabitants in Venetian Dalmatia spoke, or at least understood, two languages: Roman (old Dalmatian or again Italian) and Croatian" (p. 32). But Klaić, being so diligent with regard to Italian dialects and paying special attention to old Dalmatian language and the Venetian dialect, does not have a word of explanation about the characteristics of that Croatian language, for if he did, he would have to say that Croatian was solely Chakavian, as all historical documents bear witness. The arrival of the Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia was an argument for Klaić's thesis on unchanging ethnic circumstances. "All the numbered settlements and displacements did not, after all, significantly change the ethnographic circumstances in the Kingdom of Croatia until 1526. In the whole Kingdom, the great majority of citizens were still comprised of the Croats - that is, the Slavonians (*Slavinci*). Ludovicus Tubero (Crijević or Cerva, died in 1527), a contemporary historian from Dubrovnik, confirmed that as well when describing the Hungary and Croatia of that time up until 1522: 'From the Dalmatian coastline, washed by the Adriatic sea, to the Drava River, all the inhabitants are Illyrians, whom the Hungarians partly refer to as Croatian, Slavonian or Rascian people. Hungarian is



spoken from the Drava River onwards.’ In addition to the essentially unchanged national circumstances, class circumstances did not change either” (p. 32).

However, bearing in mind the fact that, under the rule of King Matthias Corvinus, the old feudal oligarchy was significantly suppressed in favour of the lower feudal aristocracy - so that even serfs were in some cases given the highest state or church positions, “the old Croatian noble families began to trace their origins to the ancient Roman and Italian families in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is not known whether this was done under the influence of humanism or if they just wanted to thus separate themselves from the new aristocracy. The princes of the Krk-Modruš region started using the new name of Frangipane (formerly Frankopan), while the Babonić family changed its name to Blagajac and the Ursin family became Orsini. Prince Ivan Karlović (formerly Kurjaković) started tracing his origin to the Torquato family of ancient Rome ... An attempt was made to establish ties of kinship between the Zrinj family of the Šubić tribe and the Roman Sulpici family, but this proved unsuccessful” (p.33-34). That was proof of how great the Croatian national consciousness was among the chief Croatian noble families and how much respect they had for that consciousness. Discussing the church and religious matters, Klaić states: “Despite numerous migrations into the countries of the Kingdom of Croatia, the domestic Roman Catholic citizenry was still so numerous that the religious circumstances did not significantly change either. The aristocratic religion still remained Roman Catholicism. There was no doubt that the majority of Vlach settlers belonged to the Eastern-Greek creed, but it cannot be established whether or not those Vlachs had any sort of church organisation. The situation was the same with the Patarenes (Bogomils) that arrived from Bosnia” (p. 50). This was also the time when the development of Croatian literature began, due to the emergence of Marko Marulić from Split, the first poet who wrote his poems in Croatian (1450 – 1524), though Klaić laid claims to the poets Šiško Menčetić and Đora Držić from Dubrovnik as well, calling them the first Croatian troubadours, despite the fact that there was nothing Croatian about them or their work.

#### **d) Ottoman Pillaging as the Cause of Discord Between Slavonia and Croatia**

Having heard the news of the King’s death in the Battle of Mohacs, the Hungarian noblemen began to divide into two clans, one that supported Ferdinand of the House of Habsburg as a pretender to the throne and another that supported John Zapolya. “Besides, the great majority of the Croatian classes was in favour of Archduke Ferdinand, while the Slavonic nobility was enthusiastic about John Zapolya. The origins of John Zapolya’s family were in the Slavonian land (the town of Zapolje between Vrbova and Nova Gradiška), so how could anyone expect the Slavonian noblemen not to stand by their “Janos”? Under these circumstances, it was only natural that Prince Krsto Frankopan did not take sides with either Archduke Ferdinand or John Zapolya at first, although his indecisiveness could have been interpreted as his own longing for the throne” (p. 75). As to that, at the assembly meeting of the Slavonian Parliament in Koprivnica, Frankopan was entrusted with defending the whole of Slavonia and given a large scope of authority. At the beginning of November 1526, the Hungarian Parliament proclaimed John Zapolya as King. Krsto Frankopan and Simon Erdödy, the Bishop of Zagreb, joined John Zapolya, who immediately appointed Frankopan as Ban of Croatia

and Slavonia and Commander in Chief for the regions between the Danube and the Drava River, giving him back the properties that had earlier been taken away from his family. This strengthened Zapolya's positions in Slavonia even more "but, in response to that, the Kingdom of Croatia only favoured Archduke Ferdinand even more decisively." In the name of the Croatian noble classes, Ivan Perušić, Gašpar Križanić and Ivan Karlović were sent to Ferdinand, the Austrian Archduke, who was first proclaimed King of Bohemia and then King of Hungary. The assembly meeting of the Croatian Parliament was convoked in Cetina on 1 January 1527, to acknowledge Ferdinand I as its King and to pledge loyalty to him. Five days later, the Slavonian Parliament in Dubrava acknowledged Zapolya as its King. Thus, at the beginning of that year, the greatest chasm ever was opened between Croatia and Slavonia.

Generally, King Ferdinand I did not fulfil the promises given to the Croatian princes to help by providing them with the army and money in their defence against the Turks. The Bosnian Pasha increasingly intruded into Krbava, Lika, Gacka and as far as Novigrad and Modruša. In the south of Velebit, the Turks occupied Obrovac, and in Krbava they occupied Udbina along with two more towns. Although, in the beginning, John Zapolya was far more powerful than his German opponent, Ferdinand persistently gathered arms and money for the fight, making various individual promises to win over some Slavonian princes. Besides Francis Batthyány, he also appointed Ivan Karlović as Ban of Croatia, instructing them both to fight against Krsto Frankopan. When Ferdinand I began his military campaign against Hungary, many towns began to surrender one after another, until Zapolya also had to run away from Buda. In one clash with Ferdinand's followers, Krsto Frankopan was wounded and nobody attended the assembly meeting of the Slavonian Parliament that he had convoked with the intention of immediately sending help to Zapolya. Having received the news, he started to settle accounts with Ferdinand's followers in Slavonia, conquer their fortifications and seize their estates. He died doing that during the siege of Varaždin. At the same time, Ferdinand's army defeated Zapolya's army in the decisive Battle of Tokaj, and the new Buda Parliament acknowledged the Habsburg King as its own. In 1528, during these fights, the Turks conquered the entire Banate of Jajce. They thus became a direct threat to Slavonia, as they could earlier intrude on Slavonian territory only by crossing the Una River and through Croatia. The Ottoman invasion continued and, apart from ravaging through the Slavonian and Croatian regions, their plundering detachments began to intrude on Carniola again. Zapolya did not stand still either. First, he found refuge in Poland, together with his most loyal followers, the most prominent of them being Bishops Stefan Brodarić and Franjo Frankopan. Then he took extensive diplomatic and military actions, without hesitating even to scheme with the Turks. Simon Erdődy, the Bishop of Zagreb, acted secretly on behalf of Zapolya in Slavonia. In 1528, one detachment of Zapolya's army managed to defeat Ferdinand's troops, thus allowing Zapolya increasing control over Eastern Hungary, Transylvania and Slavonia. Slavonian noblemen Peter Erdődy, Ivan Banfi, Franjo Tahi, Paul Karacsony, Petar Markov and others were at his side. They succeeded in defeating Ferdinand's followers at Čazma and Bishop Simon, as their leader, soon controlled the whole of Slavonia. Ferdinand sent help to his followers and they besieged Zagreb, the Bishop's residence. However, they were soon forced to retreat and the whole of Slavonia was in Zapolya's hands.

In 1529, Sultan Suleiman openly sided with Zapolya and entered Hungary with his army. Zapolya greeted him at the field of Mohacs, "bowed down to him and kissed his

hand” (p. 115). They conquered Buda with combined forces, where the Turks proclaimed Zapolya as the Hungarian king. The Sultan resumed his journey to Vienna, which he besieged for a while and then came back. Pope Clement VII cursed Zapolya as an Ottoman ally. Bishop Simon, who was seriously wounded in a fight with Ferdinand’s followers, was proclaimed Ban of Slavonia by Zapolya. In 1530, the Bishop convoked the assembly meeting of the Slavonian Parliament in Ivančić, in which the nobility decided to ally with the Turks and definitively defeat the remnants of Ferdinand’s followers gathered at the Gradec Fortress near Zagreb. “Then they would have revenge on the Croats who helped Gradec defend itself, as well as, on the people of Carniola and Styria who took an equal part in the defence of the town by being on the side of the Count Nikola Turn” (p. 117).

As Klaić further described, “Both Croatia and Carniola immediately felt the consequences of the Slavonian-Ottoman alliance. As early as February 1530, the Turks enslaved the people of Kočevje in Carniola, invading Croatia at the same time in agreement with Zapolya’s followers and pillaging it relentlessly. That last plunder in particular overwhelmed the already sad Croats with grief. Andrija Tuškanić, the Bishop of Knin, wrote a letter to King Ferdinand on 24 February to inform him of that last plunder and urge him to swear he would eventually report on anything he was able to do for the defence of the unfortunate kingdom. A little before that, the Croatian noblemen held an assembly meeting of the Croatian Parliament to discuss the defence of their homeland ... They were still ready to give their lives for their King and faith, but Croatia had never been under such a great threat as it was at that moment. The enraged Turks, who had already been attacking Croatia from Bosnia, were now unceasingly invading Croatian estates and property, especially after their recent visit to Hungary when they had conquered several towns in the territory of this very country (Croatia), from which they could intrude on their Christian neighbours. In addition to that, the Slavonian lords and noblemen who used to provide help for the Croats whenever needed, now became their deadly enemies and adversaries, inflicting as much harm on the Croatian people and property as the Turks, with whom the Slavonians had formed an alliance” (p.117).

Having received notice of the Parliament decision, Ferdinand appointed renowned military leader Ivan Kocijan as the Chief Captain of the Croatian army, but Kocijan’s preoccupation was the fight against Bishop Simon. Thus, the civil war in Slavonia broke out again, while the Ottoman intrusions into Croatia became even larger and more devastating. Desperate cries for help from the Croatian nobility again fell on deaf ears. In 1531, after the death of Ivan Karlović and the withdrawal of Francis Batthyány, Ferdinand appointed Andrija Tuškanić, the Bishop of Knin, as the Ban Regent. Thus, two bishops, one in Slavonia and one in Croatia, held the position of Ban in the same period. Bishop Simon, as the Ban appointed by Zapolya, controlled almost all of Slavonia, while Bishop Andrija, as the Ban Regent appointed by Ferdinand, controlled Croatia and some small parts of Slavonia, though with no real power and authority. In 1532, during the new invasion by Sultan Suleiman II, which turned into a plunder, the Turks were returning across Slavonia divided into two columns, through Posavina [the Sava River basin] and Podravina [the Drava River basin], pillaging whatever they could. In the meantime, in Croatia, Prince Stjepan Blagajski gained power by killing members of the noble families of Slunković and Sirović. “On the other hand, the surfs - who were exposed to wilfulness of their lords and constant Ottoman intrusions, as well as to

merciless and inexorable collection of various duties - started abandoning their homeland in large numbers and moving to neighbouring Carniola and Styria under the influence of the lords and noblemen of those regions who lured them with endless promises” (p. 136). When Andrija Tuškanić died in 1533, Ferdinand appointed Petar Keglević as the new Ban Regent and convoked the assembly meeting of the Parliament in Zagreb where, for the first time, both Croatian and Slavonian nobles were in session - at least those who attended the meeting of the Parliament. Klaić remarks that, “after a while, it became almost a regular procedure, and eventually both kingdoms had only one joint Parliament” (p. 137). In Slavonia, the support that the noblemen gave to Zapolya was reduced after the Ottoman invasion. Since Ferdinand made peace with Suleiman II in 1533, Croatia and Slavonia were spared Ottoman plunders in the following two years. In 1535, Simon Erdődy, the Bishop of Zagreb, and his followers withdrew their support for Zapolya and joined Ferdinand.

In 1536, the Bosnian Turks rushed into Slavonia again, especially attacking Požega, while the resistance of the Slavonian noblemen was extremely weak due to mutual discord. On that occasion, the Turks retained some fortifications in Slavonia and then invaded Croatia and conquered the town of Klis in 1537. The fall of Klis did not upset anyone, for this part of Croatia in the south of Velebit had already been written off. That year, Ferdinand I convoked the Slavonian Parliament in order to organize the defence against the Turks and sent Commander in Chief Kocijan with the army to Slavonia in an attempt to wrest control of the town of Osjek from the Turks. Unfortunately, Kocijan had to retreat when the Turks received reinforcements, and defeated him as he went. At the end of that year, King Ferdinand I appointed Tomas Nadasdy and Petar Keglević as respective Bans of Croatia and Slavonia, and he was reconciled with Zapolya the following year. At that time, the Turks were fighting against the Venetians, from whom they seized the Dalmatian towns of Nadin and Vrana in 1538. On their way back, they also conquered the town of Dubica on the Una River in Croatia, which was of great strategic importance as it gave access to Zagreb. In 1539, Nadasdy stepped down as Ban. In 1540, Ferdinand acknowledged Keglević as the only Ban and, in the future, no other ruler would double the position of Ban by appointing two executives for this position with the exception of Ferdinand himself who, not long after that, appointed Jerolim Laški as Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia shortly before the trip to Constantinople, in order to build up his reputation and increase his importance. He never actually exercised the Ban position.

## **5 Croatian Key Figures and Events of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.**

Since John Zapolya died in 1540 and left the throne to his newborn son John Sigismund, in 1541, Ferdinand sent the army to conquer Buda but the Turks came to Buda's help and defeated the invaders, who also left Pest armed and with reserves. Then the Sultan came with a huge army and proclaimed Buda an Ottoman town, leaving Transylvania to the east of the Tisa River to Zapolya's son, as his vassal. On his return, the Sultan conquered Našice in Slavonia too. Since Petar Keglević fell into King's disfavour that year, he was dismissed from his position as Ban of Croatia and Slavonia, but that posed a difficult problem for Ferdinand, who did not know whom to appoint in his place when “those kingdoms have been so crushed, wretched and disorganized that it

could almost be said of the whole of Slavonia that it is turning into a wasteland of loneliness” (p. 193).

### a) **Hungarian Officer Nikola Zrinski**

By the end of 1542, Prince Nikola Zrinski was appointed Ban and, although he was a renowned warrior in the struggle against the Turks, he was considerably disliked for the treacherous murder of Ivan Kocijanić whom he had previously provided with shelter. At the time of the election, he was the only male descendant of his family and he was highly ranked among the Slavonian nobility, as one of his sisters was married to Franjo Tahli from Susedgrad and the other was married to Ivan Alapić from Veliki Kalnik. Immediately upon his establishment as Ban, Nikola Zrinski encountered major problems. He had to resolve the disputes of Slavonian noblemen, he was always in need for money and the Bosnian Turks again started to intrude on the Slavonian territory and seize various fortifications; they even occupied the town of Čazma near Požega, which they had conquered before. Based on the testimonies of contemporaries, Klaić states that the borders of Slavonia were “poorly organized at that time: people, in fear, had already run away in every direction and, in some borderline towns towards the Sanjak of Požega, there was a small number of soldiers with a shortage of firearms and an even greater scarcity of food” (p. 202).

When the Turks besieged Valpovo, the last big town in eastern Slavonia, an internal rebellion developed between the garrison and the peasants who found refuge there and this mighty fortification was handed over to the Turks after the initial destruction and killing to which it had been exposed. For Sultan Suleiman II, Valpovo was a suitable base for his new, significant conquests in Hungary. In the meantime, i.e. in 1543, the Turks ravaged the northern parts of Croatia again, up to Novigrad, and they enslaved great masses of people. In all that misery, the Croatian princes led by Petar Keglević and Juraj Frankopan, recorded one significant victory over the Turks in Gacka near Otočac. The defence line of the remaining parts of Slavonia stretched approximately from Moslavina, across Pakrac and up to Virovitica. That year, Nikola Zrinski married the sister of Stjepan II Frankopan, who did not have any heirs in his family of Ozalj descent, which resulted in the unification of the property and power of two of the most powerful Croatian noble families with estates in Slavonia. At that time, Zrinski had seventeen towns in his possession, while Frankopan had twenty five. Since the Frankopan family line of Cetina descent had just died out, the remaining two lines, aside from the family line of Ozalj descent – the Slunj and Brinjski-Trsat family lines, kept trying, although in vain, to prevent the unification of Zrinski and Frankopan property. In 1544, serious work began on the fortification of the town of Sisak, in the possession of Zagreb Bishopric, as the key point in the defence of the rest of Slavonia, precisely when the Bosnian Turks were crushing the last remnants of the Slavonian defence up towards Virovitica. They did not keep the peace even when a truce was agreed in the main areas of the boundary lines in Hungary in 1545. That year, they threatened Varaždin and Krapina. In place of the payment Nikola Zrinski was entitled to as Ban, and which King Ferdinand I could not provide, Ferdinand I gave Nikola Zrinski the town of Čakovec and all the illegally gained estates of the disloyal nobleman Petar Keglević, though Nikola had to conquer those estates by force in 1546. Keglević wanted to flee to the Turks, but the Ban’s army caught him.

In 1547, Ferdinand agreed a five-year truce with the Sultan, so that he would be able to devote himself to German and Bohemian internal conflicts and problems. Ban Zrinski spent that time quarrelling and litigating with various Slavonian noblemen, especially with those from Turopolje, and with the members of the Keglević family. Despite the truce, the Turks invaded and plundered the rest of Croatia and Slavonia several times, especially in 1550. In 1552, Sultan Suleiman sent a rather large army to continue the conquest of the Hungarian territories, which meant new destruction for Slavonia. Thus the hurried fortification of Zagreb too began in that year. In the summer of that year, Virovitica fell into the Ottoman's hands. The Turks would certainly have moved on, with the intention of attacking Koprivnica or Varaždin, if Prince Peter Erdődy had not attacked them in the south and burnt their Gradiška and Velika. Nevertheless, on their way back to the endangered south, the Turks conquered Čazma as well. In the subsequent attempt to conquer Varaždin, the Ottoman advancement was prevented by Ban Zrinski at the field of Varaždin. Since Ban Zrinski threatened to resign the Ban position for the second time, Ferdinand was forced to do something for the defence of the remnants of Croatia and Slavonia and provide more serious military support and money. He appointed Ivan Ungnad as Commander in Chief, whose main concern was the defence of Slavonia, while his assistant Ivan Lenković, Captain of Senj, was in charge of the defence line from Senj to Bihać. The King ordered the Croatian defence efforts to be paid for by the Duchy of Carniola, while the Slavonian defence efforts were to be paid by the Duchy of Styria and the Duchy of Carinthia. The best evidence that Slavonia was reduced to such a small area and its inhabitants drastically reduced in number is the information that, for the purpose of war contribution at the beginning of 1554, in the whole of Slavonia, only 4,648 chimneys or '*fumo*' should pay tax (2,743 ½ in the county of Zagreb, 1,537 ½ in the county of Varaždin and only 376 in the county of Križevci, because two of its municipalities were completely devastated by the Turks)" (p. 251). In addition to that, in the Slavonian Krajina, "a severe outbreak of the plague occurred (particularly in Križevci, Gradac, Vrbovac and Sveti Petar) that would wipe out these few defenders who survived the Ottoman attacks)" (p. 253).

In 1556, the Bosnian Pasha kept intruding into Croatia and Slavonia as part of the Sultan's preparations for the main invasion of the remnants of Hungary, with the town of Szigetvar attracting exceptional attention. However, their first attempt at besieging it was unsuccessful. The towns of Kostajnica and Novigrad on the Una River then fell into Ottoman possession, as well as an additional 52 Croatian towns and places, which gave the Turks access to the Kupa River. "The Turks increasingly advanced across the Kupa River and mercilessly plundered the fertile and rich Turopolje, where so many noble *pribjegi* from Southern Croatia had found refuge" (p. 265). After the fall of Kostajnica, Nikola Zrinski definitely resigned from the Ban position and decided to devote himself to the defence of his own property. In 1557, Peter Erdődy was already the Ban of Croatia and Slavonia, while Ivan Lenković took over the duty of Commander in Chief from Ungnad. In that same year, Lenković grew in importance tremendously when he defeated the whole brigade of several thousand Turks in the vicinity of Zagreb. The Turks were driven away from the walls of Senj by the brave action of the *Uskoci*. Unable to defend all the towns and fearing that some of them might fall into Ottoman possession, the King ordered many smaller towns at the confrontation line to be pulled down, which, in fact, only made it easier for the Turks to intrude into Croatian and Slavonian territories more frequently and pillage and enslave people. In 1558, the

Bosnian Turks plundered the remnants of Croatia between the Una and Glina Rivers, and then between the Glina and Korana. In the following year, the Turks completed the devastation of what was left of Croatia and then advanced into Carniola and Carinthia. The Parliament of Croatia and Slavonia, which was convoked at the beginning of March 1560 in Zagreb to discuss the possibilities of defence against the constant Ottoman plundering invasions, lamented the destruction of the serfs, which made it extremely difficult to organize anything in these desolate regions. Since the situation was extremely difficult, Price Zrinski wrote to the Palatine Nadasdy at the beginning of June: "Not only do the Turks attack every day, but they also strike and pillage every hour these gloomy remnants of the Croatian Krajina and always with large companies" (p. 291). By the way, Klaić translated that quote from Latin, which was then the basic language for correspondence.

At his personal request, Nikola Zrinski was appointed Captain of Szigetvar in 1561 but, because of that, he had to neglect the defence of his own remaining possessions in Croatia, so that he also ordered some of his towns in the valley of the Una River to be pulled down, so they would not fall in the possession of the Turks. In 1562, Ferdinand agreed an eight-year peace treaty with Suleiman, which brought a certain relief after the years of constant killing, destruction by fire and enslavement. "The sufferings of the wretched Croatian people during that time were beyond words. For that reason, it was not surprising that many of the Croatian people moved either to western Hungary or the hereditary Habsburg duchies, especially to the Duchy of Carniola and the Duchy of Styria. Thus, Prince Franjo Blagajski, whose ancestral towns were exposed to constant Ottoman attacks, began to rule in Carniola, in the town of Boštajn, especially since he had married Baroness Magdalene von Lamberg, and the ruler of that town. A large number of people also migrated from the completely devastated Croatian regions by the Una River to somewhat more secure Slavonian regions, such as Zagorje and Turopolje" (p. 303). In 1563, Ferdinand crowned his son Maximilian as King of Hungary. He appointed Nikola Zrinski as Commander in Chief of Hungary, whose authority in reality extended up to the right bank of the Danube, while Juraj Drašković, who had been the Bishop of Pečuj up to that moment, was appointed Bishop of Zagreb. The members of the Drašković family were Croatian noblemen who lived in the region of today's Lika, but the Bishop's father, Bartol Drašković, left his "homeland, which had already been completely pillaged by the Turks, and, like many other Croatian noblemen, he moved from Lika to the regions between Gvozd and the Kupa River" (p. 307). The following year, in 1564, Ferdinand died.

The Turks broke the truce as early as 1565 and Bosnian Pasha Sokollu Mehmed Pasha besieged Krupa and conquered it. The Turks from Slavonia advanced towards Križevci. In the meantime, Ban Erdődy was trying to convey the ownership of Susedgrad to Franjo Tahi, which led to the severe clashes in which the rebellious serfs defeated the noblemen's army. On account of that, the Parliament of Croatia and Slavonia was convoked in Zagreb in July and, on that occasion, *Podban* [Vice Ban] Ambroz Gregorijanec was dismissed under suspicion that he was behind the peasants' rebellion. When Sokollu Mehmed Pasha intruded into Slavonia across the Sava River in September, Ban Erdődy defeated the Turks in the vicinity of Kloštar Ivanić and Marča. In 1566, Suleiman II personally raised a big army and set off to conquer the strategically very important Szigetvar, which was eventually taken after a month-long siege and the death of all its defenders. Since Suleiman II died during the siege, the Turks, having

consolidated the conquered strongholds, gave up future military conquest. After the death of Ban Erdődy in 1567, the king appointed Jurij Drašković, the Bishop of Zagreb, and Prince Ferenc Frankopan Slunjski as the new respective Bans of Croatia and Slavonia. Since the new Sultan Selim II was not particularly keen on waging wars, Maximilian managed to agree a new several-year-long truce with the Turks, which was broken from time to time by limited Ottoman invasions on Croatia or Slavonia, but also by quick intrusions by Croatian and Slavonian noblemen into the Ottoman part of the Slavonian territory, which was a specialty of Juraj Zrinski, the son of the Captain of Szigetvar Nikola. In 1572, the Hungarian nobility proclaimed Rudolf, the son of Maximilian, as King and, not long after that, Ban Frankopan Slunjski died, which ended the Slunj line of this noble family. In the following years, many peasant rebellions took place in Slavonia due to the unbearably hard situation of the serfs. As Klaić remarks: “those unbearable circumstances had two evil consequences; one was that the serfs increasingly abandoned their homeland and fled to the neighbouring Austrian countries, while the other one was that the serfs would surrender to the Turks without resistance, as soon as they appeared. Thus the desperate serfs were to be blamed most for the fall of Požega County into Ottoman possession in 1536” (p. 357).

### **b) The Role of Jurij Zrinski in Crushing the Matija Gubec Rebellion**

In the spring of 1572, in the region of Susedgrad and Stubica on the properties of the most unpopular nobleman Franjo Tahi, a general peasant rebellion occurred, led by Matija Gubec, with Ilija Gregorić as the military commander. The rebellion lasted until the following year, 1573, while the Parliament of Croatia and Slavonia proclaimed the rebellious peasants traitors in January 1573. That embittered the serfs on other properties as well and rebellion spread across the whole region of Slavonia, Lower Styria and Carniola. Ban Juraj Drašković appointed Gašpar Alapić as his deputy and ordered him to crush the rebellion. Alapić bitterly defeated the peasant army in a bloody battle near Kerestinec, with considerable help from Juraj Zrinski's cavalry. Before that, the rebellious peasants had already suffered a defeat at Krško and, immediately after that, another one at Mokric, while Gregorić was defeated at the entrance to Styria. Thus the peasant rebellion was mercilessly nipped in the bud with a large number of serfs killed in the last battle at Stubičke Toplice. Several thousand serfs were killed altogether, while many of those who survived were hanged along the roads following the defeat. Matija Gubec was crowned with the red-hot crown and his body was then mutilated. Ilija Gregorić was executed after the trial in 1574. “In the peasant rebellions, at least 6,000 people were killed – 6,000 people whose strong arms were so desperately needed for both agriculture and defence against the Turks. Also, in the central regions of the rebellion, many serf villages remained desolate, demolished and burnt to the ground” (p. 377-378).



## **6. Slavonia and Hungary after the Agreement of the Hungarian-Turkish Truce**

While the peasant rebellion was raging in western Slavonia, the Turks were again ravaging the remnants of Croatia between the Kupa and Sava Rivers in 1573. In the following year, 1574, the Ottoman intrusions became even more frequent. That year, on Drašković's persistent requests, Maximilian appointed Gašpar Alapić as the new Ban, so Slavonia and Croatia again had two Bans. In 1575, Drašković wrote to Archduke Charles that the circumstances in Croatia were extremely difficult and that "the surfs were fleeing the Croatian Krajina in large numbers" (p. 390). Specially issued decrees forbidding the migration of serfs were of no help. Then the Turks began to intrude more often into Slavonia, while the Croatian and Slavonian noblemen suffered a crushing defeat at Budački on the Korana River, where Herbert Auersperg, Commander in Chief, was killed along with a large number of soldiers. Many were also taken prisoners, Herbert's son included. Having received a large ransom for the young Auersperg, Ferhat Pasha Sokolović used that money to build the Ferhadija Mosque in Banja Luka. That defeat, as Klaić further explains, "upset the Croatian people tremendously and they continued to abandon their homeland" (p. 394). King Maximilian II died in 1576 and was succeeded by his son Rudolf II, who entrusted all his Hungarian affairs to his brother Archduke Ernest. One of those affairs was the defence of the remaining parts of Croatia and Slavonia, which Klaić repeatedly calls Croatian and Slavonian Krajina, not due to a changed form of institutionalisation, but due to the constant state of warfare that these regions experienced and their exposure to incessant Ottoman intrusions. The newly agreed eight-year Hungarian-Turkish truce did not pertain to the Croatian and Slavonian regions, where the position of Ban was left vacant as Drašković and Alapić had stepped down from this position. In 1577, the Turks had already begun to build their border area towards Croatia, Slavonia and Hungary, renovating many fortifications that had been pulled down and providing them with permanent garrisons. "Around the renovated towns and fortifications, the Turks settled a large number of Vlachs from the internal regions of their Empire, who were the guides for the Turks and their army on a temporary basis during the attacks on Christian regions" (p. 409).

Due to the fact that the Turks conquered many fortifications in the Croatian territories that year, the King conveyed the administrative duties towards, as Klaić put it, the Croatian and Slavonian Krajina to his uncle Archduke Charles, the Lord of Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and Gorizia. On the first day of 1578, Charles convoked an assembly meeting of his duchies where the defence needs, the military organization of the border strongholds, the number of garrisons and the methods of supply were discussed. "The representatives certainly hoped that, once properly organized, the Croatian and Slavonian Krajina would surely be defended and that the Croatian people who had migrated in all directions, would be able to come back to their native land" (p. 416). Charles appointed Ivan Ferenberger, a German from Tirol, as Commander in Chief of the Croatian and Dalmatian Krajina, while Vid Halek remained Commander in Chief of the Slavonian Krajina. It is very important to note that the King subordinated the Ban and all the Croatian and Slavonian classes to the Archduke in writing, giving him the authority to form a War Council. Krsto Ungand was then appointed as the Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. Stjepan Gregorijanec became the Vice Ban and, at the same time, the Zhupan of Zagreb and Križevci. Charles sent the army to regain some of

the Croatian towns but, after initial success and the conquest of Cazin and some other fortifications, they had to fall back away from the Turks and, during the retreat, the army lost all that it had gained and suffered tremendous losses in personnel. In 1579, Charles began the construction of the Karlovac strategic fortification on the Kupa River, on the property of Juraj Zrinski. Then, after the death of Ferenberg, Weichard Auersperg was appointed Commander in Chief of the Croatian Krajina and Karlovac became its capital.

### **a) The Hungarian Suppression of the Ban Position**

The broad scope of authority that Archduke Charles had and his suppression of the position of Ban with regard to military matters worried the Croatian and Slavonian noblemen extremely, while Slavonia was again shaken by constant intrigues and quarrels among the nobility. The Turks too were very active in their pillaging attacks on these territories, but they were crushingly defeated by Jurij Zrinski at Grabovac in 1580. The following year, the Turks were again defeated by Tomas and Peter Erdődy at Turopolje. In that 1581 year, Josip Jošt Turn became the new Commander in Chief of Karlovac and, in 1584, Tomas Erdődy became the new Ban. At the assembly of the nobility, it was stated that the Croatian and Slavonian people were reduced to only 3,000 households, while the County of Križevci alone used to have 12,000 households liable to war contribution tax. “Desperate people, no longer able to stand such a heavy burden and so many troubles, migrated in large numbers to various countries, such as Hungary, Austria, Moravia, Styria and Carniola” (p. 445). A rather large Ottoman detachment that advanced into Carniola as far as Ljubljana, was heavily defeated on the way back by Turn and Erdődy at Slunj in 1584. That, however, would not stop further Ottoman invasions of Croatia and Slavonia. In relation to 1586, Klaić writes that this was the year when a great many Vlachs changed sides in support of Hungary instead of Turkey – especially in Slavonia, where Vlachian Dukes Nikola Ožegović, Ivan Stanković, Petar Ostojić, Petar Hasanović and many others joined under the service of the Krajina Captains. “Thus, the Orthodox Vlachs began to suppress the Ottoman Vlachs and their lords” (p. 451). That significantly impeded new Ottoman invasions, while “the later defeats of Ottoman companies in the territory of Slavonian Krajina increasingly influenced the Christian inhabitants of the borderline sanjaks and they began to change sides in favour of Christians – especially the Vlachs from the Sanjak of Pakrac and Cernik” (p. 456). On 5 November 1589, Archduke Charles “allowed that the abandoned and devastated lands of the Slavonian Krajina be given to the settlers who brought with them lots of cattle and Turkish horses. That was the beginning of the systematic settlement of the Vlachs in the territories of the former County of Križevci” (p. 456).

In 1589, Stjepan Grasswein became Commander in Chief of the Slavonian Krajina, while Baronet Andrija Auersperg became Commander in Chief of the Croatian Krajina. Since Archduke Charles died in 1590, King Rudolf II conveyed the administration of Slavonian and Croatian Krajina, in addition to Hungarian Krajina, to his brother Ernest. In 1591, the Turks unsuccessfully tried to besiege the town of Sisak, while Ban Erdődy conquered Moslavina in a counterattack. The following year, Hasan Pasha Predojević intruded into Croatia with the help of a big army, seized several strongholds and built the Petrinja fortress opposite Sisak, and then, having slaughtered all its civilians, conquered Bihać, strategically the most important fortification in the whole of Croatia. After that, he crushingly defeated the Ban’s army at Sisak, while the Ban barely

managed to escape. The Turks seized the important fortification of Brest along with many smaller strongholds, besieged the town of Sisak and seized it. Those heavy defeats led King Rudolf to appoint Charles, Margrave of Burgau as Commander in Chief of all the troops that defended the remnants of Croatia and Slavonia, who immediately began to raise a large army in Zagreb.

At the meeting of the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament convoked in Kaptol of Zagreb at the beginning of 1593, it was concluded that “in the past two years, the Bosnian Pasha burnt to the ground ninety six towns and fortresses and, in addition to that, took 35,000 people into captivity” (p. 489). The representatives who were to attend the meeting of the Hungarian Parliament in Pozsony were instructed to “complain about the oppression by the King’s and Emperor’s soldiers, who imposed enormous taxes on the people of this wretched country and began to snatch everything away from the people, their clothes included, leaving them with nothing but the bare life and a half-bare bodies” (p. 489). The siege of Sisak in the summer of 1593 ended with the crushing defeat of the Turks and the death of Hasan Pasha. Rudolf’s army was under the command of Charles’s deputy Ruprecht von Eggenberg. The Sultan then sent Sinan Pasha to Hungary, together with a large army, and ordered Rumelian Beglerbeg Hasan Sokolović to go across Bosnia to the Petrinja Fortress and defend it. Hasan soon seized Sisak as well. Having conquered the strategically important town of Győr in Hungary, Sinan Pasha practically gained access to Vienna.

Emperor and King Rudolf II appointed his brother Maximilian as Commander in Chief for Croatia and Slavonia in 1594. In that same year, Hans Sigismund Herberstein was appointed General of the Slavonian Krajina, while Juraj Lenković, former Captain of Senj, was appointed as General of the Croatian Krajina the previous year. With the help of a large army, Maximilian besieged Petrinja, which the Turks themselves burnt down while escaping from it. The Turks in Sisak did the same thing to their town when they witnessed the fall of Petrinja. However, as soon as Maximilian dismissed his army, the Turks returned to Petrinja and renovated it. Lenković’s attack on Bihać was unsuccessful as well. Frustrated at the weakening of his position due to the assignment of military duties to foreigners, Ban Erdődy resigned in 1595 and the King appointed Gašpar Stankovački, the Bishop of Zagreb, and Baron Ivan Drašković as administrators, while Ruprecht von Eggenberg became Commander in Chief of the army. Slavonian General Herberstein advanced into the Sanjak of Pakrac and Cernik, which was called Little Walachia to enable the dissatisfied Vlachs to move over to the Christian side. The Turks were then defeated between Pakrac and Bijela Stijena. After that, the local Christians organized a rebellion and the Turks were forced to leave Petrinja. As Bishop Stankovački died in 1596, Ivan Drašković became the only ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia.

#### **b) The Mass Settlement of the Serbs in *Krajinas* and Klaić’s Denial of Their National Identity**

At that time, the Vlachs began their mass migration from the Ottoman regions to the Slavonian and Croatian Krajina. Although Klaić persistently refuses to identify those Vlachs as the Serbs they really were, Trpimir Macan is somewhat more moderate, writing in a footnote: “The origin and nationality of the Vlachs who migrated from the western Ottoman provinces, especially from the Bosnian Vilayet, to Croatia and

Slavonia in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries has been under lot of speculation recently. Some historians simply regard the Vlachs as Serbs and, therefore, group them as Serbs. Others think of them as Romanians (Rumanians), who were Serbianized or Croatized after the migration. However, those Vlachs had spoken and written Serbian or Croatian long before the migration and had authentic Croatian or Serbian given names and patronymic surnames; nevertheless, in all the preserved monuments, they were always mentioned as the Vlachs. Therefore, we must consider them as belonging to a mass of people who spoke Croatian or Serbian, but who at the time had no national consciousness whatsoever. As to why they did not have any national consciousness, there may be several reasons. In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, many of them must certainly have been Croatized or Serbianized Romans (i.e. descendants of the genuine Vlachs), and there were those Slavic people who were not part of either the Croatian or Serbian state system (especially in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Duklja or Zeta) and, therefore, so the Croatian or the Serbian national name was not associated with them.

“In social and governmental terms, the Vlachs of the 16th and 17th centuries were related to the Croats and Serbs in the same way as the Torlaks were related to the Serbs and Bulgarians in linguistic terms. To discover which Vlachs could be precisely grouped as Croats and which as Serbs, some investigations would first have to be made into what settlements originally came from what parts of the territory – that is, whether they originated from ancient Croatian or ancient Serbian areas. There were some groups of Vlachs that originated from the internal regions of the Ottoman territories (that once used to be Serbian) and the Turks moved them around until they migrated to the Christian territories; there were also Vlachian groups that, in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, lived in the territories of the future Sanjaks of Klis and Hlivanj, Lika and Zakrčje, and Bihać, then migrating to the Christian Croatia in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries ... The former could be regarded as Serbs and the latter as Croats. The Vlachs that migrated to Croatia and Slavonia in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries were mainly (but not entirely) members of Eastern or Orthodox religion. For that reason, the Roman Catholic clergy in Croatia identified them initially as Serbs (Rascian people). With the organization of the Serbian church in Croatia and Slavonia, the Serbian national name increasingly spread too, even among the Vlachs themselves” (p. 519).

The Serbianized Vlachs spoke Serbian or Shtokavian, while the Croatized Vlachs, largely inhabitants of Dalmatian towns and islands, spoke Croatian or Chakavian. All the historical documents that Klaić mentions in his books written in the vernacular, not in Latin, Hungarian or German, are Chakavian if they pertain to Croatia and Kajkavian if they pertain to Slavonia. The Serbian population that the Turks settled in Croatia and Slavonia are called Vlachs due to their social status. They were not serfs, but free peasants bound to serve in backup military units and in garrisons. It is not at all true that these Vlachs did not have a national consciousness. Their national consciousness was emphatically Serbian, which is confirmed by all the preserved folk songs and all other forms of national creativity. The first Serbian state was founded precisely in Duklja and it comprised the land of Hum as well; moreover, Klaić himself confirmed that Bosnia was originally a Serbian ethnic country. The Vlachs could not be compared with the Torlaks, because they always spoke the pure Serbian language and did not have anything in common with the Croats. If the Vlachs – who possibly lived in the territories of the future Sanjak of Klis and Livanj, Lika and Zakrčje, and Bihać, in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

centuries – were indeed Croatized, they must have spoken Chakavian and continued to speak Chakavian even if they moved to the north of Croatia.

The *Uskoci* of Senj seized Klis from the Turks in 1596. When the Turks besieged the town again, Juraj Lenković helped by advancing into the town and strengthening its defence before leaving to bring back additional help. However, the demoralized garrison came to an agreement with the Turks and surrendered the town. That year, the Generals of Krajina unsuccessfully attempted to seize Kostajnica, but the Turks also suffered a serious defeat in an attempt to regain Petrinja. In 1599 and 1600, Slavonia suffered terrible losses due to an epidemic of the plague. Many families died out and many villages remained deserted and desolate. During these years, the General of the Slavonian Krajina and his captains increasingly intruded on the Ottoman Slavonia, killed the Turks, pulled down their fortifications, burned down their estates and, on returning, brought with them large numbers of Vlachs and provided them with settlements, initially between Križevci and Varaždin, and later in all the other regions as well. The General of the Croatian Krajina followed their example. “Croatian and Slavonian classes at first approved of the Vlach migration. They even provided the food that the Vlachs needed. However, when General Herberstein asked Archduke Ferdinand and King Rudolf for special benefits for the newcomers, thus attempting to establish a separate territory of Vlachian settlements in the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia that would not be under the Ban’s rule, they protested against that strongly. The Croatian and Slavonian classes demanded that the new inhabitants abide by the laws of the Kingdom, to be serfs (subjects) of those aristocrats and noblemen who were, since the ancient times, in possession of the land where the Vlachs settled and to pay one tenth of their profits to the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Generals regarded the land in the vicinity of towns of Krajina as no man’s land that was at their disposal and they required the new inhabitants to obey them and do military service. This caused severe discord between the generals and the nobility” (p. 543).

In 1599, the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament addressed Archduke Ferdinand concerning that problem and, the following year, they addressed the Hungarian Parliament in Pozsony as well. The one to protest the most against the Vlach benefits was Nikola Stjepanić Selnički, the Bishop of Zagreb, since large numbers of Vlachs had settled on his property and were completely neglecting him and his requests. In 1601, the Vlachs migrated to Croatia south of the Kupa River in large numbers. In 1609, at the request of Croatian noblemen – especially those belonging to the Zrinski and Frankopan families – the Hungarian Parliament made the decision that “the Vlach settlers in Croatia and Slavonia had to pay one tenth of their profits to the church, one ninth to the noblemen and that they must subordinate themselves to the rule of the noblemen who owned the land where they settled ... Although King Rudolf confirmed the decision of the Hungarian Parliament, neither Archduke Ferdinand nor the Generals of Krajina paid any attention to it, so Vid Kisel continued to provide the Vlachs with settlements on the lands of the Croatian princes and noblemen” (p. 562). In 1604, King Rudolf II increased his intolerance towards the Protestants and the Croatian and Slavonian noblemen supported him fervently in that, bearing in mind that the majority of generals of Krajina were Germans who were rather fond of the Protestants – some of them actually being Protestants. They were the ones who permitted “the settlement of the Vlachs in the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia, asked for benefits on behalf of Vlachs to the disadvantage of the Roman Catholic Church and the whole of the Croatian country,

creating separate areas, independent from the Croatian Ban, out of the regions entrusted to them. Therefore, it was completely understandable that the Croatian noblemen attempted to exterminate all the members of this foreign Protestant religion in the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia and to gather all the Vlachs under the umbrella of the Roman Catholic Church (Uniatism), for only the unity of religion would defend and secure the political unity in the Kingdom of Croatia. The efforts of the Croatian nobility were supported by Šimun Bratulić, the new Bishop of Zagreb, a member of the Paulist order and also a special friend of the Jesuits, who sent young Paulists to Jesuit schools to be educated there. Afterwards, he summoned the Jesuits to Zagreb and other parts of Croatia” (p. 567).

In 1605, Ban Ivan Drašković and his army played a significant role in the battles in Hungary, which began with the rebellion of the Protestants with Ottoman support, thus saving the rule of Rudolf II in general. Nevertheless, the Turks seized almost the whole of Hungary and brought it under their rule with the help of Stephen Bocskay and, under the Peace of Vienna of 1605, Bocskay, as a Turkish vassal, came to an agreement with Rudolf. Afterwards, Rudolf II agreed a twenty-year truce with the Ottoman Sultan. Bocskay was soon poisoned, but nothing was significantly changed. Since the Peace of Vienna granted religious freedom in Hungary, the Croatian and Slavonian nobility repeatedly insisted that it did not pertain to their property, which Rudolf acknowledged in 1607 with the King’s Sanction, stating that the Roman Catholic Church was the only officially accepted religion, while the Vlachs were under obligation to pay one tenth of their profits to the bishop, one ninth to the noblemen and also to subordinate themselves to the jurisdiction of the feudal lords on whose land they lived. This was followed by a dispute between Rudolf and his brother Mathias, forcing Rudolf to abdicate in favour of his brother, who was proclaimed the King.

### **c) Summing up the Situation in the Remaining Parts of the Remnants of the Three Hungarian Provinces**

Summing up the situation in Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia at the time of the rule of the first three rulers of the House of Habsburg, Klaić shows that the whole of Dalmatia was in the firm hands of the Venetians, while Croatia and Slavonia were reduced to remnants of the remnants – and then even those remnants were divided into two halves by the establishment of Krajina captaincies and generalates, all completely separated from the rule of the Ban. In 1536, the Croatian Parliament was convoked separately for the last time and from then on, it was always convoked as the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament, as the reduced territory implied a reduced number of noblemen. Moreover, some Croatian noblemen acquired property in Slavonia as well, thus becoming members of the Slavonian nobility. The Croatian name was extended to cover the regions up to the Kupa River, which used to belong to the County of Zagreb. Naturally, the major problem of that time was the problem of the migration of Croatian and Slavonian people, so Klaić addressed this issue once again, stating that, “The migration of the Croatian people, which began in the last decade of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, continued throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After the Battle of Mohacs, the migration of people to the neighbouring countries that were more secured from the Ottoman attacks only intensified. Especially large numbers of people moved across the Drava and Mura Rivers to the south-west of Hungary. On 10 January 1537, King Ferdinand allowed Ivan

Salaj of Keracseny, the Zhupan of Pozsony, and Gašpar Ernušt from Čakovec, a nobleman from Međumurje, to organize transport across the Mura River between their properties of Legrad and Dubrava by providing a sufficient number of ferries for the numerous fugitives from Slavonia who, together with their baggage and cattle, sought refuge in the internal regions of the Kingdom of Hungary. The King allowed it because he wanted the Mura River to be crossed as many times as possible. It is certain that there were many such ‘ferries’ on the Drava River as well, which people increasingly used to find shelter in safer regions of western Hungary. An extremely large number of people, especially commoners, must have fled to the north for, in 1550, the Parliament of Hungary in Pozsony, no doubt on the request of the Croatian nuncios, by Article 72 established that “those peasants who, over the past years, fled from Slavonia to Hungary due to hunger or the fear of the Turks, must be released from service to the lords of the estates in which they found shelter if they would voluntarily want to return.” Certainly, there were few peasants who would want to return to their homes; whenever the Turks intensified their attacks on the Croatian territory (1556, 1565, 1576 until 1578, 1592), the migrations would increase in number again, so that almost the entire area of south-western Hungary was full of Croatian immigrants. Many Croatian settlements that still exist in the Counties of Pozsony, Sopron, Moson and Željezna, and that once existed in Győr, originate from these settlers. When on 2 August 1579, Juraj Drašković assembled the Diocesan Synod in Szombathely, among 28 parsons present, nine of them had Croatian surnames” (p. 616).

Klaić further points out that the peasants were not the only ones to move around, but noblemen as well – and even magnates. “The Croatian migration to Hungary occurred at the same time as their migration to the west, into the Austrian hereditary provinces – especially into Carniola and Styria. As early as 1533, the Croatian Parliament complained to King Ferdinand I that the lords and noblemen of Carinthia lured lots of Croatian people to come to them with various promises – especially the serfs. Their King should order the Croatian people and serfs not to be taken to Carinthia any longer, or otherwise the Kingdom of Croatia would remain desolate ... The Croatian nobility repeated their plea at the meeting of the Croatian Parliament on 9 September 1535 in Topusko, complaining about the nobility of the hereditary provinces, who took away numerous Croatian serfs and provided them with settlement there, at the same time requesting that their serfs who had already been taken to the Austrian provinces be returned to them. The pleas of the Croatian Parliaments fell on deaf ears due to the increasing migration of large numbers of people into Austrian territories, especially into south-eastern Carniola where they heavily populated the vicinity of Metlika, Črnometelj, Podbrežje, Vinica, Poljana and Kostel ... In addition to the serfs, the noblemen also migrated to Carniola and other internal Austrian provinces” (p. 617-618). Klaić lists some of those most famous families by name and continues: “In the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, many new Croatian settlements were established in Lower Styria, then in Lower Austria (in Marchfeld along the Leitha and Thaya Rivers) and finally in Moravia (Guttenfeld, Novy Prerov and Frlješdorf, villages near the town of Mikulov). The initiator and the founder of the future colonies was Baron Christoph von Teufenbach, the landlord of the Drnohol estate in Moravia, who visited the Kingdom of Croatia as the King’s commissary for Krajina. The continuous migration throughout the century had a devastating effect on the Croatian and Slavonian classes. Again, at the assembly meeting in Zagreb on 15 May 1562, they lamented that, in the relics of the Kingdom of Croatia

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Translator’s note. We were unable to find any source in order to translate the name so we left it in the original Serbian version.

and Slavonia, wretched serfs lived who suffered tremendously due to persistent mass migration and other unbearable difficulties. But Croatian and Slavonian noblemen complained even more at the assembly meeting in Zagreb on 8 April 1584. On that occasion, they stated that the remnants of the Kingdom of Croatia were so terribly devastated and desolate that, in the whole territory, there were not more than 3,000 households while in the better times, in the past, the County of Križevci alone had 12,000 households; for that reason, many serfs had to leave their domiciles and migrate in large crowds to various parts of the world, such as Hungary, Austria, Moravia, Styria and Carniola” (p. 618).

However, that was not all. “In those miserable times, a large number of people went to the east, to the Ottoman Empire, both willingly and forcibly. During their countless invasions and military conquests, the Turks enslaved and took into captivity a large number of people; the Turkish *Martoloz* abducted small children either to use them as slaves or to convert them to Islam. Nevertheless, there were Christian fugitives too, who voluntarily moved to the neighbouring Bosnian Pashalik in search of shelter” (p. 618). They converted to Islam primarily to satisfy their financial and class interests. “More important noblemen who were taken into Turkish captivity were released after ransoms were paid by their relatives and friends (or even Parliament), or they were exchanged for Turkish prisoners. Nevertheless, the great majority of enslaved people, who had no one to pay the ransom for them, remained in captivity” (p. 619). After each successful Ottoman invasion of Croatia or Slavonia, long lines of captured serfs were taken to the remote interior parts of Turkey and mainly sold on the slave markets.

The third migration wave took place in the direction from Croatia to Slavonia, which Klaić explained in detail. “In addition to migration to foreign countries, migrations also took place within the Kingdom of Croatia itself. Such migrations happened when the people from the territories exposed to attacks moved to regions that were more secure and peaceful. The migrations from the southern regions to the north (from old Croatia to Slavonia) began as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, while the migrations from the east to the west started after the Battle of Mohacs. An exceptionally large number of people rushed from the south to the north. The noblemen of the Keglević family resided near the upper course of the Zrmanja River (the town of Kegal or Keglević) and in the County of Knin until 1494. Afterwards, they ruled from Bužin, in the County of Zagreb, before finally settling in the County of Križevci (Bijela Stijena) and the County of Varaždin (Lobor, Krapina and Kostel) after 1522. The noblemen and the future counts of the Drašković family, whose roots were in southern Croatia (Lika, Biline. Knin), first arrived in Blinja and Švarča in Zagreb County and then permanently settled in Trakošćane in Varaždin County. The same fate befell many other noble families from southern Croatia. The Berislavić family travelled from Vrhrlik (Vrlik) to Turopolje (Mala Mlaka), while the Dudić family moved from Cetina County to Varaždin County (Orehovica); the Patačić and Hatežević families moved from Luka County to Varaždin County (Zaježda); the Bojničić and Forčić families moved from Knin County to Varaždin County; and the Novaković family moved from Gatan County to Zagreb County (Slanovec), etc.

The noble municipalities of Zagreb County, to the north of the Kupa River, received many noblemen from the southern parts; other newcomers bought noble estates, or received them from the King as gifts for their merits. On the other hand, some married the daughters of the old Slavonian noblemen and settled on their wives’ estates. Thus, the noblemen of the Patačić and Hatežević families married the daughters of the

**Comment [PC17]:** Translator’s note: name not confirmed. The original reads *Gatanski*.



nobleman Herković from Zajezda, afterwards governing their wives' property. Moreover, some noblemen from southern Croatia agreed hereditary contracts with Slavonian noble families, to mutually inherit the property of either of the families if one of them died out. The Croatian noblemen would thus rule over the property of Slavonian families that died without any heirs. Accordingly, in 1522, Ivan Forčić from Butina Vas in Knin County, the lord of numerous estates in Knin, Buška and Gatan Counties, and Ivan Golec from Sutjeska (nowadays Sutinsko), the lord of the castle of Sutjeska, the estates in Malo, Beratinac, Ferkuljevac and Križanci in Varaždin County, agreed a mutual hereditary contract. Many years later, when Ivan Golec died without any heirs, the Forčić family, having just lost almost all their possessions in southern Croatia, inherited all of Golec's property in Varaždin County, with the written consent of King Ferdinand of 17 February 1561. Finally, many noblemen from the southern regions found shelter on the property of the magnates and big landowners in the northern regions, especially at the property belonging to Counts Zrinski and Frankopan. The southern noblemen performed various duties on the property of these counts as vassals or servants, and many of them received smaller or larger possessions in return" (p. 618-620).

Here, Klaić quoted the text of Rade Lopašić who wrote in particular about those noblemen - vassals. "The Ottoman invasions left almost all of Croatia devastated and unable to resist the superiority of the absolute Ottoman power, so every Croat that was able to flee and that cared for freedom and the Christian religion ran away in search of shelter from fellow compatriots near the Kupa and Sava Rivers. The counts of the Zrinski and Frankopan families shared every misfortune with their unfortunate fellow compatriots, especially if they were noblemen or soldiers. The counts allowed all newcomers to settle on their estates, especially on the estates of Ozalj, Ribnik and Čakovec (in Međumurje), thus securing permanently loyal servants, leaders and soldiers in the fights against the Ottomans. Nowhere in Croatia, and certainly nowhere in the neighbouring countries did it happen that big landowners divided their huge estates into smaller parts and shared them among smaller vassals and noblemen. The Counts of the Frankopan family and, later, the Zrinski family, gave at least half of their entire property, if not more, including many deserted villages, to particularly meritorious old noble families as a gift or as a loan guarantee. For the homeless Croatian fugitives, they established small estates with houses and a larger or smaller number of serfs. Many great Croatian noble families were among the fugitives and they would certainly have perished, being dispossessed of any wealth and fortune, if they had not been provided with shelter on the estates of the Zrinski and Frankopan families" (p. 620). Apart from the noblemen, many serfs and freemen found refuge in the northern regions.

#### **d) The Wave of Serbian Settlers Saves Deserted Hungarian Banates**

How large those migrations were is evident from Klaić's following statement: "The continual migrations over more than a century would have left the entire Kingdom of Croatia completely deserted if many people had not come and settled in these areas. The majority of people who came to settle in the Kingdom of Croatia were Christians from the Ottoman Empire who could not or would not bear the oppression of their unbaptized lords. Those settlers were sometimes called Turks, for they came from Turkish regions, or simply Vlachs – rarely Rascians or Serbs. Since they jumped into the Croatian

territory or escaped from regions under the Ottoman rule, they were also called *Prebjezi* or *Uskoci* (or even *Predavci*). All those settlers were of Croatian-Serbian origin; they spoke Croatian or Serbian and the majority of them had folk Christian names and surnames. The prevailing religion among them was Greek-Eastern (Orthodox). Naturally, some of them were descendants of the medieval Roman Vlachs, who were already largely Croatized or Serbianized at that time” (p. 620-621). In regard to this statement, Trpimir Macan pointed out that “Klaić, in accordance with the spirit of his time, wrongly believed that the Croats and the Serbs comprised one and the same nation” (p. 621). However, if Klaić really believed that the Croats and the Serbs belonged to one nation with two names, he would have included the entire history of the Serbs in his book entitled *The History of the Croats*. As he did not believe that, he spoke about the Croatian-Serbian nation and about the Croatian or the Serbian language only when he was embarrassed to confess that, when it came to the settlement of the completely deserted Croatian and Slavonian regions, the subject in question was entirely about the Serbian nation and the Serbian language. The first Serbian *Uskoci* settled in Žumberak and the Captaincy of Senj. However, it should be noted that the Turks also settled the Serbs in the deserted regions of Croatia and Slavonia they had conquered, with the status of Vlachs and serfs.

Klaić wrote about that too: “In the second half of the 16th century, the migration from the Turkish regions into the Christian territories gradually began to subside. The reason for that seemed to be the foundation by the Turks of the Turkish Krajina, in addition to the Croatian and Slavonian Krajina, which the Turks created by supplying the border towns of the Lika, Bosnia, Pakrac (Cernica) and Požega Sanjaks with strong garrisons of foot soldiers and cavalymen. The Turks placed numerous Christian Vlachs between and around these towns, who already lived there, or who the Turks had brought there from internal Turkish (Serbian) regions. Those Vlachs were members of the irregular Ottoman army, whose task was to clear the way for the regular army and to ravage and enslave people during the invasions of Christian Croatia and Slavonia. The irregular Ottoman companies that were comprised of Vlachs – who were not paid, only given part of the loot – were also called *Martoloz*” (p. 622-623). Klaić assumed that their name could have derived from the Greek word for an armed border guard or from a Greek word for a sinner or a villain. “In some regions, those Vlachian *Martoloz* were present in such great numbers that parts of the Pakrac and Požega Sanjaks became known as Little Walachia” (p. 623).

At the end of the 16th century, the settlement of the Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia became massive. “After the victories over the Turks at Sisak (1593) and Petrinja (1596), the great migrations of people from the Turkish Vilayet of Bosnia to Christian Croatia and Slavonia began again. In October 1595, Vlachian Bishop Vasilije, whose see was in the Remeti Monastery (Orahovica) in the Sanjak of Požega, fled to Križevci, where he immediately started discussing possible ways of moving the Christian people from Little Walachia to the Slavonian Krajina with Hans Sigismund Herberstein, the Commander in Chief of the Slavonian Krajina at the time” (p. 623). After Bishop Vasilije, increasingly large groups of people started to settle in Croatia and Slavonia. “Motivated by the success of the Slavonian Commander in Chief, the Commander in Chief of the Croatian Krajina began to encourage the Vlachs from Turkish Croatia to move there. The first large group of these Turkish Vlachs moved to Christian Croatia in 1600, and Lenković allowed them to inhabit the deserted region around the demolished town of Gojmerje or

Gomirje, which the Princes of the Zrinski family had inherited from Stjepan Frankopan of Ozalj. The Serbian monks also came to Gomirje, where they founded a monastery. After Lenković's death, the inhabitation process was continued by his successor Vid Kasel with the help of Danilo Frankol, the Captain of Senj. Thus, by 1606, the Vlachs and Morovlachs (Morlachs) settled in Moravice (Mavrovice), Vrbovsko, and finally Lič. However, since those places belonged to the princes of the Frankopan and the Zrinski families, fierce fights started between those princes and the Commander in Chief of the Croatian Krajina over the Vlachs, which lasted for many years" (p. 623-624). The conflicts arose because the Serbs were freed of feudal duties and the obligation to subordinate themselves to the jurisdiction of the local landlords, obeying only the orders of the Krajina Captains.

Klaić drew particular attention to the fact that the German and Venetian inhabitants also sporadically settled in Croatia and Slavonia, in addition to the mass migrations of the Serbs. "In addition to the mass migrations of the Vlachs (Serbs, *Uskoci* and *Pribjezi*) from the Ottoman Empire to Croatia and Slavonia, some families from the Austrian regions (Styria, Carniola, Istria and Carinthia) also moved there, as did the families from the Venetian regions, especially from Dalmatia. The people from the Austrian regions who moved there were mainly soldiers who settled in the Krajina towns (Senj, Karlovac, Koprivnica, etc.), while those who moved there from the Venetian Republic were mainly fugitives running away from the court and punishment" (p. 624). In any case, "constant emigrations and migrations significantly changed the ethnographic structure of the Kingdom of Croatia, especially in the Croatian and Slavonian Krajina, which was gradually transformed into a big military camp. The civilian portion of Croatia and Slavonia did not change much, except for the arrival of the old Croatian nobility and commoners, who settled in Slavonia among the old Slavonian people" (p. 624). In addition to all that, one should keep the religious question in Croatia and Slavonia in mind, which, having just managed to crush the Protestant Reformation in their territories, were about to face another challenge to their exclusive Roman Catholicism. "At first, both the religious and secular authorities approved of the arrival of the Vlachs, their monks and their bishops, for they were expected to assimilate with the members of the Roman Catholic Church and acknowledge the Pope as their supreme spiritual leader" (p. 671). When those expectations were not fulfilled, the Serbs who settled there were greeted by waves of religious fanaticism and intolerance, which was additionally intensified by the Jesuits who came to Zagreb in 1606.

## **B. Klaić's Systematization of Bosnian History**

The first thorough and seriously systematized history of the Bosnian state until the fall under the Turkish rule was written by none other than Vjekoslav Klaić himself. His book *The History of Bosnia until the Fall of the Kingdom* was published in the author's own edition in Zagreb, in 1882. In the preface, he dealt with all the scientific approaches to that topic employed so far, starting with *The Realm of the Slavs* by Orbin of 1601. Klaić claimed that this work was "a set of trustworthy and untrustworthy news. His failure to give a critical analysis of this topic is almost complete. All the sources were equally reliable for him; for example, he considered the famous *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* to be as valuable as any other serious manuscript" (p. 1). Despite many unreliable statements cited in the book, such as those taken from *The Chronicle of the*

*Priest of Duklja*, “Orbin’s personal merit was that, despite being a Catholic votary, he wrote his history of the South Slavs without paying any attention to their religion, thus portraying and praising all the great and famous men with equal affection and enthusiasm, no matter whether they were Catholics or not” (p. 2). Concerning the brochure on Bosnia written by Pavle Ritter Vitezović of 1712, Klaić said: “At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a tiny work of hardly any scientific value was published on Bosnia, but it is worth mentioning as it was written by a passionate man and a zealous Croat” (p. 3).

In a book on Bosnian history published in Vienna in 1787, a German writer Schimek “made the same mistake as his predecessors did in relation to the historical period from the most ancient history to Ban Borić, blindly adhering to *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, and then to Orbin and Lukar and their fabrications. However, in relation to the history of the Kotromanić family, a general tendency to base his narration on pure and more reliable sources was evident” (p. 7). Klaić reproached him for his total neglect of the relations between Bosnia and Serbia, as he based his work on literature that came from the Hungarians, Croats and Dalmatians. On the other hand, Jovan Raić considered Bosnia an integral part of Serbia, as did Fran Pejačević in the book published in Latin in 1799. In 1801, Johann Christian Engel also “completely merged the history of Bosnia with the history of Serbia, and considered both of them to be the same entity, thus adding many things for which he failed to provide historical proof” (p. 8). In 1857, in his famous historiographic work, a Russian Maykov stated that Serbia, Bosnia and Dubrovnik were Serbian lands.

## 1. The Indisputable Serbian Character of Early Bosnian State

Describing the geographic position of early Bosnia situated in a very narrow territory, Klaić stated that, around the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century, Soli belonged to Serbia, while Donji Kraji [the Lower Lands] belonged to Croatia. Out of three Counties in Zapadne Strane [the Western Areas] – namely Glamoč, Livno and Duvno – Livno County belonged to the Croatian Principality, whereas Duvno County belonged to the Neretva Principality. Concerning Podrinje, which comprised the upper part of the Drina, Lim and Čehotina Rivers, Klaić said that, “this region had been part of the Serbian country since the most ancient times” (p. 25). He described Hum and Pomorje, but he did not state their ethnic affiliation. The historical sources did not provide any information about Bosnia from the period of the Slavic migration there until the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and the information is very scarce regarding the period from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards. “The older writers who wrote about Bosnian history attempted to fill this huge gap with the information from the extremely uncritical and not particularly useful *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*” (p. 42). Such attempts have been made until these days. “Thus, Bans Želimir, Krešimir, Leget and Vukmir became parts of Bosnian history although they were totally unknown in the critical history. Since none of this seems plausible, it is difficult to fill the several-century gap” (p. 42).

There is no doubt that Klaić would appropriate Bosnia as a Croatian country if he were able to find any reasonable grounds for that in the historical documents. Since that is not possible and since Klaić is not ready to permanently abandon basic academic ethics, he sought for a more moderate variation, a halfway solution on which he could base his thesis that the early Bosnia was actually neither Serbian nor Croatian. Then he

states, at least in the form of an indication, assumption or just a wish, that Bosnia could have become a Croatian ethnic territory. In relation to that, he reasons: "Since the sources were so scarce, it would be ungrateful to firmly decide whether the former Slavic inhabitants of Bosnia were to be regarded as Croats or Serbs, but it was certain that the Bosnian region was on the line of division between the Croatian and Serbian population right from the start. All the areas in west and the northwest of that region were Croatian, whereas all those to the east, northeast and southeast were Serbian" (p. 43). Donji Kraji region is in the west and northwest of Bosnia and comprises the counties of Pliva, Luka, Zemaljniki, Vrbanja, Glaž, Mrin, Vrbas, Sana and Dubica, as well as Zapadne Strane region that includes the counties of Glamok, Livno and Dubica. Those would then be Croatian territories and Klaić would be able to present convincing arguments for that. Usora and Soli are in the northeast. Usora comprises the towns of Tešanj, Doboje, Dobor and Srebrenik, whereas Soli comprises Tuzla. Podrinje is in the eastern part of Bosnia, while the Land of Hum and Primorje (Konavle and Dračevica) are in the southeast. These are indisputably Serbian territories.

Among those Croatian and Serbian territories, Bosnia nestled in the territory of the upper Bosnia River. "The very location of Bosnia itself determined its destiny for many centuries to come. As soon as two separate countries began to take shape under the respective names of Croatia and Serbia, thus gathering the neighbouring territories, both countries started to attract Bosnia to their respective sides. Even if the detailed narration of Priest of Duklja is not to be trusted, one thing could certainly be discerned in it, namely that the territory of Bosnia was originally chained to Croatia. It was very likely that it happened at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, when the first Croatian King Tomislav was the only possible opponent to the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon in the whole of the Slavic south. It was possible that Bosnia then became a banate, for the title and honour of Ban were known only to the Croats. When Serbian Prince Časlav (931-960) managed to raise the crushed Serbia to prominence and form a federal country after the death of the Great Emperor Simeon, the Bosnian territory was joined to the newly formed country. The contemporary writer of that time, Byzantine Emperor Constantine, provided the first reliable information about Bosnia of that time. According to him, Bosnia was then part of the Serbian Principality as it did not have its own ruler, instead being subordinated to the rule of Prince Časlav. Thanks to this same Prince Časlav the Banate of Bosnia, subjected to him, was defended from the Hungarians" (p. 43-44). Although there is no trustworthy evidence that Bosnia was "originally chained" to Croatia, Klaić says that it must have happened during the rule of Tomislav. Probable, improbable or not unlikely - these are not serious historiographic terms. The same goes for the expression that it was "possible" that Bosnia then became a banate. When there is no relevant evidence, anything is possible. Nevertheless, Bosnia was only first mentioned as a banate in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when it fell under Hungarian domination. The only undisputable fact was that Bosnia was part of the Serbian country formed by Serbian ruler Časlav, but that country was not a federation of any kind, nor did the federal countries exist in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

### **a) Speculation and Belief as Reliable Scientific Methods of the Croatian Historiographic School**

Therefore, it was completely inappropriate when Klaić wrote that, after the death of Prince Časlav and the disintegration of his country, “Bosnia fell under the rule of domestic bans” (p. 44). In relation to that, he cited the documents of the Priest of Duklja, although he pointed out on several occasions that he did not believe the Priest of Duklja. However, when he could benefit from it, he was ready to exploit the Priest of Duklja’s fabrications even further, stating: “As early as 968, Croatian King Krešimir attacked the Bosnian Ban. The battle was fought at the Upper Vrbas River in the counties of Pliva, Luka and Uskoplje. The Bosnian Ban soon realized that he could not resist the forceful attacks of King Krešimir, so he fled from his Banate to the Hungarian King, thus leaving Bosnia to fall under the rule of King Krešimir (p. 44). Klaić further wrote that, since no reliable evidence could be found, it was “possible” that “Bosnia, much like Srem, fell under the supreme rule of the Byzantine Empire around 1019. Nevertheless, immediately upon the death of this mighty Emperor, Bosnia freed itself from Byzantine supremacy and remained independent under the rule of its bans for a longer period. In the second and the third quarter of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Bosnian bans and their banate significantly rose to prominence so that, in 1067, Bosnia was mentioned in the same line as the Principality of Duklja or Serbia” (p. 45). Klaić thought that Bosnia did not fall under the rule of the Hungarians until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but did not accept the standpoint of Engel and Maykov that the Hungarian King received Bosnia as a dowry from Bela Uroš of Serbia, the Grand Zhupan of Raška. In relation to this question, he argued: “Bella II the Blind, ruler of Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia and Srem, the friend and ally of the Serbian people, who ruled with the help of his wise wife Jelena (Helena of Raška), a Serbian Princess, was the first Hungarian King with whom Bosnia had somewhat closer relation. It was just an unproven assumption that Bella II the Blind received the Banate of Bosnia as a dowry from his father-in-law, Serbian Grand Zhupan Bela Uroš. It was more likely that the Bosnian bans, having seen that Croatia was taken over by the Hungarian Arpad dynasty who allied with the Serbian rulers through marriages, voluntarily joined the Hungarian King, for he could help them defeat their mutual enemy who threatened to impose on them the fate of Bulgaria. In 1135, Bela II the Blind, was the first member of the Hungarian Arpad dynasty who was proclaimed the King of Rama for the first time; a little afterwards, at the meeting of the Hungarian Parliament in Esztergom, King Bela II honoured his second son Ladislaus with the title of Duke of Bosnia, although he left the indigenous bans to rule over their ancestral land” (p. 47-48).

Klaić himself was hesitant about this subject, especially in relation to the meaning of the term “King of Rama”, as was evident in his following remark: “Isn’t it true that the term Rama originally referred only to the remnants of the former Principality of Neretva, together with the valley of the Rama River?” (p. 48). Based on one preserved charter from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Klaić concluded that, “Rama was then located between Croatia and Hum, much like the former Neretva” (p. 48). At the same time, Klaić did not call into question, but confirmed that “Ban Borić, the first Bosnian ruler whose name was widely known”, did not appear on the historical scene until the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (p. 49). Therefore, there was no evidence that Bosnia had any ban at all before Ban Borić. Perhaps there was a ban after all, considering that Maykov wrote about it and Klaić cited as a remark: “Bosnia became the banate from 1120 onwards”, i.e. from the

year it fell under Hungarian rule, either as a dowry granted by the Serbian ruler or “voluntarily”, as Klaić would prefer. During the rule of Ban Borić, the Hungarians added some additional Serbian territories to Bosnia, thus expanding its territory to the Drina River. As Klaić stated, “Around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bosnia thus expanded across previously Serbian territories, so it must certainly have comprised Borač County, which had been Serbian until recently” (p. 51). The former Borač County is today’s Birač and Klaić remarked additionally that, “When many regions of the Danube and the Sava basins fell into the hands of Hungary, it was certain that the Hungarian kings had also seized the Serbian regions of Soli and Usora as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and that those regions had been under Byzantine rule since 1019, much like Srem. That the Bosnian bans received the regions of Soli and Usora specifically from the Hungarian rulers was evident from the entire history of Bosnia” (p. 51). For some reason, although his remark was flimsy, it was very important to Klaić to point out that “Ban Borić was not the subject of the Hungarian King, but an ally who was highly respected, appreciated, distinguished and, above all, rewarded for his help. It was highly likely that Ban Borić was the one to receive the territories to the north of the early Bosnia, namely those of Soli and Usora, as a reward from the Hungarian rulers, thus forming some sort of dependant relationship with the Hungarian-Croatian ruler for, without these territories, Bosnia did not have any grounds to become subject to the Hungarian King. This presumption becomes even more credible if one takes into consideration the fact that Ban Borić possessed territories in Slavonia at that time and that he gave these territories as a gift to the Order of the Temple or *Božjaci*, with the permission of King Stephen. The descendants of Ban Borić were mentioned as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century as Croatian nobility, while many claimed that Ban Borić was a forefather of the noble family of Berislavić” (p. 51-52).

This explains Klaić’s intentions completely. He wanted to demonstrate at all costs that the title Ban of Bosnia was the authentic title of rulers and not a title given to a governor under the Hungarian King, which it actually was. Moreover, it was evident that Bosnia could never have been an independent state under the rule of Ban Borić. Even the rulers of early Croatia did not have the titles of ban, but prince, while bans were the governors of Lika, Krbava and Gacka and, as such, they were the state’s highest dignitaries. First, the Hungarian rulers appointed Zvonimir as Ban of Slavonia, then he became the highest dignitary, almost a co-ruler with Petar Krešimir IV, and finally succeeded him as King of Croatia. If Ban Borić really acquired possessions in Slavonia, he could only have got them as a gift from the Hungarian King in return for his real merits as a loyal vassal. If Borić became a Slavonian lord, it did not automatically mean Croatian too. Speculations about the members of the Berislavić family as descendants of Ban Borić do not require any serious comment, for even Klaić himself did not dare to confirm them, although he would have been extremely happy if these speculations were true; therefore, he dissociated himself from them by using the phrase “many claimed”. Many claimed and many did not. Between the rule of Ban Borić and Ban Kulin, Bosnia once again fell under Byzantine rule for a while but, when Ban Kulin came to power in 1180, Bosnia gained real independence for the first time. That was the time when the first Bogomils appeared in Bosnia and even Ban Kulin became one of their followers. By the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with the decline of the Byzantine Empire, Hungary strove to dominate the Balkans and subordinate Bosnia, Serbia and Bulgaria to itself. “The Hungarian rulers found loyal allies in their striving – the Roman Catholic Popes. It was

at this time that the power of the Roman Catholic Popes increased tremendously, so it seemed as if the dreams of Pope Gregory VII would come true. Wise and resolute men occupied St Peter's Cathedra in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century; Pope Innocent III, Pope Honorius III, Pope Gregory IX and Pope Innocent IV were not only the dukes of Christianity in the holy war against the infidels, but also the dictators of Europe, whom even the Roman Emperors could not oppose without punishment. Not only did they want to liberate the Holy Grave from the hands of infidels, but they also strove to unite the whole Christian world under their sceptre, to reconcile the East with the West and exterminate all heretics. For that reason, they did not deny any help they could provide when the Byzantine Empire was to be replaced by the Latin Empire and, for that reason, they invented the Inquisition, started the Crusades and exterminated all kinds of heresy, no matter whether it appeared in France, Italy, on the Balkan Peninsula – in Bosnia. In order to successfully complete their mission among the South Slavs, they united with the Hungarian King, who was already looking over the Sava and the Danube with lustful eyes. Thus, the whole religious authority united with the secular authority against the state and religious freedom of the South Slavs. Those were hard times for Patarene Bosnia and its Bans Kulin and Matej Ninoslav" (p. 56).

On several occasions, Bosnia fell victim to the Crusades started by the Popes and waged by Hungarian rulers – "Hungarian-Croatian", as Klaić would say. At that time, the brother-in-law of Ban Kulin, his sister's husband and Nemanja's brother, Grand Prince Miroslav of Hum "was also on bad terms with the Roman Catholic Church; he even robbed the Archbishop of Split, thus making Pope Alexander III excommunicate him from the Christian Church" (p. 57). In any case, Vjekoslav Klaić devoted a separate chapter to the history of Hum, in which he stated as follows: "The first known ruler of the Land of Hum was Mihajlo Višević (912-926), the contemporary of Croatian King Tomislav and Bulgarian Emperor Simeon. Constantine, the Byzantine Emperor, said of him that he was the son of Prince Višević, who was the lord and ruler of Zahumlje at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, with a seat in the ancient town of Blagaj, when nothing was known about the genuine Bosnia or Upper Bosnia. Mihajlo Višević had his origins among the unbaptized Slavs (Serbs) of that time from the northern regions around the Vistula River and he was known as a respectable ruler, so that Emperor Constantine himself gave him the title of 'Proconsul and Patrician'" (p. 95). At this point, giving 917 as a reliable landmark, Klaić mentioned the "Principality of Neretva (between the Cetina and Neretva Rivers), which was, at the time, under the rule of Serbian Grand Zhupan Petar" (p. 96). Besides, Mihajlo Višević was so mighty a ruler that some contemporary Italian writers called him king, which Klaić observed as well. "For a long time after Mihajlo Višević, there was no mention of the independent princes of Hum. It is likely that, after 931, Serbian Prince Časlav, having returned from Bulgarian captivity and having restored the Serbian country, united the Land of Hum with it. In 949, Byzantine Emperor Constantine included the Land of Hum, together with Duklja and Travunia into the Serbian lands, from which it could easily be concluded that these principalities indeed constituted the federal country of Prince Časlav. After the death of Prince Časlav (960), the Land of Hum and Bosnia were freed from Serbian rule but, as soon as Bosnia acknowledged the supremacy of Croatian King Mihajlo Krešimir, the Land of Hum fell under the rule of the Kingdom of Duklja (Red Croatia) which comprised four regions: Duklja (Zeta), Travunia, Podgorje and Hum" (p. 97). Although he was completely familiar with the fact that "Red Croatia" was not mentioned anywhere, except in the



highly unreliable and phantasmagoric *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, it did not cost Klaić a penny to mention it as if in passing, at least in brackets, and thus sow seeds of doubt in the mind of the ignorant reader. As we shall see later, these seeds of doubt produced a high yield in the mind of Dominik Mandić.

## II. The Historical Deceptions of Ferdo Šišić

With his book *Overview of the History of the Croatian People* (Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 1962), first published in 1916, Ferdo Šišić represents a significant improvement in the scientific, critical and methodological sense, in comparison to the voluminous work of Vjekoslav Klaić. However, this work is similarly burdened by national and political tendentiousness, which the editor and commentator Jaroslav Šidak explains to some extent in his Preface to the third edition. “Šišić’s conception is explained and justified to some degree by the social function of historiography at a time of the constant struggle for the political independence and unity of the Croatian territories” (p. 12). Šišić’s critical approach to *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, which served as the basis for Klaić’s unelaborated and undocumented theory of “Red Croatia”, is significant nevertheless. In the summary of the main sources and works on Croatian history, Šišić says that, “*The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* is mainly divided into two separate parts. The first part contains a collection of obviously distorted various events whose place in history is, for the most part, impossible to locate. The second part, on the other hand, presents the spoken narrations of old men, together with the memories of the unknown author, undoubtedly a Catholic priest from Bar, in regard to various events that took place in Duklja (Zeta) in the 11<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Therefore, in its more valuable part, the Chronicle is primarily the source for the medieval history of Duklja and Zeta. The first part of the Chronicle reached Croatia very early, where it was translated from Latin into Croatian and enriched (in the 14<sup>th</sup> century at the latest) with the detailed, but essentially highly probable, description of the sudden death of Croatian King Dmitar Zvonimir (died in 1089). Up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this edition of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* was the main source of historical knowledge for the Croats, especially those from Dalmatia” (p. 21).

### 1. The Process of Gathering Around the Political Name of the Croats

Šišić wrote that, upon settling in the Balkan Peninsula, the Croats’ “real centre and core was at first the territory between the Raša River and the mouth of the Cetina River – that is, the Neretva River on the one side, facing the islands to the west, the Vrbas and Lower Bosnia to the east and the Drava River and Styria and Craniola border mountains to the north. Nevertheless, that territory was not always and permanently one governmental entity, but was sometimes wider, sometimes narrower” (p. 31). Unlike Klaić, who unequivocally admitted that the Croatian name was restricted exclusively to the regions between the Cetina and Raša – that is, the Kupa River – Šišić extended that name over to the Drava and the Danube without any valid arguments, thus including the Slavonian land, i.e. Slavonia, where no Croatian national consciousness had ever existed. He nevertheless remarked that “it was undeniable that the part of the Croatian land that spread between the Sava, Drava, Kupa and Danube rivers and belonged to Middle Europe, exhibited a totally different character in comparison to the regions to the

south of it; moreover, there was a time when those two territories stood against each other in opposition and animosity. For that reason, the Romans divided today's Croatia into two provinces, Pannonia and Dalmatia, on the remnants of which both Croatian Principalities of Pannonia and Dalmatia sprang into existence and, after them, both Banates, namely Slavonia and Croatia with Dalmatia" (p. 32). However, there was no explanation why the citizenry of those two alleged Croatian principalities spoke different languages; in one of them, Chakavian was spoken and, in the other, Kajkavian.

Šišić divided the entire Croatian history into four periods. The first period encompassed the period from their settlement to the *Pacta Conventa* agreement. The beginning was therefore "the time when the South Slavs began to settle in their present homeland, one part of which later started to gather around the political name of the Croats" (p. 65). Unlike Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Šišić believed that the term Croat did not exist before their settlement but was invented later as a political name. Such a thesis explains in advance the gathering process around the political name "the Croats", which lasts even until today, on the Slavic ethnic foundation (Serbian or Slovenian) and the Roman Catholic religion, with the appropriation of Serbian (Shtokavian) and the discontinuation of use of Croatian (Chakavian) and Slovenian (Kajkavian).

The second period began from 1102 and lasted until the Battle of Mohacs in 1526 and Šišić attempted to present it as a period of special personal union between Hungary and Croatia, which was primarily bound to the King. He thus takes over Klaić's notion of the "Croatian-Hungarian" kings. The third historical period encompassed the period from the Battle of Mohacs to the death of Joseph II in 1790 and Šišić claimed that the Croats "chose" the Habsburg dynasty for their ruling house at the beginning of this period. The fourth period began in 1790 when, due to the intensive court policy of governmental centralisation and Germanization, "for the sake of defence, the Croats decided (1790) to temporarily entrust themselves to Hungary, as an integral part of its supreme administration in a way, thus, hoping that they would be able to restore the independent constitutional relationship towards Hungary once the threat had gone" (p. 66). That period, which lasted until 1918, was characterized by constant political fighting with the Hungarians, who strove for a unitary state and the Magyarization of the Slavs.

Šišić divided all the Slavic people into the western group (the Slavs) and the eastern group (the Ants), providing a short description of the Slavs' ravaging and advancement into the Balkan Peninsula under the oppression of the Avars. This lasted until Byzantine Emperor Heraclius crushingly defeated the Avars near the town of Constantinople itself, which inspired the Slavic people to free themselves of the Avarian domination. "At the time, between 630-640, armed companies of Croats advanced from their homeland of White Croatia (today's Lesser Poland with the seat in the vicinity of Krakow) into Pannonia and Roman Dalmatia and, having overpowered and expelled the Avars from those territories, imposed their own rule there. The Croats were a part of the Slavic Ants while the Avar subjects in Pannonia and Dalmatia belonged to the Slavs; therefore, the former belonged to the north-western Slavic language group, while the latter belonged to the south-eastern language group. Since there were a small number of Croatian newcomers – only the noble class – the widely known historical process took place here too, namely, the ruling newcomers assumed the language of their subjects, while the subjects acquired the newcomers' name in return" (p. 76). Obviously, this was the only rational way for Šišić to explain the radical historical changes in the later ethnic

structure of the citizenry classified under the political name of “the Croats”. First, his thesis that the original Croats were of Ant origin was problematic. In the study entitled *The Old Faith of the Serbs and Croats*, the undoubtedly highly educated Natko Nodilo wrote that the Serbs were of East Slavic origin, while the Croats were of West Slavic (“Ljes”) origin. The present similarities between Serbian and Russian unequivocally confirm that, while linguists such as Aleksandar Belić established many lexical, morphological and syntactic similarities between the Chakavian and Kajkavian dialects on the one hand, and Polish, Czech and other West Slavic languages, on the other. There is no doubt that Slavonia of that time was densely populated by the Slavs who spoke Kajkavian and were part of Samo’s Empire, but all the regions in the south of the Kupa and Sava Rivers were completely desolate and ravished during the pillaging invasions of the Avars, with the exception of the coastal towns and a few Vlachs in the mountains. As Constantine Porphyrogenitus reported, that was the reason why King Heraclius asked the Serbs and the Croats to settle in these deserted territories. The Croats might have found a few Slavic people who had settled earlier on their territory, but those Slavs must have been a convincing minority in comparison to the Croatian newcomers, while the whole region was clearly bordered by the Raša, Kupa, Una and Cetina Rivers. Therefore, the ruling minority did not impose its name on the majority, nor did it accept the language of the majority. The artificial transfer of the Bulgarian-Sclavonian example turned out to be naïve and imprudent.

Confirming that the Roman or Vlachian people continued to live in the Dalmatian towns and on the islands after the arrival of the Croats, Šišić stated that it could not be determined with certainty whether that ethnic indigenous element was present in the interior regions of the Croatian territories as well, for they undoubtedly lived in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the whole of Serbia, “although their assimilation with the Slavs soon followed” (p. 79). What is really interesting here is Šišić’s statement that “that some Avars remained there as a foreign element; it seemed that they were present most in today’s south Dalmatia, Lika, Krbava, Gacka and northwest Bosnia; moreover, it could easily happen that some Croatian pastor families were of Avar origin. As early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Emperor Constantine was informed that “the Avars were present in Croatia and that it was evident that they were Avars.” They apparently had a separate chief in the Krbava and Lika regions and they called him *bajan*, the word that developed into the Croatian term *ban* after the Avar assimilation with the Croats” (p. 79-80). However, one should bear in mind that the Slavs “called all the Roman people Vlachs – both the people from the coastal regions and those who belonged to a remaining Roman minority dispersed in the interior parts of the territory who had fled from their invasion, mostly to the mountains. Nevertheless, the Slavs made the distinction between those two groups by often referring to the Roman people in the interior regions as the Black Vlachs” (p. 79). Thus, the Serbs assimilated the Black Vlachs, while the Croats assimilated the Vlachs from the coastal regions and Avars, which only intensified the former ethnic differences between them. “Even during their migration to the new homeland, and especially when they settled there permanently, the Slavs heard the names of various places, regions, rivers and mountains used by the remaining indigenous people and adopted most of them. Those names are the most reliable proof that the population density of the indigenous people was somewhere higher and somewhere lower in comparison to the population density of the Roman people, for it was rather unlikely that the indigenous names were mainly preserved in the

coastal region, while those names were hardly preserved in the interior regions that had been ravaged by the Barbarians since the 4<sup>th</sup> century ... All the bigger islands and many smaller ones preserved their original indigenous names, which is obvious proof that those regions were, at first, the main domicile of the remaining Romans. Additionally, the names of all the bigger rivers, which the Slavs heard during their pillaging wars, preserved their indigenous names as well” (p. 80).

### **a) The Role of Word-play in the Croatian Expansion to the East**

Two whole centuries after their migration, the Serbs and the Croats lived in a society of tribal democracy, acknowledging the supremacy of Byzantine rule, feeling practically no pressure or limitations due to the preoccupation of the Byzantine rulers with more urgent matters in the other regions of the vast Byzantine Empire. The tribes were organized into parishes and the parishes were gradually grouped into principalities. Klaić tries to expand the Croatian territory slightly to the east by stating that the boundary was “towards the Bosna and the Drina Rivers”, instead of the lower course of the Bosna River. He hesitates to clearly state that the boundary was at the Bosna River or at the Drina River; but instead uses the vague term “towards”, leaving the open possibility for everyone to arbitrarily define the territories encompassed by the term “towards”. In relation to that, he says that “Croatia spread between the mouths of the Raša (in today’s Istria) and the Cetina Rivers, then between the Adriatic Sea and the Vrbas River, and across its middle and lower course further to the east, towards the Bosna and the Drina Rivers” (p. 83).

Šišić was probably the first author who gave Slavonia the name Pannonian Croatia – completely arbitrarily as well; furthermore, he admitted this arbitrariness in a way, when he wrote: “In the former Pannonia Savia, a separate territory lay between the Sava and the Drava Rivers and between the mountain range from Risnjak to the Una River and the Plješevica Mountain of Lika. The Slavic name was dominant there until the 17<sup>th</sup> century and so the name Sclavonia appeared in the Latin documents, while the name Slavonians and Slovinje appeared in the Croatian documents. We shall call this territory Pannonian Croatia” (p. 83) Therefore, up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this territory was definitely Slavonia, but Šišić decided to call it Pannonian Croatia because such a term fitted the political project that he favoured through historiographic striving with a clear political tendency. At the same time, he tried to distance some irrefutably Serbian territories from Serbia by using an unbelievable forgery. He claimed that, concurrently with Croatia, there existed, “Narenta, between the mouths of the Cetina and the Neretva Rivers; Zahumlje or Hum that stretched from the Neretva River to Dubrovnik; the region of Trebinje, which stretched from Dubrovnik to Travunian Kotor; as well as Duklja that stretched from Kotor to the Bojana River and the mouth of the Drim River. All these regions extended into the interior regions, to the mountains that separated the waters of the Adriatic Sea from the Sava tributaries, where the region of Bosnia stretched across the basin of the upper course of the Bosna River, while Serbia lay in the basins of the Piva, Tara, Upper Drina and Lim Rivers surrounded by the high mountains” (p. 83). This latter region was never called Serbia by itself, but was always and exclusively Raška, while the term Serbia encompassed all these regions together, whether political and governmental unity existed among them at the time or not.

## **b) Šišić's Theory of Two Croatias in the Textbooks of Both Yugoslavias**

In order to create a timely and convincing ideological foundation for the later mass Croatization of the non-Croatian ethnic elements, Ferdo Šišić presents the thesis that the Serbs and the Croats were originally one and the same nation, although he is unable to solve the etymological enigma related to their names. Additionally, he admits that the ethnic Serbs still live in Lusatia and in some regions of Russia; moreover, it is undeniable that the Serbs and the Croats arrived in the Balkan Peninsula as already formed ethnic groups under those precise names. He tries to present the entire situation as the decision of the South Slavs, made over a long period of time, to voluntarily affiliate to either the Serbian or Croatian national option. In that sense, he makes the following statements: “Up to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the nation that settled in the area of Old Dalmatia and Pannonia was mentioned only under the general name of the Slavs in the foreign sources of that time. However, there was no doubt that some tribal names had already existed at the time, primarily those excellent ones such as the Croats and the Serbs, but they were not widely known until the foundation of the political regions. It thus happened that the same nation, originally known in the sources under the name of Slavs, began to gather around the two national and political names of the Croats and the Serbs. As the power of one political name or the other subsequently increased, their respective territories also varied in size, depending on the amount of power gained” (p. 83-84). That is a complete lie, for the Croatian name was related to the territories bordered by the Cetina, Kupa and Una Rivers for almost one thousand years.

By the artificial transformation of Slavonia into Pannonian Croatia, Šišić also appropriates the Slavonian people – that is, the Slavonians and their rulers as well, such as Vojnomir, who fought on the Franciscan side against the Avars in 795. A more drastic example of this kind of appropriation is in the case of Slavonian Prince Ljudevit, who proposed an alliance to the Slovenes of Carniola, Croats and the Timok Serbs, in order to definitively liberate themselves from the Frankish rule and their Emperor Louis the Pious. “The Timok Serbs and the Eastern Slovenes of the present-day Carniola and Lower Styria accepted Prince Ljudevit’s alliance proposal, but the Dalmatian-Croatian Prince Borna refused to form the alliance, remaining loyal to the Frankish Emperor and ready to do military service for the Emperor” (p. 89). Borna was only the Croatian Ban, not the Dalmatian one, for Dalmatia of that time was reduced to the coastal towns from Split to Zadar, their surroundings and the islands and was not part of his principality, but under the direct Byzantine rule. Moreover, Dalmatia was populated by the Roman people and Latin was spoken there, or rather a dialect of Latin later named Dalmatian by scientists. The Eastern Slovenes did not live in Carniola and Lower Styria between 810 and 823. The Slovenes that occupied the territories furthest to the east lived in Slavonia and were on much better terms with the inhabitants of Carniola and the Serbs than with the Croats. A bloody war was fought between the Slavonians and the Croats at that time and, after the Croatian defeat at the Kupa River in 819, “Ljudevit advanced into Dalmatian Croatia in December and started to pillage and burn it” (p. 89). Although there existed only Croatia – not Dalmatian Croatia, Šišić’s theory of two Croatias, one Dalmatian and one Pannonian (or Trans-Savian), was uncritically included in all the history books for the primary and secondary school in both the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

and the communist Yugoslavia. Ljudevit succeeded in uniting all the Slovenes under his rule as early as 820, though after his defeat, the Slovenes lost their governmental independence over the subsequent 1100 years, until the Serbs liberated them in 1918.

In 827, Slavonia fell under Bulgarian rule, while Carinthia, Carniola and Lower Styria were under the rule of Bavarian King Louis the German. In Slavonia, the Bulgarians brought Prince Ratomir to power, who ruled from 829 to 838. In 838, Ratomir was defeated by Count Ratbod who subjected Slavonia to the rule of King Louis the German, who gained complete independence from the Frankish Empire in 843. Prince Pribina, the ruler of the Balaton Principality (and the former ruler of the Principality of Nitra in Slovakia), was King Louis's prefect in Slavonia until 861, together with his son, Prince Kocelja, who was the King's prefect until 876. Prince Braslav ruled over Slavonia as a Frankish ruler from 880 to 896. The Croats and the Croatian spirit were never mentioned in Slavonia throughout all those years. Besides, as Šišić himself confirmed, it was Prince Trpimir who first called himself "the Prince of Croats, in the name of God" when he came to power in 845; that was "the first mention of the Croatian name in the historical documents, such as his charter (issued on 4 March 852) - the oldest known Croatian diplomatic document" (p. 96). In addition to that, Šišić remarked: "Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus was the witness of the older events, but he did not write until the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The older Frankish chronicle writers knew nothing of the Croatian name" (p. 96). Jaroslav Šidak drew special attention to "Prince Trpimir's charter, which was preserved in transcripts, the oldest of which dated from 1568. This fact alone, as well as some other factors, raised questions about its authenticity" (p. 96).

The Croats waged war against the Slavonians again in 876, when they rebelled after falling under supreme German rule, after Carloman, the son of King Louis the German ascended to the throne, previously being the King of Moravia, Bohemia, Slavonia and other Slavic countries. That rebellion lasted for seven years. During the war against the Croats, the Slavonian Prince Kocelj was killed in the first year of war when leading King Carloman's army. In 878, during the most intense clashes with the Germans, Croatian Prince Zdeslav acknowledged supreme Byzantine rule, so that the Croatian Bishopric with the seat in Nin also came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople. For that reason, Teodosije, the chosen but not ordained Bishop of Nin, and magnate Branimir hatched a conspiracy and killed Prince Zdeslav in 879. Immediately afterwards, Branimir, now the new Prince, informed the Pope that the Bishopric of Nin would again be under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church. In any case, the Croatian and Slavonian territories were strictly divided until the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. the arrival of the Hungarians who founded Hungary, thus severing the territorial connection between the inhabitants of Carniola and the Slavonians on the one hand and the ethnically similar Bohemians and Slovaks on the other. The Hungarians advanced through Slavonia all the way to the Croatian borders for a while, but Prince Tomislav managed to stop them and "to expand his rule over most of the former Pannonian Croatia all the way to the Drava River and the present-day Slavonian plain, where the expanded Croatia bordered on Bulgaria at first (approximately until the death of the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon). Nevertheless, around 930, the expanded Croatia bordered on Hungary, since the Hungarians, during the decline of the Bulgarian Empire, had settled in some crucial places around the mouth of the Drava River and along the Danube and the Sava Rivers.

“It was unknown when and how Dalmatian Croatia expanded over Pannonian Croatia, but it is certain that in 925, the territory of the former Sisak Bishopric, which had belonged to the Patriarchate of Aquileia until the fall of Frankish rule in those regions in 900, was considered a part of the Split Archbishopric and a part of the jurisdiction of the Croatian ruler” (p. 120-121). Certainly, it would be even harder to reconstruct the exact boundaries of Croatia’s territorial expansion over Slavonia, but what is most interesting here is Šišić’s claim that the Slavonians ran to Croatia under the Hungarian invasion. Although he did not have any valid proof for such a claim, he used this claim for further assumptions, using the word “probably” as a replacement and compensation for his arguments. “At the time of the Hungarian pillaging wars, large numbers of people migrated to Croatia from Pannonia, which was then under the rule of Prince Kocelj, and which was already completely devastated, deserted and without a single church in 900, as the Bavarian bishops informed the Pope. Thus, it is probable that Pannonian Croatia voluntarily stuck to Dalmatian Croatia as a more powerful governmental organism, while its important people (zhupans) remained responsible for the domestic administration” (p. 121).

### **c) Unrealistic Theses on the Alleged Hungarian Occupation of the Serbian Territories**

Šišić stated that Serbian Prince Petar Gojniković, who ruled for twenty years starting from 896, seized Narenta, “with the exception of the islands of Vis, Brač and Hvar, for those islands were at the time undoubtedly under the rule of Croatian Prince Tomislav” (p. 121). This meant that the Serbia under Gojniković’s rule extended to Omiš and the Cetina, which would thus be the southern border of Tomislav’s Croatia; however, whether Tomislav really had the islands of Vis, Brač and Hvar under his control at the time is a separate issue requiring further discussion, since Šišić did not provide any proof to back up his statement. When the Bulgarians captured Petar, Mihailo Višević “seized Narenta, thus uniting the entire coastal area with the Bosnian and Serbian border mountains from the Cetina and Drina Rivers into one entity under his rule” (p. 121). This was clear proof that Narenta was not a part of the Croatian Principality, either under the rule of Prince Tomislav, the greatest Croatian ruler, or before him. Narenta, famous for rejecting Christianity and its fearless pirates, was either independent or under the rule of the neighbouring Serbian rulers. When the Bulgarians attacked the Serbian Prince Zaharije Prvosavljević in 923, “the Bulgarians finally conquered Serbia in that war, forcing the Serbian inhabitants to flee in all directions, especially to Croatia, where Zaharije himself fled, causing the Serbian Principality to temporarily disappear and become the lower part of the huge Bulgarian country (924)” (p. 122). Therefore, that would be the first mass migration of the Serbs into Croatia. Today, it is impossible to determine with more certainty what was the original difference between Serbian and Croatian as Slavic dialects, since the Serbs bear greater similarity to the Russians, whereas the Croats are closer to the Polish, but it is undeniable that the newcomers from Serbia must have left a certain linguistic influence on the native Croatian language – Chakavian. The process of linguistic convergence must have already started then. “Prince Tomislav must have proclaimed himself king around 925 ... He certainly did this with the approval of the Holy See, for the Pope acknowledged his title as King; however, whether Tomislav was crowned, by whom and where, remains unknown” (p.

122). At the same time, Šišić categorically denied the credibility of the story about the coronation in Duvanjsko Polje from *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, which was zealously propagated by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski and Tadija Smičiklas, the main creators of the targeted national propaganda of the Croatian historiographic pamphlet writings in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The historically indisputable presence of some Serbian aristocrats at the Church Council of Split in 925, including Mihailo Višević, the Prince of Zahumlje, served as reliable proof that the Serbs were the immediate neighbours of Tomislav's Croatia. However, Šišić tried to disqualify this proof by stating that those Serbs "were undoubtedly newcomers who found refuge from the Bulgarian attacks in Croatia" (p. 123). Attempting to cartographically represent the expansion of Croatia under Tomislav and his successors Trpimir II and Krešimir until the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Šišić drew its boundaries at the Raša, Kupa, Drava, Cetina and Usora Rivers, as well as at the lower course of the Bosna River, behind the mouth of the Usora River. He admitted that he was unable to precisely define the Croatian boundary towards Slavonia, between the Drava and the Sava Rivers, but he presumed it to be to the east of Požega. According to Šišić, the most southern part of the Croatian territory would be the Imotski Parish.

During the civil war in Croatia, at around 948, the islands of Brač, Hvar and Vis were restored to the newly independent Principality of Narenta. "Bosnia was also separated from Croatia and made a part of the Serbian Principality under the rule of Časlav Klonimirović" (p. 124). The enclosed map clearly shows which Bosnia was separated from Croatia. It certainly was not the early Bosnia around the source of the eponymous river, but the later Bosnia to the west from the source of the Lašva River, to the west of the Usora River and the lower course of the Bosna River. Later, Samuel's Empire comprised all Serbian territories to the Cetina River, including Bosnia and Srem. Samuel invaded Croatia as well and ravaged it all the way to Zadar, but he did not subject it to his rule. In 1027, Hungarian King Stephen I seized Slavonia from Croatian King Krešimir III and made it the independent Slavonian Banate or *Ducatus* under Hungarian influence. Petar Krešimir IV conquered Slavonia again between 1066 and 1070; however, Šišić unfoundedly claimed that Bosnia was then the third banate encompassed by Croatia. In relation to that, he wrote: "The boundaries of Croatia under Petar Krešimir could be defined approximately as follows: starting from the banks of the Neretva River, the boundary extended over the mountains that divide the waters of the Adriatic Sea from the Sava tributaries to the upper course of the Drava River, then along that river to the vicinity of Zvornik, where the boundary turned to the west, all the way to the confluence of the Spreča River with the Bosna River and along the Bosna River to its confluence with the Sava River. From there, the boundary extended from the present-day town of Đakovo to the Drava River near the present-day town of Donji Miholjac, thus extending along the Drava River further to the west, where the approximate border line with the Marches of Carniola and Carinthia was. The border with the Marches of Carniola and Carinthia was the same as the present-day border with Slovenia, except for the region around the present-day town of Metlika in Southern Carniola, which belonged to Croatia. From the source of the Kupa River, the boundary descended to the Adriatic Sea, encompassing a part of the present-day eastern Istria and reaching the coast at the mouth of the Raša River. All the islands from Cres and Krk to Vis belonged to Croatian-Dalmatian country as well" (p. 136).



#### **d) Šišić's Interpretation of the Official Titles of the Hungarian Nobility**

Providing a retrospective overview of the internal state of affairs in Croatia when it was ruled by the native rulers, Šišić insisted that “the Croats did not form unified countries immediately upon settlement, but several smaller territories, such as Pannonian Croatia, Dalmatian Croatia, Narenta and Bosnia” (p. 148); nevertheless, the grounds for his claims could not be found in historical sources, serious literature or in the previous 150 pages of his book. Completely arbitrarily, he changed the name of Slavonia and forgot to mention the fact that the Kajkavian dialect was spoken there, also neglecting the fact that the Shtokavian dialect – that is, the Serbian language – was spoken in Narenta and Bosnia. Although he himself was a zealous and fanatical Croat, Jaroslav Šidak made a special and careful observation that “the formation of these territories at the time of the Croatian migration could not be connected with the idea of the Croatian national territory in such a broad sense. The genesis of the Croatian nation was a more complex and lengthy process and the Serbs were also mentioned quite early in the territory of the old Roman province of Dalmatia” (p. 148). On the other hand, as Šidak remarked, “No grounds for the claim that Narenta was annexed to Croatia at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century could be found in the preserved sources. The prevailing scientific opinion, supported by new findings, is that the annexation must have occurred later, although it is unknown precisely when” (p. 148). Šišić here attempted to determine the territorial range of Croatia before its annexation to Hungary: “The boundaries of the Kingdom of Croatia at the time when it accepted King Coloman as its ruler extended approximately along the Neretva River to Rama and from there to the upper and the middle course of the Vrbas River, then to the lower course of the Bosna River and its confluence with the Sava River, in the direction between the present-day town of Brod and Donji Miholjac to the Drava River. The boundary further extended along the Drava River to the mountains at the border between Styria and Carniola and, from there, descended to the sea near the town of Rijeka. Among the greater islands, the islands of Krk, Cres, Rab, Pag, Hvar, Brač and Vis belonged to Croatia” (p.148). Šidak observed that these boundaries were defined by Franjo Rački, and they were almost identical to those defined by Vjekoslav Klaić.

Šišić further presented several other significant facts. He thus stated that “a new Archbishopric” was established in the town of Bar in 1089 and “that Bosnia came under its jurisdiction” (p. 150). Nevertheless, he failed to mention one “tiny” detail – that the Archbishop of Bar held the title of the Serbian Primate, the title that he holds even today. Secondly, Šišić claimed that “it was completely wrong and contrary to both the expressions found in the sources and their meaning to call the Croatian rulers who were the predecessors of the Croatian kings bans, as some historians did” (p. 151). They were princes, whereas the bans and župans were the special provincial governors that the ruler appointed and deposed in accordance with his own preferences. Thirdly, the Croatian rulers never had their own coins; they only used Byzantine money. Furthermore, Šišić remarked that “Bosnia was a part of Serbia from 1089, following the death of Zvonimir, to the death of Constantine Bodin (1101). However, it became independent after the disintegration of Bodin’s state (1110) and, as such, it was annexed to Hungary at around 1137 at the latest” (p. 170). Nevertheless, immediately after that, he made the highly unfounded statement that Ban Borić, the first Bosnian ban under the

supreme rule of Hungary, was “a Croat from the vicinity of Graborje, not far from the present-day town of Brod on the Sava River” (p. 171). Šidak remarked that this opinion was based on the fact that “his descendants were mentioned in that region” over the subsequent centuries – in the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (p. 171). The strongest scientific argument, surely beyond any doubt. Since Šišić, much like Klaić, consistently labelled the Hungarian kings as “Hungarian-Croatian” or Hungarian and Croatian, Šidak, the editor of the book, corrected it and added this footnote to their genealogy: “The dual way of labelling these kings as Croatian and Hungarian that Šišić used was abandoned both in the text and here, in the genealogy of the Arpad dynasty; only the Hungarian official way of labelling used in the contemporary documents is kept” (p. 173).

### **e) The Inadvertent Mention of Chakavian as the Main Determinant of the Croatiandom**

In relation to the Battle at Krbava Šišić drew attention to the fact that Ban Derenčin was a Hungarian. He also pointed out that one of the consequences of the crushing defeat in 1493 was “the migration of the Croats from the territories across Gvozd to Slavonia and further on to Hungary, which resulted in the expansion of the Croatian geographical name to the Drava River in the north, while it increasingly disappeared from the basins of the Vrbas, Sava and Una Rivers at the same time” (p. 238). In regard to the Vlach issue, Šišić remarked that the name Vlach was originally used to describe the remaining native Roman citizenry but, “from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, it primarily referred to cattlemen – that is, the occupation and social status, not a foreign nationality. The part of Croatia from the Neretva River to Gvozd, especially around the Cetina, Zrmanja and Lika Rivers, was densely populated with the Vlachs, who were mainly Catholics with only a few members of Greek-Eastern faith (the schismatic Vlachs). ‘The Croatian Vlachs’ or ‘the Vlachs of Croatia’, as they called themselves, spoke Chakavian after their Croatization, which was proved by their preserved documents. Their names were changed into Croatian forms as well” (p. 243). Although his thesis on the Croatized Catholic Vlach was highly ungrounded, with the exception of the inhabitants of the coastal towns and the Dalmatian islands, the important thing here was that Šišić mentioned Chakavian for the first time as one of the basic Croatian ethnic traits. He made a special remark emphasizing that “those Vlachs should be distinguished from the Orthodox Serbs –Vlachs under Turkish rule from the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries onwards” (p. 243).

As far as Slavonia was concerned, “many Hungarian noble families” settled there in the period from the *Pacta Conventa* to the Battle of Mohacs. “These Hungarian noble families created the seeming impression that Slavonia in the Middle Ages was essentially ‘Hungarian’ – that is, more closely related to Hungary than to the rest of Croatia” (p. 224). By treating this fact with scorn, Šišić, at the very least, neglected the fact that Slavonian aristocracy rather than Croatian took part in the assembly meetings of the Hungarian nobility. After all, Croatia and Slavonia were completely separate in regard to religious matters as well. The whole territory of Croatia was under the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Split, which encompassed the Bishoprics of Makarska, Duvno and Hvar, in addition to the Croatian Bishoprics (of Knin, Trogir, Nin, Krbava, Skradin, Šibenik and Senj). There were three bishoprics in Slavonia and all three of them were subordinated to the Archbishopric of Kalocsa. The Bishopric of

Zagreb extended “to the east all the way to Slatina, Voćin and Pakrac” (p. 244). The Bishopric of Pečuj “encompassed the major part of present-day Slavonia all the way to the town of Ilok (which was not included) and the territory extending from there to the confluence of the Bosut River with the Sava River” (p. 244). “The Bishopric of Srem, with its seat in Banoštor, extended to the east of the Bishopric of Pečuj, between the Danube and the Sava Rivers” (p. 244). In addition, the seat of the Bishop of Bosnia was located in Đakovo since 1247 due to the dominance of the Bogomils in Bosnia. The Bishop of Bosnia was subordinated to the Archbishopric of Kalocsa at the time, although he had first been under the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Bar and then under the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Dubrovnik.

#### **f) The Extinction of the Zrinski and Frankopan Families**

Although Šišić insisted that *Srb* – the name of the place in Lika – originated from the word *sebar*, Šidak remarked: “Although the sources written in Croatian revealed that the word *sebar*, which denoted a serf, was used at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the derivation of the toponym *Srb* from this word was very unlikely. Having taken into consideration all the facts, it seems that the toponym was related to the ethnic Serbian name” (p. 251).

It is very important for us that Šišić continued to present the historical events as of the last year discussed by Klaić – that is, from 1608 onwards, when Matthias II of the house of Habsburg usurped the Hungarian and Austro-Moravian throne of his incapable brother Rudolf; after Rudolf's death in 1612, Matthias succeeded him as the Holy Roman Emperor. In this same year, when Matthias was crowned, the Croatian and Slavonian gentry sent their representatives to the Hungarian Parliament in Pozsony, demanding the abolition of the Military Krajina by the withdrawal of all foreign troops and commanders from all its towns and the complete restoration of the governmental rule to the Ban. The King promised to do this and appointed Tomas II Erdődy as the new Ban to humour the Croats and the Slavonians. However, the King did not fulfil his promise as Archduke Ferdinand persistently stood in opposition to him. In protest, Ban Tomas II Erdődy resigned in 1614. The *Uskok* issue would be solved to some extent under the rule of Ban Nikola Frankopan Tržački from 1616 to 1622. In relation to those *Uskoci* who mainly populated the Military Krajina from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Šišić wrote: “After the fall of Bosnia (1463) and Herzegovina (1482), those citizens (mainly Catholics) who did not want to submit themselves to Ottoman rule found refuge in the neighbouring Croatia and Slavonia. In Slavonia, those fugitives were mainly called ‘*pribegi* or ‘*prebegi*’, while in south Croatia, they were called ‘*uskoci*’ (from the verb ‘jump in’), as well as Vlachs, Martoloz and Morlachs. Little by little, a large number of fugitives from Venetian Dalmatia, who often evaded punishment, joined those *Uskoci*. Therefore, the *Uskoci* were not one integral ethnic group, for they were mainly the Catholic Croats, as well as Orthodox Serbs and some Italians (*Venturins*)” (p. 292-293). Šišić did not say a word about where those Croats jumped in from. Those who jumped in were Catholic Serbs who were present in large numbers in Bosnia after the mainly forcible conversion of the Bogomils to Roman Catholicism. By dividing the Serbs from the Croats on religious grounds instead of on the grounds of the Shtokavian and Chakavian dialects, Šišić accidentally took a position that led to the conclusion that the

Croats are in fact the Catholic Serbs. The number of Italians and other foreigners among the *Uskoci* was negligibly small.

The pillaging and pirate attacks of the *Uskoci* vexed the Venetians for decades – during the period when they had good relations with the Ottomans – and after the first Uskok-Venetian War (1616 to 1617), it was decided that the *Uskoci* from Senj should be relocated to Otočac and Žumberak. By the end of 1618, at the coronation of Ferdinand II, the Archduke of Styria, “. . . the Croatian emissaries repeated their accusations, with the aim of restoring the supreme governmental rule of the ban and Croatinizing the Military Border” at a Hungarian Parliament session in Pressburg (p. 294-295). Ferdinand promised to do so, and Šišić indirectly attempted to present that promise as a crucial prerequisite for the coronation itself. Anyhow, he writes that Ferdinand II was crowned “. . . as the Hungarian-Croatian King; at the coronation ceremony, Ban Nikola Frankopan carried the royal sceptre, young Count Krsto Erdody bore the Slavonian flag and Count Juraj Zrinski the Serbian flag” (p. 295). There were also various other flags present at the coronation; nevertheless, it was the coronation of the Hungarian King – with many additional titles of rule. Otherwise he would have to be called the Hungarian-Croatian-Slavonian-Serbian-Moldavian, etc King. However, in 1627, the new king guaranteed the Vlachs the right to stay on the property where they had lived until that point, under the direct rule of the king, being practically equal to the Croatian nobility concerning their rights. As Šišić points out, the Military Krajina was not subjected to the rule of the Croatian-Slavonian ban and Parliament, but was divided into the general commands of Karlovac and Varaždin, that is, the Croatian and Slavonian Military Krajinas. “Being that those regions were very sparsely populated, the Germans began luring in the Orthodox Serbs (the Vlachs) who were settled the neighbouring Turkish territories, offering them various privileges. One of these was protection from the Croatian nobility’s demands that the Vlachs be their serfs – as they had settled on their land – and that they pay tithe to the Catholic bishops. Consequently, violent conflicts broke out between the Croatian nobility and the Imperial Court, which were halted when Ferdinand II issued a charter to the immigrants (on 5 October 1630), which declared that they would only be soldiers of the Military Krajina, and not serfs for the Croatian nobility. Furthermore, the immigrants were allowed to freely choose their village princes, who in turn chose the judges. By this act, the Military Krajina became a separate territory, completely exempt from subjection to the rule of the bans and Parliament. This division of the already small Croatian territory forced the Croatian nobility to increasingly rely on the Hungarians for their mutual defence” (p. 296-297).

Under the rule of Ferdinand III, who ruled from 1637 to 1657, not only was it impossible to restore the Military Krajina to the Croatian-Slavonian Banat but there also loomed the possibility of the judicial jurisdiction of the ban being revoked, which would make Croatia and Slavonia legally equal with the Austrian provinces. During the rule of Ferdinand’s successor Leopold I (Leopold Ignaz Joseph Balthasar Felician), wars with the Turks were resumed in 1663 and 1664, when the Turks, after several sporadic defeats, succeeded in capturing Novi Zrinj, situated at the confluence of the Mura River with the Drava River, thereby gaining access to Vienna. However, they soon suffered a crushing defeat at Saint Gotthard, which resulted in the signing of a twenty-year peace treaty. The Hungarian, Slavonian and Croatian gentry were highly dissatisfied with this peace treaty, as they wished to take advantage of the weakness of the Turks and regain as many of their long-lost territories as possible. Furthermore, Nikola Zrinski, the

Croatian-Slavonian Ban and best Hungarian poet of the time; his brother Petar and his wife Katarina Frankopan; as well as many of the leading Hungarian noblemen, all participated in conspiring a plot. The conspirators established relations with French King Louis XIV, the archenemy of the Habsburg dynasty, seeking his protectorate. King Louis XIV was even offered the Hungarian Crown of Saint Stephen. The leader of the conspirators, Nikola Zrinski, was even ready to collaborate with the Turks, but he was killed by a boar during a hunting excursion in 1664. The following year, Petar Zrinski became the ban and continued the conspiratorial agreements with the French, who ended up leaving him in the lurch in 1667. According to Šidak, Petar included his wife's brother, Duke Fran Krsto Frankopan – who had translated Moliere's verses into Slovenian (although Šišić called that language Croatian) – in the conspiracy two years later. (p. 303).

As the conspirators had lost all their European allies and political strongholds, , at the end of 1669, Zrinski sent an emissary to make a secret pact with the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV, with the main clause of the pact specifying that Hungary and Croatia would come under the Sultan's patronage. After that, Petar Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan began intensive preparations for an uprising, but the Imperial Court found out about their secret pact with the Ottomans. The Imperial Army took preventive action in 1670 and, as soon as it reached Međumurje, Zrinski and Frankopan rushed to Vienna to repent before the king and ask for his forgiveness. There they were arrested and sentenced to death for high treason. They were executed in 1671, together with several Hungarian noblemen. As Šišić concludes: “. . . that catastrophe put an end to two ancient Croatian noble families, and brought German rule over Croatia to its peak” (p. 307).

## **2. The Croatian Political Program Once the Ottoman Threat was Gone**

After having attacked Vienna with a large army in 1683 and being terribly defeated, the power of the Ottomans Empire was devastated for a long period of time. In a counterattack, the Imperial Army had by 1687 seized the greater portion of Hungary, Slavonia and Croatia, which had until then been under Ottoman rule. By signing the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, King Leopold I confirmed his rule over the entire Croatia, to the southern part of Velebit and the Una River, and over the entire Slavonia, whereas his Venetian allies gained control over Knin, Sinj and Vrgorac, in addition to all the other regions that they had seized through battle. “Now the Dalmatian name spread even over those territories that had once been purely Croatian in a geographical sense” (p. 314). The territorial expansion established the conditions for the appearance of the first Croatian political program, whose author was Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652-1713), born in Senj. He published a small brochure “Revived Croatia” or “Croatia *Rediviva*” in Latin in 1700. “Vitezović proved that Croatia had once been much more spacious in comparison to its contemporary (1700) remnants. Moreover, he identified the Illyrians and the Slavs (Slovenes or South Slavs), and since some Dalmatian writers called their language both Slavic and Croatian, Vitezović took a it a step further by claiming that the terms Illyrian, Slavic and Croatian were only synonyms. Therefore, for Vitezović, Croatia included everything which the Romans had once called Illyria, and he made a distinction between White and Red Croatia. According to him, White Croatia comprised

Primorje (from Raša to Bar), Zachlunia (*Zagorje* – Bosnia and Herzegovina), Međurječje (between the Sava and the Drava Rivers) and Mountainous Croatia (Croacia Aplestris, that is, present-day Carinthia (Koruška), Lower Styria (Štajerska) and Carniola (Kranjska)); whereas Red Croatia referred to Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Thrace. He regarded the different dialects spoken in those regions simply as parts of the same Croatian language. However, Vitezović's portrayal was far from reality. The land that was conquered by the Croats and emperors was Croatian only by a historical name; it had been more ravaged than any land, and was mainly populated by new inhabitants, primarily by the Serbs. Moreover, the Viennese Court refused to unify the conquered territories with the mother country, and instead, subjected Lika and Slavonia to the Imperial Court Chamber, that is, to the supreme Austrian financial district that served as the state treasury. After all, the Republic of Venice also refused to surrender the conquered territories of present-day Dalmatia, north of the Neretva River, to King Leopold" (p. 316)

When, at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Austria was shaken by the uprising organized by Transylvanian Duke Ferenc (Francis) Rakoczi II, the grandson of Petar Zrinski on the maternal side, ". . . as there was concern in Vienna over Croatian loyalty, King Leopold had to satisfy the demands of the Croatian Parliament and abolish the Varaždin Military Krajina, while subjecting the Banat Military Border (expanded to the Una River) to the rule and government of Ban Adam Bačani (1703). However, the abolition of the Varaždin Military Krajina was not put into effect, for wars over the Spanish inheritance were being waged against French King Louis XIV at the same time (1700-1714), requiring a large number of soldiers and thus causing the abolition to be postponed. Thus, it happened that everything remained the same as before" (p. 316). After the short reign of King Joseph I (1705-1711), he was succeeded by his brother Charles III (later Charles VI), who granted religious freedom to the Protestants in Hungary by the Treaty of Szatmar that his mother Eleonore-Magdalena of the Palatinate signed in 1711. This treaty brought the interests of the Habsburg dynasty into accord with the interests of the Hungarian nobility, which now paid special attention to tightly incorporating Croatia and Slavonia into liberated Hungary. A Croatian-Slavonian Parliament session, held in Zagreb in 1712, adopted the Pragmatic Sanction, by which it accepted the succession of the throne to female Habsburg descendents. In an address dealing with that sanction, sent to Charles III, the Croatian-Slavonian nobility confirmed that Croatia and Slavonia were ". . . part of Hungary", that is, ". . . countries joined with Hungary, and that they would acknowledge this fact as long as the Hungarian king was the also the ruler of Austria; otherwise, they would not obey the will of Hungary. Šišić was of the opinion that such a decision by the Parliament ". . . clearly stated that the union of Hungary and Croatia depended on the individual ruler; as long as both kingdoms had the same ruler, the union between them would also exist; if that condition was not met, the union would not be possible" (p. 319). In fact, it all had to do with the nobility factor, because otherwise, there would be no need for Croatia and Slavonia to stay adjoined to Hungary, for they could have been subjected directly to Vienna, thus being equal with Hungary. The fact that the person who proposed that parliament decision was Emeric Esterhazy, the Bishop of Zagreb and a native Magyar, serves as proof that it all really had to do with protecting the interests and privileges of the nobility.

The king basically accepted this conclusion by Parliament, but he did not legally confirm it with a royal sanction, for fear that by so doing, he might infuriate the Hungarian nobility. In 1715, the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg adopted Article 120 of the law, which stated that the Hungarian Parliament was incompetent of dealing with the internal legislative matters of the Kingdom of Croatia”. Šišić claimed that this Article was “. . . from then on one of the most significant rights of the Kingdom of Croatia, and clear proof of its political and territorial independence” (p. 320). After a new war with the Turks, the Passarowitz (Požarevac) Treaty in 1718 gave Austria, among other things, the entire right bank of the Sava and the Una Rivers, all the way to the foot of the mountain region in Bosnia, while the Venetians received the Dalmatian town of Imotski. After a new war against the Turks, Austria lost the right to the right bank of the Sava River under the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. “Frequent clashes and the need for a regular army forced the Viennese War Council to proclaim the Military Krajina a separate royal territory, despite the demands of the Croatian nobility that the Krajina be rescinded, or at least subjected to the rule of the ban. The management of the Croatian Military Krajina was entrusted to Prince Joseph of Saxe-Hildburghausen, whereas Count Ferdinand Kevenchillen (1734) was entrusted with the management of the Slavonian Military Krajina, the primary goal being to receive, when necessary, as big an army as possible from that land” (p. 322).

**Comment [K.B.18]:** Translator's note. This name could not be confirmed in the available sources. The suggested spelling was given here

### a) The Deliberate Omission of the Crimes of Trenck's Pandours

The rule of Charles' daughter Maria Theresa (1740-1780) began with the seven-year Silesian Wars that started in 1741, which Šišić refers to when emphasizing the role of Trenck's Pandours (the irregular army units of the Habsburg army in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which consisted mostly of Croats from the town of Pandur), praising them for their courage and mentioning their frequent unruliness. Instead of giving an exact description of their crimes, Šišić only wrote that “Baron Franz von der Trenck, due to his courage and unruliness, gained many opponents, who slandered him in front of the Queen and was thus brought before the court” (p. 324). He was sentenced to life in prison and soon died. Šišić points out that Trenck's family was of Prussian origin, while Trenck himself became a Slavonian aristocrat, having bought the property of Pakrac, Brestovac and Pleternica. At the Hungarian Parliament coronation session in Pressburg in 1741, Maria Theresa promised the “. . . Croatian Parliamentary representatives that she would restore the old counties in Eastern Slavonia and join them with Croatia, which she actually did in 1745. The counties of Virovitica, Požega and Srem, that is, former Slavonia, were restored and joined with Croatia, while Slavonian Posavina was reorganized into the Military Krajina. The restored and reordered counties came under the government of Ban Charles Batthyany (1742-1756), to the great pleasure of the Croatian nation” (p. 324-325). In regard to Šišić's statement about this alleged great pleasure, Šidak remarks: “The restoration of counties in Slavonia made only the nobility happy, as it guaranteed them power, while for the broad range of peasants, especially in the neighbouring regions of the Military Krajina, it was a cause of uneasiness, and even rebellion” (p. 325). Šišić additionally remarks, “The expansion of the Military Krajina to Slavonian Posavina led to the final reorganisation of the governmental structure of the entire Military Krajina. Prince Hildburghausen implemented this reorganisation in 1746, according to new military needs. The Military Krajina was divided into the following

regiments: Lika, Otočac, Ogulin and Slunj; two regiments were part of the Croatian Military Krajina (the Glina and Petrinja Regiments), while the other regiments included Križevci, Đurđevac, Gradiška, Brod and Petrovaradin. Administration was exclusively in the hands of the army. Just as counties were divided into regions, districts and municipalities, the regiments were divided into battalions, units and companies. The heads of particular military units (colonel, major, captain and lieutenant) were in charge of all affairs, even judicial ones. Litigations were conducted free of charge, a person could call on the Regimental Court, then the Auditoriate General and finally the Imperial War Council. The official language was German, as well as the legal codes. The schools were German as well. Each regiment was financed by the money from its own treasury; thus, each regiment was financially independent from the rest. Every man in the Military Krajina was a soldier from the age of 16 to 60. Thus, the Military Krajina alone could mobilize 50,000 men. During a war, each “border guard” (as the inhabitants were called) had to go where he was commanded. In times of peace, each border guard provided himself with food and clothing on his own, while they lived at the King’s expense during the war. In general, the Military Krajina was a huge, regular-army barracks maintained at a relatively small expense” (p. 325).

The status of a border guard was certainly more favourable than that of a serf, thus, every serf rebellion had the objective of joining the Military Krajina and acquiring border-guard status. On the other hand, the border guards constantly had to fight for the continuance and extension of their rights. Around the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the newly unified Slavonia was reorganised. “The Magyars incessantly claimed that those three restored Slavonian counties had been an integral part of Hungary – and in no way Croatia – since the time of Arpad dynasty, and should therefore be returned to Hungary. When the Croatian and Hungarian representatives assembled a State Parliament session in Pressburg (18 April 1751), Antun Špišić Japranski, the Vice Ban of Virovitica, suggested that each of those three newly restored Slavonian counties should send two representatives to the Hungarian Parliament, as all Hungarian counties did. He supported his suggestion with the argument that the Slavonian counties were organized in the same way as the Hungarian ones, and that they paid the same tax as their Hungarian counterparts, so it would be more appropriate for them to be regarded as Hungarian, and not Croatian. In other words, Vice Ban Špišić proposed that Slavonia should be broken off from Croatia and joined to Hungary. The Hungarian nobility accepted this proposal and it was therefore legalised (Article XXIII from 1751). The Croatian Parliament representatives protested in vain, proving how Slavonia had always been under the rule of the ban (except in the time of the Ottoman rule), and in an administrative union with Croatia and Dalmatia. Nonetheless, they managed to have that right acknowledged, after great difficulty, thus all three Slavonian counties remained under the rule and jurisdiction of the ban; and in addition to that, they sent their representatives to the Croatian Parliament where the gentry, zhupans and bishops (of Đakovica, Srem and Pecs) were *ex-officio* members” (p. 325-326).

### **b) The Complete Subordination of Slavonia and Croatia to the Centralised State of Maria Theresa**

After the end of the Seven Years’ War with Prussia in 1763, Maria Theresa devoted herself to the project of completely centralising the state. First, the Bohemian territories



were given equal status to the Austrian ones, and then the same was slowly done with the Hungarian territories as well. When the Hungarian nobility protested against this, Queen Maria Theresa stopped convoking Parliament, additionally motivated by the Hungarian nobility's refusal to increase the taxes in the amount that she demanded. She started to issue "patents" in the form of orders, which she distributed directly to the counties. On the other hand, she tried to corrupt the gentry by giving them additional privileges, in order to neutralise their further resistance. "To that end she founded the Order of Saint Stephen of Hungary (1764), which she bestowed on several Hungarian and Croatian aristocrats, as well as 'the Theresian Military Academy in Vienna as a school for young noblemen; what is more, she also established a Hungarian guard, which was comprised of young Hungarian and Croatian noblemen. She invited the parents of those noblemen to the Imperial Court and bestowed on them many honours and titles. That was the beginning of the Germanization of the Croatian nobility and their alienation from national interests. The noblemen then started abandoning their fortified castles and move to the cities, desiring entertainment and pleasure. They increasingly started to adopt the use of foreign languages, especially German and French, as well as foreign customs, ways of life and fashions. In order to gain the support of Church dignitaries, Maria Theresa acquired the title of 'Apostolic Queen' (1758), with the permission of Pope Clement XIII, which allowed her to appoint the highest church dignitaries and even canons" (p. 328-329). The Queen's appointment as Apostolic Queen was put into effect upon the Pope's confirmation. In 1765, the Empress enthroned her son Joseph II, who was very liberally orientated, as a co-ruler, and he took over the management of financial and military affairs.

In order to strike back at the Hungarian nobility even harder, and additionally diminish their power, in 1767, the Empress established the Royal Council for Croatian political, economic and military affairs with the seat originally set in Varaždin and then in Zagreb. The ban presided over the Council, which represented the first real Croatian territorial government. By its constitution and method of operation, the Royal Council was similar to the Hungarian Vice-regency Council. "Clearly, the Croatian Parliament thereby became a much less effective – and possibly unnecessary – body of the territorial government. Due to that fact, the Croats always looked upon this Royal Council with some scepticism, although the Queen issued a special report ensuring them that it was of equal importance as the Hungarian Parliament. While the Croats were showing disbelief, the Magyars were secretly striving for the subordination of the Croatian Royal Council to the Hungarian Vice-regency Council. And so it actually happened that Maria Theresa finally abolished the Royal Council (30 July 1779). However, she did not hand the entire jurisdiction of the abolished Royal Council over to the Croatian Parliament, as the Croats wanted, but rather she transferred its affairs to the Hungarian Vice-regency Council, allowing the ban to freely attend the meetings of the Council in order to vote and state his opinion on Croatian affairs. Thus, Croatia was subordinated to Hungary and its government for the first time" (p. 329).

As the Imperial Court, in 1670, formed the Austrian Littoral from Trieste and Gradež to Senj and Bag, in which Trieste and Rijeka (Fiume) had the status of autonomous cities, Maria Theresa annexed the towns of Rijeka, Bakar, Bakarac and Kraljevica to Croatia in 1776, and took away the remaining estates on the right bank of the Kupa River from Croatia, annexing them to the Banat Military Krajina (Pertinja and

Glina). Senj and Bag remained part of the Military Krajina. The Croatian Royal Council, as a special form of government, suggested to the Queen that “. . . the town of Rijeka and its district should remain a separate entity, annexed to the Holy Crown of the Kingdom of Hungary” (p. 331-332). Maria Theresa accepted that suggestion, literally stating such a proposal in her royal charter from 1779, and immediately afterwards, she subordinated the town of Rijeka to the Hungarian Vice-regency Council. That event clearly confirmed the high degree of subordination of Croatia and Slavonia to Hungary, and even more importantly, it proved that the Croatian and Slavonian gentry possessed a developed awareness of that subordination, as well as a willingness to submissively comply with such circumstances.

### **c) The Administrative, Legal and Political Estrangement of the Hungarian Provinces of Slavonia and Croatia**

The enlightened absolutist rule of Joseph II from 1780 to 1790 led to the additional centralization of the state, but also enhanced religious tolerance to the same extent, thus halting the strict and merciless Roman Catholic exclusiveness present in the territories of Croatia and Slavonia, and so the Serbs established themselves an Orthodox parish and church municipality in Zagreb in 1786. Furthermore, they kept their birth registries in the Church-Slavic language, and they bought St Margaret's Church from the Zagreb municipality and transformed it into the Orthodox Temple of Transfiguration in 1793. The Emperor also brought the whole Roman Catholic clergy under stricter state control. During the reformation of governmental administration, he forcibly appointed Germans and other foreigners to the Hungarian – and therefore Croatian and Slavonian – parishes, while he transferred the local officials to lands where German was spoken. In 1784, he proclaimed German the official language in the entire state, giving the clerical personnel a three-year deadline to learn and apply it. He administratively divided the entire Hungary into ten districts, each comprising several counties. ”On that occasion, Croatia and Slavonia were divided; Slavonia with Baranja County came under Pečuh, whereas Croatia with the Hungarian Szalad County comprised a separate district with its seat in Zagreb” (p. 336-337). The King's representatives were appointed as the heads of the districts, and they then elected vice zhupans, whereas the County Assemblies elected other officials, with the representatives' right to depose of and reappoint them. The Croatian ban was a King's representative and he ruled without a parliament. Serfdom was abolished in 1785. The royal reformation was significantly jeopardised by the unsuccessful war against the Ottomans, waged from 1787 to 1791, as well as the Emperor's serious illness and death.

Recapitulating the internal state of affairs in “the Kingdom of Croatia” from the Battle of Mohacs to the death of Joseph II, Šišić calls to attention the fact that that it was not until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that two administrative regions, the Kingdom of Dalmatia and Croatia and the Kingdom of Slavonia, were merged into one political and administrative entity under the name of the Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. The name the “Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia” remained until 1918. “Then the name Croatia was extended to the entire medieval Slavonia, all the way to the Drava River – unless it had at some time been ruled by a Turk – while the name Slavonia began referring to the whole rest of the territory to the east, all the way to Zemun” (p. 338). In relation to the ethnic changes that occurred during an almost

three-century-long period, Šišić makes the following observation: “Although an extensively large number of Croats had abandoned their endangered homeland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century – particularly the regions of present-day Northern Dalmatia, Lika, Krbava and the Una river basin – and emigrated to Western Hungary, Austria and even Southern Italy, even then they still represented the main element both in liberated Croatia, and partly in the conquered Ottoman Croatia. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, they were surrounded by large numbers of immigrants, who came there during the Ottoman rule or during the German supremacy. Those were primarily the Serbs (the Vlachs, Walachians, people of Raška, Servians and Serphen), who largely populated almost the entire Croatian Military Krajina, and then Slavonia and Srem (particularly in 1690 and 1737). No Serbs lived in the regions that were not part of the Military Krajina or that never were under Ottoman rule, nor either in the regions a little further from the Ottoman neighbourhood (such as the Croatian Zagorje region and the territories to the south of Zagreb, all the way to the Kupa River). Furthermore, the towns, especially those in Slavonia, were populated by the Germans, who worked there as craftsmen and tradesmen or as officers and clerks. Those Germans emigrated from the southern German (Swabian) regions, as well as from Upper Austria, Moravia and Württemberg. Some of the towns, such as Osijek and Petrovaradin in Slavonia, were almost entirely German in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Magyars (since the time of Ottoman rule) settled only in some Slavonian villages along the Drava and the Danube, while the Albanians (*Kelmendi*) populated only two villages: Nikinci and Hrtkovci (Herkoca), in Srem (1737)” (p. 339)

Šišić avoids explaining how and where the Croats remained the main ethnic element in Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia and even in the Croatian and Slavonian territories under Ottoman rule. In every region where the Croats really represented the main or major ethnic element, the Chakavian, that is, the Croatian language was preserved. Since the Slavonians were not originally Croats, they were forcibly Croatinized, particularly in those regions where they barely managed to preserve their Kajkavian identity, namely, in Western Slavonia, which comprised Zagreb and present-day Croatian Zagorje, that is, the Zagreb, Križevci and Varaždin Counties. As far as the nobility was concerned, two parallel processes were under way. “The old Croatian nobility from the regions across Gvozd mostly died out during the Ottoman wars, or they emigrated to Hungary and Austria” (p. 340). All the members of the nobility that came later were of foreign origin, mostly Magyar, but also German and even French. Šišić's following statement really sounds comforting: “All those of foreign birth had to gain indigenoussness and inculcation from the Croatian Parliament before they could receive the rights of nobility in the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia, that is, they had to be proclaimed and recognized as native noblemen by the Parliament” (p.340). The Parliament in question was Croatian and Slavonian only by name, as its members were increasingly of foreign origin. It should also be taken into consideration that the ban of Croatia and the bishop of Zagreb were most often of foreign origin.

#### **d) Orthodox Christianity and Protestantism in Šišić's Interpretation**

As far as the Croatian experience with Protestantism was concerned, Šišić summed it up as follows: “Despite all the Croatian clergy and nobility's attention, Protestantism

started to spread even over Croatia. There was no sign of Protestantism in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, whereas in the second half, its followers could be found among the Croats, especially among the nobility and bourgeois. Styrian Baron Ivan Ugnad, who was the commander of the Croatian and Slavonic Military Krajinas for a long time, was also a follower of Protestantism. When he grew older, he moved to Württemberg and founded a printing shop with Latin, Glagolitic and Cyrillic scripts in Bad Urach, near Tübingen, where he printed Protestant religious books in Slavic and Croatian. He was joined by Primož Trubar, the founder of Slavic literature; Stjepan Konzul Istranin; Antun Dalmatin and the wise Matija Vlačić (Matthias Flacius Illyricus), who all worked on those books. However, the main help and support came from the successor to the throne, King Maximilian I, who was very devoted to the new faith. Their intention was to spread Protestantism over the entire Balkan Peninsula, even among the Ottomans, for, as they claimed, the Croatian language is spoken 'all the way to Constantinople'. The Protestant books were very popular indeed among the Croats. Even some aristocrats became members of the new faith, such as Ban Petar Erdody, the Szigetvar hero Nikola Zrinski and especially his son Juraj, and even Franjo Tahj, the aristocrat from Susjedgrad, died as a 'heretic'.

The new faith found followers among the bourgeois as well, especially in Zagreb, Koprivnica and Varaždin. Moreover, many members of the new Protestant religion were also present in the Croatian coastal region in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps the main reason for that lay in the fact that Protestantism used Croatian, not Latin, and the clergy was allowed marry. The Catholic clergy, and especially Šimun Bratulić, the Bishop of Zagreb, stood against Protestantism by bringing the Jesuits to Croatia. The clergy was joined by the nobility, and then even Parliament bitterly and fiercely stood out against 'the heretics' (1604), passing a law which declared the Roman Catholic Church the only officially accepted religion in the territory of Croatia. Therefore, the Hungarian nobility that was trying to acquire equal status for Protestantism in Croatia encountered the fierce resistance of the Croats... The Croatian Parliament quickly managed to nip the new faith in the bud, by this energetic action and with the help of the newly arrived Jesuits. However, Protestantism left something useful behind; it was the foundation upon which Croatian Kajkavian literature began to develop. The emergence of Protestantism was otherwise here for only a short episode, having a certain influence on some noblemen and the bourgeois (in Zagreb, Varaždin and Koprivnica), but no influence on the broader masses. In that regard, , Protestantism had significantly smaller effect here than on the neighbouring Slovenes, not to mention the Magyars" (p. 342-343).

Serbian immigrants were those who belonged to the Orthodox Church in Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Krajina, which was a completely separate administrative unit, as noted by Šišić: "The immigration of the Serbs into the Croatian territories had two directions. In earlier times (in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries), some Serbs came from the Bosnian Pashaluk, or remained there after the Turks had been driven out of those territories. The Turks had brought them there from Southern Serbia and northern Macedonia as Turkish subjects, to work the land and serve as irregular military units (the Martoloz). For, in medieval Serbia, and even more so in Bosnia, the peasantry and other lower classes in some ways regarded the Turks as their liberators from the high taxes they paid to the nobility, as well as from other burdens. Those Serbs, known mostly in documents as the Vlachs, populated Northern Dalmatia, present-day Western Croatia and Bosnia, as well as the Una river basin and Slavonia, all the way to

Đakovština and Osijek. The migration of the Serbs by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> and in the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries had another direction. Those migrations occurred under the lead of two patriarchs, Arsenije Čarnojević (1690) and Arsenije Jovanović Šakabenta (1737), with the aim to reach Southern Hungary, Srem and Eastern Slavonia. However, during the first wave of the migration (1690), the Serbs refused to cross the Danube and the Sava Rivers without a guarantee from the Court that they would enjoy governmental, legal and religious freedom in the new country” (p. 344). Regarding this, Šišić makes a special remark to draw to attention the following facts: “Among those Serbs there were certainly Vlachs, that is, Romanians, and some of them were also descendants of various other Ottoman-subjected Balkan nations. However, at the time (in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries), they had already been Serbianized for a long time, which is clearly evident even today in their pure and rich language (without any Vlach, that is, Romanian words) and in their significant character. This strong evidence cannot be refuted by any ruse, but at the same time, this major phenomenon, namely the language and the character, cannot be seriously regarded as a consequence of immigration to Croatia. It is entirely wrong to mix the Serbs-Vlachs (from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries) with the medieval Croatian Vlachs, for, apart from doubtlessly sharing the same fate of the other Croats – death in battle or emigration – the Croatian Vlachs are mentioned in documents as Chakavians and Catholics” (p. 344).

Here, Šišić cites several reliable sources, which state that the term Vlach referred exclusively to Serbs in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. “It is true that the term Vlach was more frequent in sources from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, but the data mentioned here (of which more could be found pertaining to the 16<sup>th</sup> century) is enough to clearly demonstrate that the Croats in Habsburg Croatia were familiar with the real origin of those ‘Vlachs’ as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and that they were not the same as the medieval Croatian Vlachs. The more frequent use of the name Vlach only means that the more common name was being used. That is the very reason why they also referred to themselves as Vlachs when dealing with the people who knew them better by that name, and the style and content of their letters were identical to the letter structure of those who were to receive their requests. Whether the Serbs had a higher or lower national consciousness at the time (in the modern sense) is completely irrelevant, and certainly highly inappropriate for establishing the identity of those ‘Vlachs’ who are mentioned in historical documents. At the time, there could be no mention of national consciousness, even among other nations, and particularly not among the lower social classes” (p. 344).

After the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć, the Serbs under Turkish rule had a united religious organisation, so they established two additional episcopates. The Episcopate of Dabar-Bosnia, with its seat in Sarajevo, encompassed the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the parts of Dalmatia and Croatia that were under Turkish rule. The Eparchy of Požega-Cernik encompassed the entire Slavonia under Turkish rule, and its seat was in Orahovica. In 1595, (during the ‘long’ war against the Turks) Vladika Vasilije, upon an agreement with Ferdinand, Archduke of Gradac, and by the mediation of Hans Sigismund Herberstein, General of Varaždin, moved from Orahovica to the Varaždin General Command, where he reconstructed the Monastery of Marča, near Čazma, to be used as the episcopal residence. That was the first episcopate of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Christian (liberated) Croatia. A few years afterwards (1609), Vladika Vasilije’s successor, Vladika Vratanja, formed a union by acknowledging the bishop of Zagreb as his Metropolitan. This Uniatic Vladika was

confirmed by Pope Paul V, then appointed as the vladika of all Orthodox believers in the territory of the Croatian and Slavonian Military Krajina by Archduke Ferdinand (21 November 1611). However, the majority of the Serbs barely responded to such a decision and remained closely connected to the Patriarchate of Peć” (p. 345) Apart from this, Šišić devotes only a couple more sentences to the very serious issue of the Uniatization and Catholicization of the Serbs. He writes: “At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of the unification with Rome started to spread among the members of Orthodox Church, especially under the persuasion of the bishops of Zagreb. At the time, Vladika Vratanja from Marča entered into the Uniate, together with a great number of people from the surrounding regions, but the people from other regions did not join them. The the union finally extended to Žumberak in 1770. The Uniatic Diocese was later (1777) moved from Marča to Križevci” (p. 346).

### **e) The Nonexistent Attributes of the Ban in Proving Statehood**

Concerning the ban being the head of the administration, judiciary system and the army, Šišić states that he was “. . . the pillar of the constitution and independence” (p. 346). There was no such thing as the constitution, nor trace of Croatian- Dalmatian-Slavonian independence. After all, he himself admitted that the ban was not subordinate to anyone except the king until the end of the 18th century. The only right that the Slavonian and Croatian gentry had was making a list of several eminent people, one of which would be chosen as the ban by the King. Since 1567, the ban did not even have the right to convoke Parliament, except under the King’s order. That Croatia and Slavonia were separate entities in political and legal terms was evident in the fact that, even after the Battle of Mohacs, “. . . two separate Parliaments were convoked, one Croatian and one Slavonian. However, the territorial decline of Croatia and the emigration of its nobility into Slavonia forced the Croatian and Slavonian nobility to start organising joint sessions (for the first time in Zagreb in 1533) with the ban as mutual chairman. Soon, both parliaments completely merged into one Croatian-Dalmatian-Slavonian Parliament (from 1558 onwards). The chairman of Parliament was always a ban, or his deputy, usually the bishop of Zagreb, but there was no evidence that the chairman was an ordinary inhabitant of the banat. At the time, the prelates and the gentry attended the meetings of Parliament, having received special invitations from the ban, while the lower nobility held its meetings in the parishes, where they would choose their representatives for Parliament. Thus, it never occurred that large masses of the petty nobility, and particularly not the peasantry, attended the Parliament meetings,” (p. 347-348). Chapterhouses and free towns had representatives in Parliament. The conclusions reached at the Parliament meetings were ratified only by confirmation by the King. Since the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Slavonia sent its representatives to the Hungarian Parliament, whereas Croatia never had that right, up until the establishment of the Triune Croatian-Dalmatian-Slavonian Parliament.

The Croatian-Dalmatian-Slavonian ban also had administrative jurisdiction in the Croatian Military Krajina, which was comprised of the Petrinja and Glina Regiments, and even still when the Croatian Military Krajina was amalgamated with the Military Krajina as a whole. “Maria Theresa stated (in 1750) that the ban would remain responsible for the government of the Croatian Military Krajina and that he would appoint all the officers except the colonel, who would be appointed by her, but only at

the ban's proposal. Some reforms in Croatia were also undertaken during the rule of King Joseph. Until then, only the administration of the Banat Military Krajina had its seat in Zagreb, but in 1783, Joseph II transferred the supreme command of the Slavonian Military Krajina, with the original seat in Varaždin, from Koprivnica to Zagreb and united it with the supreme command of the Banat Military Krajina. Three years later, in August 1786, he transferred the supreme command of the Croatian Military Krajina from Karlovac to Zagreb, thus uniting all three general commands of the Military Krajina present in the Croatian territory into one general command (in a former Jesuit convent). As the ban-commissioner of the time, Count Ferenc Ballassa was not a soldier, so the leadership of this general command was entrusted to '*Feldmarschalleutenant*' (Field Marshall Lieutenant) Baron Joseph Nicolas de Vins (died 1798). Many lower-ranking officers came with him to Zagreb, and together with their families contributed most to the fact the German language took deep roots in Zagreb society" (p. 356).

**Comment [K.B.19]:** Translator's note. This name could not be confirmed in the available sources

Providing a short overview of the Venetian government in Dalmatia, Šišić emphasises the prevailing Italian nature of the populations of Zadar, Trogir, Split, Rab, Osor and Hvar, also emphasising the mass immigration of the Serbs, particularly to the hinterland of the coastal towns. The Orthodox Serbs under Venetian rule had fewer religious and church rights under Austrian rule. Regarding this, Šišić writes: "During the Turkish reign, Orthodox Serbs settled in Dalmatia and were subjected to the Metropolitanate of Dabar-Bosnia in Sarajevo. However, as the Venetians spread their rule through the land, the members of the Orthodox Church were subordinated to the local Catholic bishops, who formally inspected their Orthodox parishes and appointed and ordained their priests. At the time, members of the Orthodox Church visited the Catholic churches and were buried by Catholic priests. They were not allowed to build churches according to their rites until the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Besides that all, the Monastery of Arhandelovac – the Serbian religious centre in Northern Dalmatia on the Krka Rive – somehow survived, together with the Episcopate in Kotor, in Southern Dalmatia" (p. 364). Kotor was not part of any "Southern Dalmatia", but rather was part of the so-called "Venetian Albania", which was the name given to the entire coastal region from Dubrovnik to the Bojana River.

### **f) The Renaissance of Magyar Nationalism**

During the rule of King Leopold II, Joseph's brother, which lasted for only two years (1790-1792), Magyar nationalism increasingly began spreading in Hungary, as a direct reaction to the King's absolutism, centralism and attempt to Germanize the entire state. As Šišić writes, at that time the Magyars "... considered an independent Magyar state, with the pure Magyar national characteristics, to be their best protection against possible repeated attempts of Germanization. They claimed that, just as there is only one God and one King, so too should there only be one state, one nation and one language, from the Carpathians to the Adriatic Sea. That was the political thinking of the Magyars at the time, and it remained essentially the same until 1918. Thus, the Magyars fully accepted Joseph II's idea, with the exception that they replaced the idea of a united Austria with that of a united Hungary, and replaced German with Magyar. Indeed, the Croats accepted the thought of an independent Hungarian-Croatian state union, on the grounds of 'centuries devoted' to Latin, which was like a mother tongue to both the Croats and the Hungarians" (p. 372). So, there was no mention of any Croatian

language, for Chakavian had become almost extinct or hopelessly stunted, and there was no consciousness of Kajkavian as Croatian in the true sense of the word, although some literature was developed on its foundation.

In 1790, the Croatian Parliament, which was chaired by Ban Janos Erdody, “. . . concluded that a joint government should be organised for Croatia and Hungary, whose aim would be to pay special attention to the prevention of every act that was against the constitution and laws of Hungary and Croatia. This kind of relationship should exist between Hungary and Croatia until the Croatian territories under the present rule of the Turks and Venetians were re-conquered, so that a sufficient number of parishes could be gathered for the establishment of separate government. Until then, those six counties (the counties of Zagreb, Križevci, Varaždin, Virovitica, Požega and Srem – remark by the author. V.Š) should take orders from the Hungarian Government. Thus, the Croats themselves sanctioned the unconstitutional act of Maria Theresa issued in 1779 at their Parliament” (p. 374). In regard to the territories that the Croats were yet to conquer from the Turks and the Venetians, Šišić remarks that “. . . the Croats were referring to the western territories of present-day Bosnia from Vrba including Jajce; or to the so-called Turkish Croatia – western Herzegovina including Ljubuski; or to Turkish Dalmatia and Venetian Dalmatia, to the Neretva River” (p. 374).

In the same year, The Hungarian Parliament in Buda increasingly strove for the acceptance of Magyar as the official language in all public offices of Hungary, including Croatia and Slavonia, as well as for the acknowledgement of Protestant rights in the entire state; but the Croatian representatives fiercely protested against this. The Hungarian Parliament had to give in, for King Leopold II was against Magyarization and he had also promised to give a separate duchy, banat or despot to the Serbs, as they requested. However, when Leopold II was crowned King of Hungary in Pressburg, he proclaimed Hungary an independent state, which was directly subordinated to the ruler, and therefore had no obligations towards Austrian rule. “No foreign language shall be set as the official language, and Hungarian shall be used in grammar schools, academies (legal and philosophical) and at universities, whereas the Hungarian regions shall retain Latin for now” (p. 377). In December 1790, the Pressburg Parliament agreed to the modest and indulgent requests of the Croats, one of them being that the counties of Zagreb, Križevci and Varaždin remain under the jurisdiction of the Royal Hungarian Vice-regency Council, as Maria Theresa stated in 1779, but with the increased involvement of the sons of the Kingdom of Croatia; and also that the ban be given a vote and a seat in the Council; but Croatian autonomous matters should continue to be discussed solely in the Croatian Parliament” (p. 377).

The following year, the Croatian Parliament “. . . decided that the Hungarian language would be taught as an optional subject in elementary and secondary schools in Croatia and Slavonia, that is, Magyar would be studied by all who deemed it useful. . . In addition to that, a Magyar grammar book was published, written in Kajkavian” (p. 377). The conclusions of the Parliaments in Buda and Pressburg had far-reaching consequences. “The near future would show that those parliament conclusions had devastating effects on the independence of the Kingdom of Croatia as a separate entity, for according to the Magyars’ understanding, the legal equality between Hungary and Croatia was disappearing. Gradually, Croatia was being considered both politically and officially as an integral part of Hungary. The hardest blow was when the Royal Hungarian Vice-regency Council, which had from 1790 to 1848 always had an archduke



at its head, usurped all political power, causing the Croatian ban and Parliament to practically fall apart. Indeed, from that time onwards, the Croatian Parliament was only called together when the sessions of the joint Parliament were held, for a couple of days, with the sole political aim of choosing representatives for the Upper and the Lower Houses, and to give them instructions. After the meeting of the joint Parliament, the Croatian Parliament would meet again to receive a report from its representatives, and to declare laws they had passed, at the Hungarian Parliament. In other words, from that time until 1848, what happened at the long meetings of the Parliament in Pressburg was of greater importance for the history of the Croatian nation than what happened at the day-or-two long sessions of the Croatian Parliament, whose competence was significantly limited. It goes without saying that the fall of the competency of the Croatian Parliament led to the limitation of the authority of its chairman, the ban of Croatia, to the level of an executive body of the Hungarian Vice-regency Council” (p. 378).

### **3. The Croats Under the Rule of Napoleon Bonaparte**

By signing the Treaty of Sistova, King Leopold II was allowed to keep Dvor, on the Una River; Drežnik, Petrovo Selo, Lapac and Srb, which had been captured by the Ottomans; after which signing he soon died. He was succeeded by his son Francis I, who favoured the idea of royal absolutism, but who also was against liberal ideas, the Enlightenment and the Reformation. The first period of his rule was marked by the Napoleonic Wars. By signing a treaty with Napoleon in 1797, Austria ceded Lombardy in exchange for Istria, Dalmatia, the Kvarner Islands and Boka Kotorska, which had until that time been under Venetian rule. Before the occupation of the Venetian territories by the Austrian army, social unrest had been taking place in the villages and towns of Dalmatia, due to the privileges of the nobility. The archbishop of Split and the bishop of Makarska initiated the idea of Dalmatia’s unification with Croatia. However, the Emperor intended to subject the newly gained territories directly to Vienna. Since Napoleon defeated Austria in the next two wars, King Francis I was forced to cede Dalmatia to France, in accordance with the Treaty of Pressburg, signed by the end of 1805. Apart from that, in 1804, Francis I proclaimed himself the Emperor of Austria and in 1806, he renounced the title of Holy Roman Emperor, thus centralistic aspirations were once again intensified in the united Austrian Empire. During the state of war, the Magyars again tried unsuccessfully to impose the study of the Hungarian language as an obligatory subject in Croatian and Slavonian schools, through decisions by their Parliament. As Šišić claims, Maximilian Vrhovec, the Bishop of Zagreb, threatened the Magyars that “. . . the Croats would follow the Magyars’ example and introduce “their Illyrian language”, that is the Shtokavian dialect, into their offices” (p. 383). The Croatian-Slavonian Parliament responded to the Hungarian threats with the statement that, in the future, only Latin would remain the official language.

#### **a) In the French Provinces**

Napoleon entrusted the civil administration of Dalmatia, without the territories of the abolished Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik), to a Venetian Visko Dandol and

introduced Italian as the official language, making Dalmatia an integral part of the Kingdom of Italy. Dalmatia was divided into the districts of Zadar, Šibenik, Split and Makarska, while Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and Boka Kotorska gained a separate governor. The French implemented many reforms: they abolished feudalism, proclaimed the peasants the owners of the land they had to that point cultivated as serfs, normalized the status of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which had been oppressed under Venetian rule, etc. By the Treaty of Schonbrunn, signed in 1809, Austria ceded Istria, the western part of Carinthia (Koruška), Carniola (Kranjska), and the entire Croatian territory on the right bank of the Sava River up to the mouth of the Una River. All those territories were adjoined to Dalmatia and, after the unification, declared the Illyrian provinces of the French Empire, with their seat in Ljubljana. Napoleon appointed his marshal Auguste de Marmont as the governor of the Illyrian provinces, with an unlimited army at his disposal, and awarded him with the hereditary noble title of the Duke of Dubrovnik. The governmental structure that already existed in the parts of the Military Krajina upon its annexation to Illyria was preserved, and the French planned to introduce the national language, which they called Illyrian, in the schools.

By his decree from 1811, Napoleon divided Illyria into seven provinces, namely: Carniola (Koruška), Carinthia (Kranjska), Istria, Civil Croatia, Dalmatia, Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and Military Croatia. Civil Croatia encompassed Istria, including Pazin; the coastal region all the way to Senj; and the Islands of Krk, Rab, Cres and Lošinj; whereas Military Croatia comprised the Regiments of Lika, Otočac, Ogulin, Slunj, Glina and Petrinja. After Napoleon's defeat in Russia, Austria seized the entire Illyria in 1813. As Šišić states: “. . . then the name Dalmatia extended to the entire region between the Zrmanja River and the town of Budva, which was again subjected to Vienna, whereas the Military Krajina remained the same. This all was confirmed by the Viennese Congress (in 1815). However, the Viennese government refused to restore Napoleon's "Civil Croatia" to Croatia, but left it connected with Carniola and subjected it to German rule in Ljubljana. The government established the Kingdom of Illyria out of those territories (on 3 August 1816), leaving the Croatian nobility embittered and enraged. The king restored that part of its territory to Croatia only after persistent demands (in 1822), with the exception of the Islands of Kvarner, which he adjoined to Istria. The title "the King of Istria" remained until the end of the (Habsburg) dynasty (in 1918)" (p. 393).

#### **4 Pan-Slavism and the Croatian Revival**

After Napoleon's definite fall in 1815, Francis I suspended all rights of the Hungarian and Croatian-Slavonian parliaments, at the proposal of the Prime Minister, Prince Klemens von Metternich, and appointed the King's commissioners as rulers of the parishes. However, due to the passive resistance of the former local provincial ruling structures, the King gave in and convoked the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg in 1825. Immediately before that, the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament was in session in Zagreb in order to choose the representatives for the Hungarian Parliament, and formulate a request for the unification of Dalmatia and the Military Krajina with Croatia and Slavonia as united banats. At that parliament session, “. . . the dominant aspiration was for the tightest possible unification with Hungary and its nobility” (p. 394). The Pressburg Parliament was in session for almost two years. “At that time, the Magyars demanded that the Hungarian language be introduced in all schools and public offices in

all the lands of St Stephen's Order, thus, in Croatia as well. The resistance of the Croatian representatives was so great that Latin remained the official language in Croatia. In regard to the schools, they stated that “. . . they would do all that was in their power for the youth of Croatia to learn the Hungarian language” (p. 394).

At a session of the new Hungarian Parliament, in Pressburg in 1830, “. . . the Croats indulged the Magyar wishes even more. . . Immediately after the announcement that the Croatian Parliament had been called in Zagreb (on 5 August 1830) in order to choose its representatives for the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg, three Croatian counties (namely, Zagreb, Križevac and Varaždin) assembled to choose their representatives for the Croatian Parliament. On that occasion, all three counties came to the conclusion that they should demanded the Hungarian Parliament to pass a law pertaining to the obligatory study of the Hungarian language in Croatian schools” (p. 394). Those counties gave the following instructions to their representatives: “The nobility and other social classes of Croatia and Slavonia feel the need for the spread of the Hungarian language throughout these kingdoms, so as to be able to establish the strongest possible connections with the federal Kingdom of Hungary. Therefore, the representatives are instructed to strive for the legalisation of the issue regarding the obligatory study of the Hungarian language in these kingdoms” (p. 394). The Pressburg Parliament intensified the issue of the consistent introduction of Hungarian as the official language, and restated its demand that the Protestants receive civil rights in Croatia and Slavonia, but it failed then too. Thus the Magyars' claims that the Croats are lead by bigotry and intolerance became more frequent.

#### **a) The Hungarian Language in Croatian and Slavonian Schools**

Emperor Francis I still issued a decree in 1833, proclaiming the Magyar language obligatory in all Croatian and Slavonian grammar schools. This decree was also accepted by the Royal Hungarian Vice-regency Council, which acted as the supreme government for Croatia and Slavonia. That time was marked by the beginning of the so-called “Croatian national revival”, the emergence of pan-Slavic ideas and the appearance of Ljudevit Gaj with his reformist project. It is evident that Vienna worked conspiratorially on the project, in order to effectively weaken the Magyar national factor. As Kajkavian and Chakavian were not a suitable foundation for the cultural renaissance, Croatian and Slavonian intellectuals turned to Serbian, that is Shtokavian, which they renamed Illyrian and thus claimed it as their own. As early as 1832, Count Janko Drašković published his *Dissertation* in the Shtokavian dialect, in which he presented a political program which would be the foundation for future Croatian national ideas and ideals. He demanded that, “Great Illyria should unite the following countries into one political whole: Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the Military Krajina, Rijeka and Bosnia; and by the King's mercy, also the Slavic regions of Carniola, Styria and Carinthia.. The official language of that united governmental entity would be ‘Illyrian’ (i.e. the Shtokavian dialect) and the ban would act as the supreme ruler in the name of the king. Furthermore, the ban's rule should be restored to its former scope, and he should be a man of the people, enjoying in their confidence.” (p. 399-400). The Croatian Parliament was convoked in the same year, at which Ban Baron Franjo Vlašić (Vlassich Ferenc) announced that he had appointed Baron Juraj Rukavina of Vidovgrad (Georg Freiherr Rukavina von Vidovgrad) as his vice captain. The vice captain then thanked the

ban in Croatian, accompanied by a loud cheer by the Croatian noblemen. That was the first speech ever given in Croatian at the Croatian Parliament” (p. 400). Unfortunately, Šišić does not mention whether the speech in question was given in Chakavian, Shtokavian or Kajkavian, but he notes that the Parliament representative who gave the first speech in the Croatian language was Ivan Kukuljević on 2 May 1843” (p. 400).

### **b) The Croatian Takeover of Serbian as its Mother Tongue**

From 1832 to 1836, the Hungarian Parliament sessions in Pressburg were held in a spirit of liberal ideas. Its House of Representatives came out in favour of the complete abolition of serfdom, and demanded that peasants and commoners receive civil rights and rights of ownership, so that a political nation could be formed. “The Croats opposed this suggestion with all their might, claiming that the abolition of serfdom and forced labor would bring an end to the Croatian nobility, for there was neither a sufficient number of workers, nor could the poor nobility pay them. That legal project was also accepted by the Upper House, but the Emperor refused to sign it, so it was watered down to the right of a serf to migrate or to buy off his obligatory labour with money. Francis I died while Parliament was in session, and was succeeded by his son Ferdinand V, who would rule for the next thirteen years. The new Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary was a very weak ruler, so Metternich acted as the main person in charge of the country .

When, in 1836, the Hungarian Parliament decided to proclaim the Magyar language official, stating that all who wished to stay in, or be accepted to, the civil service had to learn it within ten years, Metternich was the one whose influence was crucial for the decision not receiving the King’s sanction. This encouraged Lutwig Gaj and his Illyrians to quickly accept Shtokavian, that is, Serbian as their own. “At first, Guj and his fellow comrades used Kajkavian, for they wanted to seize Kajkavian Zagreb and its surrounding regions for their own purposes. However, by January 1836, Guj made a radical change, and the first step of ‘the national revival’ by adopting the Shtokavian dialect of the Croats and the Serbs as the general literary language. He also adopted a new orthography and the Illyrian name as the mark of national unity. By this bold and crucial act, Guj had performed his greatest deed, removing the last boundary that divided a Croat from a Croat, and a Croat from a Serb. That was undoubtedly one of the most magnificent events in the history of the Croatian nation, for it was the fatal blow to the hundred-year-long provincial divisions and crumbling, and enlightened the previously unconscious masses with the consciousness of present-day Croatian national and political life ” (p. 403). Thus, Šišić considers the year 1836 to be the greatest turning point, that is, the beginning of a new era in Croatian political and cultural life.

Significant support from Vienna encouraged the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament to send its representatives to the following Hungarian Parliament session in Pressburg in 1839, and, in 1840 to demand “. . . that, along with Hungary, and after Bohemia, ‘Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia’ be added to the king’s title. By this, they wanted to evade the status of ‘the annexed part’, which was not in accordance with the governmental and judicial status of Croatia present in the consciousness of its nobility. Furthermore, the Croatian noblemen were to protest unwaveringly against Protestant civil rights, and adopt the use of Latin as a measure against the introduction of the Hungarian language in public offices; and also to support the just union of Dalmatia and

the Military Krajina with Croatia, which would significantly enhance the ban's reputation" (p. 406).

The Hungarian Parliament again adopted a resolution which set “. . . a ten-year period, at the end of which all official matters in Croatia and Slavonia must be handled in the Hungarian language” (p. 406). After the great unrest that such a decision provoked in Croatia and Slavonia, the Emperor refused to sanction it once again. In 1840, the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament demanded from the King that departments of the national language, that is, Shtokavian, be established at the Academy of Zagreb and in all secondary schools. However, divisions took place in public life as well. Those who advocated pro-Magyar policies established the Croatian-Hungarian Party in 1841. “Its political program promoted the removal of the Illyrian name, allegedly for the ‘*Horvats*’ (Croatians’) own good, whereas, in reality, because it was in direct opposition to Magyar aspirations. Moreover, this party demanded the suspension of the new orthography and the ‘Vlachian’ Shtokavian dialect, in favour of Kajkavian, as well as the establishment of the closest possible ties between the ‘*Horvats*’ and the Magyars within a united Hungarian country. Additionally, Magyar was to become the official language both in public offices as well as in schools in Croatia, and each of the three counties (Varaždin, Zagreb and Križevci) was to send two representatives to the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg, just as did the counties in Slavonia and Hungary. Therefore, the noblemen who supported this party were, actually, in favour of the extreme consequences of their political aims, that is, in favour of the complete abolition of Croatian municipal independence and the Magyarization of their nation. The leaders of this political party began searching for supporters of the fore-mentioned political program among the members of the lower nobility, and soon won many of them over, especially among those from Turopolje. Now, those who were pro-Magyar oriented (*Mađaroni*) strove further for the acquisition of supporters in the counties, with the intention of gaining the majority at the Croatian Parliament, and thus realizing their aspirations” (p. 409-410).

### **c) The Victory of Guj's Illyrians over the *Mađaroni***

The opponents of the *Mađaroni* (pro-Magyar activists) established the Illyrian Party, “. . . with a distinctly Croatian political program, aimed at the redefinition of the legal and governmental relations between Croatia and Hungary, so that Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the Military Krajina and Rijeka would form a united entity, making Croatia politically and territorially independent from Hungary, with the ban at its head, and Croatian as the official national language. In regard to literature, this party also aimed at the cultural union with the Croats in Bosnia, the Slovenians and the Serbs, using Illyrian as the sole literary language” (p. 410). As the Illyrian Party defeated the *Mađaroni* at the next county elections – in all three counties – Ferdinand V, at Hungarian insistence, named Transylvanian Count Francis Haller the Croatian-Slavonian Ban. The newly appointed Ban Heller, immediately upon its arrival to Zagreb, “. . . suggested to the Imperial Court that the most effect way of subduing Croatia was to prohibit the Illyrian name” (p. 410). Indeed, in 1843, the king prohibited all Illyrian terms and intensified the censorship by appointing a strict Magyar as the main censor. The Illyrian Party then changed its name to the National Party. At a Hungarian Parliament session in Pressburg in 1843, the Croatian representatives were forbidden to speak Latin, as a resolution was

passed making Magyar the official language at this representative body. In addition to that, it was decided again that the Magyar language was to be the sole official language in the entire Hungary, as well as in Croatia, Slavonia and Primorje; “. . . and in ten years (that is, from 1853 onwards), no one can be appointed as a public official or a priest unless he knows the Hungarian language fluently” (p. 411). The king intervened immediately, ordering the Hungarian Parliament to leave the Croatian representatives a right to choose for themselves whether they were to use Latin or Magyar during the Parliament sessions. Nevertheless, when the Croatian representatives tried to use Latin at Parliament meetings, they were prevented from doing that by loud shouts and fierce protests. Ferdinand V conceded to this, giving the Croatian representatives a six-year period to learn the Magyar language, which they were to then use at Parliament meetings. In 1845, the King indulged the Croats as well, allowing them to use the Illyrian name at least in literature, and to establish departments of the Illyrian language and literature at the Academy of Zagreb.

The Imperial Court was personally in favour of the Croatian requests, but only to the extent that would not incur reproach from the Magyars. Thus, the Croats and their requests were only instrument of manipulation. In 1845, the *Mađaroni* won at the Zagreb County elections, which caused the National Party to start street riots, in which the military intervened, resulting in a high number of deaths. That summer the triumphant *Mađaroni* organised a great assembly, at which they decided to terminate Guj's newspaper and take away his printing shop. They also decided to bring back the old Kajkavian orthography into usage, and confine Shtokavian to the towns of Požega and Osijek, “. . . since a common Croatian-Slavonian language did not exist” (p. 414). Nevertheless, the National Party maintained its dominance in the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament, and therefore demanded from the King to establish an independent government for Croatia and Slavonia. That demand was repeated in 1847, as part of the preparations for a new Parliament session in Pressburg, for which the representatives were instructed to defend the territorial integrity of Slavonia and Primorje as parts of Croatia. At that last meeting of the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament the insistence on the introduction of the vernacular at schools was affirmed, but “. . . the representatives are to start using the Magyar language at once (in the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg) as proof of brotherly love towards their fellow Hungarian comrades” (p. 415). In 1847 ad 1848, the Hungarian Parliament resumed with harassments over the enforcement of Magyar as the official language.

#### **d) Ban Jelačić's Skirmish with the Magyars**

The Viennese rebellion – and its unexpected success – against Metternich, as a reverberation of the February Revolution in Paris, created a real national euphoria in Hungary that additionally threatened the already weakened Vienna. King Ferdinand reacted to that by appointing Colonel Baron Josip Jelačić (Joseph Jellachich de Buzim), commander of the first banat regiment, as the Croatian-Slavonian Ban. He was also proclaimed as the vice marshal and general of all military forces in Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Krajina, and his first move was to order that no local officials under his command should follow orders from the Hungarian Government. As Šišić observed, “With such an order, Croatia severed centry-old ties with Hungary” (p. 419). The ban scheduled elections for 191 representatives from Croatia, Slavonia and the Military

Krajina, and invited the so-called *virilists*, the representatives who were automatically elected into local governments due to the high tax they paid, to attend Parliament. On that occasion, the Parliament officially declared Count Jelačić Ban of Croatia and Slavonia. “The Serbian Patriarch Josif Rajačić had the function of inaugurator, as a symbol of harmony between the Croats and the Serbs” (p. 419). Šidak added his own comment: “Juraj Haulik, the Bishop of Zagreb, who was by custom supposed to be the inaugurator, was not in Zagreb at the time” (p. 419). As far as the most important decisions of Parliament were concerned, Šišić makes the following comment: “In regard to the future relationship between Croatia and Hungary, Croatia took a federal standpoint, and expressed its wish for Switzerland to be taken as the model for the organisation of the Monarchy, with independent national governments, but with a central parliament and ministries for foreign affairs, defence, finance and trade in Vienna. The Parliament also decided that the rule of the ban was to be restored ‘from the Drava River to the sea’ and that the Military Krajina and Dalmatia be united with Croatia” (p. 419). The ban’s army seized the town of Rijeka, and, under a conspiratorial agreement with the Viennese Imperial Court, Ban Jelačić initiated a military skirmish with the Magyars. He immediately seized Međumurje and Čakovec, proclaiming them part of Croatia, and then headed for Buda.

Jelačić’s first battle against the Magyars around the end of September was indecisive, and afterwards, the Ban had to go urgently to Vienna, where rebels had already taken control of the city. Vienna was besieged by both Ban Jelačić and Austrian General Alfred Candidus Ferdinand, Prince of Windisch-Graetz.

Since Ban Jelačić effectively defeated the Hungarian army commanded by General Moga, who had jumped in to help the Viennese insurgents, the rebels surrendered. The incapable Ferdinand V renounced the title of emperor and king, and was succeeded by his nephew Archduke Franz Joseph I. Ban Jelačić and the Prince of Windisch-Graetz then headed toward Hungary. Furthermore, the new emperor appointed Ban Jelačić the provincial governor of Rijeka and Dalmatia, which is the basis for Šišić’s following conclusion: “Ban Jelačić thereby united all Croatian territories under his command, which were then within the boundaries of the Monarchy, including Međumurje – with the exception of Istria and the Kvarner Islands” (p. 425). Franz Joseph I then proclaimed Baron Franjo Kulmer a Croatian minister without portfolio, but with membership in the Ministers’ Council.

After several victories over the Hungarian army, the Prince of Windisch-Grätz and Ban Jelačić entered the town of Buda, while the Hungarian separatist government of Louis Kossuth fled to Debrecen. Having heard that the Magyars were crushingly defeated, King Franz Joseph I established an Imposed Constitution on 4 March 1849, founded on the aspiration for centralisation and Germanisation. The Empire was defined as indivisible and inseparable, comprising separate, mutually independent kingdoms that were integral parts of the united governmental entity. Šišić remarked that those kingdoms were listed in the following order: “The Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, with the Croatian coastal region, the town of Rijeka and its administrative district; the Kingdom of Hungary; the Grand Duchy of Transylvania and the Military Krajina (the Hungarian and the Croatian-Slavonian Military Krajinas as the same entity)” (p. 426). Moreover, all the nations were proclaimed equal, and each of them was given the right to preserve and protect its own language and national being. The Emperor and the Central Parliament shared the state’s legislative jurisdiction, whereas

the Emperor shared this jurisdiction with the local Parliament in the various kingdoms. Thus, Croatia and Slavonia were completely separated from Hungary. However, the Croats were dissatisfied, not only because their territorial aspirations were not fulfilled, but also because they knew that the new constitutional organisation was a result of the King's sovereign will, and as such, it was susceptible to change, whereas they insisted on interstate contracts and agreements as part of their political ideology.

The new constitution additionally enraged the Magyars, whose uprising was coming to an end. This motivated them to engage in additional military clashes in order to evade the complete loss of their statehood. In the spring of 1849, they achieved several significant military victories, which allowed them to return and mount a resolute assault on Buda. Louis Kossuth propagated complete Magyar independence. Windisch-Grätz was dismissed, whereas Ban Jelačić invaded Hungary; however, after several initial victories, he was forced to withdraw all the way to Srem. Only by Russian intervention were the Magyars completely defeated. After the fall of the Magyars, the Croatian-Slavonian Banate Council proclaimed the Imposed Constitution of King Franz Joseph I the basic state law. The Emperor confirmed the imposition of the national language as the official language in Croatia and Slavonia. "In June 1850, Croatia received new political administration with the ban as the chairman of the Banate Council. The country was then divided into six counties: Rijeka, Zagreb, Varaždin, Križevci, Požega and Osijek, governed by the imperial-royal supreme zhupans" (p. 430).

The Minister of Internal Affairs, Baron Alexander von Bach, left his personal mark on this period of the Austrian absolutism. The banate government of Ban Jelačić was transformed into the Imperial-Royal Vice-regency Council. When the counties were transformed into five districts, Križevci County was divided between the Zagreb and Varaždin District. The official language in all public institutions and offices had been German since 1854. The imperial government strived to fill all significant and desirable public office positions "... with foreigners. Thus, many Germans, Czechs and Slovenes came to Croatia, for not only those who spoke German could be appointed as public officials, but also and primarily those who possessed an official certificate as a proof that they were not 'politically suspicious', which many Croats could not do. Those foreigners, usually completely unfamiliar with the local state of affairs, put the laws into practice very strictly, which only made the position of the people even more unbearable. Nevertheless, the Croatian native element could not be completely neglected; thus, many native 'Bach hussars' (members of famous middle-class and noble families) formed part of the public officials' absolutism. Thus, people, driven by need or ambition, accepted the public office positions of the new system in the divisions of police, finance, administration, justice and education. Therefore, Bach's time was German indeed, but barely half of the public officials (his instruments) at the time were foreigners in Croatia. The schools were then completely Germanized, and to some extent the society as well, public officials in particular" (p. 430).

### **e) Slavonia and Croatia outside the Hungarian Catholic Hierarchy**

Serfdom in Croatia and Slavonia was abolished in 1853, with the implementation of an agricultural reform, causing the economic destruction of the lower nobility, for they received highly insecure state financial securities as compensation for their work. The



impoverished noblemen tried to find a position in the public service at all costs, while the main purpose of the education system was to provide as many public officials as possible. Civil rights and liberties were completely abolished. Nevertheless, such circumstances did not prevent Ban Jelačić from persuading Pope Pius IX to transform the Diocese of Zagreb into an archdiocese, which then became the head of the Diocese of Senj, the Uniatic Diocese of Križevci and the Diocese of Đakovo. Thus, as far as church organisation was concerned, the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia and Slavonia was separate from its Hungarian counterpart, following the example of public administration, legislature and education. At the same time, this was the foundation of Croatian clericalism, as the Roman Catholic priests who became independent from the Hungarian factor increasingly strove for political demands and ambitions.

Austria was shaken by many financial scandals at the time; the costs of the Crimean War led to the significant economic decline of Austria, whereas the defeat in the Battle of Solferino and the loss of Lombardy during the war fought against the French Emperor Napoleon III would lead to the crush of Bach's absolutism in 1859. Ban Jelačić died in the same year, in a completely delusional state of consciousness. Giving an estimation of Ban Jelačić's significant historical role, Šišić stated: "After many centuries, he was the ban under whose rule stood all of Croatianhood, from the Drava River to Boka Kotorska Bay, and from the confluence of the Sava River with the Danube to the sea; moreover, even Turkish Bosnia mentioned him with rapture. . . Ban Jelačić was undoubtedly a sincere and loyal Yugoslavian patriot, but, above all, he was an Austrian officer of that time, that is, a man blindly loyal to the Imperial Court and the interests of the dynasty" (p. 433).

#### **f) The Chronology of the Croatians' Bureaucratic Struggle for their Independence**

In Vienna in 1860, the broadened composition of the State Council discussed the federalist and centralistic alternatives of the future of Austria. The federalists were predominant then, striving for the acknowledgement of the political and historical individuality of all the countries that in various ways formed the Austrian Empire. On that occasion, Bishop Strossmayer made demands for the introduction of "the Croatian language" in public offices and schools, as well as the annexation of Dalmatia to the Banates of Croatia and Slavonia. This conflict over Dalmatia gave rise to the Croatian National Party and the Italian Autonomist Party. In the same year, by the proposal of Strossmayer, Baron Josip Šokčević was proclaimed the new ban and he, immediately upon his arrival to Zagreb, stated that, "The Emperor had authorised him to initiate the use of the Croatian language in public offices. Now, the numerous foreign 'Bach hussars' left Croatia and were replaced by those native Croatian sons who had been previously labelled as 'unreliable'. This event renewed the political life in Croatia, which unsurprisingly gave some very noisy signs of its existence in the beginning, due to its decade-long suppression. The German actors were banished from the Zagreb stage (on 25 November 1860), and the acting was subsequently done solely in Croatian" (p. 434). By the October Diploma, ". . . the Emperor restored the constitution to Hungary and Croatia and promised to do the same for the other countries as well. Apart from that, he made a distinction between the common affairs that dealt with all the countries of the Monarchy, which were to be discussed in the State Council (acting as the Central Parliament); and those affairs in each particular country, the latter being under the

jurisdiction of local Parliaments” (p. 434). As the Hungarian Royal Office was then renewed, the Banate Conference in Zagreb at end of 1860 demanded from the Emperor that he establish the Croatian-Slavonian Royal Office, and also repeated its previous demands concerning the language and the annexation of the Military Krajina, Dalmatia, Istria and the Kvarner Islands. In Vienna, the Emperor then formed the Croatian Royal Dicastery as a temporary governmental body; he also proclaimed “Croatian” the official language and ordered that the Dalmatian representatives be invited to the Banate Conference. However, the Dalmatians did not respond to the invitation and Međumurje was given back to Hungary. The “*Talijanaši*”<sup>3</sup> from the town of Rijeka also demanded that their town be given back to the Magyars.

Due to the huge dissatisfaction of the Magyars with the October Diploma, the Emperor issued the February Patent in 1861, which proclaimed the Royal Council the Central Parliament, with an aristocratic Upper House and a representative Lower House, and it ordered that the final solution concerning Dalmatia be expressly postponed. That year, the meeting of the Hungarian Parliament was held first, to which the Emperor also invited the representatives of the Croatian Parliament, to witness “. . . his future inauguration and coronation as the King of Hungary and the King of Dalmatia-Croatia-Slavonia, by one and the same act” (p. 437). Although he did not specify what his sources were, Šišić probably quoted an official royal invitation. The Hungarian Parliament refused to send its representatives to the Viennese State Council, demanding that Hungary remain only in a personal union with Austria, and that its entire jurisdiction and territorial rights from 1848 be restored to it. Almost at the same time, the Dalmatian Parliament in Zadar refused to choose its representatives for the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament in Zagreb, but it did select representatives for the Viennese State Council. The Croatian-Slavonian Parliament again demanded from the Emperor that he order the Military Krajina to send its representatives to this Parliament, and to allow the annexation of Dalmatia, Dubrovnik, Boka Kotorska and the Kvarner Islands to Croatia and Slavonia. The Emperor only ordered the Military Krajina to send its representatives to Zagreb, who would leave the Parliament meeting as soon as the discussion about the governmental and legal matters were over with. He did not state his opinion on the other demands at all. “In the meantime, the elections in Srem and the Military Krajina took place, and thus, the Serbs attended a session of the Croatian Parliament for the first time as a new political factor” (p. 440).

The Croatian-Slavonian Parliament decided that the legislative, administrative and judicial connection between Hungary and Croatia ended in 1848, and that their future connection would be based only on the figure of the mutual ruler and his coronation ceremony. “In addition to all that, Croatia is still willing to form a real union with Hungary, but only after Hungary’s legal acknowledgement of Croatian independence and its territorial unity” (p. 440). As Šišić pointed out, that territorial unity pertained to Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, comprised of the counties of Rijeka, Zagreb, Varaždin, Križevci, Požega, Virovitica and Srem, as well as the Military Krajina, which was comprised of the regiments of Lika, Otočac, Ogulin, Slunj, both regiments of the Croatian Military Krajina, Križevci, Đurđevo, Gradiška, Brod and Petrovaradin. Here, the name Dalmatia was only formally given, for its territories were under the direct rule of Vienna, so it did not have any governmental connections with Hungary. In addition to

<sup>3</sup> Talijanaši – The Italians understood that one segment of the ethnic Croats were slavo-ponic Italians, and part of the Croatian nation thought of themselves as Italians, thus they were called *talijanaši*

that, the Parliament representatives made a demand that Međumurje be returned to them. However, the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament decided not to send its representatives to the Viennese State Council, for “Croatia did not have any common affairs with Austria” (p. 441). In the same year, the Royal Vice-Regency Council was established, acting as the Croatian-Slavonian Government with the ban as the chairman, and also the Croatian Royal Office, with Ivan Mažuranić at its head functioning as a secret Imperial Court adviser. Mažuranić established the Independent Party, aiming at the formation of a real union between Croatia and Austria, whereas Strossmayer’s and Rački’s National Party wanted a union with Hungary.

In 1865, the Banate Conference established new parliament election rules, which lowered the number of the gentry who would directly become the members of the Parliament from 79 to 24, reserved ten parliament seats for the Catholic prelates and stated that 74 representatives (formerly 120) would be chosen from Croatia and Slavonia, and 55 from the Military Krajina. At the first subsequent elections, two thirds of the parliament seats were won by the National Party in Croatia and Slavonia, whereas, in the Military Krajina, all parliament seats were won by the members of the Independent Party, mostly officers loyal Vienna. Then, the Emperor abolished the State Council, since its work was being obstructed in most countries. In 1886, the Parliament of Croatia and Slavonia opted for a union with Hungary, on the condition that it had equal rights and status as the Hungarian Parliament. However, the two-month-long negotiations on this subject, held in Vienna, between those two Parliament delegations were unsuccessful. On that occasion, Strossmayer concluded that the Magyars “did not want us by their side as an equal nation, but as an inferior nation subjected to their rule” (p. 444). The defeat in the Battle of Sadowa in 1866, during the war fought against the Kingdom of Prussia, weakened Austria so much that, in 1867, the Emperor had to agree to the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise, which divided the whole state into the Austrian and the Hungarian parts, defining them as two independent countries with their own Parliaments and separate legislation, administration and judiciary. “The only things the two countries had in common were the ruling figure, foreign affairs with diplomatic and trade representatives abroad, the army and the navy, and voting for the funds needed for covering the expenses of joint affairs, controlled by the separate committees of the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments (usually called delegations). Those committees conferred separately, each for itself, alternating between Vienna and Pest. The ministers of Foreign Affairs, War and Joint Finances answered to each of those committees. The Crown alone declared wars and made peace, without any restrictions imposed by Parliament, while the king also commanded the army as its supreme Commander in Chief. In regard to the territory, Austria kept Dalmatia for itself and handed Croatia over to Hungary, along with Transylvania, so Hungary could reach a settlement with Croatia on its own” (p. 447).

While the negotiations between Austria and Hungary were still in progress, the people in Croatia and Slavonia realised what kind of a threat unification with Hungary would be, so the Parliament made a decision to abandon the concept of a union with Hungary, and to try to negotiate some sort of settlement with Austria. However, it was already too late for that, so the only thing the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament could do was to decide not to send its representatives to the Hungarian Parliament to attend the coronation of Franz Joseph as King of Hungary in 1867. At the following Parliament elections held in the same year, with the changed rules, those in favour of the unification

received almost four-fifths of all representatives, who immediately chose a regnikolar deputation in order to reach a compromise with its counterpart of the Hungarian Parliament. The text of the compromise was soon put together, pointing out in its introduction that the compromise in question was reached between two equal factors, “. . . the Kingdom of Hungary united with Transylvania, and the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, in order to resolve the political and legal issues present between them” (p. 449). It was emphasised in the settlement that all the countries of the Crown of Saint Stephen of Hungary were inseparable, and that Croatia and Slavonia had been their integral parts legally and factually for centuries, thus forming the same state union with Hungary, together with Dalmatia and Transylvania. As far as foreign affairs were concerned, “. . . they all dealt with them as one state entity, whereas, concerning internal affairs, each country acted as an independent political entity. In that sense, it was stated that ‘the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia were a political nation, as they have their own separate territories’” (p. 449). The mutual ruler would be crowned by a unified act, but the original document of his oath would also be written in “Croatian”, in addition to the Hungarian language. The autonomy of Croatia and Slavonia, in regard to the legislature, administration, etc. was complete. There was a plan to establish the joint Ministries of “. . . Finance, Agriculture, Trade and Civil Defence, for which separate sections would be established in Croatia” (p. 449). The joint Parliament of all the kingdoms of the Hungarian Crown discussed joint affairs, and one of the regulations stated the possibility of using “Croatian”, the united coat of arms of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia and their flag together with the Hungarian coat of arms and flag. In addition to that, the Hungarian Parliament was obligated to support the annexation of the Military Krajina and Dalmatia to Croatia and Slavonia. The issue of the town of Rijeka was postponed, but, at the moment of concluding the compromise, the Hungarian Parliament reached a decision that the town of Rijeka would be directly subjected to Hungary. King Franz Joseph confirmed the compromise, demanding that the issue of the town of Rijeka be solved with the participation of the people from that town. The great majority of Rijeka’s inhabitants were in favour of the Hungarian option, which prevailed in 1870, with the foundation of the Town Administration Council under the jurisdiction of Central Hungarian rule. This was initially intended to be a temporary solution, but it remained in effect until 1918.

### **g) From Chauvinism to an Alliance with the Serbs**

The National Party, which won at the Parliament elections in 1872, was dissatisfied with the compromise, because its regulations allowed “. . . the autonomous Croatian government to be subjected to the influence of the Hungarian Government, and thus be just a reflection of the Hungarian ministry; for, as long as the ban depended on the Hungarian Prime Minister, there could be no mention of a Croatian autonomous government” (p. 456). The members of the National Party expressed this attitude in their manifesto, written in order to bring the legitimacy of the compromise into question, while in 1871, Eugen Kvaternik organised a rebellion in the Regiment of Ogulin, proclaiming Croatia an independent country. His own men killed him and his closest associates three days later. Having received the news about this rebellion, the Emperor ordered the Hungarian government to organise all Croatian-Slavonian matters in accordance to its own liking. A new session of the Croatian Parliament was not held

until January 1872, and the Emperor dismissed it as soon as he elected Ivan Mažuranić for his chairman. In 1873, Mažuranić was appointed as the ban, and he was the first commoner to be given this title. During the Serbian uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1876, Ban Mažuranić conducted mass arrests of the famous Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia, closing the Serbian Orthodox church schools, while the government representatives claimed at the Parliament meetings that there were no Serbs in Croatia, just Orthodox Croats. King Franz Joseph adjoined the Military Krajina to Croatia and Slavonia in 1881. In the same year, clashes were organised in Zagreb and the Croatian region of Zagorje, due to the new coats of arms designed by the Hungarian Minister of Finance. However, the clashes soon became anti-Semitic in nature. The King's commissioner, General Hermann von Ramberg put a stop to the clashes, and in 1883, at the suggestion of the Hungarian government, the Emperor proclaimed Count Dragutin Khuen-Héderváry the new ban. Count Dragutin was an eminent Hungarian nobleman and the propagator of the Hungarian idea of state unity. He crushed the opposition and managed to pacify Croatia and Slavonia, remaining at the position of ban for twenty full years.

Šišić claims that Ban Dragutin Khuen-Héderváry drew his greatest strength from “, , the already existing conflict between the Croats and the Serbs, which he deepened even more by his calculated favouritism of the Serbs. Thus, the regime of Count Khuen-Héderváry fell into crisis the day the Croats and the Serbs finally joined forces against the Hungarian systematic breach of the Compromise by the foundation of increasingly large numbers of Hungarian schools, under the pretext that they were ‘private schools for railroad workers’, in Croatia and Slavonia. This coming together and co-operation between the Croats and the Serbs was the work of the Croatian and Serbian youth, started in those sad times in when the elections of 1901, and the mass anti-Serbian clashes in Zagreb (on 1 and 2 September 1902) clearly showed to the whole world that the contemporary oppositional national lead of the Croats and the Serbs had become completely powerless” (p. 461). Even greater and bloodier clashes took place in 1903, particularly in Zagreb and the regions of Zagorje and Primorje, which forced Ban Khuen-Héderváry to resign his position as the ban. In 1905, three new political parties were established: The Serbian Independent Party, the Croatian Party of Progress and the Croatian Peasant Party. In the same year, the Croatian, Dalmatian and Istrian members of the opposition adopted the Rijeka Resolution, which offered reconciliation to the Magyars, reinforced the claims for the amalgamation of Dalmatia to Croatia and Slavonia and demanded the imposition of democratic rights and civil liberties. As an answer to that, the Serbian Independent Party and the Serbian Radical Party in Croatia and Slavonia adopted the Zadar Resolution, which stated their readiness and agreement, with the Serbian representatives in the Viennese Parliament and the Dalmatian Council, to support the demands of the Croatian political parties, on the condition that they acknowledge the Serbian nation as equal with the Croatia nation.

This led to the creation of a coalition between the Croatian and the Serbian opposition political parties, with the exception of the political party led by Josip Frank and, as Šidak added, the Croatian Peasant Party of the Radić brothers. The Croatian-Serbian coalition immediately issued a manifesto that guaranteed the equality and the rights of the Serbian nation. At the parliament elections in 1906, the Croatian-Serbian coalition defeated the unionist National Party, and the following year, in 1907, it proved its ability to almost block the sessions of the Central Parliament in Pest by the use of

obstructive means. The triumph of the coalition was repeated at the elections in 1908, so the ban of that time, Levin Rauh resorted to lawlessness and tyrannical rule. Nevertheless, the Croatian-Serbian coalition was shaken that year, due to the differences between the Serbian and Croatian attitudes towards the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The systematic persecution of eminent Serbs followed, together with the well-known high treason trials in Zagreb and Vienna, conducted on the basis of falsified documents about their alleged conspiratorial connections with official Belgrade. The Coalition won at the elections three more times before the beginning of World War I.

### **5. The Groundlessness of Alleged Proof in Comparison to the Real State of the Affairs**

Much like Vjekoslav Klaić, Tadija Smičiklas and Ivan Kukuljević; Šišić too constantly talked about the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom, the Hungarian-Croatian King, etc., which do not have any grounds in the real state of things. Moreover, he insisted on the name Croatia for the whole territory of Croatia, Slavonia, the Military Krajina and Dalmatia, although the historical facts testify otherwise. The Parliament and the ban were Dalmatian-Croatian-Slavonian until 1918. Šišić started to use his own invention, which he promoted as “Pannonian Croatia” in the more mature period of his historiographic work, after a long and futile search for a more optimal variant, which would fit well into the contemporary national and ideological context. The term “Pannonian Croatia” was preceded by the term “Transsavian Croatia”, which, for example, Šišić used in his three-volume work “*Croatian History*”, published by Matica Hrvatska in Zagreb in 1906, 1908 and 1913. There he wrote: “A separate Croatian region was formed in the old Pannonia, between the Drava and Sava rivers and the Kapela Mountain, where the Slavonian name existed until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. For that reason, the region in question was named Slavonia in the official Latin documents, whereas the same region was mentioned as Slovinci in the Croatian documents. We will call this region Transsavian Croatia” (volume I, p. 32). Šišić did not even attempt to explain why and on what grounds he called this region “Transsavian Croatia”. He simply named it like that and end of story. When, several years later, it appeared to him that the mentioned term was not the most suitable one, he completely obstinately changed it again, into “Pannonian Croatia”.

In order to conceal this as much as possible, Šišić neglected the scientifically completely clear fact that the Serbs and the Croats arrived at the Balkan Peninsula with already formed tribal names, and a developed collective and individual consciousness about affiliation to an ethnic group, with either Serbian or Croatian attributes. Instead, he offered his own artificial construction, according to which the following occurred in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula: “. . . one and the same nation, formerly known by the name of the Slavs, began to gather around two tribal names – Croatian and Serbian; as one tribe or the other gained or lost political power, so were the territories encompassed by their names sometimes larger and sometimes smaller” (p. 32). Such a thesis left enough room for the subsequent arbitrary labelling of the denationalised Serbs who converted to Roman Catholicism as Croats. If the Serbs and the Croats really are one and the same nation, then it does not matter at all whether they be called by their Serbian or Croatian name; however, it still insisted that they be called Croats whenever

possible, even when doing so does not represent even a hint of a serious scientific approach.

In this book, Šišić also pursues the phantasmagoria of “Red Croatia”, which he completely abandoned in his work *“An Overview of the History of the Croatian Nation”*. Moreover, he subjected the imaginative plot of *“The Chronicle of Priest Dukljanin”* to rational criticism, stating that Priest Dukljanin was probably a Roman Catholic Serb. He wrote here: “At first, the Croatian name (nation) encompassed the whole region between the Raša and the Drim rivers, and between the sea and the Drina River. This region was divided into White Croatia, from the Raša to the Cetina rivers; Bosnia, around the upper course of the Bosnia River; and Red Croatia, from the Cetina to the Drim rivers. Red Croatia comprised the following smaller regions: Pagania (Neretljanska), between the Cetina and the Neretva Rivers; Zachlunia (Zahumska), the Land of the Hum) from the Neretva River to the town of Dubrovnik; Travunia, between the towns of Dubrovnik and Kotor; and Duklja, from the town of Kotor to the Drim River” (p. 32). And where was Slavonia in all that? How come the Croatian name never referred to Slavonia as well? Šišić did not even attempt to explain that, although he continued to refer to Slavonia as Transsavian Croatia, and Pannonian Croatia a little later.

This construction of Šišić’s is even more unbelievable, taking into consideration the fact that, during the whole 7<sup>th</sup> century and until the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Slavonians were under Avarian domination, or were the Avar allies at the very least, whereas Emperor Heraclius invited the Serbs and the Croats to the Balkans, for they had already proven themselves as enemies to the Avar in wars. In 797, the Slavonians waged a war on the Avars’ side against the Frankish army comprised of Bavarians and Langobards under the command of Pepin the Short. In 798, Margrave Eric of Friuli defeated them and seized the rule of Slavonia to the Danube, thus permanently suppressing the Avar influence. Much like Istria, Carniola and Styria, Slavonia was part of Francia, under the rule of the margrave of Friuli and therefore, part of the Frankish province of Friuli. Thus, at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Slavonians were converted to Christianity and, in regard to church organisation, they were under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Aquileia. Croatia was then under Byzantine rule, and it came under Frankish rule only after the Byzantine – Frankish War in 803, staying subjected to them until 878.

In 804, Dalmatia surrendered to the Franks as well, which led to another war, of Charlemagne against the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine Empire won this war and seized Dalmatia back. No historical evidence could be found as the basis for the claim that Slavonian Prince Ljudevit was a Croat. Slovenes or Slovines were mentioned everywhere as the inhabitants of Slavonia, whereas the Serbs lived in the regions to the east and south of Slavonia. Šišić himself wrote that Ljudevit was joined to the east by “. . . both Serbian tribes of Braničevci and Timočani, who voluntarily replaced Bulgarian rule with Frankish rule” (p. 36). When, in 822, Ljudevit had to leave Sisak as his residence, “. . . he fled across the border towards the Serbs” (p. 36). It is understood that he did not rush across the whole Slavonia to the east to escape across the border to the Serbian tribes of Braničevci and Timočani, but rather he escaped across the closest border, the Sava River, to the south of the Serbs. After all, when the Franks conquered the whole of Slavonia, they also conquered the Serbian tribe of Braničevci, who lived in the southern regions of present-day Banat. On the other hand, as Šišić himself states, “Ljudevit did not stay long among the Serbs, for he killed his host, some Serbian zhupan, by deceit (it is not known why) and was forced to flee from there to White

Croatia, where he found refuge with Ljudemišlo, the Prince Borna's uncle" (p. 37). Ljudevit did not flee from the Serbian territories, where he initially found refuge, to "White Croatia", but to the only Croatia that existed at the time. Whether he escaped across the Vrbas or the Una as the border-river, it is still very hard to determine.

All these facts did not bother Šišić a bit, as he concluded that ". . . Ljudevit should be included among the most important figures of ancient Croatian history. He was the only ruler who managed to gather around himself a large number of the Slovenes and the Serbs, even if only for a short time, ruling over the entire territory from the mouth of the Drava, Sava and Soča rivers to the confluence of the Timok River with the Danube" (p. 37). The "Croatian" ruler who gathered Slovenes, Slavonians and Serbs, but not one Croat! This is really a grotesque historiography. Šišić also arbitrarily labelled other subsequent Slavonian princes as the princes of Transsavian Croatia: Ratomir, who historical documents say broke off from the Franks and, having been defeated in 838, subjected himself to the Franks again; Mutimir, who subjected Slavonia to the jurisdiction of St Methodius, the Slavonian Metropolitan in 870; and Mutimir's successor, Prince Braslav, who travelled to the vicinity of Vienna to bow to the Frankish King Charles III the Fat in 884. The Croatian state existed as the Principality or the Kingdom of Croatia until the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when Dalmatia was adjoined to it, which even Šišić confirmed by stating that from that moment on, ". . . the state name present in all official documents was Croatia and Dalmatia" (p. 76). He highly unconvincingly blamed the Germans and the Venetians, as foreigners, for the introduction of the term Slavonia. As to that, he said, "Thus, in those ancient times, two additional terms, imposed by foreigners, were attached to the previously sole term 'Croatian state' and they acquired a separate geographical identity in time" (p. 76). The fact that the Slavonians originally spoke kajkavian, which is a completely different dialect from the Croatian chakavian one, did not matter whatsoever to Šišić. As far as Dalmatia was concerned, it comprised only the coastal towns and the islands, and was populated by a completely different nation, the Romans, whose mother tongue was a Latin or Italian dialect. It is evident that Slavonia and Dalmatia have always been something completely different in comparison with Croatia. In some particular historical periods, they were unified with Croatia, but they were never parts of Croatia.

Šišić and all other Croatian historians, when writing about the history of Croatia, write about what Šišić initially called "White Croatia", which he later gave up on. They have sporadically appropriated Bosnia, the Principality of Pagania, Zachlunia, Travunia, Dubrovnik and Duklja, but they were unable to consistently incorporate the rich history of these regions, abounding in genuine historical documents, into the history of Croatia. Thus, the *Pacta Conventa* from 1102 pertained only to the amalgamation of Croatia, occupying the territory from the Cetina River to Gvozd, with Hungary. On the other hand, it was very significant that the Archdiocese of Split comprised the dioceses of Osor, Krk, Rab, Zadar, Skradin, Ston, Dubrovnik, Kotor, Duvno and Sisak until the very end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Split was under firm Byzantine rule at the time. Radical changes took place with the amalgamation of Dalmatia with Croatia. Šišić states that the Archdiocese of Bar was founded in 1067, but he tendentiously fails to mention that the archbishop of Bar was a life-long holder of the title Primate of Serbia, and that Bosnia was under his jurisdiction as well. Why was the archbishop of Bar not the Primate of "Red Croatia"? Four years later, the Diocese of Knin was founded and its bishop gained the Croatian attribute. This was also confirmed by Šišić himself, when he wrote about



the changes that the Diocese of Split (or “Splet”, as he said) had then undergone: “By the foundation of the Archdiocese of Bar (1067), the Diocese of Split lost all southern dioceses and Bosnia, whereas by the foundation of the three new dioceses of Nin, Biograd and Knin, it gained three new suffragans in the north. The Diocese of Knin was the most important, and its jurisdiction extended all the way to the Drava River, while its bishop carried the title of the Croatian bishop (*Croacie episcopus*)” (p. 78-79).

Šišić’s nebulous thesis, persistently repeated in the works of almost all Croatian historians of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, that Slavonia had been “. . . a purely Croatian territory since the ancient times” could never fit into the fact that Croatia and Dalmatia, on the one hand, and Slavonia, on the other, represented two banates incorporated into Hungary. A *herzog* (duke), exclusively a member of royalty, formally ruled over both of the banates, and each banate had its own ban. If it sometimes happened that there was not a *herzog* of royal blood appointed, then the ban of Slavonia performed the *herzog*’s duty, and the Croatian-Dalmatian ban was subordinated to him. The circumstances related to this changed as Hungary was left without Dalmatia and huge parts of Croatia, so the king initially had to appoint two bans who performed the ban’s duties together, then one ban only, and the United Gentry Parliament was established. This process lasted for centuries, and it was conditioned by the complete loss of Dalmatia and the reduction of Croatia and Slavonia to the remnants of the remnants of “the former kingdoms.” Šišić himself points out that, “In the absence of the *herzog*, his jurisdiction was transferred to the bans. At first, only one ban was appointed, but since the reign of King Béla III (IV), there were two of them; one ban for Croatia and Dalmatia and one for Slavonia. Following the rule of Matthias Corvinus, when Dalmatia and Southern Croatia had already been lost, only one Croatian-Dalmatian-Slavonian ban was elected, or two of them for the same position. That title remained until today. Each ban had its own vice ban (*vicebanus*); the Slavonian vice ban was always the *zhupan* of Križevci County, and the Croatian vice ban was the *zhupan* of Knin County” (p. 204). In the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Slavonian bans occasionally minted their own coins, the so-called “*banovac*” coins. The currency in use was the *dinar*, *obole* and *bagatin*. Croatia and Dalmatia never had their own money until Ante Pavelić. Marten money<sup>4</sup> (*kuna*) was only a land tax.

### a) The Direct Incorporation of Slavonia into Hungary

When Šišić wants to appropriate something that is Serbian, then he talks about the Serbs and the Croats as being originally the same nation, mentioning the Croatian or the Serbian language; then the *hajduks* and the *uskoci* are equally Croatian and Serbian. When some people speak in *chakavian*, that is sufficient proof that they are really Croatian, like some allegedly Croatianised Vlachs who issued some of their documents in *chakavian*. Thus, Šišić in one place writes, “The *hajduks* were those deserving people who cherished and supported the idea of freedom and liberation among the Croats and the Serbs throughout the period of Ottoman captivation” (vol. II, p. 115). According to him, the *uskoci* of Senj were mainly Croats, because they were Catholics, although they did not speak *chakavian*; however, many of them were Orthodox Serbs and some of

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<sup>4</sup> The word “*kuna*” (modern Croatian currency) literally means “*marten*”. This refers to the fact that the Croats at one point paid their land taxes in *marten* skins, from which the currency’s name is derived.

them were Italians. There was another example, that of Dalmatia, “. . . where the Croats and the Serbs organised an uprising under their famous leaders Stojan Janković and Ilija Smiljanić the moment they heard about the Ottoman defeat in Vienna” (p. 124). The leaders mentioned here were exclusively Serbian heroes in the Venetian service. No Croats were under their command, only Orthodox Serbs and perhaps a small portion of Catholic Serbs. Anyway, all the territories that they liberated from the Turks were adjoined to the Republic of Venice.

In relation to the seizure of Lika and Slavonia back from the Turks and their annexation to Austria, Šišić then talks about the Serbs as foreign elements, because the Serbs in this particular situation were not the object of appropriation, but an insurmountable hindrance to Croatian aspirations. Thus, he writes, “These territories, conquered by the *carevci* (king-men) and Croats, were Croatian only because they bore the Croatian name in the ancient times; however, in more recent times, these territories were ravaged and repopulated mostly by foreign elements, primarily the Serbs. Apart from that, the Imperial Court refused to amalgamate the conquered territories with the mother country, subjecting Lika and Slavonia to the jurisdiction of the Imperial Chamber Court” (p. 127). Šišić and other Croatian historiographers always had a habit of – every time an army was comprised of Croatian soldiers – calling the army *the* Croatian army, thus regularly using the constructions: “the Hungarian and Croatian army”, “the Magyars and the Croats”, “the Croats and *carevci*”, etc. Where is the evidence of the Croatian support of the *carevci* in the conquest of Slavonia and Lika?

Maybe a few Croats were under the command of the *carevci* (tsar’s supporters), for there were certainly some of them there, but none were with the *carevci*. After all, to what extent the alleged Croats of that time really cared for the amalgamation of Slavonia with Croatia was evident from the fact that, at the meeting of the Hungarian Parliament in Pressburg in 1751, where the Croatian aristocrats were also present, Antun Špišić Japranski, the Zhupan of Virovitica County, suggested that “. . . from then on, each of the three newly-established Slavonian counties should send one representative to the Hungarian Parliament, just as the Hungarian counties do. He supported his suggestion with the claim that the mentioned counties are organised after the model of Hungary and that they bring as much profit as their Hungarian counterparts, and thus it would be better to come under the rule of the palatines. In other words, Vice Zhupan Špišić suggested that Slavonia separate from Croatia and unite with Hungary” (p. 139). The suggestion was accepted, so the ban in Slavonia retained the judicial function, while Slavonia was administratively attached directly to Hungary.

## **b) Catholicism as the Bond between the Croats and the Magyars**

Šišić referred to the seven-year period of Hungarian rule over the Croats as a Croatian-Hungarian close friendship and alliance, though not denying the harsh conflicts which he claimed were exceptionally rare. “The primary connection between the Croats and the Magyars was the Catholic faith” (p. 2, Book 3), although both nations were uncertain for a long time whether to choose the Orthodox or the Catholic Church. “If Hungary had finally chosen the Orthodox Church, it would have been transformed into a Slavic country over the centuries, just as it happened to Bulgaria. If Croatia, on the other hand, had chosen Orthodox Christianity, the distinction between the Croats and the

Serbs would not have been established and both tribes would have assimilated into one political nation with one ethnic name, either Croatian or Serbian, as early as the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. After the final schism of the Christian Church (1054), Hungary and Croatia chose the Roman Christian Church and Rome for good, which permanently determined the direction and route of their history. The Magyars were thus saved from Slavinization, whereas the Croats considerably distanced themselves from their closest neighbours and brothers, the Serbs, over the subsequent centuries” (p. 3). As far as the Serbian-Croatian relations were concerned, this thesis is absolutely wrong. The Slovenians, Czechs, and Polish are ethnically much closer to the Croats than the Serbs are. It would not have come to the assimilation of the Serbs and the Croats into one political nation by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, even if they belonged to the same religion, for the majority of Serbs were Catholic for another century to come. Moreover, the Serbian kings were crowned by the Pope until Saint Sava Nemanjić founded the Serbian national church, that is, the Autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church.

As Ferdo Šišić stated, the other strong bond between the Croats and the Magyars was Latin as the official language of the state, generally accepted in the public and cultural life and predominant in “the private communication of the Croatian and Hungarian intelligentsia” (p. 4). Apart from this, he mentioned two significant additional factors that connected these two nations: one was the class interests of the nobility and the clergy, and the other was the joint defence against external enemies. The Dalmatian, Croatian and Slavonian nobility had the same or even greater rights as the Hungarian noblemen. However, what Šišić regards as greater rights are actually fewer rights, for, unlike the Slavonian nobility, the Croatian gentry initially did not have any representatives in the Hungarian Parliament. Afterwards, the united Dalmatian-Croatian-Slavonian Parliament sent its representatives to the Hungarian Parliament. On the one hand, there was national megalomania, and on the other, there was the confession that “the Kingdom of Croatia” comprised only the Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci counties in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 141). In accordance with the real situation, “. . . in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatian name among the intelligentsia was exclusively restricted to the kajkavians, that is, to Zagreb County to the Kupa River, Varaždin County (with Međumurje of the Zalad County) and Križevci County. Therefore, the Croatian name was more nondescript than the vast Illyrian name, which referred to all shtokavians and additionally to all the old Dalmatian writers, especially those from Dubrovnik” (p. 155). Šišić himself confirmed that the Illyrian language actually referred to the Serbian language, when he wrote about Vuk Karadžić’s works, stating that “. . . in accordance with the philological principles of the time, his works became the most genuine sources of the pure national Illyrian (Serbian) language” (p. 159). Ferdo Šišić wrote the word “Serbian” in parentheses next to the word “Illyrian”.

### **c) Ljudevit Gaj’s Reasons for Giving up Kajkavian**

In relation to Ljudevit Gaj’s role in the Illyrian revival movement, Šišić states that his “. . . first public appearance and success of the revival-craving youth was the lecture he gave on the Croatian (that is, kajkavian) language at the Orthodox Academy in Zagreb” (p. 163). This happened in 1831. By the end of that year, Professor Matija Smodek “. . . asked the Professor Committee to allow him to teach Croatian (the kajkavian dialect) privately and free of charge in one of the rooms of the academic

building” (p. 164). The next year, Ivan Derkos issued a proclamation in Latin, demanding that all Croatian, Slavonian and Dalmatian dialects be “. . . united into one literary, not national, language” (p. 167), thus referring to chakavian, kajkavian and shtokavian. An increasing threat of Magyarisation gave rise to the solidarity among chakavians, and particularly among kajkavians and shtokavians. The two prevailing variants were kajkavian and artificially combined, until Count Janko Drašković came out for shtokavian. The reason for Drašković’s decision in favour of shtokavian was the lamentable state of kajkavian, in addition to the almost extinct chakavian, which Šišić demonstrated immediately at the beginning of the third book by stating that “. . . Latin played the primary role, for Croatian was mostly neglected in public life; moreover, when somebody spoke kajkavian in their home or in public, every forth or fifth word was Latin, and in some regions, even German. It really should be pointed out that in those gloomy times, the Croatian nation was an unconscious and lethargic society, whose social life was covered by a thick cobweb, so, apart from rare exceptions, everything seemed to be petrified” (p. 8). The Croats were awoken from that lethargy by the rapid rise of Hungarian nationalism and by the attempt to impose the Hungarian language as official in the territory of entire Hungary.

Nevertheless, in 1835, Ljudevit Gaj decided to base the Croatian literary language on kajkavian and thus published his newspaper, the *Croatian, Slavonian, and Dalmatian Morning Star*, in kajkavian, which was a real sensation among the sparse Croatian intelligentsia. “The newspaper subscribers were mainly only kajkavians, very few subscribed from the Krajina and Slavonia, and especially from Dalmatia, Bosnia and Slovenia. Therefore, in the following year, 1836, Ljudevit Gaj decided to change the name, the dialect and orthography without any higher previous permission, for he knew very well that the kajkavians were neither competent of creating and further developing their own literature, nor were they sufficiently numerous and strong to exist as a separate national body” (p. 193-194). Thus, he and his associates devoted themselves to the “Illyrian” idea, encompassing by it all the Slavs from Carynthia to Bulgaria. He changed the name of the newspaper to the *Illyrian National News*, in which kajkavian was replaced by shtokavian, following the example of the people from Dubrovnik and the exemplary work of Vuk Karadžić” (p. 194).

As an annexed part of Hungary, the province that was persistently referred to as the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia in official documents, actually had a certain, indisputably small autonomy within the feudal social framework, which was limited to the scope of its so-called municipal rights. As Šišić comments, “. . . these rights primarily pertained to some separate judicial forms, then to the right of the Croatian gentry to freely choose their notary local judge, as well as a local captain for military matters, and also to attend the meetings of the Parliament at the ban’s invitation and under his chairmanship, where they would reach decisions that were then to be sent directly to his Royal Highness for confirmation. Furthermore, the nobility had the right to obtain sea salt under favourable conditions and the right to their own separate jurisdiction with the ban at its head. However, the most important municipal rights were: 1) the use of Latin in internal administration; 2) the advantage of Croatia to pay only a half of the sum (of the war tax) paid by one churchyard in Hungary; 3) exemption from quartering soldiers, except in case of urgent need; 4) exemption from giving crops and the harvest to the army; and 5) the exclusion of non-Catholics (Protestants) from possessing real estate and from the service” (p. 197). The territory that had these

municipal rights was reduced to only three counties, those of Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci, and with the immigration of numerous Croatian noblemen, that territory was given the name Croatia and was removed from Slavonia, of which it had originally been part of. The real Croatia was under Ottoman rule or part of the Military Krajina, which was sometimes called Military Croatia, whereas those three counties were called Civil Croatia. Dalmatia was first under firm Venetian rule and then under Austrian rule, whereas the entire liberated Slavonia, except for the parts that belonged to the Military Krajina, was directly annexed to Hungary. In an attempt to make those three counties equal with the rest of Hungary in a legal sense, the Magyars primarily strove for the imposition of Hungarian as the official language, and the recognition of equal rights for the Protestant. That was exactly the issue the Croatian political leaders most fiercely opposed, insisting upon Latin as the official language and Roman Catholic religious exclusivism.

The most eminent *Mađaroni*, led by Count Aleksandar Drašković, formulated their anti-Illyrian political program in 1840. “The political goals of these noblemen primarily strived for the elimination of the dangerous Illyrian name – which was in opposition with the Magyar aspirations – under the pretext of protection and for the sake of the ‘Croatian’ name. Furthermore, they propagated the abolition of the new orthography, together with the ‘Vlachian’ shtokavian and its replacement by kajkavian. Additionally, they strove for the closest possible unification of the ‘Croats’ with the Magyars into one single, unified Hungarian political state, and the imposition of Hungarian – not only as the official language, but also as the educational language in schools. Finally, each of the three Croatian counties (Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci) were to send two representatives for the Hungarian Parliament, just as the Slavonian and Hungarian counties did” (p. 242). The noblemen of Turopolje clearly stated that if they had to renounce their Croatian nationality, they would rather become Magyars than Illyrians. Antun Josipović, the representative from Turopolje in the Hungarian Parliament, publically declared himself a Magyar. Thus, in 1841, the Croatian-Hungarian Party was established as the first Croatian political party, which was of an extremely Hungarian character. Therefore, two originally foreign interests became dominant and mutually confrontational, which had the direst of consequences. The Illyrians were an instrument of the Imperial Court and Austrian political interests, whereas the ‘Croats’ or the pro-Magyars (*Mađaroni*) were the instrument of the Hungarian ones. The passion of both camps was so flammable that it often provoked bloody clashes between them. In 1842, the Imperial Court had to give in to Hungarian pressure, due to the diplomatic problems that were caused by the attempt of the Illyrian Movement in Bosnia under Turkish rule. Thus, the Illyrian name was forbidden in January 1843. For the Illyrians, this was a stab in the back, done by those who had created and supported them.

The sudden change of the Austrian attitude was certainly influenced by the news that “. . . some Illyrians stated their readiness to convert to Orthodox Christianity; a rumour spread that the Illyrians wanted to separate the southern Slavic countries from Austria and create a new independent Illyrian state together with Serbia, which would not abide by the laws of the Hungarian constitution” (p. 267). Intervention by the Imperial Court significantly weakened Ljudevit Gaj, so many Illyrians withdrew their support and concentrated on political actions that would encompass Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and the Military Krajina. After the bloodshed in Zagreb in 1844, during which many nationalists were killed and wounded by a military intervention, the Assembly of Zagreb

County, dominated by the *Mađaroni*, asked the Hungarian government “. . . to order the reintroduction of the old orthography in all schools and in public, and to hire professors of kajkavian at the Department of the National Language at the Academy founded by the King. They stated that a department of shtokavian could be founded in Osijek or Požega, supporting such demands by the claim that there was no single Croatian-Slavonian language” (p. 428). However, the Imperial Court did not allow the *Mađaron* Party to become too strong, hence, that year ban Haller received instructions to let the nationalists prevail and thus eliminate the petty nobility from the decision process, as they were under strong Hungarian influence, especially those from Turopolje. In that way, the Austrians actually balanced the power of each of the political fractions by their orchestration and manipulation. Vjekoslav Babukić, a renowned Slavonian linguist from Požega, was appointed as a professor at the Department of the Croatian-Slavonian Language at the Academy in 1846, thus giving shtokavian prevalence. His contemporaries at the time talked about a “national” language, whereas later historians, including Šišić, readily changed the “Illyrian” or the “national” language into “Croatian”. Babukić’s first lecture was about the Illyrian language and literature, not about Croatian. That was the time when Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski talked about “the Croatian-Slavonian homeland”, “our people”, “the national language”, etc.

Ferdo Šišić himself, as an eminent intellectual and the leading historian of his time, was a contradictory personality. On several occasions, before the First World War, he distinguished himself as a zealous propagator of Serbian-Croatian national unity. In this book, he again expressed a regret that Ljudevit Gaj at the time had abandoned the idea of establishing the Cyrillic alphabet as the Croatian-Slavonian script, that is, as the general Illyrian script, thus he writes, “Gaj had to abandon the idea of the columns being written in the Cyrillic alphabet; although he strove for the eventual acceptance of the Cyrillic alphabet, just as he successfully strove for the replacement of kajkavian with shtokavian in 1836, his attempts to do that were thwarted. If he had by any chance succeeded in doing that, the Croatian and the Serbian literature would be the same entity today, which was the primary goal of Ljudevit Gaj’s work and the work of his associates” (p. 211). On the other hand, in his books Šišić appropriated the Serbian territories and parts of the Serbian nation without supporting by arguments, and he Croatianised the Dalmatians and the Slavonians – although the Croatian national consciousness had never existed among them – as well as the inhabitants of Dubrovnik, Boka and all Catholic Serbs in general.

### **III. Von Sudland’s Systematisation of the Croatian National Concept**

Ivo Pilar, one of the most significant Croatian national ideologists, published a book in German entitled the *South Slav Question*, under the pseudonym L.V. Sudland in Vienna in 1918, purporting to thoroughly examine that issue, with a clear political goal. In 1943, Matica Hrvatska published this work in an artificial, corrupted Serbian, and the Ustasha regime publically propagated the mentioned work as one of the most significant theoretical foundation stones of their ideology. The presentation method was based on the author’s understanding of historiographic essayism, whose goal was not to examine, call into question or to criticise, but to convince the reader with an overly sweet story and a lapidary style. Thus, when he wrote about the first period of the Croatian Balkan history, von Sudland stated that the Croats, immediately upon their settlement there, “. . .

extended their rule and conquered the interior parts of the Balkans all the way to the Morava River and to the Adriatic coast, and on the south all the way to Skadarsko Lake, that is to the Bojana River. The Croats managed to conquer and populate these territories by military undertakings. The success of this expansion was evident in the historically irrefutable existence of Red Croatia in the 8<sup>th</sup> century – present-day South Dalmatia, Herzegovina and Montenegro. The success of this expansion was later suppressed by Serbian expansion” (p. 12). Moreover, von Sudland claims that three Croatian states were formed immediately upon the settlement: “. . . the North-Dalmatian state or White Croatia, which spread from Istria to the geopolitical barrier of Biokovo Mountain; the South-Dalmatian state or Red Croatia, which spread from Biokovo Mountain to Skadarsko Lake and Pannonian Croatia, which at one time, before the arrival of the Magyars, spread from the first part of the Balkan Alps all the way to Lake Balaton and the Danube” (p. 12). In regard to the wars that Emperor Louis I the Pious waged against the Venetians over the Dalmatian towns, as it soon followed, “. . . it is important to point out that the ally of the Venetians in the first war was the Serbian Tsar Stjepan Dušan. His death during the war was the only thing that prevented the war from becoming unfavourable for Ljudevit! I emphasise and point out that the alliance of the Serbs and the Italians is a fact, which we Croats, have to take into consideration in the future” (p. 22).

### 1. The Serbs as a Foreign Element

Von Sidland too emphasised the problem of the Croatian emigration under the Turkish invasion, thus writing, “The period of Turkish rule was marked by the constant emigration of the Croats into Hungary, Austria and Italy. The following lands, surrounded by Croatian settlements: the Counties of Pressburg, Sopron, Moson, Vas (Iron County), Zala, Bacs-Bodrog and Baranya, where 300,000 Croats live even today according to the 1910 census; the clusters of Croats at Moravian Field\_(Marchfeld) and the Lejiga River in Moravia; in Italy, (the villages of Montemitro, San Felice, Slavo, Acquaviva Collerocce in the Province of Molise and Larino District, where Croatian is still spoken even today) and in Bavaria (Aisenstat) are the ethnic remnants of that period of the emigration. Additionally, all those colonies are just the remnants of the group migrations, which were actually less important, for they could only take place from time to time. The constant emigrations of individuals, single families, and small groups of several families were an more severe ethnical loss, for they soon lost their original national identity in the new homeland. It should be pointed out that the best part of the Croatian nation was the one that was accustomed to better living conditions and who migrated due to the unbearable circumstances, whereas those poorer did not emigrate, but retreated to impassable regions, far away from the main roads, and continued to eke out a miserable existence. While those richer and more cultured emigrated, those physically stronger and more capable fought and died for the liberation of their homeland. Therefore, the period of Turkish rule represented a period of negative selection of the toughest sort of the Croatian nation, as those most capable were killed then or were lost for the national life. This Croatian loss was incomparably greater than, for example, that suffered by the Germans during the Thirty Years' War, as, for the Croats, this war period lasted eight times longer” (p. 27).

**Comment [Z20]:** Translator's note. The spelling of this river could not be confirmed in the available sources. Possible mistake in the original Serbian text

However, the Croats' fatal wound was still to be inflicted. "The mentioned emigration of the Croats left vast Croatian territories desolate and deserted. For governmental, financial and military reasons, the Turks could not allow the land to remain abandoned and without any population, so they tried to repopulate those deserted regions by whatever people they had at their disposal. The Turks brought the peasants and shepherds from the Balkan regions to the new settlements, for there were no Muslim peasants and shepherds, as the Muslims were the rich class; thus, the new population was mostly made up of the Orthodox element. Those elements did not belong to one and the same nation; some were Bulgarians, some were Orthodox Arnauts, Greeks, Gypsies; particularly a lot of Vlachs, Romanian shepherds and a certain percentage of Serbs, for the neighbouring regions were Serbian. Since the Serbs were culturally the best organised in their Serbian national church, as we shall see later, the previously non-Slavic elements became Slavic and, under the influence of the most powerful Slavic element, that is, the Serbs, they themselves became Serbs. That is the origin of the present-day Serbs in Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, the period of Turkish rule consequently led to the vanishing of the ethnically unified Croatian region, and the emergence of a new Serbian population in the Croatian territories, which had its own characteristics, viewpoints and political goals, totally opposite from the Croatian ones" (p. 28). The Serbs were also present in large numbers on the other side of the Austrian or "Croatian" border, since the defence of the imperial territories ". . . was tremendously hindered due to the deserted Croatian border regions, and even more due to the Ottoman devastation and ravaging of all the border settlements. All of this resulted in a shortage of people, which made defence even more difficult. Parallel with the Croatian migration to the north and the west, the Turkish invasion did the same to the other Balkan inhabitants, especially to the Serbs, so they fled from the Turks or advanced with them as submissive prisoners of war and back-up military units. Thus, a great migration of the Balkan people to the north and northwest took place. The Ottomans very skilfully used those human resources for small military companies, advance guards and pillaging gangs. Since that part of the population was naturally prone to pillage, looting and robbery, other people were very scared of it. Austria wanted to oppose this tactic by an attempt to exploit this nomadic population for its own purposes, and finally repopulate the deserted Croatian regions with it" (p. 31).

Thus, the Serbs were a nation that naturally had a pillaging mentality, and as Austria, calling them the Vlachs, Raci<sup>5</sup>, *uskoci* and new-comers, gave them land in the border regions, in return obliging them to military service in the status of *Krajišniks* in Croatia and Slavonia, "a new foreign element, with which we would have to deal again later, was infiltrated among the Croatian population" (p. 31). As von Sudland states, not only were those immigrants, ". . . which were mostly of non-Slavic origin Slavinised", but they also "attracted one part of the Croats, converting them to Orthodox Christianity and assimilating them into one single unified ethnic entity, whose descendants are the present-day *Prečani* Serbs in Croatia" (p. 33). For him, the main problem was the territorial and political separation of the Military Krajina and its exemption from the jurisdiction of the Croatian and Slavonian feudal classes, for the free status of the

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<sup>5</sup> Raci (Rac, Ratzen, Ratzians, Rasciani) is the name that the Hungarians and Germans used for the Serbs. *Raci* name comes from the name of one of the first Serbian state Raška. In addition to the name Raci, in use was the name Rascijani (*Rasciani*), a country called the *Rascia* or *Racszag*



population of the Krajina strongly attracted the oppressed Croatian serfs, who were completely deprived of all rights.

### **a) The Disqualification of Porphyrogenitus**

As far as the beginnings of Serbian statehood are concerned, von Sudland called into question the credibility of the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus' information on the original Serbian settlement in the regions of Travunia, Zachlunia, Paganian and Bosnia. However, he says that the future generations really did “. . . spread over the neighbouring territories and thus, although not until subsequent centuries, the Serbs fully or only partially settled in the territories that Porphyrogenitus had so abundantly attributed to them. Nevertheless, the Serbs settled in some additional territories to the south that Porphyrogenitus had not acknowledged as Serbian” (p. 44). Moreover, von Sudland considered “. . . the Croatian governmental entity, namely Red Croatia, which originally comprised present-day Herzegovina and Montenegro, to be an essential factor in the development of the Serbian state. The assumptions that the Croatian nobility imposed their rule over the Serbian peasant highlanders for a short period in the 8<sup>th</sup> century were valid indeed. Flavije Blondo informed us that Raša was regarded as a province of Croatia. However, it seemed that the Serbs who were inclined towards the Byzantium soon overthrew the rule of the Roman-inclined Croatian nobility with the help of their clergy. Thus, these two nations mingled, and the Serbs finally prevailed. It was observed that the medieval Byzantine writers, Joannes (John) Zonaras and George Cedrenus in particular, called the population of Raša and Duklja ‘the Serbs that were also called Croats’ or ‘the Croats that are also called Serbs’. The Byzantine author Skilices mentioned the same thing as well. Since the foundation and development of the Croatian state began very early, it was natural that the Croats who first established the state from time to time extended their rule over the unorganised and poorly organised Serbs” (p. 45). Describing how the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon desolated Raška at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> (although all historical sources testified that it was Serbia in question, which for von Sudland is a synonym), he states that many Serbs fled to Croatia and other territories, which was of crucial importance for the ethnic fate of Duklja. “I already pointed out that I regard Duklja only as a further expansion of Red Croatia (which was a Croatian settlement first). However, it seems that the layer of the Croatian inhabitants was very thin and that due to geopolitical obstacles, they did not nurture a relationship with the nationally more powerful White Croatia, so the later development was decisively to the Croats' disadvantage. The coincidence that part of the higher Serbian classes, the politically active part of the people, settled exactly in Duklja seemed to play a certain additional role here. Starting from 924, the Serbian influence gradually increased, while during the great conquest of the Comnenus Dynasty in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (1168-1180), it seems that the increasing Byzantine influence acted even more in favour of the Orthodox Serbs against the Catholic Croats” (p. 47).

According to him, this process had catastrophic consequences for the Croats. “Thus, Duklja gradually came under the Serbian circle of influence. In some ways it became a second political centre of the Serbian nation. Nevertheless, the original Croatian settlement as an ethnical factor, and the strong influence of Catholicism left a special, permanent mark on this territory, so that Duklja, later Zeta, emerged throughout the entire Serbian history as a separate entity, usually in some kind of opposition with the

ethnic centre in Raša. These separate elements have proven to be so strong that it is impossible to subdue them even today and thus, in addition to Serbia, we have Montenegro as well, the successor of the former Duklja and Zeta” (p. 47). In order to additionally emphasise the alleged statehood superiority of Croatia, von Sudland states the following opinion: “As much as the centre of the Serbian territory was suitable for the maintenance and development of national strength, it was also that much unsuitable for political development and the foundation of a state. No significant Serbian state foundations existed between the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. The infertile, poor, mountainous land, with no big towns and no cultural tradition was simply unsuitable for the foundation of a state. Only with the arrival of a Serbian population during the already mentioned flights and migrations, and with Byzantine-Orthodox help, did Duklja (Zeta) reach the Serbian political sphere of activity. Thus, the Serbs began to take part in the foundation of a state, which, however, was not completely Serbian, but the Serbs already made up such a big part of it that it was impossible to get around them” (p. 47).

At the time of the peak of the Serbian state, after the Bulgarian defeat and with Byzantine support of all that had been accomplished so far, “. . . the Serbian element slowly started its return from exile back to its national centre in Raša. On that occasion, the Serbs brought back the versatile Croatian-Roman cultural influence and political traditions” (p. 47-48). For, what would we Serbs do without the Croatian culture and political traditions? We would be a nothing and a nobody! That is one of the forms of anti-Serbian hatred, aiming to present the Serbian nation as biologically inferior, socially backward and politically unfit. Von Sudland additionally stated that, due to the Byzantine-Serbian conflicts at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, a great number of the Serbs again left Raška (Rascia) and mainly fled to Duklja. “This repeated immigration strengthened the Serbian element in Duklja (Zeta) so much that, from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, we could no longer regard Duklja as purely Croatian, but as a mixed Serbian-Croatian state formation. Duklja (Zeta) began to share the political destiny of Raška (Rascia), with which it had better geopolitical connections than with the rest of Croatia. Despite that, we can not give a purely Serbian label to the state formations of Vojislav and Bodin, but a mixed Croatian-Serbian one instead, for the Byzantine writer Nicetas of Paphlagonia still called Duklja ‘Corbatia’ or ‘Red Croatia’” (p. 48).

At the beginning of a separate chapter, von Sudland self-confidently hinted that he would prove that “. . . the Serbs have no claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina, even if we would completely accept the so-called principle of nationality. Bosnia has never been Serbian national property, it is not today, and it is a question if it ever will be in the future” (p. 80). While elaborating on the question of the national definition of the Bosnian population, he draws attention to the fact that “. . . Bosnia is an exception to the rule that I have established, which states that the South Slavic nations are only the product of political and governmental formations. It is a historical fact that an independent Bosnian state existed. Nevertheless, the Bosnian nation has never existed, nor will it ever. Therefore, we have here a sociological problem that we have to solve unconditionally, if we do not want the entire construction that we have built to have some serious cracks. Without an explanation of this exception to the rule, the whole Bosnian problem has to remain unclear and unintelligible” (p. 81). His great burden was the fact that many authoritative historians, starting with Constantine Porphyrogenitus, claimed that Bosnia was undeniably a Serbian land; some of these von Sudland himself mentions: Maximilian Šimek, Jovan Rajić, Franjo Pejačević Virovitički, Johann

Christian von Engel, Leopold von Ranke, Benjamin von Kallay, Joseph Alexander von Helfert, etc. Despite that, von Sudland, in a manner completely unsuitable for a scientist and an intellectual, says in spite: “Thus, I claim that Bosnia has been a Croatian territory since the 8<sup>th</sup> century, that it remains so even today and that only the future will tell whether it will perhaps become Serbian” (p. 82).

As far as Porphyrogenitus’ testimony was concerned, von Sudland claims that “. . . we can not accept this history about the settlement, because it is completely tendentious at the disadvantage of the Croats, and in favour of the Byzantium-inclined Serbs, and at the same time is particularly false in regard to Bosnia” (p. 83). Von Sudland thereby falsified John Kinnamos, accusing him of writing a statement that the Serbs did not live in Bosnia, which is false, adding to that the statement that the Byzantine writers were biased in favour of the Serbs. “If we looked closely at the old sources, we would notice that this issue was somewhat confusing even there, although it is evident that the Croats increasingly stood out, whereas the Serbs were increasingly pushed into the background as we go back further into the past. I will not bother the readers with the excessive burden of the source, so I will just shortly cite George Cedrenus, who confirmed that the Croats shared a border with the Bulgarians. We are to look for that border in the north, mainly in today’s Kingdom of Serbia. I will also cite Flavije Blondo, who labelled Bosnia as a province of the Kingdom of Croatia, and also a note from the register of the Monastery of St. Peter, near Solin in Dalmatia, which states that Bosnia was an integral part of Croatia, and thus the ban of Bosnia was designated as the prince-electoral when choosing the Croatian king. This fact was also mentioned by Joseph Alexander von Helfert” (p. 83-84).

### **b) Geometric Proof that Bosnia Belongs to the Croats**

The authors that he mentioned are not regarded as particularly serious and, as far as the mentioned monastery register is concerned, Croatian historiography has determined that it is a case of imaginative historical forgery. In regard to the fact that the Serbs fell under Bulgarian rule and the Croats succeeded in defeating the Bulgarian army, this fact is not a sufficient proof for the thesis that “. . . initially, the Croats must have been more numerous and must have occupied a larger territory than the Serbs, although the respected Porphyrogenitus wanted to convince us that the truth was quite opposite” (p. 84). He can contest Porphyrogenitus with futile reasoning to his heart’s content, but an alternative historical source from Porphyrogenitus’ time or earlier simply does not exist. Von Sudland has “better” evidence. He claims that Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia were indisputably Croatian territories, and he supported his claim with the data from the 1910 census, according to which 62.5% Croats and 24.6% Serbs lived in Croatia and Slavonia, whereas 82.5% Croats and 16.3% Serbs lived in Dalmatia. This should be taken for granted and cannot be doubted. And then von Sudland, having established his initial irrefutable axiom, refers us to the map. “One should only take a look at the Croatian territories marked with black in Bosnia, the rest of which has been left white. How can we imagine that one nation came into existence in a country in the shape of a pair of open compasses, and another nation lived in the land inside those compasses? One does not need extremely good power of perception to realise that the presence of the Croatian nation in the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia – which is a fact clearly proven by the famous military undertakings of the Croats in the fierce

battles of the World War – had to be the initial nation-creating force in Bosnia as well. The existence of one nation in the territories of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia is simply geopolitically an anthropologically impossible without Bosnia added to those territories. The development could follow only in the way I have already described – that the Croats, during the two initial centuries, spread from their original centre, which extended to Vrbas, towards the south, the north and the east and populated those territories, establishing new social classes and their rule there. Moreover, they assimilated the local Slavic and non-Slavic elements and thus initiated the creation of one Croatian nation” (p. 84). His map, however, comprised the long area below the Cetina River and the entire Boka Kotorska Bay to the south, as well as the entire Slavonia and Srem to the northeast, which had never been Croatian territories. Such a “Croatian” loaf simply did not exist throughout earlier history. In the east, the Croats never expanded farther than Vrbas, whereas, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Croatian feudal lords who migrated there imposed the Croatian consciousness to the present-day kajkavian (Slovenian) region of Hrvatsko Zagorje. Von Sudland did not at all mention the crucial criterion that could have served as an objective criterion in discussions similar to this - the spread of chakavian.

He told his own story and liberated the already naïve readers from the burden of any proof. The story itself was nice and alluring. “Just as it was a Croatian territory upon its settlement, Bosnia was politically a Croatian territory as well. Anyone, capable of thinking on their own, who has taken into consideration the enclosed map, has to have reached such a conclusion. If today’s Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia once belonged to the Croatian state, then Bosnia unavoidably belonged to it too. For just as it is impossible to create one nation, it is equally impossible to create a state in the territory of such an impossible shape, as the three mentioned present-day Croatian lands are” (p. 85-86). Apart from this, he stated three additional arguments supporting his claim that Bosnia belonged to the “Croatian” state: “1) That Bosnia was an integral part of the Croatian state is best proved by its political organisation and its later development into an independent country. From the first mention of Bosnia in the historical sources to its proclamation as a kingdom, a ban had been at its head. The title of ban is exclusively a Croatian institution, which is present in relation to the bans of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia even today. Later, at the time of the state union between the Croats and the Magyars, the title of ban extended to Hungarian state law and thus gained the status of regency in the South Slavic provinces, which is proved even today by Banat in Southern Hungary and the historical banates. . . The Serbs are not familiar with the institution of the ban. They only had zhupans and grand zhupans, which gave rise to the Serbian royalty. The title of ban cannot be found anywhere in Serbian history, but only in the history of Croatia. Thus, it follows that a country whose constitutional system has been founded on the institution of the ban must ethnically and governmentally belong to the Croats. 2) In accordance with Croatian constitutional law, the ban of Bosnia was the Croatian standard-bearer and the Croatian prince-elect, even the first prince-elect in the Croatian state. Again, I would refer to the already mentioned information from the monastery near Solin. 3) Hungary gained Bosnia together with Croatia, as an integral part of the Croatian state. This is a fact that the Magyars do not accept, basing their claims on some military conquest of Bosnia” (p. 86). Ban is an Avar term and it represented the administrator of the separate territories of Lika, Krbava and Gacko in the Croatian state. The Magyars established the institution of the ban in countries that had

nothing to do with the Croats, even in Serbian lands. The Serbs are certainly familiar with the institution of the ban, as one Serb, Beloš, the Serbian Prince and brother of the Hungarian queen, was the Dalmatian-Croatian and Slavonian ban. The first ban of Bosnia (in historical sources, Borić is mentioned as the first) was appointed only after Bosnia's amalgamation with Hungary at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Hungary gained Bosnia from Serbia as the dowry of a princess who married a Hungarian king, and it did not become one of the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen as an integral part of the Croatian state, just as Slavonia did not join the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen at the same time as Croatia, but much earlier.

### **c) Trampling Over the Undesirable Facts about Bosnia**

One more big worry tormented von Sudland. As much as he altered the older history, hid the undesirable facts, invented more desirable ones and endlessly fantasised in a romantic fervour, “. . . the fact remains that the Serbs are the strongest national and religious element in present-day Bosnia, comprising around 43% of the entire population, and that they have the highest degree of national consciousness. Not even a slight degree of such great national consciousness is present in the Catholic Croats, who comprise 20% of the population, let alone the Muslims, who comprise up to 33% of the population and have not yet developed any kind of national consciousness. The Muslim intelligentsia exhibits the roots of some kind of national feeling, but they are divided, as one part is inclined towards the Croats and the other towards the Serbs, although it must be admitted that the majority of the Muslims favours the Croats. So how is it possible to explain these phenomena, which are completely opposite to our claim that Bosnia and Herzegovina are Croatian territories? I admit that I have not yet encountered a complete explanation of the origin of the present-day ethnic circumstances in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the Bosnian problem is the hardest to solve of all the South Slavic problems” (p. 87).

For that reason, von Sudland attempted to prove the unproved with great enthusiasm, claiming that he had solved the main problem that vexed him and his other like-minded people. He introduced the Bosnian Bogomilism as a crucial factor and constructed an entirely new and completely fabricated story about the alleged political background of the Bogomil Movement. He talks about the political chasm in Croatia at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, where “. . . the People's Party was established as an answer to the Romanization tendencies of the Catholic Church. We know that the clashes between the People's Party and the Latin-Clerical Party weakened the Croatian state so much that the Magyars were able to form and achieve their aspirations. As we can see further, the Croatian People's Party opposed the Magyars too at that moment, but was defeated at Gvozd by the Hungarian and the Croatian proponents of the Magyar Party. On that occasion, Petar Svačić, the last native Croatian king, was killed. However, it would be wrong to think that the Croatian People's Party permanently disappeared after this defeat, for it felt an urge for the independent existence of an entire resilient and determined nation, such as was the Croatian nation. So, what did this party do, what did it have to do? Its proponents had to emigrate from the regions that were under the control of their opponents, the Clerical Croats and the coastal Romans and Magyars. Since the Clerical Croats and the coastal Romans and Magyars had only gained control of the outskirts, the Croatian People's Party retreated to the internal parts of the country,

and due to the shape of the Croatian lands, that was precisely Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mountainous, hardly-accessible regions of Bosnia became the refuge of the imperishable Croatian national nobles and their proponents, who fled there in search of shelter. The protection that they found there was enough to allow them to further resist the Romans, the clerical-papal policy and the aspirations of the Hungarian kings. This migration of a politically active national element in Bosnia was a firm foundation for the later establishment of the Bosnian state” (p. 91).

Truly a lovely story! So why should von Sudland, in addition to such loveliness, have to worry about his story’s complete lack of historical credibility and the fact that not one Croatian nobleman, nor a representative of the politically active element, was known to flee to Bosnia under the Magyar invasion in 1102 and be distinguished there, even as a third-rate political factor? In addition to this, the author attributed a special significance to the fact that Ban Borić banished the Bosnian Catholics, ascribing almost fantastic meaning to it. “The Croatian national nobility could not have remained unaware of the fact that the state Catholic Church, which they had established, unilaterally supported the Dalmatian Romans. Since the Catholic-Clerical Party in Croatia favoured the Croats, it is only natural that the Croatian People’s Party had to be of an anti-clerical and even of anti-Catholic orientation. This resulted in the fact that the first Bosnian ban who appeared and acted independently, shortly after the migration of the Croatian People’s Party to Bosnia, was of an anti-Catholic orientation” (p. 91-92).

A new problem soon ensued. In 1163, Bosnia came under Byzantine rule once again, at the time of Manuel Comnenos’ reign, and “. . . in 1180, after Manuel’s death, Bogomilism had appeared in Bosnia. The next Bosnian ban, Ban Kulin, who is present in the national traditions of Bosnia even today, was already a zealous Bogomil, while over 10,000 Bogomils were present in Bosnia at the time. What can we learn from that phenomenon? The anti-Catholic orientation of the Croats, which was first observed at the time of Ban Borić, moved a step further. The Croatian-Bosnian nobility converted to Bogomilism, it being a fundamental enemy of Catholicism, simply because it was the most suitable means for the expression of their disposition. The fact that the Slavic language was used in Bogomil churches, which they had unsuccessfully tried to introduce in their own state, certainly contributed to that. Their striving for an independent state church also had an opportunity to be realised, for Bogomilism was organised into churches in the countries. Byzantine rule in Bosnia from 1163 to 1180 certainly tried all possible methods to improve the position of Orthodoxy in Bosnia, and since the Croats were not inclined towards Byzantism and Orthodoxy, it was just an additional motivation for their conversion to the Bogomilism. It was equally anti-Catholic and anti-Orthodox, thus, conversion to Bogomilism was a barrier against both” (p. 92).

Explaining the political reasons for “the entire nation’s” conversion to Bogomilism, von Sudland ascribed primary significance to the Catholic support initially for the Roman people’s, and later of the Hungarian, political goals. “Apart from the migration of the Croatian nobility, the Bogomil Movement was the most significant factor that resulted in the creation of the independent Bosnian state” (p. 92). Since the Bogomils with their teaching advanced into the territories of Slavonia and Dalmatia as well, “. . . the Catholic-clerical tendencies increasingly appeared among the Croats from the coastal region, due to assimilation of the Romans, so they began working on the suppression of the Bosnian heresy. The consequence of this was the estrangement of the Bogomil Croats from the Catholics in the coastal region. Thus, the latter took an offensive attitude

towards their fellow brethren in Bosnia, whereas the Bosnian Croats persistently attempted to gain their independence and to politically separate themselves from the Croats in the coastal region, proclaiming the region of the Bosnian church a politically independent entity at the same time” (p. 92-93). The cruel rule of Mladen Šubić over Bosnia further broadened the differences between the mentioned opposites, and the Bosnian Bogomils killed his uncle Pavle Šubić.

However, continuing to follow his incredible historiographic and methodical approach, von Sudland states, “Although the Bosnians came into opposition with the rest of the Croats, they still preserved a sense of belonging to the same nationality. Every national movement of the Catholic Croats was always supported by the Bosnians. Whenever the Croats chose their king, the Bosnians acknowledged him as their own supreme ruler as well. This was even more significant, bearing in mind the fact that the Croats outside Bosnia never attempted to force the acknowledgement of the Croatian kings in Bosnia by the use of military force, although they were, barely, capable of doing so. The crucial thing in that matter was the traditional standpoint of Bosnia, which sprang from a Croatian origin from Bosnia and from the mentioned migration of the Croatian People’s Party” (p. 93). Von Sudland listed Bosnian Bogomilism as the reason for the persistent Bosnian resistance to Hungarian domination, which the Croats had otherwise easily come to terms with. He then concludes, “The theory about migration and Bogomilism, which I have used to interpret the Bosnian problem, explains one additional phenomenon, the one concerning the creation of the Bosnian state as an exception to the rule that we had established, according to which the South-Slavic nations are only a consequence of state creations by the South Slavs. The Bosnian nation was not a consequence of the creation of the Bosnian state, which quite logically follows from the fact that the creation of the Bosnian state was not a primordial creation of a state of some conquering tribe, but only a secondary creation of the Croatian nation, whose main aspects had already been formed. The motive for the creation of the Bosnian state was not conquest and an attempt to keep what had been conquered, but only a religious urge for self-preservation and defence. But those forces were not strong enough to abolish their historical principle of organisation and change set national characteristics” (p. 94).

#### **d) The Collapse of all Hypotheses about the Croatian Character of Bosnia**

The author did not seem to mind the paradox of his main conclusion; moreover, he regarded it as expected and justified. “The medieval Bosnians were Croats in their core and consciousness, but the national consciousness undoubtedly decreased during historical development, until it almost completely disappeared during the gigantic cataclysm of the Ottoman conquest” (p. 94). Attempting to shield himself in advance from the possible claims that his hypotheses were mere guessing, von Sudland cites several epitaphs from Bosnian tombstones containing the surname Banović as evidence in his favour, expressing pride for the chivalry and noble origin of the deceased. “Where do those sons of the banate who lay rest in Banov Dol lead us to? They led us to the Croats, for the Serbs did not have bans! In what Southern Slavic territories can we find such an indestructible race that, at the final moments of its life, prided itself on its privileges, its noble land and its chivalry? Only among the Croats! The families Šubić,

Nelipić, Zrinski, Frankopan, Berislavić, Blagaj, Kolonić, Drašković, Keglević, Baćani, etc. were the Catholic representatives of the same powerful and indestructible race, whose Bogomil descendants were laid to rest in the 13th and the 14th centuries, and whose tombstones speak to us very clearly. The ancient, pure ikavian-Croatian language, . . . in which those epitaphs were written and which vividly remind us of the dialect of the Dalmatian islands, only harmoniously adds to that picture. If there remains anyone who doubts this, let them come to the Croatian Antiquity Museum in the old Croatian royal city of Knin in Dalmatia and see the works of art from the period of that national dynasty in Croatia in the 10th and the 11th centuries. Afterwards, they may go to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Museum in Sarajevo to see the Bosnian works of art from the period between the 12th and the 14th centuries, where they would only be amazed by the sameness of the artistic elements. There can be no doubt that the creators of both kinds of artwork necessarily had to be the members of one and the same nation. Thallotzy had already established this fact. And who built all the medieval towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina? The valleys of the Bosnia and Drina Rivers are packed with old towns, similarly to the valley of the Rhine. So, who lived in those old towns? Only the members of the only blood-line nobility in the Balkans, that is, the Croats. The blood-line nobility did not exist among the Serbs or the Bulgarians, but only an official nobility, as with all the Byzantines. Because of that all, there is no doubt that the Bogomil race, which ruled in Bosnia from the 12th to the 15th centuries, was of Croatian origin, and that the entire region of the Western Balkans, where the Bogomil tombstones can be found, once used to be part of the Croatian national property” (p. 95-96).

### **e) The Overture to the Chauvinistic Rhapsody**

The extensive prattle about the scarcity of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina before the arrival of the Ottomans, and their later coming into existence from the originally Roman and subsequently Slavonised Vlachs was supplemented by von Sudland's thesis that the term Morovlachs shows that “. . . that Roman nation somewhere and at sometime mixed with some nation of a dark complexion, probably with the Gypsies, who were also nomads” (p. 108). On the other hand, “. . . their names were of Jewish origin, so some claim that they were Jews, whom they called their brothers” (p. 111). He supports his racist approach with alleged anthropological research and anthropometrical analysis in order to prove that the present-day Serbs in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia once used to be Romanized Vlachs, who came into existence by mingling with the Gypsies and the Jews, that is, that they were in any case a lower race. Von Sudland published that before the emergence of Hitler, fascism and Nazism, saying, “I used all the additional means that were at my disposal, and I found confirmation everywhere that the anthropological characteristics are in accordance with the results of our historical research; namely that the Catholics and the Muslims in Bosnia belonged to the same tribe and mainly have Nordic characteristics even today, whereas the Serbs were much different from them, and were of some other, dark type of origin” (p. 122). As a summary of his racist nonsense, Ivo Pilar, alias von Sudland, states, “My research thus far has left no room for any doubt, so I am compelled to give the following national definition of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosnia and Herzegovina are historically Croatian lands, they remain ethnically Croatian even today, as 56.53% of the population must be classified as Croatian. In the last 400 years, a



Serbian population arrived there as well, who make up 43.48%, which is of even greater significance when taking into consideration the fact that the Serbs were religiously united, whereas the Croats were divided into two religious camps, and that the Serbian national consciousness was much higher than that of the Catholic Croats and the Muslims. Nevertheless, Bosnia and Herzegovina are still Croatian lands that are rapidly being Serbianised” (p. 123). Thus, the Serbs, although in possession of an incomparably higher national consciousness, were not originally true Serbs, whereas the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Catholics and Muslims, despite their lack of express Croatian national consciousness, are still purebred Croats.

## **2. Serbian Statehood, the Main Cause of von Sudland’s *Complex***

Having declared himself a sincere and devout Catholic, von Sudland gets into a lengthy examination of the causes that led to the Christian schism, as well as the social role of the Eastern and the Western Churches. He admitted that the Serbs were in a position to renew their own state thanks to their national church. “The Serbs were the first who were able to liberate themselves and restore their state, because in their national church they had an invisible, but several-century long motivational force, which aimed at the establishment of their own state” (p. 138). Regardless of how highly subjective and tendentious it was, his analysis led him to an interesting differentiation of the social role of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox clergies; thus, the former were not strictly connected with the state where they performed their duties, whereas the latter were an organic part of the state apparatus in an Orthodox state. “In this regard, the Orthodox clergy was completely different from their Catholic counterpart. The Catholic clergy did not entirely identify itself with the interests of the state, for the Catholic Church existed independently from the state. It had its own separate goals and intentions, a clearly concentrated governmental apparatus with the Pope at its head, and it had to obey his orders even when they were in opposition to the intentions of the state. In the case that the clergy had to act in opposition to the interests of the state, it was obliged to actively support that purpose. Therefore, a significant difference could be established between the Orthodox and the Catholic clergy; namely, the Catholic clergy acted more actively, evidently and boldly. The role of the chaplain-agitator was completely unknown among the Orthodox clergy. I am also completely unfamiliar with a case when any Orthodox religious dignitary became overly involved in politics, in the same way that Strossmayer was the Croatian political leader and the head of a political party. That phenomenon was seemingly in opposition to the powerful political role that the Orthodox Church and its clergy had always played and which it plays even today. The Orthodox clergy is actively involved in politics, but its activity is invisible and is comprised of cautious and diplomatic mediation between the believers and between the state and the state apparatus, of invisible brokering and, most importantly, of the formation of the political opinion and political conviction and, in one word, of complete influence on the national thought” (p. 140).

### **a) Unconcealed Envy at the Serbian National Church**

From that point of view, von Sudland actually envied the members of the Orthodox Church, as their clergy was in the service of the nation, did not sacrifice the national

interests for Church politics and it did not instrumentalise the nation. “The Orthodox clergy governs the huge factory of political ideas and deals with their division. The speed with which political enlightenment, political ideas and thought spread among the Serbs is quite striking and this phenomenon is an example of the activity performed by the Orthodox clergy. Nothing like that could be observed in relation to the Catholics. A Catholic priest will politically enlighten his believers only on very rare occasions. Most of the time, he will not even be allowed to do so, since he is bound to obey orders from above, due to the concentrated Church organisation. In a crucial moment, a Catholic priest will act as a leader and he will use his influence or, if necessary, even live agitation in an attempt to get the nation follow his lead and thus achieve his goal. An Orthodox priest would never do that. He will point the people in the satisfactory direction, give them necessary instructions and leave them to act on their own, standing by to the side, and if needed, give further instructions for action. The majority of those familiar with the Orthodox circumstances observed the refined political sense of the Orthodox Church, namely, Benjamin von Kallay. On the one hand, this originated from the fact that the Orthodox Church traditionally inherited some sort of the superior Byzantine policy and Byzantine methods, and on the other, every Orthodox priest is much more independent and forced to primarily rely on himself, due to the lack of a strict organisation. Thus, he bears the burden of responsibility for the Church and state interests in a much higher degree than a Catholic priest does. For that reason, an Orthodox priest is bound to more vivid political thinking” (p. 140-141).

Von Sudland especially noticed that the Orthodox Church also transferred to the Orthodox state the goal of religion preservation in its pure form and its further spread. “The Greek Church has never been much involved in missionary work. It gladly left that difficult, distasteful and barely successful work to the West European dreamers. The Orthodox Church spreads its religion by the Orthodox state first conquering foreign lands, and then by spreading its religion in the newly conquered territories with the help of the entire power of the conquering state. Since the urge for expansion is deeply rooted in every religion, for non-expansion equals retreat, the religious factor acts as a constant motivation for the expansive politics in an Orthodox state. Therefore, we see that the Orthodox states are constantly restless and in need of expansion” (p. 141). The moral he reached from such reasoning was intended to warn the Austro-Hungarian political factors against the essence of the Serbian threat. “Therefore, we must clearly state: Thanks to the abundant help provided by the Church, the Orthodox state is more resilient, long-lasting, insensitive and capable of enduring much greater internal schism, without a threat to its survival. The Orthodox political thought, sense and endeavours are quite more flexible, elastic, opportune and incomparably more vivid than their counterparts in a Catholic state, for their advocate is not the state or the nobility, but the Church. If we add to that the urge for expansion motivated by religious factors, we must reach the conclusion that the Orthodox state is *ceteris paribus* more politically active, stronger and more fit for life than the Catholic state” (p. 142). One should be simply impressed by such an opinion, but it was then followed by a frontal attack on Orthodoxy. Von Sudland considered the Byzantine superiority of the state over the Church harmful for the realisation of basic Church goals. “The state monster swallowed morality together with the Church. Can a dependent church, which always serves political goals and which always bears in mind secular interests, be at the service of

morality, renunciation and modesty? Morality and politics have been quite diametrically opposite in every period of time” (p. 142).

### **b) Von Sudland’s Work According to Hitler’s Criteria**

Von Sudland ascribes extreme immorality and unscrupulousness to the Orthodox Christians. “When an Orthodox Christian is provided with a suitable opportunity to satisfy his needs, he will unscrupulously and without a thought take advantage of such an opportunity, not being kept from doing that by any moral obligation or scruple” (p. 145). Pointing out the dark sides of social life in Serbia, due to the Byzantine understanding of morality, he additionally warns us: “We can determine the terrible relativity of all that is humane here as well. However, this terrible picture has its good reverse side. The Orthodox faith produced much stronger individuals than Catholicism did. A member of the Orthodox Church does not rely on anyone; he definitely lacks that tiny, blissful amount of trust that a Catholic possesses. A Catholic acknowledges certain moral duties and expects others to acknowledge them as well, although such expectations of his are usually unfulfilled. Since a member of the Orthodox Church does not have faith in anyone, he does not expect others to have faith in him either, which makes him more diligent and active. All alone and merciless, he does not spare anyone and does not expect that from others either. He knows that he can save himself only by being strong, tough-minded, shrewd and cunning, so he strives for the development of such qualities to the very most. Since a member of the Orthodox Church does not acknowledge any moral duties, if caught in an evil act, he would not have any moral weaknesses, he would never admit his guilt; moreover, he would defend himself so resiliently, that he would have great chances to evade the rightful punishment, which could easily happen if he was to be judged by the Catholics. Since the greed for power is the driving force of all his work, he would diligently try to be in places it is possible to gain honour, respect, money and other means of power and he will try to distinguish himself with all the might of his unscrupulous character” (p. 145).

### **c) The Slavic Love of Freedom**

On the Catholic side, von Sudland observes the dreamy and trusting consideration of a German-Austrian Slav, and on the other, Orthodox, side, he observes the evil and dangerous individuality of the Serb, whose national character was infected with the Byzantine cultural characteristics. He explains the fact that three quarters of the Slavs belong to the Orthodox Church in the following way: “I regard the great majority of the Slavs as a politically less endowed race, due to the characteristically Slavic trait of paying greater attention to the emotional life than to reason, and partly due to their almost exclusive role as farmers. All historical records refer to them as peasants. When we examine their behaviour more closely and observe what they do and what they initially failed to do, we could not help but conclude that their instincts of a farmer are too strong. The Proto-Slavs were bound to their native soil and all their aspirations and strivings aimed at keeping the land they cherished in their possession. It is undeniable that the Slavs possess a great love of freedom, but their love of land is even greater. A Slav could even come to terms with foreign rule, on the condition that the land remains in his possession. This Slavic trait was the reason for the symbiosis of the Slavs with the

Ural-Altaics, the Mongols, the Huns, the Avars, the Bulgarians, the Magyars, etc., which has been so often mentioned in history. They were the nomads and the warriors, whereas the Slavs were farmers; this division of labour was repeatedly the foundation stone of the state foundations that lasted so long. The Slavs were conquerors only when there was a lack of available land; they were never warriors or conquerors for the mere urge for conquest. Once they took the land into their possession, the expansion was over. It is clear that the characteristics of a warrior and of a farmer are mutually exclusive. It could not be said that the Slavs are bad warriors, but a genuine Slav does not live off war, but off agriculture, and for that reason agricultural urges prevail among them. The entire political organisation of the Slavs was done in accordance with such urges. The Slavs were organised only in small parishes, whose political power was enough to shield them from intrusions on their property” (p. 148-149).

In an attempt to prove that the majority of the Slavs was a lower race in comparison to the Aryan, primarily German nations, von Sudland continued with the previous elaboration of his basic thesis and claimed that “. . . the peasant intellect of the Slavs provided them with only a narrow overview of their immediate homeland. Greater and broader governmental structures meant a threat of greater conflicts and imposed burdens that, after all, were the peasants’ responsibility, which they did not like at all. Thus, the prevailing agricultural urge should be regarded as the crucial factor that determined the political division of the Slavs and their dislike of the greater governmental structures. However, between the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Slavic states sprang into existence everywhere. All those states mainly had the same flaw – the unilateral tendencies of their founders. The Slavic tendency to live in communal families was another obstacle that stood in their way, as it prevented the upbringing of powerful individuals and the establishment of the individual hereditary right. Those were the circumstances under which the Slavic states developed, if they could continue their existence at all, for some internal dissatisfaction appeared within their boundaries, which was most evident from the invitation to the princes of Varingia, mentioned by Nestor the Chronicler: ‘Our land is great and fertile, but it lacks order and justice; come, take possession, and govern us.’ Such circumstances were most favourable for the great enchantress, the Orthodox Church, which itself originated exactly from the political dissatisfaction of one gifted nation. Wasn’t its task to compensate the Greek nation for the lack of natural conditions necessary for the development of its power and preservation of its position? Similar circumstances existed among the Slavs as well. The Slavs did not consider themselves competent for their political task, they felt that they were weak and in need of help. The Orthodox faith spoke then: ‘Embrace me and I would provide you with rule over the entire world. You do not have to be strong or soldiers either, educated or honest; I will give you secular power nonetheless, if only you would come to me and follow my lead’. The majority of the Slavs accepted such an offer indeed. They sold their Aryan-Slavic soul in exchange for political power” (p. 149).

#### **d) The Polish and the Croats as Aryan Subtypes**

According to him, only two Slavic nations, the Croats and the Polish, preserved the main characteristics of the Aryan race and the strong Nordic character. “I would prove that it happened like so: which were the two Slavic nations that scorned the Orthodox faith, although they came into more direct and much closer contact with it than the

Russians? Those were the two most distinctly Slavic noble states – the Polish and the Croatian noble states. Both states have remained unequivocally Catholic to this day, solely for the sake of opposition to the Orthodox faith. Why? Because their inborn aristocratic instincts, characteristic of their much purer race, made them feel strong enough to distinguish themselves from the peasants and from the ruling noble class that ruled independently. Moreover, as they were of Aryan-Slavic blood, they felt extreme repulsion towards the Orthodox faith, equal to the repulsion the Goths once felt and who had to be destroyed by the Byzantine Empire before they were able to establish their own state and church. Now we can understand why the Serbs embraced the Orthodox faith, whereas the Croats accepted Catholicism. The Serbs were gifted, but a poor nation of the highlanders, who wanted to liberate themselves from the pressure they were put under by the Croats, Bulgarians and the Byzantines. They needed power to achieve that, so, in order to become powerful, they embraced the Orthodox faith, which promised them that power. The aristocratic instincts of the Croatian noble race despised that religion, which was completely foreign to them, so they remained devoted to Catholicism. When they did not succeed in distinguishing themselves with the help of Catholicism, they converted to Bogomilism; and when that did not help them either, they converted to Islam, the religion with the strongest lust for power. The reasoning of the Serbs was sound. The Orthodox faith gave them power, temporal at least. They seized greater territories from the Bulgarians and the Croats with the help of their better political and religious organisation. They seized present-day Western Serbia and former Duklja (Doclea) from the Croats, while the main driving force that caused the current war was the fanatical striving of the Serbs to finally seize Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Croats as well” (p. 149-150).

### **e) The Orthodox Faith and Pan-Slavism, Dangerous for the Catholics**

According to von Sudland, the characteristic Orthodox hatred towards all non-believers, and especially towards the Catholics, was of Byzantine origin. The members of the Orthodox clergy were not the ones who primarily expressed that animosity: they were primarily the state and the laymen. “As a member of the Orthodox Church, an Orthodox layman hates every heterodox person, for this was very important for the Orthodox faith. He could not stand living in the same place with heterodox people; thus, the members of the Orthodox Church separated themselves from members of other religions and established their own city quarter (the Serbian quarters in Bosnia). Woe be to any heterodox person who happened to be in the Orthodox quarter! He would be banished from there with the most selective means of human spite. In that period, many Catholics disappeared without a trace in some parts of the Balkans, namely, in northern and north-western Bosnia, then in northern Serbia, that is in Mačva, where many Catholics (the remnants of the former Croats) used to live two or three centuries before. Furthermore, the sudden rapid disappearance of the Muslims from the Orthodox Balkan territories also took place at that time. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Austrian military authorities allowed the Orthodox elements to settle in Croatia and Slavonia. In 1632, Emperor Ferdinand granted them the entire land between the Sava and the Drava Rivers, so they initiated the banishment of the Catholics from their territories and forced many of them to convert to the Orthodox faith. In 1702, Danilo Petrović, the Vladika of

Montenegro, gave an order to all his subjects that all heterodox people had to either convert to the Orthodox faith or emigrate. Those who did not obey the order were attacked and killed. Such was the end of the Islamised Bogomils of the former Red Croatia” (p. 151). He determined that the causes of this hatred were to be found in the ancient Greek-Roman relations, in the animosity between the religious centres of Constantinople and Rome, in the consequences of the Crusades, etc. “The Orthodox faith preserved that hatred and implanted it deeply in the souls of its believers, so it could be used as a weapon in the struggle for power against the heterodox people when the time was right. The Orthodox faith could not conceal its primordial nature here either, so it stored up everything that it came across, saw or experienced during its thousand-year existence for its subsequent use in attempts to increase its power as much as possible” (p. 154).

Von Sudland hinted that Catholicism was the next to bear the brunt of the Orthodox faith, immediately after Islam and the Ottoman Empire, which were the archenemies of the Orthodox faith. “The waves of the Orthodox faith broke through all the cracks peacefully, invisibly and silently. Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Mačva was mainly a Catholic territory, whereas no Catholics live there today. Until 1463, barely a few members of the Orthodox Church lived in Bosnia; perhaps some of them lived in Herzegovina. Today, the members of the Orthodox Church comprise 43% of the entire population in Bosnia. Until 1500, the Orthodox element was not present at all in Croatia and Slavonia, except some traces in Srem. Today they comprise 24% of the entire population. The situation is the same in Dalmatia. Around 1230, St. Sava established an Orthodox bishopric, but the inhabitants of Dubrovnik forced it to move to Trebinje, and with it the Orthodox faith in Dalmatia in general. Nevertheless, in Dalmatia today there are still 16% Orthodox people. . . However, the increase of the Orthodox faith was not only numerical, but also political. The Orthodox element has become the leading one in Croatia and Slavonia in recent years. They gained additional political and economical power in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the time of the annexation, the Croats suppressed them a bit, but they have made progress in recent years” (p. 155). The lament for the suppression of the Catholic element in Bosnia and Herzegovina turned into the disastrous warning to Vienna and the whole Catholic world, expressing, at the same time, the disappointment at the insufficient attention paid to the danger of the Orthodox faith. “The world does not worry its head over the fact that both a powerful Orthodox state and a powerful Orthodox individual are morally and culturally worthless to the same extent and beyond improvement, so that they will permanently remain a horrible thing! The world does not care much for morality; it cares for culture to some extent, if it is cheap, but, above all, it cares for power. There lies the basis of the present and the future achievements of the Orthodox faith. All who prefer power to morality are overwhelmed by and somehow magically drawn to the dazzling phantom of a thousand-year-long Byzantine striving for power. All those whose lust for power remained unsatisfied in this world; they are as pliable as wax in the hands of a skilful sculptor at the banks of the Bosphorus and its successors, for they hoped they would finally gain a tiny bit of power with its help. The Byzantine Empire was well aware of that, so it took advantage of the circumstances, states and people both skilfully and inconsiderately. There lay one of the greatest dangers to humankind and especially to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This danger was even greater, as nobody was really familiar with its actual significance and greatness” (p. 156).

According to this Croatian ideologist, the problem of the South Slavs was an integral part of the confrontation zone, which spread “. . . from the southern cape of Dalmatia all the way to the Baltic Sea” (p. 156-157). Moreover, “. . . there was no doubt that the clashes at the huge mentioned front line were racial, national, political, social and economic clashes at the same time. Nevertheless, the religious question remained a psychological, and thus, the strongest and most direct motive” (p. 157). In addition to the Orthodox faith, pan-Slavism emerged as the second strongest and equally dangerous factor. “It sprang from an unreal and naïve movement; however, supported by the spirit of the Catholic Slavs, through ethical strivings, culture improvement and mutual generous aid, it became a movement that could even win over a man full of zealous idealism, such as Strossmayer. In the hands of the Russians, it also became a cruel instrument for gaining power, and its basic form attempted to take advantage of that enthusiastic and unclear political striving, which originated from an internal need. Moreover, it attempted to take advantage of the Catholic Slavs as the front-line troops in the Russian-Orthodox efforts for expansion over Central Europe” (p. 157-158). Von Sudland concluded from his own personal experience that the Catholic Slavs did not even think about the possibility of endangering the countries where they lived, by their pan-Slavic fervour. “The Catholic Slavs’ definition of ‘Slavic reciprocity’ is entirely different from the Orthodox Slavs’ definition of the same notion. On the other hand, it is important to point out that a member of the Orthodox Church can never regard a Catholic as an equal partner. However, the Monarchy judged that issue, not completely incorrectly, in terms of its final dangerous point in Russia. A clear distinction between those two viewpoints was missing; thus, the awful Russian aspiration for power bears the pan-Slavic name even today, although it did not deserve that honourable name at all” (p. 158).

#### **f) The Serbian Orthodox Church, the Biggest Problem for Catholicism**

Apart from the Orthodox faith and pan-Slavism as the instruments of the Russian effort to restore Byzantium under its imperial crown, von Sudland considered “the Greater Serbian nationalistic idea to be the core of the South Slavic problem” (p. 162). This core “. . . involved the intention of Serbdom to defeat the Bulgarians and the Croats, to become the leading force in the Balkans and to subsequently destroy and assimilate the Croats and the Bulgarians, which would result in the conquest and the Serbianisation of the entire Slavic Balkans” (p. 162). He accused the Serbs of the Serbianisation of a large number of the Balkan Romans and particularly insisted on the claim that the Vlachian, that is, Romanic citizenry had inhabited Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time of Ottoman rule, which were later systematically Serbianised by the Serbian Orthodox Church. “Thus, it happened that the Church authority of the Serbian Orthodox Church remained permanently in the hands of the Serbs and the Church further developed all its national characteristics as much as possible. The overly exaggerated national consciousness of the Orthodox Church, the emphasis on the national tradition and the national language, as well as on the folk songs, customs and dances, were the precise instruments of Serbianisation. If we take into consideration the additional fact of the Slavic language being used at Church, which was the only thing the uncultured Balkan Romans found useful, it is easy to understand

that they could not resist such an influence, and had to be Serbianised” (p. 170). Von Sudland admitted that the Croats had Croatianised some Romans as well. “Only those Vlachs who lived directly on the property of their Catholic masters were converted to Catholicism. Those who inhabited the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained members of the Orthodox Church, unless they accepted Bogomilism. That happened because the Orthodox faith was traditionally preserved among them and because the Orthodox Vlachs repeatedly came there in large numbers, due to the territorial connection with Serbia. If we completely leave out the autochthonous Vlachs, we must reach the conclusion that only a small portion of those Vlachs who, together with the Turks, subsequently migrated into the Croatian territories embraced Catholicism, whereas the major, Orthodox, portion of them went to the Serbs. Thus, the Vlachs could become the nucleus of the Orthodox population in Bosnia. Therefore, the number of Serbs was increased by the Orthodox Vlachs who lived in the Croatian territories, that is, who originated from those territories. The consequence of this was that the Serbs assimilated much of the Vlachian blood, and since those Vlachs were dark-complexioned, similar to the Romans, there were more dark-complexioned people among the Serbs than among the Croats” (p. 170).

The assimilation of the Vlachs really did take place in the Serbian territories, but it was completed much before the immigration of the Serbs into Croatia and Slavonia. Moreover, all those Orthodox Christians who immigrated then spoke exclusively Serbian and had a Vlachian social status, which meant that they were not serfs but freemen: mainly cattlemen, bound to military service. What von Sudland emphasised here once again was the extremely important role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the preservation of the national cohesion and collective national consciousness, as well as in the facilitation of the assimilation process of the indigenous Balkan inhabitants. “I would say that Serbdom, for the salvation of its nationality and the multiple increase of its population by the assimilation of the Vlachs, mainly thanks, if not exclusively, its national church. That historical development gave rise to the phenomenon of regarding every member of the Serbian Orthodox Church as being of Serbian nationality as well. This fact is of great importance, and even greater, if we take into consideration the fact that such a practice has been common in the entire South for centuries” (p. 170). The restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 played a special role in all of this, and von Sudland pointed out that it was “. . . a theocratic sovereign Serbian state, which comprised Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Slavonia and a great part of Croatia and Hungary, in addition to the Serbian territories,” and, as he further states, “whose rule was not much different from the complete governmental authority of the state” (p. 176). The Patriarchate of Peć retained such an organisational structure even after the emigration of the patriarch to the Austrian territories, and this Croatian nationalist ideologist demonstrated how much the Croatian-Slavonian Parliament unsuccessfully tried to forbid the Orthodox faith in the territories under its jurisdiction. He repeatedly presents the Serbs as a nomadic nation, devoid of any moral values and obsessed with a lust for constant pillage and plunder. “Although the pillaging urges were increasingly suppressed among the individuals, and though their primitive forms of robbery and theft became rare; due to the power-hungry politics of the Serbian state, their increasingly frequent occurrence became, nevertheless, a mass phenomenon. The Serbian strivings were too often motivated by the aspiration towards the appropriation of somebody else’s property wherever they appeared as a political mass. The Croats in particular could say a



word or two about that. All that the Croats have – the Croatian territories, the Croatian language, the Croatian literature – it was all Serbian. The Croats did not create anything throughout their history; the Serbs created everything” (p. 186).

Having taken into consideration the fact that the present-day Serbs inherited the pillaging character of the Balkan shepherd-nomads, “. . . if we were to explain the character of the Serbian nation with the help of the historical development of its national components, we must bear in mind that the Balkan Romans, as the allies of the Turks, squandered all three South Slavic states: Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia. Moreover, we must not forget the period when the Balkan Romans were an important part of the irregular Ottoman army as the *akinci*, *bashi-bazouks*, *martoloz* and *harami*. That was the time of the most severe selection; all those weaker, more gentle and less capable elements were exterminated and only those who possessed the strongest destructive, asocial and criminal instincts remained. This fact could be used as an explanation for the rare destructive power, the destructive talent and hostile attitude of this element towards the state. Whoever knew the mentality of the Serbs, especially those in Bosnia, their unbelievably hostile behaviour, their denial of every, even the slightest merit of the Monarchy; and whoever read the works of Mikašinović, Vasilj Grđić and Dr. Stojadinović, would be able to explain such a mentality with the help of the mentioned historical period” (p. 187). The Serbian nomadic mentality was highly inclined towards deceit, revolutions and conspiracies. “How many coups d' état, killings of the kings and most unbelievable turns of events there were among the Serbs. . . . Wherever some cultural centre existed or there was some great opportunity for making a profit or gaining property, the nomads were the first to arrive there; connected by religious bonds and an unusual sense of solidarity, they would form a tie and get the cream of the crop long before the others (mostly the Croats) realised what was happening and pulled themselves together. . . . We are to pay attention to that outstanding ability of the nomad element to use resilience and flexibility for taking advantage of every opportunity” (p. 187). Moreover, the Serbs are traditionally the best tradesmen of all the Slavic nations, and von Sudland regards this Serbian characteristic as a product of their nomadic spirit, together with their talent for calculated and useful political activity, for acting and pretending, etc.

All in all, “. . . the dangerous characteristics of the tradition and aspirations of the Serbian-Byzantine Church found its suitable supplement in the penetration of the Balkan-Romanic nomadic blood into the Serbian nation. Therefore, the inborn racial instincts of the Balkan Romans for appropriation, their asocial inclinations and mania for destruction and squander, made the Serbs the primary danger for the neighbouring nations and states” (p. 189). Von Sudland particularly pointed out how much it was important to him to prove that “. . . the lust for power, megalomania and urge for expansion were highly developed among the Serbian nation. Those urges were not constantly evident in such an obvious and awkward way, but they were the guiding thought of the Serbs and were evident in their every act, aspiration and thought. . . . Those already described urges had their root in the historical and religious upbringing of the Serbs and in their racial inclinations” (p. 197). At the same time, he came down on Dobrovsky, Šafarik, Karadžić and many other Slavic linguists as well, claiming that they had neglected the Croats and reduced them to the only thing the Croats really were: chakavians, adding to them the subsequently Croatinised kajkavians. He particularly reproached Vuk Karadžić for his establishment of the ideological foundation of Greater

Serbian imperialism. “The core of the South Slavic problem was in the development of Serbdom into a powerful imperialistic, religious and national-political movement, which strove for the subjection and assimilation of the remaining South Slavic nations and the establishment of its own dominance and power on the ruins of the neighbouring states. That movement was not initiated by the Karadorđević royal family, as it was often wrongly believed: it was the natural expression of the Byzantine and Serbian Orthodox thought concerning church and state. The history and the development of this movement are several centuries old, and they changed several forms throughout its development. Around 1830, it finally crystallised into its present-day national-political form in Southern Hungary, whereas from 1860 onwards, it crystallised into its governmental and political form in the new Serbian state” (p. 215).

Von Sudland regarded the Great Serbian ideology as the most faithful contemporary reincarnation of the Byzantine spirit that gave the extraordinary suggestive power to this movement, which was exerted not only on its own believers, but also on the heterodox people, only to a greater extent. “That was such a refined composition of deceit and consummate lies, put into practice for the sake of one’s own personal increase in power, which made the opponent confused to the point – when they were totally lost and resigned – of subjecting themselves to the rule of the perfidious, power-hungry leader. As a personal increase in power was an important characteristic, goal and life-long striving of every Byzantine, the mentioned deceit and consummate lies grew into a responsibility, as they were already used for such purposes. An additional consequence of this was the inclination of every Byzantine to believe in his own lies with all the ardour of his religious aspirations. This ardour, this great intensity of belief in one’s own fabrications and tricks, was the source of suggestive power – for every powerful aspiration had a suggestive effect on others, and was transmitted to them (p. 289). He lamented that the whole world, historical science in particular, succumbed to the suggestive power of the Byzantine spirit and the “Serbian lust for power”, so that the eminent intellectuals ascribed much greater significance and ethnic characteristics to the Serbs, which they did not deserve. “Thus, the Serbs, initially the smallest nation among the South Slavs, became ‘the great Slavic branch’, with the help of their ‘national, religious and pious deceit’ and Slavic and German scholars. Therefore, the Russian-Serbian forgery of history completely fulfilled its aim of presenting the Serbs as mighty as possible and the Croats as insignificant as possible” (p. 291). The entire study of the Slavic languages until that point was the object of his criticism, together with great portion of the German historiography. He was terribly frustrated by the fact that “. . . the official standpoint of contemporary science was that the Serbs were the main integral part of the South Slavic citizenry of the Monarchy, whereas the Croats were only a small, insignificant nation with no right to its own independent life. Such an insight would now have to be paid with an inexpressibly great number of victims in a sea of blood, whereas it could have been gained by one or two objective and conscientious scientific acts” (p. 292).

### **g) The Habsburg Monarchy, a Guarantee of the Croatian Future**

The Austrians, the Magyars and the Croats repeatedly fell victims to the Serbian intrigues, lies and deceit, while their constant scheming began to undermine the very foundations of the Monarchy, which von Sudland regarded as the embodiment of all his

hopes and the perspective of the Croatian future. “The Serbian issue was a bitter remnant of the glorious battles against the Ottoman invasion. The Monarchy would suffer from that for much longer than it was usually thought. We came into that unpleasant situation due to the false ambitions we had been enchanted with in 1538. According to the Pope’s conception, which led to the foundation of the Holy League, the members of the Habsburg dynasty were supposed to become both Roman and Greek emperors. The papal policy in regard to the union, which resulted in failure, was, in other words, left to the Habsburgs to take care of its implementation. Thus, they have been trying to accomplish a Sisyphean task in gaining the favour of the Balkan Byzantines for 400 years. Immense values were included and sacrificed for the accomplishment of that Denyen task, all in vain. Nobody understood the fact that, naturally, Catholic Austria could not gain the favour of the members of the Greek Eastern Church. However, the cunning Byzantines discovered the fault in our ambition with their unmistakable instincts. So they used every opportunity to whisper to us: you have not indulged us enough yet – make even a greater sacrifice for our sake and we will be yours. Whoever is familiar with the matter could conclude from the very titles of the books that it was their duty to support such a thought. Nevertheless, the position of the Serbs was especially favourable. They arrived to the Empire to serve, and they received benefits for that. They gained a privileged position in the state. . . They were always extremely useful; they could always turn the truth into a lie, a lie into the truth, a big thing into a small one and vice versa, for they inherited the traditional political and diplomatic supremacy of the Byzantine Empire. They were used as political weapons for that reason. In 1848, they served the dynasty as an instrument against the Magyars, and from 1878 onwards, they served the Magyars as an instrument against the Croats. However, it tends to be forgotten that everyone who has used Serbian help has been ruined. The old Byzantium used them in its fight against the Bulgarians and the Croats; however, in 1346, Dušan the Mighty tried to conquer Byzantium itself. The Turks used the Serbs from 1557 to 1689, and the Serbs were precisely the ones who, from 1804 to 1912, inflicted the mortal wound to the Turkish rule in Europe. It should not be forgotten that, if we would have to pay the price for the Byzantine supremacy from 1690 to 1914 in this World War, that would only be a legal consequence” (p. 298).

Von Sudland considered the cause of the Austro-Hungarian conflict with the Serbs to be “the natural development of the Serbian national and religious conquering thought”. He further claimed that from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, actually from 1860, “. . . that conflict became irreparable; for, before the foundation of the new Serbian state, perhaps there could have been room for discussion whether Greek-Eastern Serbia could exist within Catholic Austria. Based on my understanding of the relations between Catholicism and the Greek Eastern Orthodox faith, between the church and the state in the Greek Eastern Orthodox faith and the nature and tendency of the Byzantine thought on the church and the state, I consider that to be completely out of the question” (p. 299). While the Croats demonstrated that they could not accustom themselves to the various developmental phases of the Austrian-Hungarian relations, even provoking irritability and revulsion of both dominant state factors by their laments; the Serbs, on the other hand, proved themselves to be incomparably more cunning and patient. “The Serbs mainly used their refined methods; they could skilfully conceal the traces of their actual intentions and ascribe them to somebody else, so that the public increasingly favoured the Serbs and not the Croats” (p. 299). When the ruling circles realised the

extent of the Serbian danger, and when some actions were undertaken to suppress it, for example, by the High Treason Trial in Zagreb and the Friedjung Trial in Vienna, it was too late. The authorities devastatingly lost the litigations. "Instead of the suppression of the Serbians' scheming, the effect was quite the opposite. The Serbs considered themselves the winners, they realised that nothing could be done against them and they become increasingly insolent. I could not describe the shame I felt as an individual for the disgraceful failure of our governmental thought; I was even more ashamed, because I already knew then that the standpoint of our state authorities was justified in both litigations and because the factors that led to those failures were already known" (p. 300).

Von Sudland uses this opportunity to point out all the possible harmful consequences of the wrong politics which Vienna and Budapest led towards the Serbs, failing to recognise what real danger was hidden in that political factor imbued with the Byzantine spirit. "The High Treason Trial in Zagreb was organised to help the endangered state by bringing to justice all those who openly spoke and acted in favour of Serbian rule in Croatia, and expressed their favour of the governmental and legal change of the present governmental and legal status. However, the fact that the trial was going to be held in Croatia was completely neglected, as well as the fact that Croatia was a state governed by a carrot-and-stick approach, that is, by violence, bribery, against the will of the people; and a country where justice was too often misused for political purposes and was just an instrument in the hands of the ruler. It was also forgotten that a weapon was now to be used against those who had been the best servants of that structure for twenty years, and who already used that weapon against their enemies, therefore, they precisely knew all its shortcomings. . . Baron Rauch had the correct intention of summoning the Croats, which were threatened by the Serbian conquering thought to the same extent as the state, to defend the state, together with the so-called Croatian Pure Party of Rights of Ante Starčević, which promoted the anti-Serbian standpoint and theories concerning the origin of Serbdom. In my opinion, those theories were correct in their essence, but they were unilaterally presented and tendentiously used. Baron Rauch also overlooked the fact that Starčević's theories had not been officially and scientifically proven. The proponents of the party were never active in the scientific field of history; nevertheless, if they had been active they would not discover much, for Khuen would never allow those he was to rule against to scientifically undermine the ones he ruled with. On the other hand, the Serbs had the official science at their side, which stated that the Serbs were all those who spoke shtokavian" (p. 300-301).

Specific mistakes were also pointed out here, such as the accusation of too many people, the constant drunkenness of the Head of the Bench during the trial (which was allegedly financed by the defence attorneys of the accused) and the dragging out of the lawsuit. "A newspaper in Croatia run by the Serbs propagated from the start that the accused Serbs should be cleared of all charges, attempting to bring their guilt into question. Furthermore, it accepted every unfavourable occurrence and misused it maliciously, which even further raised doubts. However, the Annexation Crisis had already ended and it was thought that the Serbian danger was gone. The Serbs used their connections, which they had had in Pecs since the rule of Khuen, and again revealed their feelings to the Magyars, in an attempt to gain rule over the coalition, since they could not destroy it. In the end, the Friedjung Process in Vienna failed as well and

everyone was tired of those political litigations” (p. 301). Von Sudland ended his laments over the inappropriate running of the case and final failure of both those anti-Serbian trials with the following moral: “However, the truth was that Serbia, that tiny, power-hungry neighbour, had systematically attacked and harassed the Monarchy in its grand mania, whereas the Monarchy had only wanted to defend itself from the invisible scheming that could not be stopped. It was suggested to the whole world that the truth was quite the opposite: Austria wanted to conquer Serbia and concealed that act by all possible malicious tricks. The South Slavic politics, which had been wrongly led for centuries, took revenge on the Monarchy severely. All the mud and the dregs that collected in the South, partly due to the tolerated and partly due to the accidentally created corruption, initiated by the wrong politics, came to the surface and splashed over the shiny shield of the ancient Monarchy. The Monarchy headed towards the World War, marked by undeserved malice, conquering tendencies and fundamental hostility towards the small nations” (p. 304).

Thus, an attitude was formed that Serbia was the main culprit for the World War, that is, the Byzantine spirit, whose big branch was Russia, Serbia being its small branch. “My deepest belief is that the militant Byzantine thought concerning church and state did not only foolishly caused this war, but it also gave the war its characteristics and its thought-equipment. I do not want to diminish the role of England, but it only gladly joined, as it was not so power-hungry and unscrupulous, bringing France along, which was pervaded by the thought of revenge. As the financially, spiritually and individually most powerful force, England, took over the leadership of the war; it became the promoter of the war and did not hesitate to openly state what it thought, whereas the Byzantine Empire, skilful at hiding its foundations, had been more silent and careful” (p. 305). According to Sudland’s opinion, the real motivation for the war came from the East, despite that superficial pretence, and the East was, at the same time, most interested in its outcome. “For Russia, it was a matter of the final takeover of the Byzantine inheritance, the execution of the final will of Peter the Great. Only by the possession of Byzantium, the New Rome, does Russia become the sole heir to the Byzantine religious and governmental ideas, the supreme head of Anatolian Christianity and the centre of the world. Only with Constantinople in its possession does Russia reach the fulfilment of the Roman idea of the world state, which the Medieval Byzantine Empire and the entire politics of the Orthodox Church strove to achieve. That inheritance was jeopardised after the Balkan Wars, for the Balkan Wars had a consequence that Russia did not expect; namely, the tiny Balkan states, in accordance with the internal laws on the core of Byzantianism, strove, each for itself, to get a hold on Constantinople. Bulgaria had to suffer for being closest to the fulfilment of that goal. As far as Serbia was concerned, it was about the fulfilment of the idea of the Patriarchate of Peć. After the Annexation Campaign, the prevailing thought in Austria was that the Bosnian issue was resolved. What great naivety! Nobody knew that a religious idea was involved, apart from the national one, and that the Church never gave its former property up” (p. 305-306).

The role of Serbia in the materialisation of the Byzantine conquering thought should not be neglected on account of its territorial dimensions at that moment. “The fact that Serbia was small should not mislead us. The most poisonous snakes are usually the smallest ones. I had a reason for striving to demonstrate how dangerous the present-day Serbdom was due to its ideas and racial make-up, and for trying to prove that its

proneness to conspiracy, revolutions and coups d'etat was in its blood. This proneness was the motivation for the attempts to initiate the World War, it was only transferred to the field of international politics" (p. 306). The basic goal of all Serbian strivings primarily was Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Austro-Hungarian annexation made the realisation of this goal in a peaceful way completely impossible. "Serbia saw the only hope that it would ever have Bosnia and Herzegovina in its possession in a fight to the death, for a Byzantine believer would rather die than give up the conquest and rule over a heterodox people. The Serbs remained faithful to their words and strove towards the initiation of a World War, so that they could create a new Switzerland out of Austria, having taken into consideration its size and importance. The tendency towards the erection of nomadic shacks on sites where, previously to their extinction, old noble castles stood, was traditionally embedded in their nomadic blood!" (p. 308). The general mobilisation of the Serbian nation, of all its individuals, demonstrated the greatness of the influence that the Byzantine spirit had on the masses inspired by it. "They all exhibited equal fanaticism and unscrupulousness in their ability to win others over to a zealous belief in their cause. . . The hatred of Austria and Germany was the true Byzantine hatred of the heterodox people, intensified by the primordial anti-German (anti-Aryan) spirit of the Byzantine Empire, which strove for the destruction of the entire Aryan being. The foundation of that hatred lay in the evidence for the cruelty of those two states, and Spalajković and Seton-Watson were those responsible for the literary explanation and public disclosure of the mentioned cruelties. . . The Byzantine Empire initiated the break-out of the fight, left its mark on it and applied its old skill of twisting the facts and suggestion against the Central Powers: the Central Powers, which had fought a fierce battle for survival, mercilessly attacked the murderers as well, who had set the world on fire to satisfy their cruel lust for conquest and rule. And for that severe crime, a death sentence was passed on the Austro-Hungarian Empire" (p. 309).

### **3. The Racial and Other Unscientific Arguments Against the Serbian Nation**

Von Sudland dedicated a special chapter of his book to the strivings for the accomplishment of a Serbo-Croatian unity and to the arguments stating why such a unity was impossible. The arguments covered a broad area, starting from the racial and national to the cultural and religious areas, which were all based on the different political and governmental-legal histories. "The Serbs, the biggest South Slavic nation today, were once the smallest of all the Balkan Slavic tribes with a certain future to look forward to. A group of Serbs, which was otherwise not big, left one of its parts at the Salonika district, where it perished like many other Slavs in the Balkans. Only one part of the Serbs arrived to the land that was later named Raša. That was the only original Serbian settlement. . . All those who were not part of this settlement were not Serbs, just as the present-day Croats and Bulgarians are not, although Greater Serbs claimed, wherever they could, that the Croats and the Bulgarians were 'actually Serbs as well.' That was the Byzantine way of thinking and observation, which did not pay attention to what was really there, but only to whatever could contribute to the increase of their personal power. . . The resilient nation of the Serbian highlanders was in a much more difficult position, for it existed between three opponents – the Byzantine Empire in the south, the Bulgarians in the east and the Croats (who were initially a much bigger tribe,

as Dümmler proved it quite correctly) in the north and the west. Historical sources could undoubtedly prove that Raša was temporarily in Croatian possession as well. However, the rule of the Croatian nobility was harsh, and the Bulgarian military government was even worse. The Serbs chose to take the Byzantine side and to serve it. The middle-class Serbian peasant-highlanders, full of life and stamina, soon became the best offensive of the Byzantine Empire against the Bulgarians and the Croats. For that reason, the Byzantines started very early to support the Serbs in their task to be the holders of the religious, governmental and political Byzantine influence. Thus, the Serbs crushed the power of the Croatian noblemen soon and, with Byzantine help, conquered Zeta and Duklja (Doclea), which was once called Red Croatia. Those regions initially had a mixed population, which was not completely Serbianised until the end of the century, under the influence of ‘the irresistible assimilation power’, as Miklošić has already established” (p. 314-315). He particularly points out that the Serbs “. . . were always used as an instrument for offensives, thus, they were always attempting to appropriate as much as possible from both the attackers and those who defended themselves, so that they could be the ones to benefit the most from the conflict” (p. 315).

### **a) The Lack of a National Conscience as a Croatian Advantage**

But what could be done with the Croats when they did not even have a national consciousness? Von Sudland openly admits that “. . . a national consciousness did not exist in Slavonia until 1848; it did not exist in Dalmatia until 1861, whereas the Bosnian Catholics did not possess a national consciousness in general until 1895. Even today, the national consciousness of those last mentioned is not developed to the same extent as it is in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. The nationalisation of the Bosnian Muslims encountered special difficulties” (p. 313). Thus, it follows that only those who for centuries did not have any national consciousness accepted to become Croats. And then, the national consciousness rushed to them like a torrent. Von Sudland was full of praise for the old Croats, whose traces are very difficult to find today. “They were initially a much greater nation, which ruled from their national centre in the north-western part of the Balkans to Skadarsko Lake and the Serbian Morava River, and they ruled over the indigenous people there as a ruling caste, as a blood-line aristocracy. However, geographical disunity contributed to the establishment of local noble authorities. The centre of the state soon developed in the territory of present-day northern Dalmatia and the surrounding areas, as it was the region with the highest degree of culture. Despite their great military power and military virtues, the Croats were never the attackers; their military actions were always limited to defence only. They were united into a bigger state not for the sake of conquest, but for defence. Tomislav, the one who defeated the Magyars and the Bulgarians, accomplished that. The Croats were never the attackers. The old chronicles exclusively proved, that and history also proved that the Croats never pursued conquest. This made their defence even more resilient. Once they occupied a certain position, they would resolutely defend it as long as they were able” (p. 315).

An even more superficial comparison of the Serbs and the Croats revealed that “. . . those two nations were completely opposite in character. That opposition originated from two entirely different historical developments, with very little in common, considering their territorial closeness. Those two developments were the product of accepted racial tendencies they had brought with them, the social organisation of both

nations, their geographical positions and the external influences conditioned by that; and they were especially the product of the different religious influences to which the two nations had succumbed. The Serbian character was formed thanks to the Orthodox faith, which actually represented only the national consciousness, which was greatly increased and deepened by the religious influence, as the Serbs were able to establish a national church. As far as the ethnical factor was concerned, the Balkan Romanic nomadic element, the element of the dark Latin people (*Latini Nigri*), was more dominant among the Serbs than the Slavic one. This dark element was evident in 64% of dark-complexioned Serbs, both in their faces, which were similar to birds of prey, and in their dark, piercing eyes. However, when someone lives among the South Slavs for more than ten centuries, trying to understand the religious factor in the social and political lives of those nations by thorough religious and political research, they must then be amazed at what a profound effect the religions has had on the very core of those nations. One could almost establish that the religions gave those nations their 'face', their physiognomy. The face of the Serbs was the face of the Orthodox faith, whereas the face of the Croats was the face of Catholicism, Islam and Bogomilism. Therefore, it could be rightfully claimed that the Orthodox faith created the present-day Serbs. As they all were members of the same religion, they were internally united as not many nations were, and that was their advantage over the Croats, who were internally very disunited and ruined, lagging behind the Serbs, due to their division into the Catholic, the Bogomil and later the Islamic parts of the nation. Since the Orthodox faith also represented the closed Eastern cultural system, other cultures, such as the Italian culture in Dalmatia and the German one in Croatia and Slavonia, could not have such great a influence on the Serbs as on the Croats, who lived with them there. Most of the things that the Serbs prided themselves on as being their national characteristics are mainly the educational consequence of their national church. The Serbs had to thank their religion for their immensely developed national sentiment, for their individualism that was superior to that of the Catholic Croats, for their 'irresistible power of assimilation', for their superior cunning, an inborn political talent and their invincible aspiration for power and rule, which marked their entire history" (p. 316-317).

### **b) The Positive Catholic Characteristics According to von Sudland**

Von Sudland was even ready to testify that the Serbs had come into existence as the materialisation of the Eastern Orthodox Church's urge for constant expansion. "The Croats have to thank their religious history for their division into two parts, which they have not overcome in their political and national consciousness even today. The Croats had to thank Catholicism for their conservatism, their diminished national consciousness, their increased susceptibility to foreign cultures, for their more highly developed culture, abilities and their deeper ethnic sentiment. . . And the social tissue of both nations was completely different. The Croats were the ruling class, which was preserved as a pure-bred nobility for centuries. Although that nobility is almost extinct today, its noble significance remained indelibly imprinted among the people. Its remnants are Croatian loyalty, Croatian hospitality, a highly developed sense for aesthetics, love for art and the theatre and, on the other hand, a poor talent for the real



aspects of life. The significance of the Serbian nation was marked by a peasant trait, certainly with the strong addition of the Byzantine understanding of the world, practical philosophy of life and invincible lust for power. . . On the other hand, it is evident that the Croatian customs originate from ‘higher up’, from the nobility in particular. . . Throughout their history, the Croats have demonstrated their desire for the unification with Middle Europe, whereas the Serbs did that only temporarily and in cases of need. The moment they were no longer in need, they became irresistibly drawn to the Orient” (p. 317). Unlike the Serbs, to whom any foreign rule was completely unbearable, regardless of whether they rejected it out of religious or traditional political motives, “. . . the Croats were traditionally loyal to their state, due to their character traits and religious regards” (p. 317). Finally, “. . . the Croats possessed a strong feeling for their own statehood and an urge for self-preservation; as we can see, they wanted to be the masters of their own house. The ethnic migrations during the Turkish rule allowed the Serbs to take possession of a huge region which had historically and unconditionally belonged to the Croats, and the Serbian aspirations for expansion and rule are still evident there. The conflicts between the two opposing political ideals were unavoidable, and both political goals stood in hostile opposition to one another. Therefore, I have reached the following conclusion: the Serbs and the Croats are two nations with a distinct, completely different form, which cannot and must not be mixed under any circumstances” (p. 317-318).

### **c) The Linguistic Labyrinth with an Exit into the Abyss**

The question of the same literary language remained to be examined, whereupon von Sudland claimed that the Serbs had skilfully used the mentioned language to initiate a terrible confusion in their favour. “The beginnings of Croatian literature, which came into existence in Croatia Proper around 1830, out of a close relationship with the old kajkavian literature, were also written in the kajkavian dialect. The Serbs are thus more unique than the Croats in regard to their language, as in everything else as well. They have only two dialects, ekavian and ijekavian, which are both shtokavian and thus, mutually less different than the three Croatian dialects: kajkavian, chakavian and shtokavian. Those dialects differ from each other in the question word ‘why’, whose counterpart is ‘kaj’ in the kajkavian dialect, ‘ča’ in chakavian and ‘što’ in shtokavian, the last one being quite the same as in Serbian. The kajkavian dialect is undoubtedly the product of ethnical and linguistic blending of the Croats with the Slovenians, between whom there is no clear ethnical distinction at all. According to the unanimous opinion of all linguists, especially of Miklošić and Jagić, the chakavian-ikavian dialect is actually the dialect of the real Croatian race – the conquerors. Today, this dialect is limited to a small area, furthest to the west, and its speakers are the smallest in number. Once it was of a much greater range, whereas it is in decline now. The chakavian dialect is marked by the so-called ikavian dialect. . . The kajkavian dialect is limited to Croatia Proper, to the counties of Zagreb, Varaždin, Modruš-Rijeka and Bijelovar-Križevci in particular, and it is marked by the ekavian dialect... The shtokavian dialect covers the major part of the Croatian territories, that is, approximately half of Croatia, the whole Slavonia, a major part of Dalmatia and the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Croats and the Serbs speak shtokavian. In regard to the Croats, it is divided into the ikavian- and ijekavian-shtokavian dialects” (p. 318-319).

Von Sudland explains how it happened that the Serbs and the Croats had a joint literary language in the first place, as follows: “The Croats chose the dialect of Dubrovnik as their literary language, which was both shtokavian and ijekavian, and which had had a rich literature since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Since that language was similar to the one chosen by Vuk Karadžić, both languages were transformed into another one, especially due to Vuk Karadžić’s intensive research of the language, done at the suggestion of the famous Slavist Kopitar. Vuk Karadžić collected immense amounts of national literature, which became the basis for the further development of the language. Vuk’s standpoint had to prevail, because he transformed the living national language into a literary one. That national language was preserved in its original form, whereas the language of the writers from Dubrovnik in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century was a dead language and had already contained Italian elements. Those added Italian elements became increasingly numerous over time, so that the present-day dialect spoken in Dubrovnik, the so-called ‘macaroni dialect’, is a mixture of the Croatian and the Italian language. Since the Croats could not easily come to Herzegovina, which was under Turkish rule at the time, Vuk Karadžić, being a Turkish subject, had been familiar with those territories since his early childhood, so he repeatedly went there and collected an increasing amount of material. His significance for the development of the joint language became increasingly large, for he became almost the sole connection between the literature and the people, as the source of the language. Thus, the Serbian influences on linguistics became of crucial importance. Political reasons played a decisive role in the Croatian and Serbian choice of the literary dialect. Thus, the Croats from Croatia Proper who spoke kajkavian chose the ijekavian-shtokavian dialect, which was actually completely unfamiliar to them. Gaj’s choice was correct and fully justified, for the literary language of his choice was most similar to the dialect most widely used among the people. It was the dialect used by approximately two-fifths of the population, whereas the remaining three fifths were divided into the chakavian, kajkavian and ikavian- shtokavian dialects. On the other hand, it was interesting to confirm that Vuk Karadžić chose the language of the minority as the literary language. Out of 5 million Serbs, barely a 1.5 million of them were speakers of the shtokavian-ijekavian dialect, in the western regions in particular, whereas 3.5 million Serbs spoke the shtokavian-ekavian dialect, especially in the middle regions, in the north and in the southeast” (p. 319).

Von Sudland first presented a bare fabrication, then he started to treat it as a proven fact, although no evidence could be found for that, and, in the end, he proclaimed it irrefutable. “This irrefutable fact was also evident in the political tendency in the choice of the literary language. The Croats chose a dialect that was, indeed, foreign to the contemporary cultural and political leaders, who spoke kajkavian, but which was also the most widely spread dialect. That act reflected the striving for the creation of a linguistic unity, based on the reasonable principle of the majority, as well as the striving for overcoming linguistic inequality, which was created by various ethnic and political influences. It was also evident that Vuk Karadžić attempted to expand the Serbian influence as far as possible to the west by choosing a western dialect. After all, that was not surprising a bit, as he was the founder of contemporary nationalistic pan-Serbianism. However, I would like to establish that the initial intention of the Croats was that the literary language of Dubrovnik should be taken as the literary one. Nevertheless, the supremacy of the national language over the actually dead literary language and the

great significance of Vuk in the development of the language were enough for the development of the language in accordance with Vuk's standpoints. Thus, the unity of the literary language was established. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the Croats stood by their choice of the literary language, for that choice originated from the application of the reasonable principle of the majority. However, it was not like that in regard to the Serbs, for the development there started in the reverse direction, completely unnoticed. The ekavian dialect, as the ruling dialect among the people, made a breakthrough in the territory of the Serbian state and completely suppressed the ijekavian dialect. That change took place at the same time as the continuous increase in Serbia's significance, so Vuk's standpoint could be regarded as isolated, taking the choice of the literary language into consideration. Today, the literary language of the Croats differs from the literary language of the Serbs. This difference occurred in accordance with the various ethnic structures and various political goals, although that is difficult for foreigners on the outside to perceive" (p. 319-320).

The Croats initially took over the Serbian literary language from Vuk Karadžić and accepted it as their own, and then the Croatian ideologists came down on the leading linguistic reformer with all their might. Von Sudland acted in accordance with that. Thus he says, "I think I acted quite properly when I expressed doubt that the founder of pan-Serbian imperialism was guided by pan-Serbian national and religious tendencies when he chose the literary language. That happened unconditionally, indeed. Vuk was the first one to claim that the Croats were actually only those who spoke chakavian, and perhaps the speakers of kajkavian, which were more Slovenians than the Croats, whereas the Serbs were all those who spoke shtokavian. Emperor Porphyrogenetos' testimony of the settling of the people served as the basis for this theory, together with the tendency present in every Byzantine, and thus in Vuk as well, in order to make every Latin, every Catholic as insignificant, unimportant and despised as possible, since it was already impossible to banish them from the state. This claim of Vuk's in regard to the scientific works of Dobrovsky and Šafarik, which have not been completely abandoned even today, still serve as the basis for the claim that Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Slavonia and Dalmatia are Serbian territories, considering the language spoken there. . . This is another example of 'the Byzantine influence' being put into effect, which is one of the strangest phenomena of the new age and which cannot be defeated by any reasonable arguments. Therefore, we must not be surprised by the fact that there were Croats who allowed the claim that the Croats had accepted the language from the Serbs. For that reason, it is unconditionally necessary to establish the character of the joint literary language of the Croats and the Serbs. I am not familiar with any previous attempts to do so, starting from the correct standpoint, which, according to my opinion, could be correct only if it points to the correct insight into the ethnographic history of the linguistic area" (p. 320). Here, von Sudland returns to one of his previous theses that ". . . the Croatian territories of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina were ethnically united Croatian territories until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, in which powerful ethnic changes took place only after the Turkish conquest. The course of events was the same there as in Old Serbia and Greece, where the Albanians emerged and partially suppressed the Serbian and the Greek population. A new element came into existence in the mentioned Croatian territories, which had mainly originated from the south-eastern Balkans, and was of the Balkan Romanic race and the Greek-Eastern religion. Under the influence of the Croatian environment and the Serbian national

church, that element was Slavinised, and it expanded greatly under the influence of the religious politics of the Patriarchate of Peć, so it was finally . . . , only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nationally and politically transformed into Serbs, under the influence of the pan-Serbian movement” (p. 320-321).

Von Sudland attempts to add a linguistic aspect to that as well. “It is obvious that the ethnic changes had to be of crucial importance for the language in that region as well. It is significant that the ijekavian-shtokavian dialect emerged exactly in those initially Croatian territories, which, after the 16<sup>th</sup> century, gained a new Orthodox population, more or less mixed with the Catholics and the Muslims. It should also be pointed out that the ekavian dialect is the strongest one among the Serbs, whereas the ikavian dialect was the oldest one among the Croats. All those reasons do not allow any doubt that the contemporary literary language of the Croats and the former literary language of the Serbs were actually a linguistic mixture of the Croatian language with the language of the new element that was later Serbianised. Such linguistic mixtures often appear in the regions where various elements exist next to each other, due to ethnic migrations. For example, a mixed Polish-Ruthenian language exists in western Russia. Those main characteristics of both languages, the Croatian ikavian dialect and the Serbian ekavian dialect, merged into one diphthong ‘ije’, so the ijekavian dialect came into existence, in addition to the ikavian and the ekavian dialects. The language of the region where that mixing lasted the longest and where it was the most intensive, that is, in Herzegovina, was upgraded to the level of the literary language. A strong Serbian influence could be felt there since the time of the Nemanjić rule. After the fall of the Nemanjić state in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatian-Bosnian influence became dominant there again. Banished by the Magyars, the Bogomils rushed there and, as I have already established, they spoke ikavian” (p. 321).

In this opportunity, von Sudland was ready to cite Serbian authors who wrote that the Serbian language was a mutual treasure of the Serbian and the Croatian nation, together with each historical proof about their merging in the particular regions. Then he says, “Therefore, I am convinced that the linguistic mixture created in Herzegovina, perhaps through the efforts of the Orthodox Church, which had one of its seats in Herzegovina, was later additionally expanded towards the north, together with the expansion of the Orthodox religious community that started in 1557 (the foundation year of the Patriarchate of Peć). As the destruction of the Croats who spoke chakavian progressed in the centre of their settlement, the ijekavian-shtokavian dialect progressed as well, and was equally accepted by both the new population and the remaining Croats. This driving out of the Croats from the centre of their settlement could also be used as an explanation for why the chakavian dialect was restricted to such a small range. It could only be preserved in those regions where the new population was not present, that is, on the Dalmatian coast, in the coastal region of Croatia Proper and on the islands” (p. 321-322).

#### **d) Von Sudland Against Himself**

Unconsciously proving by his arguments that the Croats as a nation historically almost disappeared, as they were partly destroyed, partly displaced and partly assimilated, von Sudland tries to convince us that the Croats survived, but they only accepted somebody else’s language or combined their own chakavian with the Serbian

ekavian-shtokavian dialect, which led to the creation of the ijekavian-shtokavian dialect. “The origin of the ijekavian-shtokavian dialect would thus be explained and it would be proven that it was a mixture of the Croatian ikavian dialect and the Serbian ekavian one. It should also be investigated whether the shtokavian dialect was a characteristic suitable to be regarded as Serbian. The chakavian dialect, which had once expanded all the way to western Serbia and Montenegro, was disunited as well, thus it contained significant differences in certain regions. Therefore, the question word was not everywhere uttered as ‘ča’, but as ‘če’ and ‘čo’, which corresponded to the Polish and Czech question word ‘co’. However, in the shtokavian dialect as well, the question word ‘što’ was sometimes replaced by ‘šta’. It was evident that ‘ča’ and ‘čo’ simply linguistically interchanged with ‘šta’ and ‘što’, whereas the lexical structure of the language and the accent still remained chakavian, which has been partially preserved even today. Thus, Professor Šurmin was able to undoubtedly determine the chakavian remnants in the present-day speech of the native Catholics and Muslims from Sarajevo” (p. 322). In an attempt to prove his thesis that the shtokavian dialect was not genuinely Serbian, von Sudland introduces the Bulgarian language into the discussion, although he could also introduce Russian on the same grounds, as all East Slavs were speakers of shtokavian. There was no doubt that both the Serbian and the Croatian languages took over some morphological and phonetic characteristics of the Romance languages, but this cannot not be regarded as proof that the Serbian language is not Serbian. As he was unable to adequately handle the linguistic discussion, for which he was neither competent nor skilful, von Sudland seemed as if he reconciled himself with the facts for a moment, thus, he concluded that the joint language of the Serbs and the Croats was “a consequence of historical development, by which one foreign element forced its way into the Croatian regions and drove out the majority of the Croats. Due to political opportunism, the Croats had to choose one dialect as their literary language, which was created out of a mixture of chakavian, their primordial dialect, with foreign elements; thus, the new mixture became mostly foreign to them, due to its phonetic rules and the rules of the linguistic forms” (p. 323).

Being more than proud of his Croatian “mighty human race” and of “the life and work of this powerful, originally pure-bred Aryan race”, von Sudland pointed out the fact that, in 1835, at the beginning of their national revival, the Croats noticed that “. . . they did not exist in historical research at all. According to the standpoints of Dobrovsky and Šafarik, the Croats were only those who spoke chakavian, perhaps the kajkavian speakers to some extent as well, in total, around 200,000-300,000 people at that time. All other remaining people were Serbs and that small remaining part was ‘actually comprised of Serbs as well’” (p. 333). Taking this fact as the foundation stone, he tries to explain the fact – which was for many people still unbelievable – that the Croatian National Movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century initially developed by spreading the ideas of the Illyrian Movement and Yugoslavhood. “The Croats as Catholics and Western Europeans stuck to the scientific standpoints, they did not have any connection with the Orthodox faith and Russia, which would magnify everything that was Croatian and disparage everything the Croats regarded as hostile, suggesting that further to Slavistics, which had just come into existence. The Croats could not start anything with the kind of science that developed from 1789 to 1835. Their national racial consciousness, which also included the consciousness of historical importance, came into conflict with the contemporary state of science, according to which the Croats became only a small and

insignificant nation. The kind of Croatianhood defined by the predominant standpoints of Slavistics at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century could not be used for the establishment of the political foundations and could not give the people hope for the future. However, to be left without foundations and hope meant an encounter with a national death. Illyrianism was, for that reason, a construction in a case of need, whose task was to bridge the gap between the national consciousness, which relied on the historical facts, and the unfavourable and objectively incorrect scientific standpoints. Since they did not find any suitable natural framework in history in which they could develop their abilities and ambitions, they decided to quickly create a new artificial framework. The foundations of Illyrianism initially were the historical fact about the Napoleonic Illyria and the circumstance that Napoleon obviously supported Croatianhood in order to win over those capable soldiers for himself. . . . Moreover, there was the opinion of the Russian chronicler Nestor that the old Illyrians were Slavs and the mutual forefathers of the Croats and the Serbs” (p. 333).

If scientific findings were not in accordance with the political interests and goals, then all the worse for science. Von Sudland admitted that a new ideological framework was created in order to make the opposition to the scientific statements more effective. He was aware that the present-day Croatian nation was only one political construction, but he tried to “prove” how much that construction was necessary in an attempt at the opposition. “The Croats were forced to use an artificial name in order to revive their national movement. The fact that they had to exist under somebody else’s name for half of the century was undoubtedly very bad for the Croats; it significantly harmed the popularisation and presentation of their national name and their aspirations. . . . However, the Illyrian Movement did not even want to be a nation, but only a political term, which was supposed to assemble all South Slavs, even Serbs, in the former Croatian region in the pursuit of united political goals. The Illyrian Movement did not abolish particular nations; therefore, their followers were called the Illyrians from Croatia, the Illyrians from Carniola, the Illyrians from Bosnia, etc. In spite of that, the Illyrian Movement was active only in the Croatian territories and, to a small extent, in Slavic territories and southern Hungary. The Serbs from southern Hungary rejected it immediately, with the explanation that the intentions of the Illyrians were not clear and obvious” (p. 335).

Von Sudland was of the opinion that the Viennese authorities were also suspicious about the Illyrian Movement when the Bosnian vizier warned them that the Illyrian Movement was manifested as the product of Russian propaganda, so Metternich forbade the Illyrian name in 1843. “The significant role of the Illyrian Movement was its productivity in the field of culture. The buds of all the cultural institutions that the Croats have today were formed at that time, for they did not have almost any national cultural institutions until 1835. Those few that were established after the suppression of the Turkish threat, such as the Orthodox Academy in Zagreb, which originated from a Jesuit secondary school, were completely non-national. The main significance of the Illyrian Movement for Croatianhood lay in that cultural versatility. To be able to understand that, one should bear in mind two factors: firstly, the powerful force of the idea of national greatness, even if it was artificial, as the whole Illyrian Movement was; and the hope for the future, which was added to the previously mentioned idea, especially the hope for the liberation of other fellow-comrades from the Turkish enslavement. That force gave the real contents to the previously described national consciousness, which was one factor of power. The other factor was the deep ethnical,

cultural and active components of the ideal of humanity, which was taken over by the Illyrian Movement” (p. 335).

Believing that that alleged humanism originated from the ideals of the Illyrian Movement had significantly contributed to the cleansing of the Croats from the cruelty imposed on them by the several-century-long clash with the Turks, von Sudland states that the humanistic role in Croatia Proper was played by the old literature from Dubrovnik and Dalmatia, inspired by the Italian Renaissance work. “However, the Croats were not meant to gain the right to the preservation of humanistic ideas, so they had to do that with weapons in their hands. The Illyrian Movement reached its natural end in 1848/49. The Croats started a war against the Magyars in order to defend their autonomy, as the remnant of the former national Croatian statehood. At the same time, that was the year when the new Croatian nationalism came into existence. With weapons in their hands, they gained immense recognition in the world, so that the scientific theories unfavourable to the Croats faded away for some time” (p. 336). That was also the time when serious political relations and collaboration between the Serbs and the Croats were established in order to fight against the Hungarian hegemonic and unitarianistic aspirations. “During the act of fraternisation at the time, the Serbs in Croatia were mentioned for the first time. It was also stated that the Croats and the Serbs were one nation; therefore, they had to live in love and brotherhood, overcoming their religious differences. However, the relations soon became tenuous. The Serbs required Srem for the Serbian Vojvodina, which was to be founded. Therefore, those regions would cease to be under the rule of the ban. Thus, the relations between those two nations deteriorated” (p. 336). The persistent Croatian strivings for the annexation of the Military Krajina to Croatia Proper and the constant Serbian opposition to that solution would become the new problem.

### **e) Taking Different Roads to the Same Goal**

In the 1860s, there was a differentiation in the Croatian national politics between the proponents of agreement with the Serbs, which were led by Strossmayer; and those who were for a complete confrontation with the Serbs, under the lead of Starčević. The only difference between them was the political method they used, as their main goals were the same. “As he was the bishop of a bishopric that did not only encompass many Serbs, but also had the whole Kingdom of Serbia under its jurisdiction, Strossmayer soon became aware that the Serbian issue was actually a religious issue, due to the inseparable connection between Serbdom and the Greek Eastern Orthodox faith. Perhaps he even suspected what a disaster would happen when Catholicism and the Greek Eastern Orthodox faith clashed with each other; thus, in 1861, he already had the presentiment that a tempest was coming. Despite his German origin, he considered himself to be a Croat, and he was one of many people who were drawn to the ethical and cultural component of the Illyrian humanism. This made him feel even greater abhorrence towards the approaching battle. Being a powerful figure, he attempted to nip that evil in the bud by renovating the old papal idea of a unification. Strossmayer wanted to lead all South Slavs towards Catholicism, or the Greek Uniate at least, and thus prevent the clashes between the Croats and the Serbs. His idea was really magnificent, but doomed to fail in advance; it had to share the fate of the papal policy, which it would always have to share. The idea of the union did not seem to originate from Strossmayer

himself, but from the Croatian historian Dr. Franjo Rački, for he already published a series of articles entitled *The Catholic Church and the Bulgarian Nation* in the *Catholic Gazette* (the official Catholic newspaper in Croatia) in 1861. In those articles, he initiated the issue of the Bulgarian conversion to Catholicism.

Strossmayer intended to put his idea into effect in great style. Loyal to his credo: "All for the religion and the homeland", he wanted to unite the national and Church interests and support them not only with Church funds, but also with secular ones. He wanted to make Croatia the spiritual centre of the entire Balkans; he founded the Yugoslav Academy of Science and Arts in Zagreb and gave his support for the establishment of the University in Zagreb, which he provided with abundant resources. He used the term "Yugoslavhood" to avoid someone being offended by the political name and he launched intensive advertising for it. His party, which recruited members from the most educated circles in Croatia, loyal to the Croatian humanistic ideas, evaded a clash with the Serbs, trying to indulge them as much as possible. It attempted to win them over to Strossmayer's ideas and to a friendly collaboration with the Croats" (p. 337-338).

The Serbs saw through Strossmayer's cunning politics, and many Croatian politicians also thought that it contained some hidden potential danger to the authentic Croatian national interests, so all its strivings in that direction failed. "Apart from that, the generous bishop faced only bitter disappointment in general. When his aspirations for the union failed in the Balkans, he attempted to make some connections in Russia for that sake, but this made him suspicious in Vienna, thus Emperor Franz Joseph I held him responsible for the manoeuvres in Slavonia in 1888. His obvious strivings for the union only gave rise to bitter hatred among the Serbs. The Serbs justified their lasting hostile attitude towards the Croats precisely with the explanation that they had to protect themselves from the Croatian aspirations for the union. However, that was just a typical Byzantine twisting of the real state of the matters, for Strossmayer's strivings for the union were only an attempt to restrain the Serbian conquering intentions from 1860. When Strossmayer wanted to visit part of his bishopric in Serbia in the 90s, the Serbian Government forbade him to enter the country. Finally, he was seriously accused in the Vatican for squandering the property of the Church on secular, not religious, purposes" (p. 338).

In regard to the most exemplary option for leading of the Croatian national politics, von Sudland was undoubtedly in favour of Ante Starčević, although he expressed certain reservations about some aspects of Starčević's work. As he points out, Starčević ". . . realised that the Serbian cunning and forcibly conquering campaign could not be defeated by humane diplomacy, so he wanted to lead the whole Croatian nation to a merciless battle against the invasion of Serbdom. Starčević rejected the Illyrian humanism and its cultural aspirations as old-fashioned and useless. He put the ideal of Greater Croatia in opposition to the ideal of Greater Serbia. He wanted to impress the entire nation with that ideal, to crush all the internal enemies first and then unite all Croatian territories. He developed a theory that the Serbs never existed, based on the fact that the Balkan Romans had greatly participated in the creation of Serbdom and on the fact that Serbdom was initially very small and under Croatian rule, overlooking, at the same time, the fact that a state could never exist without a powerful national element. . . A resolute opposition to the Serbs, and an established ideal of national greatness, whose core was truthful, healthy and in accordance with the national self-consciousness,



although it generally exceeded reasonable limits and partially twisted the historical facts (in regard to Serbia and the Slavic countries), as well as the widely spread and inconsiderate propagation of such standpoints, all made a deep impression on the Croatian nation. The cationian significance of Starčević, his sovereign scorn for all honour, dignity and worldly possessions, only intensified his influence. The nation blindly followed the man who lacked the main characteristics of a successful politician, that is, a practical sense of reality, and therefore, the tactics and the talent for the completion of the task. He never made any detailed plans for putting his ideas into effect, and all that those around him did in regard to that was of little importance” (p. 339). It was evident that von Sudland reproached Starčević for only three superficial and marginal things: verbal exaggeration, taking the anti-Austrian course at one period of his political engagement and the incapability of leading the serious political campaign in regard to the organisation of the proponents and realisation of the political and ideological program.

In an attempt to demonstrate that all the politics of an agreement between the Croats and the Serbs in the past several decades were wrong and devastating for the interests of the Croats, although they were constantly under attack of the Hungarians, von Sudland stated that he was proud that, in the end, when the war started, the Croats proved to be the most loyal subjects of the Austrian Emperor. “The Serbs entered the war completely sure that they could rely on the Croats. The bitter shouting from the Serbian shooting trenches at the Croats who unstopably advanced proved how greatly they were mistaken. The innate significance of the Croatian nation, its loyalty to the ruler of its own choice and a deep feeling for its own national, governmental and political significance, incorporated into all classes, even the lowest ones, by Ante Starčević, led the Croats to the right path” (p. 362). Von Sudland openly mourned the failure of the trialistic idea of the reorganisation of the Monarchy, which would have satisfied all the Croatian political ambitions. At the same time, he was fervently against any idea of a Serbian-Croatian national unity, as he thought that its realisation would unavoidably lead to the Serbianisation of the Croats. “The Serbian being bore the stamp of their religion, the Orthodox faith, especially in regard to politics, which was not the case with the Croats. Thus, the Serbs were unchangeable in the political sense, whereas the Croats were prone to change, and the whole ‘integration’ would be at the disadvantage of the Croatian being, that is, the Croats would gradually become enslaved and forced to renounce their Western religion for the sake of the Eastern one” (p. 336). He was also fanatically against the idea of Yugoslavhood, whose goal was to politically and legally integrate the Slovenes with the Serbs and the Croats. “Where has Yugoslavhood in its entirety ever proved its strength? Nowhere and never. A state needs a historical tradition, a strong nation and a sufficiently strong will for the state and rule. All South Slavs are strong and brave, but the Slovenes do not have the historical tradition, not to mention the will, for a state. The Croats and the Serbs have their historical traditions and the will for a state, indeed, but their historical traditions are completely different, and the will for the state of the Serbs and the will for the state of the Croats stand in mutual opposition and hostility” (p. 368).

### **f) The Main Ideologist of the Trialistic Reorganisation of the Habsburg Monarchy**

Von Sudland also considered the trialistic idea based on a Serbo-Croatian unity to be a failure, as it would have led to a Serbian supremacy in the long run. He was an ideologist of Croatian exclusiveness, of the Croats as the third factor of statehood, in addition to the Austrians and the Magyars, in the trialistically reorganised Monarchy. Thus, he insisted that “. . . the solution for the South Slav issue should never be reached on the basis of the equal treatment of the Croats and the Serbs. There is no equality between the Croats and the Serbs. The explanation for this claim would naturally reveal itself to anyone who has read this book with the slightest bit of attention. The Croats undoubtedly strove for complete equality when they accepted the idea of the resolution, however, their only success was that the Serbs rose to the surface and became the leading and the decisive factor, whereas the Croats were persistently forced to make a tough choice: either to break off with the Serbs or give in and allow themselves to be led by the Serbs. However, the position of the Croats was such that they could not break off with the Serbs. The attempt at equality had to always lead to the same result by legal necessity, and the reason for this again exclusively lay in the unfortunate religious question. The basic attitude of a member of the Greek Eastern Church towards a Catholic was that of contempt and hatred, which completely ruled equality out. A member of the Greek Eastern Church simply could never regard a Catholic as an equal. Just as the Polish could never expect equality from the Russians, the Croats could not expect it from the Serbs either. This was present between those two latter-mentioned nations in various forms. That all originated from the set of ideas of the Patriarchate of Peć. The Patriarchate was a religious and political idea that strove for the extinction of the Croatian name and being. That set of ideas is active and evident everywhere even today. Wherever a Croat, his name or his being exists in the territory of the former Patriarchate of Peć, the Serbs feel that he does not have the right to be there, and should not be there; therefore all means should be used to fight against him and destroy him. And the Byzantine skill of twisting and distorting the facts can produce effects beyond the imagination” (p. 368-369).

Von Sudland regarded the resolutionists as the followers of the so-called Rijeka Resolution, whose signatories demanded the annexation of Dalmatia to Croatia Proper; and as the followers of the Zadar Resolution, which insisted that the Serbs and the Croats were one nation; thus, they had to achieve their mutual interests with joint forces. Von Sudland charged the Croatian intellectuals from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in particular for Serbophilia, claiming that the war with Serbia was simply unavoidable. Nevertheless, the Croats massively followed the Emperor and gave their full contribution to the war efforts. “The final position of the Croats was determined by three factors: 1) the characteristically Croatian loyalty to the master of their own choice, which resulted from their Aryan origin and which prevailed among the Serbophiles as well in the crucial moment; 2) the anti-Serbian disposition present among the broad range of national layers; and 3) the instinctive and completely correct belief, widely spread among those broad national layers, that the Serbs were the main culprit for the unfavourable position of the Croats” (p. 371). Therefore, he was of opinion that the Croats, as the nation loyal to the Emperor, deserved the reorganisation of the Monarchy

after the war, but that the objective circumstances in the Monarchy required that the Monarchy should retain its basic dualism and should include Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina in a unified administrative region, which would not be an equal factor with Austria and Hungary. "The new unified region would have a dependant position in relation to the other states of the Monarchy: it would become the mutual property of both states. However, that dependant position should only serve the protection of the legal interests of the whole state and especially the interests of the single states; however, on the other hand, the autonomy of that region should not be limited to such an extent to suppress the practical, cultural and economical potential of the newly established region" (p. 396). In other words, this would mean that the whole possibly united region would have a status very similar to the one of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the annexation.

Therefore, von Sudland generally remained a proponent of dualism, but he tried to create a solution that would eliminate the South Slavic issue – its main weakness and the generator of persistent internal and foreign political crises – by ascribing Croatian national characteristics to it and a primacy of Zagreb. Vienna and Pest would have some sort of an ownership over the newly established unified region. "Namely, that was the only way the dualistic Monarchy could remain capable of life and expansion. If the Monarchy strictly stuck to the division into two and thought only about the appropriation of the provinces that could easily be divided into two, it would never achieve anything. Unless the Monarchy reorganised itself into a structure that would allow it to obtain other historical and political entities, the dualistic Monarchy would have to decline and would be condemned to the role of a crushed, helpless spectator of the worldwide historical events and development. Therefore, I think that the creation and reorganisation of one suitable type of that ownership was precisely the vital need of the dualistic Monarchy" (p. 397). Furthermore, he was ready to make an additional concession to the Magyars and allow them to retain the governmental possession of Rijeka as a *corpus separatum*, together with the railway that would connect it to Hungary, so they would be unable to say that they were left without an exit to the sea. Von Sudland expected that the realistic loss caused by the restriction of Austrian and Hungarian rule over this region could be compensated for. "Further equality and compensation were possible to achieve by the division of the eventual new territories that would be gained in the war" (p. 399).

The most important thing was that such a solution would completely satisfy the Croats, and that they would have the overall ethnic majority in the newly established administrative region. "The Croats were always loyal to the Monarchy and the Dynasty, and were a stronghold of the throne and the state at all difficult moments of the Monarchy. They proved that in this war as well, despite the intensive undermining by the enemy. The Croats and their state foundation represented a form of South Slavhood, nationally, governmentally and legally annexed to the Monarchy. The new organisation in the south could be and must be put into effect only in a Croatian sense. That new organisation would only be an element of power and stability of the Monarchy in the south" (p. 400). Von Sudland was preoccupied with the conviction that his standpoint about the solution of the South Slav issue ". . . would create a southern front to the Monarchy, which would today have the same value – against the contemporary enemies in the south and the southeast – as the Military Krajina once had against the Turks. Once the Croats are politically satisfied and undisturbed in their development, they would be a

safe rampart to the Monarchy” (p. 400). No dilemmas about that. “The new region could only be under the political leadership of the Croats and it could not be anything else but a Croatian state by its make-up. It is completely clear what I mean by a Croatian state: the autonomy that originated from the eight-hundred-year-long historical development within the Monarchy. Only such a solution is in accordance with the interests of the Monarchy. That certainty has necessarily resulted from our entire understanding of history, which it is beyond any doubt” (p. 401). Such a solution would renew the Croatian faith and hope for the state, even after the great historical disappointments. “Why did the Croats fight in the Great War, what was the reason for their embittered assault on the Serbs, Russians, Italians? The Croats certainly fought for the Monarchy as well; however, that old nation, after all, fought only for its own state, which was not established in 1867/68. Whoever carefully observed the development of the circumstances from 1867 to 1917 was clearly convinced that the matter was about whether the Croats would fight on the side of Middle Europe against the Byzantine Empire or on the side of the Byzantine Empire against Middle Europe in the next world war, and I am sure it will break out in a couple of decades. For me, it is beyond any doubt that they would do the latter, if the Monarchy uses the Serbs, their enemies of yesterday, after the war to again thwart the improvement of the Croatian position” (p. 403).

### **g) Croatianhood, the Unerring Instrument in the Hands of the Catholic Church**

In order to more convincingly present how significant the anti-Serbian function of that improvised Croatian pseudo-country was, von Sudland cited the opinion of August Franz Gfrer, a professor at the University in Freiburg and “a great German scholar”, as Sudland says, who wrote, “The present-day Croatian state and the Military Krajina must become mobile, it must cross the Danube, then the Balkans and further, lower, to Rumelia, Gallipoli and Adrianople (Edirne); it must assimilate the nations that live there – for they are of the same origin as the Croats – disregarding the Greek law. Whoever objects to this should be slain by the sword! Finally, a Croatian king will be the one to put the cross at the beautiful Justinian’s building, the Church of St. Sophia (the Church of Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia), not the inferior Orthodox one, but the blessed Latin cross” (p. 407). Von Sudland had only one objection to the opinion of this German. He thought that all further strivings for the union would be inappropriate, for they were mostly unsuccessful in the past. However, he immediately pointed out: “It is my honour and merit to cite again the opinion of August Franz Gfrer in a form made suitable for the present. I tried very hard and I require much patience from the readers to state that opinion precisely, in a form that rules out any doubt, trying, at the same time, to leave the enormous zest and one-sidedness aside. Thus, I repeat, relying on the authority of this great German scholar: the foundation of one Catholic-Islamic Croatian state within the Monarchy is the only solution and salvation, and it is a question that does not pertain only to Austria, but to the whole Middle Europe as well” (p. 407). Within the final discussion, von Sudland particularly pointed out: “As I reached for the opinion of Gfrer on the Croatian nation, I had in front of my eyes a magnificent defensive campaign, a structure of states, from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic Sea, which would be the rampart to the advancing and expansive East. Besides Poland, besides the Orthodox, but yet

politically anti-Byzantine Bulgaria, perhaps besides Ukraine over time, I imagine another Catholic-Muslim Croatia in the southwest, which is naturally the best, unerring instrument for defence, due to a thousand-year-long tradition. This instrument would be even more valuable, for it would act not only in the south-eastern direction, but also to the southwest. Starting from my historical and historical-philosophical insights, I am most deeply convinced that the defence instrument that hovers before my eyes, together with the mentioned Croatian state, would have all the characteristics to be the south-western bridgehead of this broad rampart, whereupon Poland would be the south-eastern bridgehead” (p. 414). In order to convince those who doubt the Croatian capability for the completion of such a task, von Sudland states, “That old nation, which managed to survive despite all the difficulties of its arduous history, did not survive in order to exist in some small, isolated part of the world; it survived because it was able to defend its position with weapon in hand and the courage of a lion whenever it was endangered. This nation would certainly fulfil its mission. With its historical nobility, its noble tradition, its highly likeable humanistic ideal, for now, indeed, pushed a bit into the background, but highly significant for the period of the national revival, the Croats are asked to play their role at the place of their existence” (p. 403).

## Part Three

### The Presentation of Obvious Forgeries as the Authentic Method of the Croatian Historiographic School

#### I. Dominik Mandić, the Main Croatian Historiographic Forger

There is no doubt that Dominik Mandić (1889-1973) was the greatest forger of historical facts in the entire Croatian pamphleteer historiography. He exaggerated so much that hardly any historical or political ideologist in present-day Croatia was ready to publicly cite Mandić's works and extreme attitudes. The fact that Mandić was born in Široki Brijeg, in western Herzegovina, the greatest stronghold and the centre of the Ustasha movement, was not entirely without any significant symbolism. His mother belonged to the famous Ustasha and friar Zovko family, which gave rise to several of the most famous murderers in the Second World War, together with Friar Joza Zovko, the illusionist and the inventor of the apparition of "the Madonna in Međugorje" in the post-war period. The Franciscan Seminary in Široki Brijeg shaped Mandić's views of the world. Mandić later became the head of the Franciscan Order, whereas, in his youth, he showed great interest in the political engagement from the clerical-fascist positions. At the age of 17, as a fifth-grade student of the clerical secondary school, he joined the Franciscan novitiate, following his homosexual tendencies, and soon contracted some intestinal disease from his older lovers, barely managing to survive. Having finished the last two grades of the state secondary school in Mostar with outstanding cleverness and diligence, Friar Dominik Mandić was sent to the state University in Freiburg, the College of Theology, which was run by the Dominicans, for further education. He had to postpone his PhD dissertation defence there until 1921, due to the First World War. In 1914, he returned to Široki Brijeg, where he shortly was the deputy of the parish priest Fr Didak Buntić. In the following year, he became the prefect of the theologian in Mostar and the editor of the magazine *The Christian Family*. Some records stated that he was sent to Vienna in 1918 to ask Empress Zita for help that his emaciated compatriots needed. He was appointed as the director of the print shop and the secretary of the Herzegovinian Franciscan Province in the same year. He founded the magazine *Contemporary Questions* and took part in the foundation of the newspaper *National Freedom*.

## 1. Mandić's Career as a Politician

Although the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Franciscans accepted the Viennese May Declaration of the Yugoslav Club representatives in the Viennese Parliament, which demanded the unification of the Slovene, Croatian and Serbian countries into a special state union under the Habsburg Crown, history took another course. The National Council of the Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Muslims was established in Mostar in 1918. Dominik Mandić took the rule over from the Austro-Hungarian Commander of Mostar in the Council's behalf and organised a formal reception of the Serbian army. As the leader of the Croatian Catholic Movement of Mostar, Mandić took part in the foundation of the distinctly clerical Croatian People's Party in 1919. This party initially accepted the concept of national unity of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes, as three tribes of the same nation. Mandić soon became the secretary of this party for Herzegovina. In 1920, at the elections for the Constitutional Assembly, Mandić was elected a representative; thus, at the Assembly meeting, he opposed to the boycott of the constitutional activity organised by Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Peasant Party. However, the representatives of Mandić's party left the Parliament shortly before the adoption of the Vidovdan Constitution. The followers of Radić attacked the Croatian People's Party, as they considered it to have overly conciliatory attitude towards the contemporary regime. Dominik Mandić was the leader of the clericalists at the elections in 1923, and his party did not win even one representative's term. Such a bad result repeated again in 1925, although Mandić was no longer the first candidate on the electoral list, for he had previously compromised himself in the eyes of the Catholic public opinion by his meeting with the radical leader Laza Marković during his visit to Mostar. He was again the primary electoral candidate at the elections in 1927, but again with no success. However, after the Assembly Assassination, the Croatian People's Party formed the new Korošac government and its highest official, Stipe Barić became the Minister of Social Politics. Mandić became the head of the Heregovinian Franciscan province in the same year. As his biographer, Bazilije Pandžić (*The Biography of Dr. Fr Dominik Mandić, OFM*, the Publisher Union "Wounded Swan", Chicago, 1994), wrote in the twelfth book of Mandić's collected works, as far as Mandić was concerned, ". . . he observed the engagement of Anton Korošac and Stipe Barić with trust. That was evident from the interview he gave to the editorial of the newspaper *National Freedom* after his return from Belgrade in September 1928, where he had visited Prime Minister Korošac and made him familiar with the difficult position of the peasants in Herzegovina. . . On that occasion, he also visited the ministers Veljko Vukičević, Ljuba Davidović, Mehmed Spaha and especially Stipe Barić" (p. 45).

Mandić gave public justification for the political engagement of the Roman Catholic priests, Korošac and Barić, as ministers, labelling their critics as the proponents of a campaign of the Freemason circles. After the establishment of the January 6 Dictatorship, Dominik Mandić continued his political engagement through para-political organisations, such as the Association of Tobacco Planters and the Croatian Catholic Bank. In 1923, he managed to convince Nikola Pašić to provide him with the significant funds for the erection of a new building for the Franciscan secondary school in Široki Brijeg. In 1928, the Ministerial Council granted him one million dinars for the same purpose; however, the new Minister of Education, Stjepan Radić vetoed the previous decision, which clearly demonstrated the immensity of the animosity present between

Radić and the clericalists. As Pandžić stated, on account of that, the following was written in *The Papers of the Province*: “Unfortunately, when that matter reached the Financial Board, Mr. Stjepan Radić, the Minister of Education at the time, left the above-mentioned subvention out from the budget, which had been included in the budget before Mr. Radić became a member of the Parliament. He did that out of hatred towards the Herzegovinian Franciscans, who could not and did not want to support his politics among the people” (p. 53-54). In 1929, Mandić turned to Pope Pius XI for financial help. The Pope agreed to the request, granting Fr Dominik an audience with him and providing him with certain financial help, which, however, was not sufficient even for the builders of the secondary school to cover the already existing debts. “To pay off his debts, Fr Dominik asked Božidar Maksimović, the Minister of Education at the time, for help on 16 February 1931. However, before he turned to the Minister for financial support, he had been granted an audience with King Aleksandar, who had acknowledged ‘the need and justification for the state subvention’ to the grammar school in Široki Brijeg” (p. 54-55). The fact that Stjepan Radić had died two years earlier did not bother him, nor did he suspect the King of Radić’s murder.

In 1934, Fr Dominik Mandić became the principal of the Franciscan secondary school in Široki Brijeg. In 1939, he was elected a member of the Supreme Administration of the Franciscan Order and he moved to Rome. From there he maintained intensive political contacts with Ivan Šubašić and Vlatko Maček, as well as with the ministers Bariša Smoljan, Ivan Andres, Miha Krek, Juraj Šutej and Džafer Kulenović. At the very beginning of the Second World War, he made arrangements with Fr Radoslav Glavaš, an official of Pavelić’s Government, for the emigration of the Slovenian nuns, who have been banished by the Germans, to the Croatian Ustasha State. He engaged in the release of the famous Croats who had been interned by the Italians from the Dalmatian territories, directly annexed to Italy. As he realised in time that the Western Allies were going to prevail in the Second World War, he searched in advance for an option that would free the Croats from the responsibility, or diminish it at the very least, for the alliance with the Germans and the genocide over the Serbs.

### **a) Pandžić’s Genesis of the Genocide Against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia**

As Pandžić pointed out, “. . . the Croats generally accepted the Independent State of Croatia with enthusiasm, for they saw in it the accomplishment of their hundred-year-old aspirations and celebrated that loudly. On the other hand, the Serbs could not stand either the proclamation of the state nor the celebration. Those who were particularly against that were the Chetniks, a para-military movement of fanatical Serbs, who could not understand that the Croats were allowed to strive for things for which the Serbs had not given them permission; thus, they fought against both the proclamation of the state and the celebration of it. For example, the Croatian state was established on 10 April, and on 15 April, the Serbian Chetniks advanced on Croatian houses with the army, burning them to the ground and killing the Croats. The Croats attacked them back, particularly those who were members of the Ustasha movement. That resulted in mutual killings, the burning of the houses and places to the ground, etc. The new Croatian authorities soon realised that the hardest issue to solve would be how to calm the Serbs



down. The decision of the German Government to displace the Slovenes from those regions that were annexed to Germany gave the Croatian authorities an option for the solution of that issue. Since the German Government had made a request to the Croatian Government for the settlement of the displaced Slovenes in the territory of the Croatian state, the Croatian Government agreed to that request, as it was looking for a way to get rid of the Serbs. The Croatian Government complied with the German request on the condition that the Germans displace as many Serbs from Croatia to Serbia as the number of the Slovenes that would settle in Croatia” (p. 77-78).

Thus, the Serbs were to blame themselves for the massacres of the Serbian people, for they could not calmly accept the fact that they were subjected to the rule of the Croatian fascist state, which was a quisling foundation. They were the first to start with the killings, so it was only natural that the Croats found a way to get rid of them. That was the reason for Pavelić’s establishment of the State Agency for Renewal, which was to engage in the displacement of the Serbs and the immigration of the Slovenes. “Before that displacement was arranged, some Croatian officials started to arbitrarily displace the Serbs from their territories and send them to Serbia. That created immense distress among the Serbs in Croatia. To avoid trouble with the Croatian authorities, some turned to the Catholic priests for protection. The priests were able to help some of them, especially those who used to be the Catholics. They also helped the families in which one parent was a Catholic or used to be a Catholic. However, some individuals converted to Catholicism to protect themselves. That was the solution of individuals. When an entire village was to be displaced, a movement for a conversion to Catholicism was organised there in order to evade emigration to Serbia.

“The news about the displacement of the Orthodox Christians from Croatia to Serbia and their conversion to Catholicism made an unusual impression on Fr Dominik. The news he received was not always true and complete, but he knew that the relations between the Serbs and the Croats were tense, and he feared that this tenseness might increase due to the unfair proceedings of the Croatian authorities. Therefore, he wrote to the influential people in Croatia, although they were not members of the ruling class, to exert their influence on the Croatian authorities and make sure that nothing illegal was being done that would result in even greater clashes between the Serbs and the Croats” (p. 78-79). That was the justification for the Ustasha crimes given by Bazilije Pandžić, a Roman Catholic priest, a doctor of theology and the director of the Vatican General Archive of the Franciscan Order for almost four decades. Moreover, he was the vice president of the Croatian Historical Institute in Rome for many years and an external associate of the Papal Congregation for Canonisation. The criteria for canonisation were such that Dominik Mandić and Ante Pavelić could easily be proclaimed “saints”. The method of Pandžić’s writing reflected the systematic approach of the Roman Catholic intellectuals to the cover-up of the bloody role their church and its highest dignitaries had in the Ustasha crimes.

Pandžić regretfully concluded that the project of the displacement of the Serbs from Croatia (that is, Pavelić’s whole Independent State of Croatia) to Serbia was mostly unsuccessful. “Although the Orthodox Serbs would rather abandon their religion than emigrate, it did not seem that the Croatian authorities cared much for that. In any case, they wanted the Serbian authorities from Serbia, that is, Belgrade, to have no religious influence on the Orthodox Serbs in Croatia” (p. 84). In regard to that, he justified the decree issued by the Ustasha Government about renaming the “Serbian Orthodox”

religion into the “Greek-Eastern” one and the abolition of the Julian calendar, and also justified Pavelić’s statement that there was sporadic violence, but that the Serbian Orthodox Church could not exist in the Croatian state, which led to the legal establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church in 1942. “Fr Dominik initially considered the establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church to be a good decision. The establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church seemed to be a reasonable act, for it gave the Orthodox people an opportunity to stay what they were and live in accordance with their religion. This act really brought peace to the Orthodox people in some places (around Banja Luka and Tuzla). However, it was too late to calm down the Orthodox soldiers and politicians. Then, they organised a previously thought-out uprising, which was widely spread among the Serbian population. It was organised by Draža Mihajlović at the end of June 1941. By gathering around himself a certain number of former Yugoslav officers, people loyal to the Monarchy and the Government in exile in London, he decided to fight against the newly established Croatian state. The Communists immediately started to fight against the Independent State of Croatia as well. . . They decided to organise a real army against Germany and Croatia. Thus, two rebellion armies against the Croatian state existed almost from the very start: the Chetniks, led by Draža Mihajlović; and the Partisans (the Communists), led by Josip Broz Tito. At first, they fought together, but they split later. The Chetniks were supported by the Yugoslav Government, which was then in exile in London, whereas the Partisans were supported by the Soviet Union. The Communists eventually prevailed and they led the battle against Croatia and the Axis Powers. Their initial method of fighting included sudden attacks on particular places, setting houses on fire, the demolition of public institutions and monuments, killing people and the extermination of livestock” (p. 85-86).

Dominik Mandić was very mild in his opposition to the Croatian crimes against the Serbs, whereupon he pointed out that the basic problem were not the mass killings, which he ascribed to the individuals, but the banishment, usurpation of the property and involuntary conversion to Catholicism. In his alleged letter to the Pope, cited by Pandžić, he wrote, “Many Orthodox priests and eminent Serbs were abducted by individuals at night and murdered without a trial, or sent to Serbia” (p. 81). However, when the Serbian rebels became stronger by the end of 1942, Mandić was upset and wrote the following to Fr Didak Burić: “I am very saddened by the violence provoked by the Partisans and the Chetniks, especially in eastern Herzegovina and the district of Prozor. I am afraid that it will be even worse one day, considering the present development of circumstances. I am doing all in my power through the Holy See and other connections to put an end to the mutual destruction of the Serbs and the Croats, and to prohibit the Chetniks and the Partisans from setting Croatian villages on fire and killing the peaceful Croatian people. You should also organise the people there to be able to defend themselves from anyone’s violence. The Croatian Catholics should not attack anyone and should live peacefully and honestly with everyone, but if somebody attacks our villages and the safety of our possessions, they should defend themselves resolutely. Rakitno should be your model, for, as I have heard, they managed to defend themselves from both the Partisans and the Chetniks in very dangerous circumstances. All the villages and parishes to the west of the Neretva River should be organised in a similar way. The dangerous and fatal days for the Croatian Catholic population may

soon come, particularly in the transitional times, when all hell will break loose, until peace and regular rule are restored” (p. 86-87).

### **b) The Attempt at the Preservation of the Ustasha State**

By the end of 1942, it was clear to everyone that Hitler had no chance for victory in the long run, and Dominik Mandić was worried about the possible attack of the Allies “on Croatia”, as he wrote, after the expected previous invasion on Italy. Pandžić gave the following interpretation of Mandić’s standpoint: “The attack of the Allies on Croatia might inflict severe consequences on it, if it is not prepared for that attack. As he foresaw that difficult situation, which he also discussed with others, Fr Dominik tried to indirectly get in touch with the Croatian authorities of the time, even before the attack of the Allies on Italy, and advise them to find a way out in time. For that purpose, he invited Žarko Vlaha, his former associate in Herzegovina for many years and a high official in the presidium of the Croatian state, to Rome in March 1943. Mandić talked to him about the state of affairs in the world and in Croatia. They particularly discussed the end of the war and concluded that it would be at the disadvantage of the Axis Powers and, therefore, of Croatia as well, as Croatia was connected with the Axis Powers. The Croatian Government should prepare for that defeat and find a way in advance to get out of it with the least possible harm” (p. 87).

Moreover, as Pandžić stated, Mandić thought that Lorković and Vokić, the putschists from 1944, were inspired by his ideas. In any case, he counted the most on the option of Vlatko Maček and the Croatian Peasant Party, for whom he prepared the concept containing four principles which they were to govern themselves by in future political activities. They were the principles of democracy, state independence, the peaceful exchange of the population, and the federal union of the independent states of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and perhaps Bulgaria. “The third principle is particularly interesting, that the mixture of the national groups and the instability of the frontiers were one of the main causes of the frequent wars in Europe, and it is necessary to establish pure national territories to evade the future conflicts” (p. 89). Thus, Mandić wrote, “The Slavic nations in the South of Europe, particularly the Croats and the Serbs, should determine their national frontiers by mutual consent and peacefully move the population from one territory into another, with adequate property indemnity paid to those immigrants in the new region. If the national frontier could not be established by a brotherly agreement, the establishment of the frontiers should be then entrusted to the arbitrary judgement of the great nations of the Alliance. . . The Croats accept their fellow Muslim Croats from eastern Bosnia and eastern Herzegovina into their national territory, as an integral part of the Croatian nation” (p. 89-90).

When the Ustashas started to massively flee by the end of the war, Dominik Mandić, as the president of the Fraternity of St. Jerome, engaged as much as possible in helping the Ustasha refugees. “Together with the Fraternity, he made efforts to place the Croatian refugees into camps; and for those threatened by the Communist spies, he tried to find independent, separate facilities, where they could hide without fear” (p. 97). Mandić was especially skilful at finding money. He even financed the establishment of a print shop for the refugees in the camp in Ferme, which started to publish the newspaper *Croacia* at the end of 1946. He tried to organise a migration of around a hundred Serbian orphans – who the Ustasha had formerly gathered and converted to Catholicism

– from Austria to Italy, where the Franciscans would prepare them to be friars. Since he did not succeed in doing that, he complained in one of his letters from 1947: “At the mentioned orphanage (Ramsau), there were well-raised children with an ensured priest position, and I would never get over that loss for the Church and our work. The poor children, not only would they lose their opportunities to become friars and priests, but they would also lose the holy religion due to their violent upbringing. What a pity and what a sin” (p. 109). In 1952, Dominik Mandić was appointed as the Headmaster of the Croatian Franciscan Commissariat in the USA, and he performed that function for the following three years. Afterwards, he entirely devoted himself to pseudo-historical and political pamphleteering. He worked for decades on the research and the artificial *post festum* embellishment of the persona and the work of the little-known Christian martyr Nikola Tavelić, who was canonised in 1970 as the first Croatian Catholic saint.

## 2. The Idol of the Defeated Clerical-Fascists

A true quasi-intellectual cult of Dominik Mandić has been developed among the Franciscan friars and Ustasha immigrants all over the world. The significance of his role lies in the fact that he was ready to discard even the slightest serious scientific method in historiography if it appeared to him to be inadequate for the realisation of his ideological ideas and the political goals. He artistically reshaped the past in accordance with the daily political needs. By a revision of all the scientific statements made until then, he removed and changed all that did not fit into the ideal picture of the romantically-conceived Croatian past. He incessantly came down on Johannes Lucius, Franjo Rački, Vatroslav Jagić, Ferdo Šišić and Nada Klaić. The eminent Croatian immigrant Dušan Žanko expressed the following opinion on Mandić’s work in 1973: “Mandić’s historical works in regard to this were an excellent scientific support to Starčević’s, Šufļajev’s, Lukas’, Cimerman’s and Makanac’s philosophical-political theses on the Croatian cultural-historic tradition. Moreover, they would be the documentary basis for the future creation of the Croatian history’s sense in accordance with the plan of one philosophical history that had not been written yet. . . The logic of Mandić’s medieval governmental-ethnical and cultural history of the Croats, together with ‘the national question’, if it was ‘fundamental’ in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina – and embodied in ‘the present-day reality’ – yes, that logic was by itself the condition of its value. It connected the national spirit to the national mentality from the first days of its genesis to the meaning of the latest events. The Croatian nation was the people’s nation in its genesis and, as such, it was accepted and treated in the contemporary cultural and political union of the nations from the West, and not one Croatian generation, throughout all the political storms . . . has ever abandoned or forgotten the character of its statehood” (p. 216-217).

### a) The Imagined Serbian Dominance in the Era of Communism

The book *The Croats and the Serbs: Two Old Different Nations* was the crucial “creation” of Dominik Mandić, practically the synthesis of all his works. He engaged in the parallel comparison of the Croatian and the Serbian historical courses, conspicuously emphasising a whole spectrum of differences and proving the necessity of a political and legal separation. He did not find it difficult to prove that the Serbs and the Croats were

not one nation, and he had many arguments for the thesis on the futility of the Yugoslav project. However, through that, he made an artificial parallel between the murders of Stjepan Radić and Aleksandar Karađorđević and the mutual massacres of the Serbs and the Croats in the Second World War. Although the Croats and the Slovenes strove feverishly for the state union with the Serbs in 1918, for that was the only way for them to preserve their national territories, several decades later, Mandić and the authors with similar views insisted that the individual nations were not even asked whether they wanted Yugoslavia or not. Although a Croat, Josip Broz Tito, had been at the head of the Communist regime for decades and his dictatorship was extremely anti-Serbian oriented, Mandić, by the simple substitution of theses, insisted that the Serbs were dominant in the Yugoslav state even under Communism. Thus, he wrote the following in the preface of the first edition in 1970: “The centralised organisation of the Communist Party in Yugoslavia allowed the Serbs, who were the powerful majority in all institutions of the party, to have a resolute influence and real rule in all the federal republics, as well as to take advantage of the entire Yugoslav state union for their special Serbian national goals. Naturally, this created a legitimate dissatisfaction and opposition among the other nations, which would, at the crucial moment, necessarily lead to new mutual fights and the repeated disintegration of Yugoslavia. The Serbs exerted the greatest pressure on the Croats in present-day Yugoslavia. Today, nobody claims anymore that the Slovenes and the Macedonians are the same nation as the Serbs, although there are eminent scholars and leading politicians in Yugoslavia and the world who still follow the misconceptions from the First World War, namely, that the Serbs, the Croats and the Montenegrins are one and the same nation with one joint language. Based on that, many contemporary Serbian politicians are preoccupied with the thought that they will eventually take the national identity away from the Croats and transform them into Serbs. Therefore, they suppressed the Croatian name and the Croatian cultural characteristics everywhere; they established Serbian colonies and made the Serbs stronger in Croatia; they exhausted Croatia with enormous taxes for the central federation; they devastated the Croatian economy, disabled its development and the development of the undeveloped Croatian regions by the policies of credit loans, foreign currency and investment. Thus, this caused high unemployment in almost all the regions in Croatia, which caused the Croats there to massively emigrate abroad, at the great disadvantage and ruin of the Croatian national being” (Dominik Mandić: *The Collected Works*, Vol. VI, ZIRAL, Chicago, Rome, Zurich, Toronto 1980, p. 12).

The Serbs really did constitute the numerical majority in the Communist Party or in the League of Communists, but the organisation of the party was such that the Serbian political officials could be easily outvoted in case of need. Could the Serbian national goals really be the artificial inauguration of new nations: the Macedonian, the Montenegrin and the Muslim ones? The Croats were not the ones who had been stripped of their national identity and transformed into Serbs under the Communist regime, it was the conversion process of the Catholic Serbs into Croats that was carried out. The problem of the same language usage by both the Serbs and the Croats could be solved by the return of the Croats to their Croatian, chakavian, language, instead of their several-decade-long mutilation of the Serbian language by the creation of their own grotesque variant of it. The Croatian name was not suppressed anywhere, but the Serbian name was. No Serbian colonies were established in Croatia under Communism, but the Serbs were displaced from Croatia to Vojvodina, under the order of the regime, to populate the

deserted German territories there. The taxes, that is, the fees, were sent to the central treasury and were evenly collected over the entire Yugoslavia; whereas the credit, foreign currency and investment policies were tendentiously adjusted to the Slovenian and the Croatian interests as the primary ones. The regions mostly populated by Serbs remained economically underdeveloped in the Croatian federal unit. Unemployment in the Croatian regions was much below the Yugoslav average, whereas the greater immigration of the Croats in comparison to the Serbian immigration was a result of the previous migration processes, which made the Croatian diaspora larger than the Serbian one, and therefore, more powerful to attract new immigrants and asylum seekers.

### **b) The Construction of the Original Croatian Homeland**

Citing the oldest news on the Croats and the Serbs from various historical sources, Mandić, based on the twice mentioned “Horoatos” on stone plaques in the Greek language from the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, found at the mouth of the Don River, pretentiously reached a conclusion about the existence of “the Croats from the Don” and immediately entitled a section of his book “The Don Croatia”. Perhaps that was just a linguistic coincidence or perhaps the existence of two Croats was really noted at some point. In any case, for serious historians it was a matter of a still unsolved mystery, whereas Mandić had no dilemma about it. “If the Greek suffix ‘-os’ is discarded in both inscriptions, we are left with the pure Croatian name in the kajkavian pronunciation: ‘Horoat’” (p. 15). This was not about any kind of kajkavian pronunciation, as various foreigners, the Magyars and the Serbs included, called the Croats “Horoats”; moreover, kajkavian was not the Croatian language at all, not even its oldest variant. Similarly to Niko Županić, who surmised that the term “Croats” in a scrambled form was actually hidden under Pliny’s name of Corite or Corte, used for some Iranian tribe, Mandić immediately concluded that various Iranian tribes lived in the Don River region between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, and that the Croats, who also lived there, must have been Iranians” (p. 15).

Assumptions about the true meaning of the name “Croat” ensued, and also citations of authors who assumed that it was derived from the Iranian word “horvac”, which meant “the bed of the sun” or “hurvat”, which meant “friend”. “The titles “king”, “ban”, “zhupan”, given to the old Croatian rulers, were of Iranian origin as well. The religion of the old Croats also had Iranian emblems: the God of light and darkness, the veneration of fire, cremation, etc. The Croatian words that denoted religious notions were also Iranian: God (*Bog*), faith (*vjera*), sacrifice (*žrtva*), flock (*roj*), Easter (*vazam*), to cry out (*vapiti*), to summon (*zazivati*), to foretell (*gati*), etc. Following the Iranian example, the Croats marked the cardinal points of the territories where they lived with paint. White denoted the West, red denoted the South, green denoted the East and black denoted the North. The terms White or western Croatia, Red or southern Croatia and Green or eastern Croatia derived from this. The old Croatian national art also carried the emblems of the Eastern and the Iranian art, particularly the Croatian wattle. The Croats also brought their national coat of arms with 64 red and white squares from Iran” (p. 16). The title “king” was the Slavic term for the name Carl, whereas the word “ban” was of Avarian origin, and the Croats used it first in Krbava and Gacka, where the Avars, after the settlement of the Croats, lived for a long time under the rule of the Croatian princes. “Zhupan” was a general Slavic term, as well as most of the words Mandić cited as

Croatian. Natko Nodilo proved in the book *The Old Faith of the Serbs and the Croats* that the subject in question was the Slavic religion, whereas everything else may point to proto-Slavic or proto-Indo-European origins, especially the terms that were similar to the Sanskrit expressions. When he mentioned western, eastern and southern “Croatia”, Mandić forgot to mention northern Croatia, whose corresponding name would be “Black Croatia”. As far as the coat of arms was concerned, the Croats might have taken it from Iran, but it fell out of their airplane at some point during the flight.

It was even more hideous when Mandić listed “Harauvatish” as one of 23 tribes that were subjugated to the Persian ruler Darius I the Great in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., as well as the national name “Harahvaiti” from the Iranian Holy Book (Zend-) Avesta, establishing a relation between them and the Croats. When it came to the data of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, Mandić chose the one that he found suitable and took it for granted, whereas he automatically disqualified the data that was not in favour of his theses. The data on Great or White Croatia in the territory of present-day Krakow were probably true. It was confirmed by several Arab writers and by old Russian chronicles. “The great similarity between the Croatian and the Slovakian languages, whose mutual similarity is far greater than their similarity to other Slavic languages, clearly point to the fact that the majority of the Croats migrated to the south from northern Slovakia” (p. 20). As to that, Mandić mentioned some Croatian families in present-day Czech and southern Polish regions, stating that, during the reign of the Bohemian King Boleslaus I around the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, “the Croatian name gradually disappeared and the Croats from those regions assimilated with the Bohemians, the Moravians and the Slovaks.”

A few decades later, during the reign of the Polish King Boleslaus I the Brave, “. . . the Polishisation of the old Croats gradually started in the regions around the Vistula River. Nevertheless, the Croatian name and the Croatian national consciousness prevailed there for a long time. . . . The emigrants from the surrounding areas of Krakow registered themselves as White Croats with the American authorities at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 21). All this data was probably true, but what ensued afterwards was a new arbitrary construction of Mandić, according to which: “. . . the rear-Carpathian White Croats were of the same descent as the Don Croats, which is evident from their national name. The Croatian name did not derive from a general term as to be independently generated in various places; it was a specific proper name with a particular meaning. Therefore, wherever the Croats are mentioned, whether it is in the Don River region, in the rear-Carpathian region, at the Adriatic Sea, or elsewhere, they are members of the same Croatian nation that we find on the Don River at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. It was evident that the rear-Carpathian Croats came from the region of the Don River from their name, the White or Western Croats. They were the ‘White’ or the Western Croats, whereas the Southern or the ‘Red’ Croats remained on the Don River. Although we do not have the sources, which would definitely testify of this, all of this points us to the conclusion that one part of the Don Croats was driven to the West during the invasion of Europe by the Huns (in 375 A.D.), and they reached the region to the south of the present-day Carpathian Mountains. There, the Iranian Croats assimilated with various local Slavic tribes and accepted the Slavic language from them. However, after the fall of the Hun supreme rule, the Croats organised the rear-Carpathian Slavs into a state and gave them the Croatian national name” (p. 21-22).

It was obvious that Dominik Mandić propagated a non-Slavic theory on the origin of the Croats, and he himself concluded that the fewer the relevant sources there were the

better, as he would be able to vent his poetic freedom and meaningless prattle. If the Croats were really originally a non-Slavic nation that was Slavinised after its settlement among the Slavic people to the south from the Carpathians, then their name was just an empty shell, a memory of a nation that had disappeared a long time ago. This was a term that lost its original meaning seventeen centuries ago and acquired a completely new one. Allegedly, it would all repeat in the Balkans, where the Slavinised Croats arrived among the new Slavic masses, accepted their language and imposed their name and rule on them. Afterwards, when those Croats historically completely disappeared as well, new Croats were created from the Slovenes, that is, from the Slovenian kajkavians, and lately, from the Catholic Serbs. Thus, the subject in question were five different ethnic substrata that carried the same name. The first substratum was comprised of the Asian or the Iranian Croats, who settled on the Don River; it is unknown what language they spoke nor whether they managed to preserve it there. The second substratum was comprised of the Asian Croats assimilated by the Slavic masses, whose language they accepted, giving them their name. The third substratum was comprised of the Slavs who accepted the Croatian name upon their settlement at the Adriatic Sea; they ethnically assimilated with the indigenous Slavs there, accepted their language and imposed the Croatian name and rule on them. The fourth substratum was comprised of the Croatian aristocrats, who settled on the new estates in Western Slavonia, their fellow compatriots having dispersed in all directions under the Turkish invasion, and imposed the Croatian name on the indigenous kajkavians there. The fifth substratum came into existence when the Roman Catholic Church, after the failure of the Illyrian Movement, organised a broad campaign of the identification of all the Catholic Serbs as members of the Croatian national entity, with the acceptance of the Serbian, shtokavian, national language as the literary one in order to facilitate the denationalisation of the Serbs. So how can the present-day Croats be related to the alleged Iranian Croats in any way?

### **c) Arbitrary Conclusions About Serbian Origins**

Mandić tried to present a similar construction in relation to the oldest Serbian history as well, starting from Pliny the Elder, who mentioned the Serbs in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., and Ptolemy, who mentioned the Serbs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. Županić considered those Serbs to be the ancestors of the present-day Serbs, and determined that their original homeland was the Northern Caucasus. Thus, Županić claimed that the alleged Serbs from Caucasus, as an autochthonous Alarodian nation, were neither of Slavic nor Indo-European origin. In any case, the most important thing for Mandić was to point out that “surely, the mentioned Serbs were not Slavs” (p. 24), for the Slavs did not exist then either in Caucasus nor at the Azov Sea. As he cited the old references to the Serbs in Asia Minor Bitinia, Tesalica, Frigia, etc, an assumption was made that the Serbs originated from Kurdistan! Thus, he claimed that, in today’s Kurdish and Turkish languages, “. . . ‘ser’ meant a head, a chief, whereas a ‘serb’ meant a flock, a crowd” (p. 25). Then, he jumped to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when the Serbs had already allegedly been Slavinised on the eastern bank of the Elbe River. However, he admitted himself that the Franciscan chronicler Fredegar wrote in 631 that the Serbs originated from the Slavs” (p. 27). “This means that the Serbs were Slavinised before the mentioned year and that they spoke the language of the Western Slavs” (p. 27). There is absolutely no proof for the claim that the Serbs really spoke the West Slavic language. However, they did populate



the territory from the Elbe River to the Baltic Sea, and the Serbian tribes of Bodrići, Ljutići, Pomorjani and others lived in the immediate neighbourhood of the present-day White Russians, and most probably spoke the East Slavic language. Natko Nodilo also stated that the Croats were of 'Lesh' (Polish) origin, whereas the Serbs were of 'Ant' (Russian) origin. After all, not one of the Western Slavic dialects, such as the chakavian found among the Croats, could be found anywhere in the Serbian territories in the Balkans. Even if the Serbs encountered some previously settled Slavs, they were of East Slavic origin, so the mutual language differences were insignificant. The present-day Lusatian Serbs speak a language that is more similar to the Polish or the Czech languages, due to linguistic influences in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, just as the Croatian-chakavian and the Slovenian-kajkavian changed over time, under the strong linguistic influences of the Serbian-shtokavian language.

Dominik Mandić tried to correct Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in regard to the issue of the Serbs and their origin, for he did not at all like Porphyrogenitus' claim that the Serbs lived in the region of Boika, to the north of Hungary, from the start or from ancient times. They lived in the neighbourhood of Francia to the west, and Great or White Croatia to the southeast. According to Mandić's views, ". . . that would mean that the original homeland of the Serbs was on the Elbe River, in the present-day northern Czech Republic. However, the name 'Serb' was a specific national name; therefore, wherever the Serbs were mentioned, they had to be of the same national origin as the Serbs in the Caucasus and Asia Minor. The Serbs must have come from those regions to the Elbe River. This was so long ago that the Serbs in the 10<sup>th</sup> century no longer possessed an awareness of their origin from the East. The unconscious awareness of their origin from the East or the South was only preserved in the term 'White' or 'Western', as the Polabian Serbs called themselves; the Polabian Serbs were 'Western', for there were other Serbs as well, the 'Eastern' or the 'Southern'" (p. 27).

#### **d) A Beam of Light in the Darkness of the Monastery**

Nevertheless, we have to agree with Mandić's opinion when he refuted the theory on the Slavic settlement in the Balkans that was developed by Franjo Rački, Vatroslav Jagić and the Austrian historian Dummler, and supported by Vjekoslav Klaić and Ferdo Šišić to some extent. "Dummler, Rački and Jagić tried to prove that all South Slavs, when they crossed the Danube near its mouth, were one nation with one mutual language, which was divided into three dialects and which belonged to the same branch of the Slavic languages. At some point during the 7<sup>th</sup> or at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, that nameless Slavic mass was gradually divided into two tribal nuclei: the Croatian one in Dalmatia, between the Cetina and Zrmanja Rivers; and the Serbian one in Raška. Those nuclei gathered around themselves the neighbouring Slavic tribes by their special vitality and militancy, and thus, they created two states: Croatia and Raška" (p. 29). After an interpretation of the disputable point of view, Mandić presented one of his own: "Recently, a thorough examination of the old sources about the settlement of particular Slavic groups in the Danube river basin and in the Balkans led to the increasingly spread belief that two migrations should be differentiated in the history of the South Slavs. The first migration lasted from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, whereupon the nameless Slavic crowd arrived at the right bank of the Danube. During the second migration, in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, first the Croats, then the Serbs and finally the

Bulgarians, as already developed nations, came to the South. They eventually assimilated with the Slavs from the first migration and established their national states of the Croats, then the Serbs and the Bulgarians. The part of the South Slavs from the first migration, which remained outside the Croatian state in the farthest north-western territories, and which was under German and Frankish rule, was the only part that had to wait for centuries to become the separate nation of the Slovenes” (p. 30). The two migrations are an irrefutable fact, together with the arrival of the Serbs, the Croats and the Bulgarians under their respective names. However, after the arrival, the Croats encountered the indigenous Slavs, Avars and Romans; the Bulgarians assimilated with the Slavic mass and gave it their name and several anthropological characteristics, whereas the Serbs did not encounter any indigenous Slavs or Avars, except in Macedonia and Pannonia to some extent; the Serbs encountered some Romanic citizenry that they soon assimilated.

Mandić himself admitted that the kajkavians were a separate Slavic group, but his claim that they arrived at the Balkans in 500 B.C. was an exaggeration. In relation to this, he wrote, “Even before the destruction of the Lusatian culture around 500 B.C., one part of the rear-Carpathian Slavs had to arrive at the left bank of the Danube, across the western slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, between the Morava and the Vaga Rivers, in search of suitable agricultural regions, as they were farmers. The creation of the kajkavian dialect could be explained only by a long stay in Pomoravlje and their separation from other Slavs due to the high Carpathian Mountains. No other dialects of the rear-Carpathian and other Slavic languages bore any resemblance to the kajkavian dialect” (p. 30). He said that the speakers of kajkavian crossed over to the right bank of the Danube in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. “The first barbaric nations, who crossed over to the right bank of the Danube’s middle course, were the German Goths and the Slavic kajkavians, who were subjected to them. They initially settled in the Roman provinces of Valeria and Upper Pannonia, whereas other provinces served them for plunder. When the Huns crossed over to the right bank of the Danube in the winter of 394/95, the Goths and the Slavic kajkavians, who had already settled there, had to acknowledge the Hun supremacy. In 441, Attila the Hun conquered Lower Pannonia, Savia and Noricum, so the Slavic kajkavians started to settle there as well, but to a lesser extent than in Valeria and Upper Pannonia. . . The settlement of the Slavic kajkavians continued in Savia and Noricum even after the fall of the Hun state, during the Gothic administration of those provinces from 489 to 555, as the Slavic kajkavians acknowledged the supreme rule of the Goths and collaborated with them” (p. 31).

The Langobards and the Gepids quarrelled over Pannonia, so the first emigrated and the latter were destroyed by the Avars. “The Avars left the repopulation of the deserted Upper Pannonia, Savia and the Noricum provinces to the Subcarpathian Slavic kajkavian speakers, both to those who already crossed over to the right bank of the Danube and to those who still remained on its left bank at the time. Both groups acknowledged the Avarian supremacy and helped them in their military actions. At the time, the Subcarpathian Slavic kajkavian speakers completely abandoned the left bank of the Danube and left it to their north-western Slavic neighbours, who were of the same origin and language as the former forefathers of the present-day Slovaks. After the Longobards’ abandonment of Upper Pannonia and Noricum, the Slavic kajkavians quickly spread to the Bavarian frontiers and to the southern slopes of the Friulian Alps. In 595 and the following year, they had already fought against the Bavarian Duke

Tasilla. Three years later, they invaded Istria, where their further advancement was suppressed by Callinicus, the Exarch of Ravenna. In 600, Pope Gregory the Great complained to Maxime, the Bishop of Salona, about the peril that the Pannonian Slavs posed to Italy, who were advancing into Italy through Istria. In 602, the Slavs, together with the Avars and the Longobards severely plundered Istria again, and the following year, they helped the Langobards conquer the towns in present-day Lombardy and Venice. During the first years of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the settlement of the Subcarpathian Slavic kajkavian speakers in Upper Pannonia, Savia and Noricumum, from the Danube to Bavaria and to the Lombardian plains in present-day Italy was finished. Their descendants speak kajkavian even today in north-western Croatia, Slovenia, south-eastern Austria and in south-western Hungary (Vinidisi)” (p. 32-33).

Mandić's portrayal of the kajkavian Slavs was surprisingly objective and he based his theses on the statements of older writers, such as Hieronimus, Paulus Dijaconus, Manender, Ampodius and Gregorius Magnus, whose works he cited. However, his data on the separate arrival of the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect and those of the shtokavian-ekavian dialect to the Balkans was extremely unconvincing and factographically far-fetched, as the shtokavian language, almost certainly, branched into the ikavian, ijekavian and ekavian dialects only in the Balkan Peninsula. He said the following for the speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect: “Under the lead of the Goths, the Slavs who originated from southern Ukraine arrived at the left bank of the Danube at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century at the latest. Linguistically, they were the speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect, as well as their fellow comrades, the Ukrainians, from whom they separated by following the lead of their masters, the Goths” (p. 33). According to Mandić, when the Goths reached the Danube and subjugated the Slavic kajkavian speakers there, the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian “. . . spread over the entire Gepid state, engaging in agriculture and helping their masters in military campaigns. When the Mongolian Huns subjugated the Goths and the Gepids in the Danube valley around 378, the Slavic speakers of shtokavian-ikavian between the Alut and Maroš came under their rule as well, although they were previously subjected to the Gepids. Around 441, Attila conquered Srem and its capital Sirmium, so the Slavic speakers of shtokavian-ikavian crossed the Danube and started to settle in Lower Pannonia, to the east from Mursian Lake, which extended to the south from Osijek, across Vinkovici to the confluence of the Bosut River with the Sava River” (p. 34).

It was recorded that the Slavs and the Gepids organised an uprising against the Huns around 454, and forced them to retreat to the Don River. The Gepids ruled again for the following hundred years, and “. . . the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect, their subjects, crossed over to the right bank of the Danube in large numbers, densely populating Srem to the east from the Mursijsko Lake. . . As Lower Pannonia also comprised Bosnian Pannonia, to the east from the watershed of the Ukrina and Usora Rivers; and Mačva, all the way to Kolubara; in the Roman period, the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect populated those regions simultaneously with the settlement of Srem, namely, between the Hun's conquest of Sirmium in 441 and the fall of the Gepids in 567. The Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect settled the regions of Roman-Byzantine Dalmatia, from the Drina River to Istria, when they seized them, in the service of the Avars, in the period of Emperor Phocas's reign (602-610), and the first years of Emperor Heraclius' reign (610-641). The political frontier between

Dalmatia, on the one hand, and Savia and Noricumum, on the other, divided the shtokavian-ikavian speakers from the kajkavian ones, whereas the Drina River divided the ikavian speakers in the west from the ekavian speakers in the east. The old Slavs had to determine those frontiers by mutual consent or their masters at the time determined the frontiers for them” (p. 35).

Mandić stated that the Slavic speakers of shtokavian-ekavian settled Dacia after its desertion by the Goths, the Gepids and the Slavic speakers of shtokavian-ikavian. According to him, the matter was about the East Slavs “. . . who originated from the region of the Dnieper River and used the shtokavian-ekavian dialect, similarly to their relatives in the old regions around the Dnieper River and to the east of it. For many centuries, these Slavs lived on the left bank of the Danube as free and independent people, acknowledging neither Gothic nor Avarian authority, nor, most certainly, that of the Huns either. . . The East Slavic speakers of ekavian started with the intrusions across the Danube, into the Roman-Byzantine state, during the first years of the reign of Emperor Justin I (518-527). In 547, the Slavic ekavian speakers advanced all the way to Drač. Initially, plunder was the aim of those intrusions; however, from 550, East Slavic ekavian speakers started to settle permanently in the Balkans. In 589, they founded an independent Slavic state in Peloponnesus, which existed under the name of Sclavinia until 806. The particularly great influx of the East Slavic ekavian speakers to the south of the Danube took place at the time of the internal clashes and the succession fights in the Byzantine Empire during the reign of the worthless Emperor Phocas (602-610), and the first ruling years of Emperor Heraclius I (610-641). Then, the East Slavic ekavian speakers settled all the territories of the Illyrian prefecture to the Drina River, with the exception of the littoral provinces of Predolje (Prevolis) and the New Epirus, which were previously seized by the Avars and their subjects, the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ikavian dialect” (p. 35-36). Mandić did not mention the Slavic speakers of the shtokavian-ijekavian dialect here at all, but his confirmation that the Slavic kajkavian speakers and the Slavic shtokavian-ikavian speakers were not Croats was very important, as other Croatian historians persistently refused to openly examine this issue.

### **e) Garnishing Historical Events With the Croatian Name**

Concerning the arrival of the Croats to the Balkan Peninsula, Mandić repeated the already known facts, but he could not resist garnishing them with his own constructions, like the one that the Avars gave up the conquest of Constantinople when they heard that the Croats crossed the Danube, or when he boldly claimed that Saint Isidore of Seville in his Etymology had described the Croatian conquest of the Greek provinces under the name of the Slavs. Therefore, following the Great Chronicle of Saint Isidore of Seville from 743, he claimed that the Croats banished the Avars from Dalmatia, Predolje (Prevalis), and the New and the Old Epirus. Thus, wherever the Slavs fought against the Avars, those were actually Croatian fights, although all historical sources stated that the Croats seized the territories between the Raša River in Istria and the Cetina River under Split. He arbitrarily interpreted the data on the extremely bloody clashes between the Slavs and the Avars presented by the Byzantine writer George Pisida in 629 in the following manner: “. . . the Slavic kajkavian speakers and the shtokavian-ikavian speakers, the former Avarian subjects in Pannonia and Dalmatia, rebelled under Croatian influence and joined the Croats in the fights against their former masters, the

Avars” (p. 43-44). If no evidence existed for that claim, then Mandić did not need the evidence at all. It required no effort from him to write, “The last clashes between the Croats and the Avars took place in Srem around 635” (p. 44). He did not care at all about the fact that the Croats were not present in those fights nor could they have been present. The historical sources testify that the subject in question here was the rebellion of a Greek population and a broader group of a Romanic population, whom the Avars had kept in the position of half-slavery to toil on the Avarian land. Having defeated the Avars with their leader Khan Kuber, they moved to the vicinity of Thessalonica. Since the work *The Miracles of St. Demetrius*, by an anonymous author, stated that Kuber was joined by other nations in his rebellion, Mandić concluded that those “other nations” were certainly Croats, thus he observed, “Actually, we have here the records of the last fights between the Croats and the Avars, which took place between the Sava and the Danube, with the help of the Slavs from the first migration. During those fights, Kuber also rebelled with the descendents of the Greek captives. After the Croats crushingly defeated the Avars in two battles, with additional participation of the Slavs from the first migration, the Romanic remnants from the Bosnian mountains, and Kuber, with the descendents of the Greek captives, they were forced to retreat to the northern part of the Danube river basin, above the Tisa River. Afterwards, Kuber left Srem and headed to the south, towards Thessalonica” (p. 45).

Dominik Mandić did not have even one single fact in support of such a claim. In order to compensate for the lack of evidence, he used Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ work, *On the Rule of the Empire* and its 30<sup>th</sup> chapter, in which it says, “One part separated from the Croats, who came to Dalmatia, and gained the rule over Illyria and Pannonia” (p. 46). The Croats never conquered the entire Dalmatia, but only a precisely defined region, and if one part of them separated and went to Illyria and Pannonia, it was certainly a small part; even if that part managed to gain rule, it certainly could not ethnically prevail either in Pannonia or Illyria. Illyria initially comprised the territory from the Mat River in Albania to Ino above Vienna; and during the reign of Diocletian, it comprised the territory from the Drina River to the Rhodop Mountains. Mandić insisted that the Illyrian territories were reduced to Albania and Epirus in the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was not impossible that a part of the Croats really emigrated to present-day Greece, for several Croatian toponyms could be found there. As we had already seen, this was possible in Slavonia as well, but those were secluded Croatian places that soon lost their ethnic character. By his uncritical interpretation of Porphyrogenitus, Mandić wanted to convince us that the Croats conquered the entire Dalmatia, the entire Illyria, the entire Pannonia, and in addition to all that, densely populated them. If there really had been so many of them, where did they disappear to in the meantime? The phantasmagorias of Priest Dukljanin were of no avail there, as it had already been scientifically determined that they all were the fabrications. Nevertheless, Mandić wrote, “An old Croatian source testifies to us that the former Croatian state extended to the former Romanic town of Apolonia, not far from present-day Vlora, which lay at the bottom of Porphyrogenitus’ Illyria” (p. 50). It seemed that this former “Croatian state” vanished into thin air, just like the mythical Atlantis, without any evidence of its existence left. Anyway, that Mandić was well aware of the frailty and flimsiness of his constructions was evident from the fact that he failed to mention that Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in the same chapter of his work, clearly defined the frontiers of Croatia and the places of the Serbian-Croatian territorial division. It was stated there: “The

**Comment [Z21]:** Translator’s note. This name could not be confirmed from the available sources, therefore it was left in the original

Croatian country started from the Cetina River and it extended across the littoral to the Istrian boundaries, that is, to the town of Labin. From the mountainous side, it extended a bit over the Istrian district. However, it came closer to the Serbian country near the Cetian and Hlijevno, as the Serbian country was facing all other countries; it came closer to Croatia in the north and to Bulgaria in the south” (Nada Klaić: *The Sources for the Croatian History Until 1526*, “Školska Knjiga”, Zagreb 1972, p. 42).

That the Cetina River was undoubtedly the border between the Serbian and the Croatian immigrants was proven by Chapter 36 of Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ work *De Administrando Imperio*, which carried the title *On the Pagans Who Are Called the Nerentines and the Land Where They Live Now*. The following text is found there: “The land where the Pagans live now was formerly owned by the Romans as well, who were moved from Rome to Dalmatia and settled there by Emperor Diocletian. The same Pagans originated from the non-baptised Serbs, from the time of that Archont who ran to Emperor Heraclius. The Avars enslaved and devastated this land as well, and it was repopulated during the reign of Emperor Heraclius. They were called Pagans, because they were not baptised at the same time all the Serbs were. In the Slavic languages, ‘Pagans’ meant those who were not baptised. And in the Romeian language, their land was called Arenta, therefore, the Romeians called them the Arentans. The populated towns in Paganian were: Mokro, Verulja, Ostrok, and Slavinica. They populated the following islands as well: the large island of Korčula with the town on it; another large island was Mljet, which St. Luke mentioned in the *Acts of the Apostles*, calling it Malita, where a snake bit St. Paul on the finger and he threw it in the fire; another large island was Hvar; and another island was Brač. There were other islands as well, which were not populated by the same Pagans: the island of Hoara, the island of Vis, the island of Lastovo” (p. 44). Today, the mentioned towns are called Makarska, Vrulje, Zaostrog and Gradac, whereas the island of Hoara is today’s Hvar Island. Therefore, if Porphyrogenitus’ data on the emigration of one part of the Croats to Pannonia and Illyria was true, it was obvious that this part was not large and it did not mean that they automatically annexed Pannonia and Illyria to Croatia, and even all territories between them, which were populated by the Serbs.

### **f) The Croatian Stamp Over the Acropolis, and the Anthropological Types of the Croats**

We have already seen that Vjekoslav Klaić wrote about a group of Croats that moved to Slavonia, where it certainly assimilated with the indigenous kajkavian speakers. In the sixth edition of the almanac *The Antique Dealer* (Belgrade 1914), Niko Županić published the extensive research paper *The Croats in Athens: An Appendix to the Anthropology and Historical Ethnology of Attica*, in which he made a multidisciplinary assessment of three villages in Greece that were called “Croats (Hrvati)”. Županić emphasised the fact that the present-day Greeks were not the descendants of the ancient Hellenes in the true sense of the word. “The contemporary Greeks are fond of the fact that the history of the Hellenes took place in their country and the Classical Greek culture originated and developed there, although they are not the real descendants of the ancient Hellenes, neither by blood nor spirit. They mostly represent an ethnic conglomeration of various foreign tribes, which were forced to

accept the Greek language by the Greek Church organisation and the system of the Byzantine state” (p. 96). The three villages with the Croatian name were proof that the Croats, at least to some extent, took part in the creation of this ethnic conglomeration. In relation to that, Županić pointed out that “. . . pleasant feelings overwhelm a Yugoslav, especially a Croat, when they look at the gorge between Pentelikon and Himetus from the Athenian Acropolis, and they know that the village Croats lies there, the memory of our ancestors’ lives near the Acropolis; and the hill Calon as an obvious mark that destiny has chosen us, the Yugoslavs, to resurrect a new life on the Classical Greek ruins and the wreck of the Byzantine Empire. One who is familiar with the history of the Slavic immigration to Ancient Greece in the Middle Ages and who knows that Constantine Porphyrogenitus wrote about the Slavified Ancient Greece, and the fact that our language was not extinct in Lakonia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, can certainly reason like this” (p. 96).

The village Croats, which lies on the road from Athens to Marathon Field, “. . . was not big, for it only has around twenty families between the barrier walls and two or three outside them. The villagers today do not speak Croatian nor do they know anything about the Croats in the north-western part of the Balkan Peninsula. They are not even Greeks; they are Albanians. Although they speak Albanian within the family, they do not know anything about their origin, nor do they know from where and when they settled in Attica. . . The Albanians in the village of Croats are good Greek patriots and like to read the Athenian newspapers. Hellenisation has reached such a degree that the Albanian language will become extinct in the Croats village perhaps by the next generation” (p. 100). In any case, “. . . the Croatian language is not spoken in the Attican Croats village, for the Slavic language died out in the entire Ancient Greece and the Archipelago in the Middle and the New Ages. However, there is no doubt that once, in the Middle Ages, our language echoed through the woods of stone pines and olive groves in the gorge between Illynt (Himotos) and Pentelikon, near the Valanaris River, where the pink oleander blossomed. It was true that we have not found this written anywhere so far, but the name of the settlement and the general circumstances of the Slavic settlement in Ancient Greece certainly lead to this conclusion. Even if this topographic name were an isolated case in Attica and in Ancient Greece in general, it would by itself prove the Slavic origin of its former inhabitants to a greater extent than the arguments to the contrary presented by the Slavophobes. They were to provide only two examples on the frivolous and artificial interpretations of the origin of the name ‘Croats’, just for the sake of concealing the existence of our nation near Athens. Namely, when I asked a Greek historian in Athens what his opinion was on the Slavic settlements in Attica, especially in the village of Croats, he told me that the topographic name ‘Croats’ was not a proof of any kind that its former inhabitants were the Croats by nationality, and that the proprietor of the village was most certainly called Corvatus, whose form in the Latin genitive was Croati (that is, Croat’s village) and thus, the village itself gained that name. The manager of the estate Croats, Mr. Gudos, told me about the etymological interpretation of some other educated Greek, according to which ‘Croats’ was of Turkish origin, and it was derived from the word harab = the ruins. We could not discuss these presentations further, which were artificial from the first glance and had their source in too delicate patriotism, for historical research should be governed only by love of the truth and knowledge. After all, all overly serious historians and ethnologists today admit that the contemporary Greeks are not the descendants of the

ancient Hellenes, and therefore, are to be regarded as the anthropological amalgamation of the Hellenes, the Slavs, the Albanians and the Vlachs. Judging by numerous Slavic settlements in Ancient Greece, the Slavic blood runs through the veins of the present-day Greeks perhaps to the same extent as Greek blood does, only the more cultivated Greeks imposed their language on this ethnical amalgamation with the help of the governmental and religious system” (p. 107-110).

Based on such a conclusion, Županić was of the opinion that “. . . it was easily understandable that, apart from the mass of other Slavs, a small number of Croats got lost in Ancient Greece and settled in Thessaly, Attica and Argolida, just as a certain number of Serbs settled in Pieria, to the northwest of Olympus, and built the town of Srpčište Ta Servlia during the reign of Emperor Heraclius in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 110). Županić pointed out that some Serbs went even more to the south, to Thessaly, Coryntha, Arcadia, Calavria, Mesinia and Lacedemonia, a proof of which were the toponyms Sotрпи, Serboksjija, Serbianika, Servot, Serpani, Servota, Serpisia, Sarpica i Servejka. “A question was raised whether the Croats really came to Attica on the occasion of the great Slavic migrations in the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> century or perhaps later, on their own. This question was not easy to answer correctly, as all sources for the medieval and contemporary history of Ancient Greece had not been collected and published” (p. 110). Niko Županić also resorted to assumptions for lack of original data, but his assumptions were, unlike those of Mandić, serious and reasonable. “Therefore, it is impossible to say when the Croats arrived at Attica. We could now discuss one possibility of their settlement near Athens by the end of the Middle Age and during the New Age. After the fall of Turkey (1458), Attica was in the middle of long-lasting wars and undoubtedly devastated, whereas its masters, the Turkish agas and beys, needed additional manpower for lack of sufficient native subjects. Exactly during those three decades after the fall of the Duchy of Attica, the Turks took a large numbers of slaves away from Croatia and south-eastern Carniola, and since it was reasonable to assume that they did not kill those slaves, but sold them, it is not completely unbelievable that the colonies under the name Croats came into existence then in Macedonia and Ancient Greece. The village of Hrvati or Ervati (meaning the Croats) also exists in the region of Lower Prespa (in the former Bitola district), which today comprises 160 Serbs and 100 Muslim Albanians (only 325 people in total). Numerous topographic names in the region between Šara Mountain and the Bay of Thessalonica testify that the mentioned villages were founded by the Serbs, either in ancient times or later, during Turkish rule. Some of them are Srbinovo ( in the Gorna Dzumaya district), Srbica (in the Kičevo district), Srpci (in the Bitola region) Srbjani (in the Kičevo Kaza), Srbjan (in Bitola Kaza); the village Srbinovo is in Donji Palog (Gostivar region), where no Serbs live today, only 440 Muslim Albanians, just as no Croats live in the Classical Greek village of Croats, but only Albanians” (p. 111).

This parallel of Županić’s was not valid, as it has been scientifically proven many times that all Serbian toponyms in Macedonia were created in the period before the Turkish occupation, and the Serbian population emigrated from there under Albanian pressure. This Albanian pressure did not exist in Attica, for it was sufficiently far away from northern Epirus. Therefore, the Orthodox village, which was called Croats, leads to the conclusion that a group of Albanians, whose name was Croats settled there. This means that their Croatian ancestors settled in Albania and were Albanianised there, and then they settled with a new ethnical identity and an old name in the interior of Greece.



However, the theory that the Turks could populate these territories with their Croatian slaves was not valid, as all slaves were denationalised and sold on various slave markets after the Turkish military campaigns. It was certainly impossible that some Croatian groups settled within the boundaries of the medieval Serbian state and left their mark through various toponyms. There was no evidence that the Croats ever massively settled in any region to the south of the Cetina River, to the east from the Una River, or in Slavonia before the arrival of the Turks. As Županić stated, the important historian Gregorius determined that part of the Croats settled in “. . . the vicinity of Mycenae during the general Slavic migration to Ancient Greece from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> century. If Gregorius' opinion was correct, then it was highly probable that the Croats came to Attica then and that the ancient name Palada was then replaced by the name Croats” (p. 112). However, that is not the explanation, because of the fact that the present-day Attican “Croats” were actually Albanians. Indeed, that territory was repeatedly ravaged and plundered by the Albanian bandits during Turkish rule, but it was impossible that Orthodox Albanians settled there and banished the indigenous Croats. It was obvious that Croats who spoke Albanian settled there long before the Turkish arrival. Historical data testifies that the Athenian supreme Duke Peter (Pedro) IV of Aragon allowed the Orthodox Albanians to settle in Attica in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

However, what was also problematic here was Mandić's positioning of Porphyrogenitus' Illyricum in the territory of today's Albania, considering the fact that Illyricum was a name given to different territories at different times. Thus, in 10 A.D., the Roman Emperor Augustus officially named Dalmatia and Pannonia Illyricum, and he divided it into the upper and lower part as two provinces. Mandić confirmed that himself, naming the regions that were encompassed by Lower Illyricum or Pannonia and Upper Illyricum or Dalmatia: “The first province encompassed the plain from the Bosnian mountains to Ino near Vienna, whereas the second one encompassed the mountainous regions from Petrova Gora and Borje, the mountain in Bosnia, to the Adriatic Sea” (p. 55). Therefore, Illyricum of that time did not encompass any present-day Albanian regions, although Mandić was ready to squeeze almost the entire Albania within the imaginary boundaries of the imaginary Croatian state. It was not a coincidence that the first mention of the Croats dated from documents written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. If any Croatian state existed in the 7<sup>th</sup> or the 8<sup>th</sup> century, especially a state that allegedly spread from Istria to Vlora, it surely would not pass through history completely unnoticed. Such a state simply never existed and all of the Balkans were part of the Byzantine Empire.

After the arrival to the Balkans, Mandić continued, the Croats assimilated with the indigenous Slavs and the Romans, who came into existence by the Romanisation of all the people that had lived there from the most ancient times. He claimed that three anthropological and characterological types of Croats came into existence in that way. Those were “the Dinaric Croats, the Mediterranean Croats and the Pannonian Croats” (p. 58). He wrote for the Dinaric Croats that were quite different from the general Slavic type. “The Dinaric Croats were tall, around 170-180 cm on average, with a elongated skull and a short neck (dolicephalic, with a skull index of 8-95). They had dark eyes and hair and were dark-complexioned. From the Middle Ages, the Dinaric Croats lived in Lika, Dalmatian Zagorje, western and middle Bosnia, in Herzegovina and Montenegro (the medieval Croatian Doclea). The Dinaric Croats brought their physical qualities from the north, where they inherited them from the Slavs who lived in the region of the

Dinaric people from the rear-Carpathian region. They inherited the second part of their physical characteristics from the ancient Dinarics, whose remnants were preserved among the Illyrian-Roman population that the Croats found in their new homeland. The third part of Dinaric characteristics developed on the spot, due to living in healthy, mountainous regions; milk; a vegetarian diet and special folk nurture of children. The influence of each of those three factors is difficult to express in percentages. However, it should be mentioned that the share of the local Romanised remnants of the ancient Dinaric people barely amounted to 20-30% in comparison to the Croats” (p. 58-59). In fact, Mandić here described the anthropological characteristics of the Dinaric Serbs, thus he mentioned ethnically pure Serbian regions. If he was to write about the Croats, he would have to examine solely the chakavian speakers, as they were the only real Croats in the Dinaric regions, which can be proven by the original language they spoke.

We can recognise the anthropological characteristics of the real Croats in Mandić’s description of “the Mediterranean Croats”, assimilated with the Romanic mass and significantly corrected by the later gradually intensive migration of the Serbs to those regions, especially the Catholic Serbs, although the Orthodox Serbs moved there as well. “The Mediterranean type of the Croats lives on the Dalmatian littoral, on the Adriatic islands and in Istria. The Mediterranean Croats are of average height, slightly shorter than the Dinaric Croats; they have an overly round skull, dark hair and eyes and a darkish complexion. The Mediterranean Croats were created by the assimilation of the Croatian newcomers with the indigenous Illyrian-Romanic Mediterranean people. That assimilation started immediately upon the arrival of the Croats. The assimilation took place during the entire Middle Ages in the coastal Roman towns, which were under Byzantine and Venetian rule. . . The Slavs from the first migration did not take part in the creation of the Mediterranean type of the Croats. The old Illyrian-Roman population with the fugitives from Roman Dalmatia and Pannonia lived exclusively on the islands until the arrival of the Croats on the Adriatic Sea in 626” (p. 59-60). The situation was similar on the islands as well. In the places where the Croats ethnically prevailed among the population, the chakavian dialect was preserved, and those places were the islands to the north of Brač Island. The Serbs populated the islands of Brač, Hvar, Korčula and Mljet, and the shtokavian dialect soon prevailed over the Romance dialect there.

Mandić’s construction of the anthropological type of “the Pannonian Croats” was certainly the most hilarious. He wrote the following about this type: “When the Croats gained rule of Lower Pannonia and Pannonian Savia, they immediately started to assimilate with the Slavic kajkavian speakers there. The third type, the Pannonian Croats, emerged out of that assimilation. They were of average height, with blond hair, a reddish complexion and a rather large head. The Croats, as the minority, accepted the kajkavian dialect in the Pannonian regions; nevertheless, they introduced many characteristics of the chakavian dialect in it. Although many Dinaric Croats and Mediterranean Croats came to those regions during the fights with the Turks from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the type of the Pannonian Croats remained obviously predominant in the old Pannonian regions until today. Out of all Croats, this type is the closest to the general Slavic type by its physical and spiritual characteristics. They are of a calm and gentle nature, but determined in the defence of their home and rights. They are characterised by a special love for their homeland and the powerful assimilation of the foreigners” (p. 60-61). It was very interesting that Mandić did not mention the chakavian dialect as the indisputable authentic Croatian

characteristic of the first two types. Here, he admitted that the Croats were the minority, which meant that the Pannonian Slavs assimilated them and imposed the kajkavian dialect on them, and yet, he talked about the type of the Pannonian Croats. It should probably be talked about the Slavonians, whose anthropological type was possibly enriched by the Croats, bringing them their own characteristics, such as the introduction of chakavian characteristics into the kajkavian dialect. And what about the major part of Slavonia, where no kajkavian or chakavian speakers lived? What type of the “Croats” lived there?

### **3. The Refutation of Porphyrogenitus in Light of the Serbian Immigration**

Surmising about the year the Serbs could have arrived to the Balkans, Mandić showed that it was very important to him that the Serbian arrival was after the Croatian arrival, when the Croats had already allegedly driven the Avars out and thus opened the way to the Serbs. Based on some of Porphyrogenitus’ data on the original Serbian settlement in Thessaly, Mandić concluded, “The Serbs from Thessaly lived for centuries under the Serbian name; they had their own Serbian eparchy (bishopric), but they assimilated with the Macedonian Slavs over time, and they have recently become Greeks. The Serbian name and the Serbian nationality were preserved by the descendants of those Serbs, who wanted to return to the Elbe River and who settled in the middle of the Balkans” (p. 63-64). His main problem now was Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ writing about the Serbs. In the chapter 30 of the work *On the Rule Of the Empire*, Mandić found a section in which the Emperor-historian differentiated particular Serbian lands, out of which one principality carried the name Serbia, and the others were called Duklja (Doclea), Travunia, Zachlunia and Pagania. He tried to interpret this as if the Serbs lived only in Serbia, but Porphyrogenitus’ view was the following: “Duklja (Doclea) was close to the fortifications of the Drač district: close to Lješ, Ulcinj and Bar, extending further to Kotor and over the mountains to Serbia. The Archonty of Travunia started from the town of Kotor, spread to Dubrovnik and over the mountains to Serbia. The Archonty of Zachlunia started from Dubrovnik and spread to the Neretva River; on the coastal side it bordered the Pagans (the district of Neretva), and it spread over the mountains in the north to the Croats (the White Croats) and to Serbia, over the mountains on the frontal side. Pagania (Nerenta) started from the Neretva River, extended to the Cetina River and had three parishes: Rastok, Makar and Dolje” (p. 64). The only thing Mandić could do here was put in brackets that the reference was to “the White Croats”.

However, Mandić’s real problem occurred when Constantine Porphyrogenitus precisely stated at the end of that chapter that the Croatian state bordered Serbia on “the Cetina River and Hlivno” (p. 64). Moreover, the famous Emperor wrote in Chapters 32 and 36 that “the Serbs initially populated Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta” (p. 64). Now, Mandić tried to refute Porphyrogenitus’ claims without any argument in the following way: “Those three provinces were initially populated by the Croats, and they belonged to Red, or southern Croatia. When internal clashes arose in Croatia due to the murder of King Miroslav in 948, the Serbian Grand Zhupan Časlav seized Bosnia, Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta, and thus expanded the Serbian state to the Cetina River and Hlivno. Porphyrogenitus was obsessed by the thought, which he repeatedly

emphasised, that the Croatian and Serbian lands belonged to the Byzantine Empire and that those nations were to acknowledge the supreme rule of the Byzantine Emperors. Under the influence of that thought, Porphyrogenitus proclaimed the Nerentans, Zachlumians and Travunians – who were political Serbs, that is, the subjects of the Serbian ruler at his time – ethnic Serbs. The following reasons will prove that the Serbs did not initially populate Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta, that is, that the original ethnic Serbia did not extend to the Cetina River and Hlivo, but had the boundaries which Porphyrogenitus described in Chapter 30, when he talked about the first Serbia: 1) Based on some old source, which he copied, Porphyrogenitus himself claimed that the Croats populated Dalmatia, Illyria and Pannonia upon their arrival. The regions which were subsequently named Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta comprised the main part of south-eastern Dalmatia. Common sense assures us that the Croats could not populate Illyria in present-day Montenegro and the Albanian littoral to Vlora, unless they previously populated south-eastern Dalmatia, that is, the regions of the future Nerenta, Zachlunia and Travunia, thus ensuring the unity of their nation and their governmental regions. When the Croats liberated Dalmatia and Illyria from the Avars in 626 and 627 and populated those regions themselves, they could not think about the Serbs and give the future regions of Nerenta, Zachlunia and Travunia to them, for it was still unknown at that time whether the Serbs would come to the south at all. The Byzantine Empire also did not think about that, as he moved the Serbs, upon their arrival at the Danube, across present-day Serbia to Thessaly” (p. 65-66).

Let us observe Mandić’s first reason for a while, before we observe the remaining three. If both Croatian and Serbian lands belonged to the Byzantine Empire, then it would be all the same to Porphyrogenitus whether Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta were Serbian or Croatian ethnic territories. He was not biased towards either the Serbs or the Croats, and he wrote in accordance with what he heard and found out with the help of his educated courtiers. If the Nerentans, Zachlumians and Travunians were really Croats by any chance, temporarily under the rule of the Serbian ruler, he would state that as well, and Časlav would then be the Grand Zhupan of both the Serbs and the Croats. He would even hardly wait to do that, as in those ancient times it was not a disgrace to be a Croat. Mandić took his own initial assumption that Porphyrogenitus referred to Albania when he talked about Illyria, as an untouchable postulate, and based his whole construction on it. He forgot that the old writers used to divide Dalmatia, which extended to the deep interior of the country, into Illyria and Pannonia, or in some cases, they divided Illyria into Dalmatia and Pannonia. That was the reason for the lack of evidence that part of the Croats really settled in Albania. Even if it was true, why would the Croats try to conquer that compact territory when all those countries were under Byzantine rule anyway? Why did the Croats, apart from the original Croatia, populate the Dalmatian towns and the islands that were in their possession, although those towns were never under the rule of the Croatian rulers? According to Mandić’s logic, the Croats had to seize all the territories from Krakow to Epirus, for they could not populate the territories farthest to the south, unless they previously populated the territories farthest to the north! There was some evidence that a certain number of Croats reached Greece, but there was absolutely no evidence that they ever lived in Albania. Furthermore, no toponyms existed to testify about their presence in Doclea, Raška, Travunia, Zachlunia, Nerenta and the original Bosnia. Hopefully they did not sink into the sea!

The subsequent reasons were even more naïve and frivolous, as Mandić wrote, “2) Porphyrogenitus noted that Emperor Heraclius I placed all the Serbs that arrived at the Balkans in Srbište in Thessaly. His expression ‘*Ho topos*’ may mean a place, a camp or a region. If we observe Srbište in this broader sense and say that the Serbs had initially settled the entire region of the Bistrica River, these regions could not be settled by more than 7- 8,000 people, taking into consideration the agricultural expansion at the time. A smaller part of those Serbs, not more than 3- 4,000 people, came back to the Danube and settled in the middle Banat. Such a small number of Serbs could not conquer the wide regions from Kosovo to the Cetina River and Hlivno, where Raška, Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta spread. 3) It is evident that Porphyrogenitus’ ethnic conclusions on the initial settlement of the Serbs in Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta were based on the ethnic situation of his time, from the fact that he did not state anywhere that the Serbs populated Doclea, which did not belong to the Serbian state in his time. During the reign of Emperor Heraclius I, the Byzantines still possessed a strong consciousness about the Roman-Byzantine provinces; moreover, there was more favourable opportunity for the travel by dense system of roads within the province itself, than for travel to the places in another province. Therefore, if the Byzantine governor wanted to give the coastal regions to the Serbs when he organised their settlement in the southern part of the Province of Predalj, he would have given them the southern part of the province, the future Doclea, as well; he would not send them instead to the other province of Dalamatia, which was populated by the Croats. Porphyrogenitus did not claim anywhere that the Serbs settled or lived in Duklja (Doclea). 4) Both Croatian and Serbian reliable sources claimed that the Serbs initially populated only Porphyrogenitus’ Serbia, which would later be named Raška. An old Croatian work *Methodus* from 753 stated that Red or southern Croatia spread from Duvno and the Cetina River to Vlora in Albania, and it comprised the regions of the future Nerenta, Zachlunia, Travunia and Doclea. Methodus described the boundaries of the original Serbia as follows: ‘the boundaries of the territory that was named Raška extended from the same Drina River towards the east to Lipljan and Lab’. The old Serbian rulers made a clear distinction between the original ethnical Serbia, or Raška, from other foreign, subsequently conquered territories. The ethnical Serbia or Raška was their ‘patrimony’, which encompassed ‘all Serbian lands’, whereas Doclea (Zeta), Travunia, Zachlunia and Dalmatia (Nerenta) were subsequently conquered foreign territories, annexed to the original ethnical Serbia” (p. 66-67).

### **a) Discrediting the Serbian Nation by the Methods of the Vatican**

Incorrectly reasoning that it was possible for an entire nation to voluntarily move to new territories in just one day and practically move into one hotel, Mandić assumed that only a few thousands of the true Serbs arrived at the Balkans. However, if we take into consideration the sheer size of the territory in the north occupied by the Serbs, between the Elbe and the Saale Rivers on the one hand, and the Vistula River on the other, their migration to the Balkans had to take place over a longer period of time, probably between 620 and 640. After all, the Croatian historians also wrote about the Timočani and Braničevci Serbs, and the Slavonian Prince Ljudevit crossed the Sava River and fled to the Serbs under the Frankish invasion at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Porphyrogenitus’ work could not be universal, and the Croatian historians agreed that his statements about the past events were often based on legends, which made his

historical value relative. The Croats did not have any written work from 753, or from the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in general, and their Croatian name first appeared in documents in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, at the time of Prince Borna. Everything else was fairytales. According to Mandić's logic, if the Croats, coincidentally, and for short periods, gained rule over parts of Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia, this automatically meant that Dalmatia, Slavonia and Bosnia in their entirety became Croatian lands forever, and their inhabitants, no matter what their ethnic origin was, were suddenly turned into Croats. The medieval title of the Serbian rulers was the master of all Serbian lands, Doclea, Travunia, Zachlunia and Nerenta, and it was the tradition of that time to list all the territories that had any political identity in the past. After all, the Nemanjić family, as the most significant Serbian ruling dynasty, originated from Zachlunia.

In order to disqualify the Serbs as much as possible and to undervalue them in his ideological vision and value system, and apart from the claim about their non-Slavic, Asian origin, he stated that they spoke the West Slavic language, that they simply assimilated with the indigenous East Slavic mass, similarly to the Bulgarians, and that they lived with large numbers of the Mavars, with whom they did not mingle, due to the black Mavarian race. This was simply outrageous nonsense, but completely expected, considering the criminal nature of the Roman Catholic Church to which Mandić belonged. When he talked about the creation of the anthropological type of the medieval Serbs, he wrote, "The initial, Anatolian type of the Serbs was greatly changed on the Elbe River. The Serbs assimilated with the numerous indigenous Slavs there and accepted their West Slavic language. The Polabian Serbs inherited some of the Nordic characteristics from those Slavs, who had previously assimilated with the remnants of the older indigenous Nordic population. The Serbs encountered the Slavs of the first migration, the shtokavian-ekavian speakers, in their new homeland, in the middle Balkans. The Serbs gave those Slavs their national name and governmental organisation, but they assimilated with the numerous Slavic shtokavian-ekavian speakers, similarly to the Bulgarians, and abandoned their West Slavic language for the shtokavian-ekavian dialect. The Serbian newcomers mostly inherited their physical characteristics from those Slavs. The creation of the Serbian medieval national type was also influenced by the remnants of the old Thracian and Macedonian population and by the Greeks to some extent, which immigrated to Raška during the long Byzantine rule. A very large number of descendants of the Mavarian military veterans remained in Raška and the surrounding mountains up to the arrival of the Serbs, but, as well shall see later, the medieval Serbs did not intermarry with them, because of the black characteristics of the Mauro-Vlachs were still dominant and obvious at the time" (p. 67-68).

There was absolutely no forgery from the old Croatian historiography that Mandić did not take for granted as being completely true, adding his own numerous fabrications to them. Thus, he repeated a story dispelled a long time ago that the Slavic language and the Glagolitic script were used in Croatia, although it was proven that they were used only in Dalmatia and Liburnia. He stated that the Metropolitanate of Split had already been established in 641, whereupon the Pope allegedly proclaimed Ivan Ravenjanin the first Archbishop and Metropolitan of Split. He even claimed that the state and religious union of Croatia and Slavonia already existed in the 7th century, stating the following: "Christianity had to spread very early in Pannonian Croatia, between Gvozd and the Drava River, as well, whereas the Croats in those regions lived in a state and religious union with the Adriatic Croats, who were Christianised in the 40s of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. As

the Pannonian Croats came under the supreme rule of the Avars by the end of that century after the Avars had recovered from a defeat by the Croatian newcomers, the advancement of Christianity was severely hindered” (p. 72). Therefore, the Croats first crushingly defeated the Avars and then the Avars recovered from the defeat and gained rule over the Croats!

A fabricated meeting of the Parliament of Duvno from 753 was an indisputable fact for Mandić. He was only sorry that Priest Dukljanin did not mention “Pannonian Croatia” at all. Although Priest Dukljanin wrote that Serbia was divided into Bosnia and Raška, Mandić tried to correct this as well, making only those statements of Priest Dukljanin’s that fitted into his concept irrefutable. As to that, he stated, “A short time before the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno, the Serbs also joined the Croatian state, almost certainly for fear of the external enemies, the Avars or the Bulgarians. For that reason, a new Croatian governmental unit was created at the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno, which would be sufficiently strong to defend itself if needed. The Croatian Kings of Zagorje were included into that unit, which was named Bosnia, together with the Serbian territories, which were named Raška. This new unit was given a joint name Surbia, for Serbs comprised the main part of that Croatian governmental unit, which was established to strengthen the Serbian defence from the external enemies in the first place” (p. 76).

No effort was required from Mandić to write without any scientific foundation that the Nerentanes “. . . were a Croatian self-governing tribe, which settled the Adriatic coastal region from the Neretva to the Cetina Rivers in 626” (p. 77). And what if it was not in 626 but in 629? Where did the evidence for 629 come from? There was none, just as there was no evidence for 626 either. When Porphyrogenitus claimed that the Nerentanes were Serbs, he did not know what he was talking about, but Mandić knew, as it was highly necessary for him to proclaim the Nerentanes genuine Croats at all costs. Mandić called the agreement between the Frankish and the Byzantine Emperors the Croatian-Byzantine territorial division line on the Drim River. On the other hand, despite the historical truth that the Croats fought on the Frankish side against the Slavonians, Mandić confidently stated, “Ljudevit Posavski should be included among the great and deserving Croatian rulers. He stood against the powerful Frankish Empire in defence of his Croatian people. By the resistance he offered, which was subsequently continued by other native rulers and later supported by the rulers of Adriatic Croatia, Ljudevit stopped the further advance of Germanisation on the western border of Pannonian Croatia” (p. 81). Mandić knew that, around 854, the Croatia under Trpimir bordered Bulgaria on the Drina River. All territories to the Drina River had to be Croatian, of course. Not one serious Croatian historian tried to prove that. The arbitrary conclusions that Mandić reached by the manipulation of historical facts and their adaptation in accordance to his aspirations was evident from the following citation: “As it was already known, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century to the establishment of the Metropolitanate of Dubrovnik (887/8) and the Diocese of Zagreb (1094), the Metropolitanate of Split extended from Raša in Istria to the Drava River and the Danube in the north, whereas the Drina River and Budva were its boundaries in the east. As the Croatian state was more spacious than the Metropolitanate of Split, that tells us that Doclea was in the Croatian state at the time, which was not under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate of Split” (p. 82-83).

Mandić wrote concerning the famous Serbian ruler Stefan Vojislav that he was “. . . a descendant of an old Croatian ruling family in Doclea” (p. 98), and about the Croatian King Petar Krešimir IV he wrote that he had expanded the state boundaries to the Drim River in Albania, based only on the claim that the Pope allegedly addressed him as the King of Dalmatia in 1063 (p. 99), assuming that that must have referred to Lower and Upper Dalmatia. He also appropriated the Nerentine ruler Slavac as the Croatian King, although that misconception had been dispelled in historiography a long time ago. As far as the *Qualiter* or the text of *Pacta conventa* was concerned, Mandić admitted that it was not a literal transcript of the original contract, but he claimed that it was nevertheless “. . . an authentic excerpt from the official document, which was issued after the Croats reached an agreement with Coloman in 1102” (p. 110). In relation to that text from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Mandić was convinced that it was proof that the Croatian aristocrats, despite losing the ruler of native blood, “. . . still preserved the sovereignty of the Croatian state and its unity from the Adriatic Sea to the Drava River and the Danube. The reached agreement was a real international contract between two independent, sovereign states, Hungary and Croatia. The former was represented by King Coloman I and the later was represented by the representatives of twelve Croatian tribes. The great flaw of the *Pacta conventa* (Lat. agreed accords) was that the Croats did not retain the exclusive right of the Croatian Parliament to choose the Croatian ban and the King’s deputies in Croatia. As none of this was regulated by the Agreement, the members of the Arpad Dynasty started very soon to appoint Magyars as the Croatian bans as well, which was harmful for the Croatian self-governance of the state and its independence” (p. 114).

He did not seem to mind that in the census of those twelve tribes, the two most powerful tribes, the Bribir tribe of Šubić and the Krbava tribe of Gušić, were missing. That was not a sufficient sign for Mandić that he should think his rushed conclusion over, because it fitted into his ideological conception; thus, although it was in opposition with the real historical facts, all the worse for the facts. The Frankopans did not participate either, and it was more than obvious that all twelve listed noble groups were from one and the same county of Luč. This Luč County was founded by the unification of the counties of Luč, Nin, Bribir and Sidraš. At the same time, three new Counties of Knin, Lika and Poljica were founded, whereas the old aristocratic principalities and old Croatian counties, such as that of Modruš, remained to exist with them at the same time. They had all lost their tribal character a long time ago, and had developed typical feudal characteristics. Thus, there is no doubt, and that question was dispelled in Croatian historiography a long time ago, that the *Qualiter* was issued in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and that it regulated the social and political issues of the time in a very restricted area; thus, it could never be regarded as an international contract. Its transfer to the 12<sup>th</sup> certainly was an especially drastic historical forgery. Mandić was well aware that it was a forgery, and he still persistently insisted on it, as it was useful for his thesis on “the friendly kingdoms” (p. 111) of Hungary and Croatia.

#### 4. Three Fabricated Croatian States

His fabrications followed one after the other. Thus, after 1463, “. . . the Croatian Bogomils in the conquered Bosnia converted to Islam with no exception, and the major part of the Croatian Catholics did the same over time. They became the fanatical propagators of Islam and they strove with their famous Croatian courage and



determination for the conquest of all the Croatian territories, their conversion to Islam and the gathering around the Bosnian *Sanjak*, the subsequent *pashaluk*” (p. 122). Thus, “the Croats” violently killed each other in Krbava Field. “In 1493, the Bosnian Sanjak Yakup-Pasha invaded Croatia and Carniola with a powerful army of the native Bosnian Muslim Croats, who were supported by the companies of the Rumelian Pasha. On the return, the Croats met Yakup on Krbava Field, below the town of Krbava (today’s Udbina). A bitter fight ensued, which lasted a whole day, on 9 September 1493, in which the sons of the same nation, separated by religion and state affiliation, fought with equal courage and determination. The inexperienced ban Emeric Derenčin was to blame for the crushing defeat of the army belonging to the free Croatia” (p. 123-124). And the army of the second free Croatia, “the Turkish Croatia”, celebrated the victory. It seemed that the folly of one part of the Croats is the fortune of the other.

Mandić devoted a separate chapter to “the independent Croatian states”, which included “Red Croatia”, Bosnia and Dubrovnik. His starting claim was that, at the fabricated meeting of the Parliament of Duvno, the alleged Croatian states were divided “. . . into two Croatian self-governing units: White (western) Croatia, which spread from the Raša River in Istria to the Cetina River in present-day Dalmatia; and Red (southern) Croatia, which spread from the Cetina River to Vlora and the Himare Mountains in present-day Albania. At the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno, Red Croatia was divided into the self-governing provinces of Nerenta, Zachlunia, Doclea and Illyria. From that moment on, these provinces comprised one state unit, mostly interconnected, which acknowledged the supreme rule of the general Croatian duke and then the rule of the King in White Croatia” (p. 124-125). The most eminent Croatian historians determined that the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno was completely made-up, and such a territorial division into the separate state units would be without precedent in the entire history of mankind. Nerenta, Zachlunia, Travunia, Doclea and alleged Illyria never comprised one state unit, except when they were part of the united Serbian state. Moreover, they certainly never acknowledged any supreme rule of some general Croatian duke or Croatian king. Even during the rule of the most powerful Croatian kings, Croatia did not succeed in expanding over the territory from the Cetina to the Neretva Rivers, not to mention any further. It was not a coincidence at all that, during the convocation of the Church Council of Split, the Pope addressed the Croatian King Tomislav and the Zachlumian Prince Mihailo Višević as equal rulers; furthermore, both the Croatian and the Serbian aristocrats attended the meeting of the mentioned council. The Croats never ruled over Illyria, if it referred to present-day Albania, and their southern boundary was never on the Drim River. The hideousness of his “methodological” procedure increased even further when Mandić renamed Mihailo Višević into Mihajlo Vuševukčić, calling him the most eminent Croatian aristocrat, in addition to King Tomislav.

The real quasi-historiographic grotesqueness was yet to come, when Mandić wrote, “At the beginning of the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the rule of Red Croatia was taken over by Doclea, which spread along the coast from Kotor to the Drim River. The Croatian Provincial Dynasty was developed there and its head was officially called ban or duke, whereas the people called him ‘king’, in accordance with the old Croatian custom. Vladimir, a member of that native Doclean dynasty, ruled over Red Croatia at the beginning of the last quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. As Stjepan Držislav, the general Croatian king, established a friendship with the Byzantine Empire, the Bulgarian Tsar

Samuel attacked Red Croatia and captured Duke Vladimir in 990 or the following year. He almost married Samuil to his daughter Theodora-Kosara and gave him Red Croatia to subject it under the supreme Bulgarian rule” (p. 125). Mandić did not care one bit about the fact that all, absolutely all original historical sources claimed that the Serbs are the exclusive subject in question here. What could the poor Serbs possibly do when they were not even aware of the fact that they were actually “the Red Croats”? He claimed for Stefan Vojislav and Mihailo Vojislavljević that they acknowledged the supreme rule of Stjepan I and Petar Krešimir IV, but that, in 1074, Mihailo “. . . did not acknowledge the choice of Slavac as the Croatian King, so he separated Doclea from Croatia and made it independent. In 1077, Mihala was given the title of King and the crown by the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates. Therefore, he founded a new Croatian Kingdom in Red or southern Croatia. Since there were factors in the state who did not approve of the division of the united Croatian Kingdom, Mihala had the chronicle *The Kingdom of the Croats* written, in which the chronicler proved that the original centre of the old Croatian state was in Doclea; therefore, Mihala only renewed the old legitimate state of affairs” (p. 128). The chronicle in question was *The Chronicles of the Priest of Doclea* or *Libellus Gothorum*, which indisputably had nothing to do with Mihailo. The following citation testifies the best that Mandić was such a big liar: “Only King Bodin (1081-1101), the son of and the second successor of King Mihala, managed to receive the Metropolitan mantle for the Archbishop of Bar, from the antipope Clement VIII Wibert, together with the papal acknowledgement of the Kingdom of Doclea“ (p. 127). Not a word about the title of the Serbian Primate that the Archbishop of Bar acquired then, and which he carries even today!

### **a) The Appropriation of the Nemanjić Line and the Serbian Territories**

According to Mandić, the Nemanjić family were pure Croats, whose Croatian origin he explained like this: “During the first years of his rule, Bodin liberated Raška from the Byzantine Empire and appointed his two courtiers as the Grand Zhupans there. Those courtiers were Vukan and Marko, Croats from Doclea, originally from Ribnica near present-day Podgorica. This was crucial for the future of the Croatian Doclea. Namely, when fights in the royal family weakened Doclea after Bodin’s death, the Zhupans of Raška interfered with Doclea, which they regarded as their old homeland, until Stefan Nemanja, the great-grandson of Bodin’s courtier Marko, completely eliminated the Doclean royal family and became the ruler himself in 1189. The Croatian population of Red Croatia was Catholic from the ancient times, with Roman rituals and with a partly Latin and partly Glagolitic script” (p. 127). As there was no evidence that the mentioned population was really Croatian, Mandić, just in case, insisted on the information that it was originally Roman Catholic and he eventually reached the position of almost all Croatian ideologists, who unconsciously proved that the notion of Croatianhood in their ideological vision was restricted to Serbian Catholics. By the way, the specific Croatian square Glagolitic script never existed anywhere in Doclea. Therefore, Mandić proclaimed the Bosnian Cyrillic as the Croatian Cyrillic script, so that he would be able to additionally Croatianise the Gospel According to Miroslav. “That book of gospels was written in the Croatian Cyrillic script (Bosnian Cyrillic) in its initial form, based on the Croatian review of the Old Church Slavic Glagolitic books” (p. 128). When the

Serbian rulers definitely decided to accept Orthodox Christianity and the Serbian national church, “the native population was determined to preserve the old Roman customs”, according to Mandić, and therefore, Serbian Kings Uroš I and Uroš II Milutin had to “. . . use force to convert the Catholic population to Orthodoxy. The Catholic bishops were banished from the dioceses, or were not allowed to be ordained; the Catholic parishes and monasteries were taken away and populated by the Orthodox priests and monks” (p. 128). Finally, “. . . that pressure ceased when, after Dušan’s death, the native Croatian Balšić family liberated Doclea from Serbian rule and established a native government” (p. 128).

According to Mandić, Montenegro preserved the Croatian national consciousness. “In addition to all the political and religious changes in Montenegro, which was the name of medieval Croatian Doclea, the Croatian tradition was not discontinued from the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, nor did the population lose its consciousness about its Croatian origin. Apart from insignificant exceptions, the members of foreign nationalities never populated the mountainous regions of Montenegro, but the descendants of the former Dinaric Croats lived there permanently. Even today, they speak Croatian ijekavian with a strong additional component of the Croatian chakavian language and accent” (p. 130). Mandić was even able to find chakavian in Montenegro, but immediately after that, he concealed those chakavian traces, so that nobody else could find them. “The tribal division of Montenegro and their regulations were of Croatian origin. The local names, national customs and tradition preserved the memory of the Croats and Red Croatia. When, in 1644, the Turkish travel writer Evliya Chelebi came to the present-day Montenegrin region of Piva among the Orthodox Montenegrins, he stated that ‘pure, true Croats’ lived there. When the Montenegrin Muslims fled to Bosnia and Sandžak during the massacre in 1709 and the expansion of Montenegro in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they carried with them the Croatian name, which they gave to their families and the settlements. Thus, Hrvati, Hrvići, Hrve, Hrvačići, Arvati, Arvatovići, Hrvacka, Hrvatsko Brdo, etc. came into existence. The suppression of the Croatian name and the Serbianisation of Montenegro began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century through the Orthodox Church. However, this was not very successful until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Vladika Petar II Njegoš (1813-1851) was the real apostle of Serbdom in Montenegro. Under the powerful influence of the Serbian propaganda of Ilija Garašanin and Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, Njegoš wrote his famous work *Gorski Vijenac*. That work, which was the ode to the Serbian Orthodoxy, contributed the most to the Serbianisation of the Montenegrin intelligentsia. However, a powerful national subconscious existed among the broad national layers which told them that they were not Serbs. That forced the creators of the second Yugoslavia to establish the Montenegrin Republic by the Constitution and acknowledge the Montenegrin nation, which was different from other nations in Yugoslavia” (p. 130-131).

Although Constantine Porphyrogenitus had explicitly written that Bosnia was originally Serbian land, Mandić neglected that and emphasised Porphyrogenitus’ general information that the Croats settled in Dalmatia, Pannonia and Illyria, thus, concluding the following: “Present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina lay in that territory and the Croats settled there during their immigration in 626” (p. 132). Immediately afterwards, he cited *The Chronicles of the Priest of Doclea* in his Croatian version, which he persistently called *The Kingdom of the Croats*. His next argument was the institution of the ban, thus he stated, “The political organisation of the country demonstrated that the Croats

populated Bosnia immediately upon their arrival to the south. Bosnia had been a banate since the most ancient times; the bans constantly ruled over it until 1377, when Tvrtko I, the Bosnian ban at the time, proclaimed himself King. The ban's title was also a Croatian institution. Neither the Serbs nor the Bulgarians knew about it, nor other nations of medieval Europe. Therefore, wherever bans ruled, we must say that the Croats lived there, for only they could give the pure Croatian title of ban to their ruler. Thus, the title of ban also testified to us that the Croats lived in Bosnia since the most ancient times throughout the entire Middle Ages" (p. 132-133). Banhood was a purely Avarian institution and the Croats accepted it, together with Lika, Krbava and Gacka, where the Avars remained to live in a certain autonomous status even after the Croatian immigration. Then the Magyars took over the institution of the ban and established several banates in the territory of their state, which did not have anything to do with the Croats. Only when Bosnia came under Hungarian rule was the institution of the ban introduced there. Before that, only princes and zhupans existed in Bosnia, just as they existed in all other Serbian lands and in Croatian ones as well. Therefore, Mandić gave old lies new clothing. He claimed that, at the fabricated meeting of the Parliament of Duvno, "Bosnia was a self-governing unit of the Croatian state" (p. 133), that Trpimir, Tomislav and Krešimir II established the boundaries on the Drina River and his crucial nonsense was reduced to the following: "The social organisation of medieval Bosnia was Croatian as well. Bosnia was then closely connected with the Croatian lands. This was also confirmed by the present-day archaeological remnants of the churches, royal and aristocratic courts and numerous tombstones, called 'stećci'. They all carried the Western and Croatian marks" (p. 133).

After the fabrication that the Croatian King Petar Krešimir IV founded the Catholic diocese in Bosnia around 1060, Mandić wrote that "Pope Clement III Wibert subjected the mentioned diocese to the new Metropolitanate of Bar in 1089, which shows us that Bosnia joined the new Croatian Kingdom in Red or southern Croatia shortly before that. Bosnia remained part of that state as a self-governing unit until 1138, when it again became part of the Croatian-Hungarian Kingdom" (p. 134). That "Red or southern Croatia" was accidentally called Serbia, just as the Metropolitan of Bar was called the Primate of Serbia, in accordance with the explicit Papal Act. Why wasn't he the Primate of "Red or southern Croatia"? The first known Bosnian ban was Borić, and he was a vassal of the Hungarian king, not some Croatian-Hungarian one, around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Mandić forged the documents of the Byzantine chronicler John Kinam, who, at the time of Emperor Manuel's reign, wrote that Bosnia was separated from other Serbian lands by the Drina River, but Mandić added a comma therein, so the text gained different meaning: "Bosnia was separated from the other, Serbian land" (p. 134). The misinterpretation of Kinam followed in order to give the meaning of ethnical differences between the Serbs and the Bosnians to his following quotation: "Bosnia was not subjected to the Serbian Grand Zhupan; it was on its own, a different nation with its own way of life and self-government" (134). Mandić's "expert" interpretation immediately followed: "Kinam, who visited Raška with Emperor Manuel, and who was personally acquainted with the national situation in that country and Bosnia, here undoubtedly claimed that the Serbs did not live in Bosnia but another nation, namely, the Croats, for the middle Balkans was then, just as now, populated by only the Croats and the Serbs" (p. 134-135). Mandić even wanted to present Bogomilism, an authentic Eastern heresy in Christianity, as a Western product. The Bosnian dynasty also had to be Croatian by

the natural state of the matters. “From the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Bosnian bans and kings were called Kotromanići, almost certainly thanks to Prijezada The Great, who was the son of the Croatian aristocrat Kotroman’s daughter” (p. 138). That alleged “Croatian aristocrat Kotroman” is completely unknown in the history, but what about the mountainous region of Kotroman in present-day Serbia, from Užice towards the Drina River? Weren’t the Kotromanići given their surname after Kotroman?

Mandić wrote about King Tvrtko I that he had the intention of gathering all the Croatian lands around Bosnia and that he was crowned by the Serbian crown only to take into possession the tax of St. Demetrius, which the inhabitants of Dubrovnik paid to the Serbian rulers. He also presented precise data about “the 1463 census, when Bosnia fell into the Turkish hands.” “Apart from a small number of non-Slavic Vlachs and around 25,000 Serbs in Podrinje, the Bosnian Kingdom was then exclusively populated by an ancient Croatian population, that is, around 750,000 Catholics and 80-90,000 Bogomils” (p. 142). They all persistently concealed the fact that their mother tongue was chakavian, so they pretended to speak shtokavian in public. While the Bogomils soon converted to Islam, Mandić said that the Catholics were persecuted by the Turkish authorities. “One part of the Croats emigrated to the free Croatian territories and the other part emigrated to the Catholic countries to protect themselves from social subordination and to save their religion. Their numbers amounted to 300,000 people. Those were the Bunjevci Croats, the Uskoci Croats, the (Bosnian) *Wasserkroaten*, the Predavci Croats and the Šokci Croats. One part came under the protection of the Orthodox Church, which had special benefits in the Turkish state, particularly those from the regions such as eastern Herzegovina and western Bosnia, where no Catholic priests could be found for a long time. The major part of the Croats accepted Islam, those who lived in towns and trading centres accepted it completely, whereas those in villages accepted it only indirectly” (p. 143-144). This was just the introduction for his claim that 900,000 Muslims, 300,000 Catholics “. . . and around 150,000 Orthodox, mostly non-Slavic Vlachs and former Catholic Croats who had converted to Orthodoxy lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1624. By the time of the Battle of Vienna, the number of Croats was more than halved by emigration and conversion to Islam and Orthodoxy. From 1684-1699, after the emigration, the number of Croatian Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina was reduced to 25,000 people” (p. 144). Almost no Croats had ever lived there, except in the regions farthest to the west, but now Mandić admitted that the Catholics almost vanished as well by 1700. However, he claimed the following immediately after that: “Although it changed its religion both before and after the fall of Bosnia (1463), the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained the same Croatian population that had immigrated there in 626 even during Turkish rule” (p. 144). How come that population forgot its beautiful chakavian language so successfully?

According to Mandić, Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha was a Croat as well. That’s why he restored the Patriarchate of Peć. He was driven to do so by his Croatian origins and his highly developed Croatian national consciousness. “Both the Muslims and the Catholics were aware that they were Croats, although others, and they themselves, usually called them Bosniaks and Herzegovinians. Both those groups spoke the old Croatian language of the ikavian dialect and strong additional components of the chakavian dialect. They still used the Croatian script called Bosnian Cyrillic and still preserved many old Croatian national customs in private and public life, together with the old folk superstition about fairies, witches and werewolves. Even today, the Catholic

Croats and the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina comprise a separate linguistic and biological union, different from the Serbs who immigrated there. The following facts shall prove that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Catholics and Muslims were well aware of their Croatian nationality even in the times of Turkish rule: When, by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Bosnian indigenous inhabitants, Bunjevci, *Wasserkroaten*, Predavci and others, started to flee to the West, they called themselves Croats, and their contemporaries called them so as well. The Papal Legate A. Burgio wrote in 1526 that 'Bosnia belonged to Croatia'. Another papal delegate wrote in 1580 that the Una River was 'the main river of Croatia'. The Croatian writer Fr Franjo Glavinić, born in Glamoč, Bosnia in 1585, called his language 'Croatian'. In his work *The Beginnings of the (Franciscan) Province of Bosnia Croatia* he wrote: 'The Bosniaks are the same nation as the Croats and their language is the same as well'. The Bosnian indigenous Catholic inhabitants called themselves 'Croatian heroes' when they joined the Turkish army. The Turkish travel writer Evliya Chelebi, who repeatedly travelled through Bosnia in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, noted their name as such several times. Chelebi wrote that the Orthodox inhabitants of the Montenegrin region of Piva were also 'pure, true Croats'" (p. 145-146). However, Mandić's statistical data was the most impressive, based on "demographic" research. "Out of all present-day Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 80-85% of them ethnically originated from Bosnian-Herzegovinian indigenous Croats, Bogomils and Catholics; 12-13% of them originated from the Croatian Muslim immigrants who came there from the surrounding Croatian territories and from Montenegro, and 3-5% of them were of Turkish or of some other foreign origin" (p. 148). And what about those tens of thousand Muslims who emigrated from Serbia to Bosnia under the Sultan's order after the First Serbian Uprising, and especially after the second one?

Mandić's appropriation of Dubrovnik also started in 626, when the Croats allegedly "settled on the slopes of St Srđa Hill all the way to the straits" (p. 149). It seemed that the Croats gave that town its name after wooded "Dubrava", for it was presumably an old "Croatian" word, which meant to stand on one's head, in accordance with the Croatian national logic that was completely upside down. From 879, Ragusa had to pay 36 gold coins a year to the Croatian princes of Zachlunia and Travunia to be able to uninterruptedly enjoy the surrounding areas of the town. During the reign of King Tomislav (923-29) and King Držislav (969-95), Ragusa was under Croatian administration, along with the entire Byzantine Dalmatia" (p. 150). How come the famous Archive of Dubrovnik did not manage to acquire at least one original document that would testify about that? The lies continued to pile up, so Mandić continued, "The Slavs of the first migration did not exist anywhere on the islands and along the coast from the Neretva River to Boka Kotorska Bay, as well as in the entire coastal Dalmatia. Those regions were populated exclusively by the Croats upon their arrival in 626. . . When the Croatian settlement of Dubrovnik, which lay opposite to the town of Ragusa, merged with this Roman town, the Croatian population consequently became an integral and significant part of the new town of Ragusa - Dubrovnik. Ragusa and Dubrovnik were most certainly united into one municipality when Ragusa became the capital of the Byzantine military region of Red Croatia and Bosnia from 1018-1042. . . The other method of the Croatianisation of Ragusa and its nobility involved the marriages between the Ragusans and the neighbouring Croats, along with the arrival of respectable families from the neighbouring or farther regions where the Croatian Catholics lived. This influx

of the Croats to Ragusa was especially large from 923 to 1074, starting from the reign of the Croatian King Tomislav to the reign of the Croatian King Petar Krešimir, who ruled over or had in their possession Byzantine Dalmatia and the town of Ragusa” (p. 153). Although the geographical term of Dalmatia was very narrow at the time and comprised the coastal region from Zadar to Omiš, Mandić first expanded Dalmatia to Dubrovnik and further, and then he uncritically accepted the standpoint of the older Croatian historiography, which stated that the Dalmatian towns of Split, Zadar, Trogir, etc. were incorporated into the Croatian state. Moreover, he added Dubrovnik to those towns on his own initiative, so the entire “scientific” statement was completed.

As far as the Serbs were concerned, “they did not take part in the Slavinisation of Ragusa. They reached the Adriatic Sea only by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when Ragusa was already mainly Croatianised. Furthermore, the Serbs were mainly Pagans until the reign of Emperor Basil I the Macedonian (867-886), and then they accepted the Eastern Christianity. From 1054 onwards, they followed the Eastern option of the Great Schism. The inhabitants of Ragusa, who were zealous Catholics from the most ancient times and followers of the Roman liturgy and the Roman Church, did not marry to the Orthodox Serbs, nor did they allow the Orthodox Serbs to settle in this town” (p. 154-155). When, in 1333, the Serbian King Stefan Dušan sold Ston and Pelješac to the inhabitants of Dubrovnik, “. . . he took care that all the Serbs were withdrawn from the sold territories, so that only the indigenous Croats remained in Ston and Rat. Those indigenous Croats were Catholics, Bogomils and members of the Orthodox Church, which were former Catholic Croats forced to accept Orthodoxy by the Serbian rulers” (p. 158). The truth was completely different, for not only did Dušan not withdraw a single Serb, but he also obliged the inhabitants of Dubrovnik to preserve the Orthodox episcopate. “With the expansion of Dubrovnik by the arrival of the exclusively Croatian population in the 14<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Dubrovnik finally became a completely Croatian state. Although Latin was used in accordance with the contemporary customs and for the sake of external trade, Croatian was used privately. At that time, the last Roman families in Dubrovnik were Croatianised under the influence of the Croatian surroundings and marriages” (p. 159). In regard to the State Archive of Dubrovnik, Mandić said that “. . . large numbers of sources have been preserved there until today, which are extremely important for the knowledge of the history of the Republic of Dubrovnik, Red Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Turkey and major part of the Mediterranean countries. The Dubrovnik State Archive is among the largest and the most famous archives in Europe” (p. 163-164). To his great regret, precisely in that Archive of Dubrovnik there was not a sole document to prove that some “Red Croatia” ever existed or that Dubrovnik had any political connections with the Croatian rulers.

A completely different story was the method Mandić used to forcibly Croatianise the literature of Dubrovnik and the language in which it was written, although the widest region of Dubrovnik where chakavian was spoken was Lastovo only. Mandić stated, “The most significant cultural contribution of the inhabitants of Dubrovnik was the Croatian literature of Dubrovnik. Its beginnings were not without an origin; it sprang and developed on the preliminary works of the religious Glagolitic literature in western Croatia, especially on the island of Krk. The distinctive characteristics of the Croatian Glagolitic literature were the poetic language and the poetic forms in the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when the nobility of Dubrovnik still mainly spoke a Dalmatian-Romance language. The poetic wealth of the Croatian Glagolitic literature was transferred to

Dubrovnik by the priests, both secular and ordained, who used the Glagolitic missal and were called the “Cyrillics” after St Cyril, the originator of the Glagolitic holy missal. The first poets of Dubrovnik were influenced by the secular Croatian literature from the western Croatian regions, especially from Split and Hvar. The secular Croatian poetry developed there first, as it was closest to the centres of the Glagolitic literature on the northern Adriatic islands. However, at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the inhabitants of Dubrovnik took over the lead in the Croatian literary creation. At that time, even the nobility spoke Croatian, and only a few old people knew the old Dalmatian-Romance language. . . Even in the prime of the Dubrovnik literature, the poets preserved connections with the Western Croatian poets; they read each other’s works and influenced one another. Both were aware of their Croatianhood and they emphasised that in their poems” (p. 165-166). However, nothing ever came out of that Croatianhood, as the inhabitants of Dubrovnik were engrossed in Slavhood, the idea of Slavic national unity based on Catholicism, with the Bosnian dialect as the joint literary language and the Serbian Cyrillic alphabet as the national script. And if any of the writers from Dubrovnik ever mentioned the Croats, as Vladislav Menčetić (1600-1666) did, when he devoted one of his poems to the Croatian ban and conspirator Petar Zrinski, then it was always in the function of the Slavic reciprocity.

As he felt that his thesis on the alleged Croatianhood from Dubrovnik was very flimsy, if the Catholic factor and the friar’s prattle were neglected, it was very important to Mandić to categorically refute the Serbian factor in the literary identity of Dubrovnik. “The Serbs did not take part at all in the creation and the development of the literature from Dubrovnik. The Serbs did not have any real literature until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. All Serbian writing until then included translations from the Byzantine and the Bulgarian languages, mostly of religious and instructive significance; the transcriptions, and from 1494, printing of the religious ‘ritual books’, prayer books and the liturgy books as well. That Serbian writing did not influence the development of the literature of Dubrovnik in any way and vice versa. The contemporary bearers of the Serbian literacy, the Orthodox monks, were raised in the Orthodox liturgy and the Byzantine spirit. They were not interested in the literature of Dubrovnik, which was Western and Catholic. The contemporary Serbs did not regard Catholic Dubrovnik as a Serbian town, nor did they write about it and its history in their chronicles and history books” (p. 168). The constant Serbian influx gradually changed the ethnical structure of Dubrovnik. All historical motifs of the old literature of Dubrovnik mostly depicted the Serbian past, which was the best proof of the national self-identification of its writers. The Serbian literature until the 18<sup>th</sup> century was incomparably richer than the Croatian one. The literature of Dubrovnik was Western and Catholic indeed, but it was not Croatian by any standards. As far as the contemporary Serbs were concerned, the Serbian nobility often used Dubrovnik as a valuable shelter, a political mediator and irreplaceable trade partner. It was none of these for the Croats; there simply were no significant contacts.

### **b) The Alteration of the Earliest Serbian History**

Anyway, Mandić claimed that there were no documents from the Serbian Balkan history for the initial five centuries. The logic was simple. It would be for the best to proclaim all that was unpleasant to me and contrary to my concept as nonexistent. Therefore, he resorted to blatant lies and bare fabrications again, claiming, “The news



was preserved in the old Croatian work *Methodus* that Raška was part of the Croatian state at the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno in 753. Raška most certainly subjected itself to the protection of the Croatian state in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It wanted to protect itself from the Avars, who had recovered from the defeat and grown in power from 626 to 635, or from the Bulgarians, who came to the Balkans in 681 and began to intrude on the middle and the south-western Balkans in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. As we must conclude from the flight of Ljudevit Posalvski to Raška in 822, it was not part of the Croatian state at the time nor did it acknowledge the supreme rule of Charlemagne, which the Croats did in 803. The Serbs most probably separated from the Croats and acknowledged the supreme rule of the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros I (802-811), when he established the territorial connection between the Byzantine Empire and Drač, whereas he seized old Illyria from the Croats” (p. 169-170). When Mandić was scared by his own exaggerated lies, fabrications and pseudo-scientific constructions, he resorted to the expressions “probably”, “approximately”, “most certainly”, “as we may conclude”, etc. Not only was the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno fabricated, but Raška was also never part of any Croatian state, nor did Raška directly border it. Ljudevit Posalvski was never in his life in Raška. He fled from Sisak to the Serbs, but somewhere near the place where he crossed the Sava or the Una River.

The way Mandić Croatianised the old Serbian history was extremely hilarious. Thus, he wrote: “Časlav organised and strengthened Raška with the help and under the supreme rule of the Byzantine Empire. In 944, during the dynastic clashes in Croatia, Časlav seized Red Croatia, Bosnia and three counties of White Croatia. During the last years of Constantine Porphyrogenetos’ reign, from 959 onwards, Časlav made Raška independent from the Byzantine Empire, but he almost got killed in the fights against the Mavars. Immediately afterwards, the Croats liberated Bosnia and other Croatian territories from the Serbs and united them again with Croatia” (p. 175). He further claimed: “During their rule in Raška, the Bulgarians completely exterminated all the members of the old Serbian ruling family. From 1036 to 1042, Dobroslav, also called Stjepan Vojislav, the member of the old Croatian family from Doclea, organised a rebellion and liberated Doclea and Raška. He considered himself to be the lawful heir of the extinct Serbian family of grand župans, as he was the grandson of the last Serbian Grand Župan Ljutomir, on his mother’s side” (p. 176). In accordance with this, “the new political life in Raška started with Bodin (1081-1101), who was the King of medieval Croatian Doclea” (p. 176). Mandić said the following for the son of the Serbian Grand Župan Uroš I, the famous Serb Beloš, who came to Hungary with his sister Jelena, the wife of the Hungarian King Béla II the Blind: “He had the position of the palatine in Hungary and he was a *ban* for a long time in Croatia, where people regarded him as their own, since he was the grandson of the Croatian nobleman Marko from Ribnica in Doclea” (p. 177). In any case, “during the first five hundred years, the Serbs lived in the middle Balkans under constant foreign rule of the Byzantines, the Bulgarians and the Croats” (p. 179). According to Mandić, Stefan Nemanja was also undoubtedly of Croatian origin, but he introduced the conquering spirit into the Serbian history, expanded and developed the Serbian state, incorporating the territories of the foreign countries and various national groups in it” (p. 179). In what other way could the Serbs acquire the conquering spirit if not from the Croats? As Stefan Prvovenčani signed himself as the ruler of “all Serbian lands and Doclea, Dalmatia, Travunia and the Lands of Hum”, Mandić confidently concluded that “all Serbian lands were ethnic Serbia, that

is, old medieval Raška, whereas other lands, Doclea, Dalmatia, Travunia and the Lands of Hum were the conquered Croatian Provinces” (p. 181). Apart from that, “The Serbian self-governing church would become a powerful instrument for the spread of the Serbdom over the neighbouring non-Serbian countries” (p. 183).

The mere fact Mandić mentioned that the Serbian ruler Stefan Dušan proclaimed himself the autocratic Tsar of the Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and Albanians, was not sufficient to him to wonder why the Croats were not mentioned in the ruling title, if the bearer of the title already ruled over the numberless Croatian territories and great masses of the Croatian population. Nevertheless, we encountered another new construction Mandić used in an attempt to refute the fact that Dušan ruled all the way to the Cetina River and even stayed in Omiš. “He abandoned his estates in many places in Zachlunia, which he regarded his own land, but the local Croats, supported by the companies of the Bosnian *ban* Stjepan II Kotromanić, liberated those places in the same year, when Dušan had to go to the east to suppress the Byzantine army, which invaded Tessaly” (p. 186). Based on that, Mandić concluded: “For that reason, it was historically wrong to extend the Dušan’s Empire to Zachlunia and the Adriatic littoral to the Cetina River. The Dušan’s Empire did not spread to the west farther than Travunia and Konavljje” (p. 186). After Dušan’s death and the beginning of the disintegration of the state, “the local Croatian Balšić family proclaimed Zeta, in which the Catholicism and the national consciousness of old Red Croatia were still strong, independent from Serbia” (p. 187).

### **c.) The Planned Exaggeration of the Vlachian Component in the Serbian Ethnic Being**

Mandić called the Uskoci Croatian Catholics who, after the fall of Bosnia, fled “to the west, to the free Croatian countries”. According to him, the Vlachs who served in the back-up Turkish and border troops were the non-Slavic Orthodox Vlachs, although it was historically indisputable that the term Valch was not used as the mark of the ethnic affiliation, but as the mark of the social status of those people who were not the serfs. After all, all those Vlachs spoke Serbian, that is, Štokavian. Mandić wrote that in 1629, “the Croatian Parliament made the Vlachian newcomers equal to the lower Croatian nobility. It also made them free and gave them all civil rights that the citizens of Croatia enjoyed. Having been persuaded by the commanders of the Austrian border guards, the Vlachs did not accept that. Instead of choosing peaceful life and cooperation with the Croatian nation that admitted them into the Croatian regions as the free and lawful citizens, the Vlachs chose to serve the foreigners, at their own real and permanent disadvantage and at the disadvantage of the Croatian nation as well” (p. 212). Mandić criticised Ferdo Šišić for claiming that the Vlachs who immigrated to Croatia and Slavonia were indentical to the Serbs and he stated in the special footnote that “it was not true. When the Vlachs immigrated to the Croatian territories in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, thwy were aware of their Vlachian ethnic origin and did not declared themselves as the Serbs. The official sources of the time also made a clear distinction between ‘the Vlachs’ and ‘the Rascians’ or the Serbs” (p. 212). In regard to the charter Ferdinand II issued in 1630, which stated that the Vlachian newcomers, as the soldiers of the Krajina, would not be subjected to the Croatian-Slavonian aristocrats, nor would they be legally subjected to the ban and the noble Parliament, he said: “From this moment on, the Military Krajina and the Vlachian immigrants would become the great

worry for the Croatian Parliament and a huge obstacle to preservation of old Croatian rights and the Croatian state independence. The Croats never approved of the exceptional status of the Vlachs and the existence of the Military Krajina apart from the regular administration. At the request of the Croatian Parliament and the joint Hungarian-Croatian electoral Parliaments in Pressburg, the new rulers of the Habsburg dynasty took the oath at the coronation ceremonies in 1608, 1618, 1637 and 1657, that they would respect the old rights and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Croatia and give the *ban* complete rule over the territories from the Drava River to the Adriatic Sea. Therefore, the preservation of the exceptional status of the Military Krajina and the Vlachs under the regular rule of the Croatian Parliament and the *ban* was a violation of the Constitution and illegal obstinacy of the king” (p. 213).

Providing an explanation for the motives of those involved in the Zrinski-Frankopan Conspiracy, Mandić stated: “The failure to fulfil the coronation obligations, the existence of the Military Krajina at the disadvantage of the Croatian self-government and the arrogance, unruliness and dishonesty of many Austrian officers in the Krajina greatly diminished the honour of the Habsburg kings and the Croatian loyalty to them” (p. 213). Trying at all costs to present Nikola Zrinski Mlađi (Miklós Zrínyi), the originator of the conspiracy and the Croatian-Slavonian *ban* as “the proven Croat”, although he was one of the best Hungarian poets at the time, Mandić stated that his intention “to show friendship towards the Magyars and win them over for the fight against the centralism and the Turks was the reason why he wrote his poems in Hungarian” (p. 214). Aware that it was difficult to explain the ethnic character of the citizenry in Croatia and Slavonia after their seizing back from the Turks, due to the fact that the Croatian and Slavonian citizenry massively abandoned those territories several centuries before, Mandić resorted again to the factor of the Bosnian Catholics. He stated that the emigration of more than 100,000 Croatian Catholics from Bosnia between 1686 and 1718 was one of the main consequences of the royal army’s failure to seize Bosnia back from the Turks. Indeed, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian emigrants thus saved Slavonia from Germanisation and the Adriatic regions from Romanisation, but they greatly deserted the vast Bosnian regions and particularly the regions in “Turkish Croatia”, where large numbers of non-Croatian population subsequently settled” (p. 217). On the other hand, “In some regions of Dalmatian land and on the Adriatic islands, the old Croatian citizenry was killed or emigrated to other countries during the Turkish wars. Nevertheless, those deserted regions were repopulated by the Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as from other regions that evaded Turkish rule” (p. 219).

Neglecting the fact that we, the Serbs, never concealed the significant Vlachian component in our ethnic being, but were proud of it, as it additionally ennobled us and supplied the Slavic bloodstream with the fresh and healthy blood, Mandić incessantly exaggerated the Vlachian issue, probably due to his belief that he would offend us by claiming that Karađorđe and Nikola Pašić were of pure Vlachian origin. Our ancestors did not kill but assimilated the old indigenous Roman citizenry, whereas the Croats assimilated large numbers of the Avars as well. Thus, the Vlachian Roman character traits can be recognised among us, the Serbs even today, whereas the Avarian traits can be recognised among the Croats. They could be recognised among the real Croats, not among the Catholic Serbs that declare themselves to be the Croats today. Although that would not be a problem of any kind, the Vlachs were not “dark-complexioned” (p. 245) as Mandić claimed. They were the people of the Roman civilisation, with a slightly

darker hair and complexion in comparison to the distinctly white and fair-haired Slavs. We, the Serbs, wanted to get a bit darker. Therefore, we intensively sunbathed and even more intensively mingled with the Vlachs, establishing the mutual blood relations. Thus, the term "Vlach" soon lost its ethnic meaning among the Serbs and became the social indicator for the freemen who were the cattle breeders, as well as for the free Christian back-up soldiers under Turkish rule. Mandić himself stated that from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Venetians used the term Valchs or Morovlachs for the entire peasant population in the hinterland of the Adriatic towns. "The Polish used the term Vlach for the Orthodox Ukrainians, whereas the Croats used the same term for all the Serbs, particularly those dark-complexioned" (p. 246).

It was unbelievable how much Mandić tried to prove that the Vlachs were originally the blacks, as if that was some morally, racially or politically disqualifying characteristic. It was very important to him to say that "the Vlachs were not the Slavs and that they could not have originated from the old Balkan Illyrian and Thracian nations, for those nations had white complexion. The Vlachian origins should be searched for in some completely black or half-black nation. If the forefathers of the Vlachs had not been blacks or overly dark people, they could not have given the dark complexion to their present-day descendants in the Balkans and elsewhere" (p. 246). Mandić's ethnic intolerance was so great that he tried to prove that the Vlachs were the descendants of the former Roman soldiers from Mauritania. We, the present-day Serbs do not mind at all if we have the blood of African nations in our veins. However, the greatest Mandić's lie was his claim that the Serbs were hesitant to marry the Vlachs, thus, imputating the racial prejudice to the Serbs. "The overly dark complexion and other physical characteristics of the Vlachs were so odious to the Bulgarians and the Serbs, among which the majority of the Vlachs lived, that they did not want to marry the Vlachs nor form family units with them" (p. 251). And in what way did the Serbs eventually assimilate those Vlachs?

It was very important to Mandić to point out that "at the Roman times, the Mauritanian colonies did not exist in present-day Croatian territories" (p. 252). They came there much later in increasingly large numbers, as if they were sent by the Serbs on purpose to suppress the Croats. "Due to the large number of the Vlachs, whose number significantly increased by the natural increase in population and their flight under the Turkish invasion, the regions below the Velebit Mountains, from Obrovac to Senj, were called 'Mauro-Valachia' in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, whereas the sea between the land and the island was called Morlachian Channal" (p. 255). However, despite all prejudice, "the state unity and the love for the joint homeland of Croatia existed among the Croats and the Vlachs until the arrival of the Turks, although they were completely separated in regard to the blood relations and family. The medieval Vlachs in the western and eastern regions were Catholics. They spoke their Romance language privately, whereas in public life, they used Croatian of the same dialect that the Croats used in those regions where the particular Vlachian groups lived" (p. 255). This would probably mean that the Vlachs spoke Chakavian, Kaikavian and Štokavian, that is, the Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian languages, which he called the unique Croatian language. Although significant number of the Vlachs moved to the west for fear of the Turks, according to Mandić "the great majority of the Vlachs, both Orthodox ones in the middle of the Balkans and the Catholic ones in Herzegovina and Doclea, joyfully accepted the new situation, the Turkish administration, which allowed them the freedom

of movement with their cattle over wide regions and announced the prospect of the better social position in the future” (p. 256). As far as Herzegovina was concerned, “When the Catholic parishes and priests vanished from those regions in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Catholic Vlachs converted to Islam and mainly to Orthodoxy. In the middle and the western parts of Zachlunia, the Vlachs remained Catholics and eventually assimilated with the local Catholic Croats” (p. 257). Mandić stated in detail that the Turks organised the settlement of great numbers of the Vlachs in all newly conquered territories. When, for example, the Turks organised the settlement of the Orthodox Vlachs from eastern Herzegovina in the region of Bihać, they, according to Mandić, brought with them “the Herzegovinian-Doclean Jekavian dialect of the Croatian language, which would eventually be accepted by the Vlachs who spoke the Romance language as well and who came to those regions from the Sanjak of Smedeevo” (p. 258).

As Mandić continued, the Vlachs increasingly abandoned the Turkish territory and went to the Austrian one by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. For his claim that those Vlachian newcomers still spoke the Romance language, Mandić’s crucial argument was the fact that “the Vlachs who came from Serbia to the Croatian territories did not left a single islet of the Serbian Ekavian dialect but they accepted the Štokavian Ikavian and Štokavian Jekavian dialects, which they found in the Croatian territories” (p. 269). Why didn’t they accept the indigenous Chakavian and Kaikavian dialects, which were the only dialects in Croatia and Slavonia until the arrival of the Serbs? And how come the Croatian national consciousness was not imposed on them but only the Serbian one was? Mandić explained this in the following way: “The Orthodox Vlachs began to arrive from the Serbian territories to the Croatian ones as the Turkish soldiers, starting from the fall of Bosnia (1463) onwards. They were followed by the Orthodox priests and monks, who depended on the Vladikas in Dabar and Mileševo and the later ones depended, in their turn, on the Serbian Patriarch in Peć. Those Serbian priests and monks in service to the non-Slavic Vlachs identified the Orthodoxy with the Serbian nationality and were exactly the ones who brought the Serbian name to Bosnia and Herzegovina and starting from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they also brought it to the free Croatian territories (the Banate of Croatia) and to Dalmatia. Thus, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, we were able to encounter, though rarely, the term Vlachs of “the Serbian religion”, which were also called the Serbs, of course. The Serbian monks, begging in Russia, spread the Serbian name in Croatia all the way to the refugee settlements of the Turkish Filurdzi Eflakan. Nevertheless, the Vlachs in the Croatian territories were aware of their ethnic uniqueness and difference from other nations until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the partially free and free states of Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria were founded in the Balkans, the descendants of the former Mauro-Vlachs abandoned their ethnic uniqueness and assimilated into the nations of the mentioned states. The systematic work on the Serbianisation of the non-Slavic Vlachs and the Orthodox Croats in the Croatian territories, which thus led to the creation of the Serbs in those regions, began with ‘Načertanije’, issued by Ilija Garašanin in 1844 and particularly with the establishment of the Serbian Committee in Belgrade in 1862, whose task was the spread of the Serbian name and influence in the neighbouring Turkish and Austrian countries, in the spirit of ‘Načertanije’” (p. 270-271).

Mandić extended the story further by claiming that, under that influence, “the Serbian Committee under the lead of the Orthodox priest Bogoljub Petranović was established in Sarajevo as well in the same year. The Committee proclaimed the ethnic

name of the Vlachs mocking and aimed at the replacement of the terms ‘Vlachs’ and ‘Christians’, which were regularly used for the Orthodox people in Bosnia and Herzegovina until then, with the Serbian name. The work on the Serbianisation of the Vlachs and other Orthodox people was especially intensive during the Bosnian-Herzegovinian uprising from 1875 to 1878 and during the first years of the Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878-1918). The Serbdom was spread through the committees for propaganda, the Orthodox confession schools, university scholarships, press, singing and sports companies (Sokol). The Orthodox clergy was especially active and it was highly respected among the Orthodox believers. In Croatia and Dalmatia, under the influence of the national spirit and the Illyrian Movement, the Orthodox people (the descendants of the Vlachs and others) mostly felt united with the Croats and strove for the unification of all Croatian territories into one Croatian state. *Ban Khuen Hedervary* (1883-1903) spread the Serbian name and awareness among the Croatian Orthodox people in order to separate them from the Croats and make them his instrument in the fight against the Croatian state rights and liberties. Nevertheless, many Orthodox people in Croatia declared themselves the Croats until 1918. Some of them were the poet Petar Preradović, General Borojević, M. Mihaljević and others. When, in 1871, the zealous Croatian patriot Eugen Kvaternik organised the uprising in Rakovica in order to liberate Croatia from ‘the Swabian-Hungarian rule’ and establish the free Croatian state, the majority of his rebels were the members of the Orthodox Church. Only in the first and the second Yugoslavia did the Croatian Orthodox people declare themselves the Serbs. According to our research, out of all present-day Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 32-35% of them originated from the Orthodox Croats; 50-52% of them originated from the non-Slavic Vlachs; 6-7% of them originated from the Serbianised Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians and Albanians; 8-10% of them originated from the real ethnic Serbs, who came to those territories mostly during Austro-Hungarian rule and during the existence of the two Yugoslavias” (p. 271-272). Having unwillingly admitted that the “real” Serbs also populated the Boka Kotorska Bay, Srem and eastern Slavonia, Mandić proceeded with his nonsense: “A small number of the ethnic Serbs settled in other Croatian territories before 1918. Out of all present-day Serbs in northwestern Dalmatia, Lika, Kordun and Banija, over two thirds of them (66-60%) originated from the Orthodox non-Slavic Vlachs, who, along with the Turks, came to those regions across Bosnia and Slavonia. Around one quarter of those Serbs originated from the Orthodox Croats ‘Predavci’<sup>6</sup>, ‘Slavonians’, native Croatian speakers of Chakavian and Kaikavian in the Military Krajina and from the Croatian Jekavian speakers, converted to Orthodoxy from eastern Herzegovina and medieval Doclea. Not more than 2-3% of those Serbs originated from the real ethnic Serbs” (p. 272-273).

Mandić’s theses on the conversion of the significant number of the Croatian Catholics to Orthodoxy were completely in accordance with such constructions. “In southeastern Croatian regions, in Travunia and medieval Doclea, during the rule of the Nemanjić family, one part of the Croatian Catholics had already been forcibly converted to Orthodoxy, as the Catholic bishops, priests and monks were banished and replaced by the Orthodox priests and monks. Even greater and very significant number of the Catholic Croats from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina converted to Orthodoxy

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<sup>6</sup> Predavci – the Croats from Bosnia

during Turkish rule (1463-1878). The main reason for that was the shortage of the Catholic preachers. Namely, before the Turkish conquest of a particular region, the Catholic clergy, both secular and ordained, would flee from the country, together with one part of the native citizenry. The Franciscans and a few *glagoljaš* priests<sup>7</sup> were the only ones to stay with the Catholic Croats who did not want to abandon their ancestral lands. However, both those groups were not present in the sufficient number, especially after 1524, when almost all Franciscan monasteries were pulled down in Turkish Bosnia. The especially great shortage of the Catholic clergy was evident in the Diocese of Trebinje, in eastern Bosnia and in Turkish Croatia between the Vrbas and the Una Rivers. Another cause of the Catholic Croats' conversion to Orthodoxy was long-lasting pressure of the Serbian and the Byzantine patriarchs, their vladikas, priests and monks. Here and there, some Catholics voluntarily converted to Orthodoxy, to protect themselves from the Turkish persecution and remain Christians, although of a different affiliation. When the new Gregorian calendar was introduced in Bosnia in 1590, a certain number of the Catholics converted to Orthodoxy in order to preserve 'the old religion'" (p. 262-263).

Mandić introduced the racial moment of differentiation in regard to this issue as well, claiming that, in the region between the Una and the Vrbas Rivers, during the enormous battles of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, "a great number of the local Croats got killed, enslaved or emigrated to the free Croatian regions. Nevertheless, a significant number of the Catholic Croats stayed on their ancestral land and converted to Islam and Orthodoxy. The present-day dark-complexioned Orthodox people from those regions originated from the non-Slavic ethnic Vlachs, whom the Turks brought from Old Vlach, Durmitor Mountain and eastern Herzegovina; those fair-complexioned with rosy cheeks, blue eyes and blond hair were the descendants of the native Catholic Croats who converted to Orthodoxy during Turkish rule. The tradition of many local Orthodox families confirmed that, as they claimed that the Catholic Croats were the only ancient people in those regions" (p. 266). On the other hand, "the fact that the present-day Orthodox people in Dalmatia live mainly in the former domicile of the old Croatian Vlachs around Obrovac, Benkovac, Knin and Vrlika shows us that the old Catholic Croatian Vlachs mingled with the new Turkish Filurdzi Eflakan in those regions as well and converted to Orthodoxy upon the Turkish conquest of those regions. Some descendants of those old Croatian Vlachs preserved the Ikavian dialect until today. The Chakavian dialect used by one part of the people who live in Žumberak also testified that the *uskoci* of Senj were the Catholics who spoke Chakavian and who settled in Žumberak in 1617, eventually converting to the Eastern rite and the Uniate" (p. 268).

Dominik Mandić was an "expert" of unbelievable, simply unnatural calibre in the sphere of linguistics. He reasoned like this: "The Štokavian dialect was divided into three sub-dialects: the Ekavian, Ikavian and Jekavian. The Serbs did not speak Štokavian when they came from the Elbe River to the Balkans. They then spoke the West Slavic language, which is spoken today by the Lusatian Sorbs, the Serbs and the Bulgarians. They accepted the Štokavian Ekavian sub-dialect from the Slavs of the first migration, into whom they assimilated as the minority. The Croats brought the Chakavian dialect with the Ikavian, Ekavian and Jekavian sub-dialects from the north. The Croatian speakers of the Chakavian Ikavian sub-dialect assimilated with the speakers of the

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<sup>7</sup> *glagoljaš* - A priest who uses Glagolitic missal

Štokavian Ikavian sub-dialect and thus created the Jekavian sub-dialect in the eastern part of their national territories, in medieval Doclea, Travunia, eastern Zachlumia and eastern Bosnia. In the central part of their national territories, in medieval Bosnia and western Zachlumia, the Croatian Chakavian speakers assimilated only with the Slavic Štokavian Ikavian speakers of the first migration. As quite many Croats lived in those regions, they introduced the powerful spirit and vocabulary of the Chakavian dialect to the Štokavian Ikavian sub-dialect and thus created the new Štokavian-Chakavian dialect. The Serbs never and nowhere spoke the Štokavian Ikavian sub-dialect. In places where those dialects were mixed with the Chakavian dialect, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croats lived there from the most ancient times and those were the Croatian lands. Although the citizenry of Bosnia and Herzegovina changed its religion under various circumstances over time, it always remained mostly of the Croatian ethnicity. 90% of all present-day Catholic Croats and Muslims originated from those Croatian indigenous people. The ethnic Serbs did not settle in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina upon their arrival from the Elbe River, nor could it be historically proven that some stronger group of them subsequently settled there. The present-day Serbs in those Provinces mostly originate from the Orthodox non-Slavic Vlachs, whom the Turks brought there during their rule. Until the Viennese Wars (1683-1699) the Orthodox people in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not comprise more than 12-15% of the entire population. The Orthodox people became the most powerful religious group only after the great part of the Muslim peasants died during the epidemic of the intestinal infections in 1782/83 and especially during the long epidemic of the plague from 1813 to 1817. The Orthodox people from northwestern Montenegro and Lika were then brought to the villages where the deceased Muslims worked as the serfs, thus ensuring the Orthodox religious supremacy, but they were always the absolute minority in comparison to the indigenous Catholic Croats and the Muslims“ (p. 283-284).

Mandić's understanding of the Serbian status rights in the territories they allegedly subsequently settled was very interesting. “The position of the Serbian minority that immigrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina and which was Serbianised in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century was similar to the position of the blacks in the United States of America (USA). The blacks, who emigrated from Africa, comprise great percentage of the entire population in several southern American states today and the absolute majority in Washington D.C. In the USA, they have all human and civil rights like other American citizens, but they do not have the right to ask for the separation of any American state from the rest of the USA and its annexation to Nigeria or any other African state. Thus, the descendants of the Vlachian immigrants to Bosnia and Herzegovina have the right to enjoy all civil rights in the new homeland together with the Croatian indigenous citizenry, they have the right to live in accordance with their Orthodox religion, to use the Cyrillic script, literature and other forms of the Serbian cultural heritage. However, they do not have the right to ask for the separation of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Croatian historical and ethnic territory and its annexation to the Serbian governmental and ethnic territory. Therefore, the Serbian striving for the unification of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Serbia in 1914 was not based on the international legal and moral standards, but it was based on the greed for other people's possession and on the violation of the ethnic rights of the Croatian nation. In accordance with this, the assassination of the heir to the throne Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, organised by the Serbian military organisation of “Unification or Death” and its leader Dragutin



Dimitrijević Apis, was the real moral crime, which could not be justified by the theory that it was morally tolerable to kill the tyrant who ruled forcibly or who did not allow the unification of the ethnic and historical parts of one national being” (p. 285-285).

If the Serbs assimilated into the indigenous Ekavian Slavic majority and imposed their name on it, they had to leave some trace in the alleged West Slavic language that they brought. The lack of such traces was the proof that no amalgamation between the East Slavs and the West Slavs took place in the Serbian territories, as well as that the Serbs appeared in the Balkans as the East Slavic nation, linguistically very similar to the indigenous East Slavs in some regions. The Croats arrived with the Chakavian dialect indeed, but the thesis that the Chakavian dialect was differentiated into the Ikavian, Ekavian and Jekavian sub-dialects before the migration was problematic. After all, the Chakavian Jekavian sub-dialect never existed. The Chakavian Ekavian sub-dialect was spoken in the north of the Croatian territories, in Istria and Kvarner Island, probably under the influence of the neighbouring Kaikavian dialect. In the Croatian south, in the hinterland of the Dalmatian towns, the Chakavian Ikavian sub-dialect was spoken, under the powerful influence of the neighbouring Štokavian Ikavian sub-dialect. That was the only reasonable explanation, since the entire Croatian region was too small and the ethnic mass very restricted to allow such a great linguistic differentiation to take place as the result of the natural internal linguistic development. Not a single serious linguist would accept Mandić's thesis that the Štokavian Jekavian sub-dialect came into existence by the amalgamation of the Chakavian Jekavian speakers with the Štokavian Ikavian speakers. The Štokavian- Chakavian dialect never and nowhere existed and if the certain number of the Croats really appeared in some Štokavian region and assimilated into it, thus introducing the traces of Chakavian into it, this did not mean that they assimilated the Štokavian speakers into the Croats. The Croats were assimilated and they thus lost their primary national characteristics. Aleksandar Belić proved that one part of the Serbs spoke the Štokavian Ikavian and he discovered, at his time, still fresh traces of Ikavian in Serbia, in eastern Podrinje. However, the most important thing was that entire Raška, which was undoubtedly Serbian state, even according to Mandić, spoke Jekavian, not Ekavian, from the most ancient times. The fact that the Serbs Serbianised the Vlachs, the Aromanians and other Balkan indigenous people should be the pride of the Serbian nation and could not be the argument for the national disqualification, except in the distorted consciousness and the hideous homosexual logic of the Roman Catholic Franciscan brain imbued with hatred, whose religious intolerance and exclusiveness represented the ideological basis of the brutal crimes for centuries.

Having constructed the thesis that almost all present-day Serbs were of almost pure Vlachian origin, Mandić engaged in the special hideous characterisation of the Serbs, dominated by the Vlachian character, and he presented it in the following way, not even attempting to conceal his personal racial prejudice: “The main characteristics of the Vlachs, the descendants of the Roman veterans and the soldiers from the Middle and New Ages, were the militancy, realistic resourcefulness under the new, overly difficult circumstances and easy acclimatisation to the environment that they settled. They do not need much in case of need. They are physically resilient, agile and fast. They are the zealous patriots of the nation that they support. This is the consequence of the Vlachian militancy and their urges to thus conceal their foreign ethnic origin and the physical characteristics of the blacks, which are still evident among many of them” (str. 287-288). Mandić made a special remark as an argument in support of his thesis on the black

origin of the present-day Serbs, the original Vlachs: “Svetozar Pribičević, the leader of the *Precani* Serbs<sup>8</sup> at the time of the first Yugoslavia, was of darker complexion than most black people in USA (from his personal experience)” (p. 288). In his text, he continuously presented the Serbian, that is, the Vlachian character flaws, from his Roman Catholic point of view. “The social isolation from other nations that lasted for centuries, the half-nomadic military life, poor and superficial religious education created many moral deviations and flaws among the Vlachs, which were turned into habits and permanent vices of the Vlachs through the frequent repetition and the heredity. In the first place, the hundred-year-long subordination and inequality to others forced the Vlachs to resort to the deceit, fraud, lies and scheming, which eventually became the inseparable part of the Vlachian nature. The deceit, lies and particularly fraud were not regarded as the moral evil among the Serbs who originated from the Vlachs, especially among those in Serbian provinces, if one managed to deceive somebody else in the perfidious, cunning and skilful way” (p. 288).

If the Vlachian social segregation really lasted for centuries, they would be unable to incorporate themselves firmly in the Serbian national being and often lead in the development of the collective national consciousness. The half-nomadic military life developed the sense of the individual and collective freedom to the utmost, placing it on the pedestal as the highest value. This sense of freedom was greatly suppressed among the nations restrained by the chains of the Roman Catholic Church. What Mandić called poor and superficial religious education was, in fact, the absence of the rigid dogmatic religious consciousness and the highly distinctive personal and collective search for the God’s presence as the meaning of the existence, the supreme principle of justice and moral criteria and not the enslavement by the empty religious phrases that sterilise the human mind. It was not a coincidence at all that Europe chose the path of the Humanism and Renaissance, liberalism and democracy only after the Protestant Reformation deeply shook and disintegrated the Vatican hotbed of the, until then, almighty Catholic obscurantism of the Inquisition. Where could be greater oddity found than among the Catholic monks, especially among the Jesuits and the Franciscans? Who presented more lies, deceit and fraud in the Balkan territories than the Roman Catholic missionaries and ideologists of the artificial Croatian nation, as the embodiment of the century-old Papal criminal project to destroy the Serbian national church, exterminate the Orthodoxy and transform the Serbian nation into the flock of the Roman archvillains and the devil’s apprentices? We, the Serbs, do not wish to become the flock, to grow the tail and the horns and to believe in the unerring nature of the Satan’s embodiment on the earth. We would rather be the blacks.

Other flaws that Mandić also ascribed to the Serbianised Vlachs were, in fact, the subconscious expression of his own character traits and negative moral values. He wrote: “The second great flaw of the provincial Vlachs, Aromanians was the greed for somebody else’s property. The Vlachs lived as the warriors of the pillage and border companies for centuries. As such, they plundered somebody else’s property, appropriated it and lived on other people’s misfortune. Thus, the belief spread among the Vlachs that it was not a sin to appropriate somebody else’s possessions, to steal and deceive others while dealing with them, especially if the person in question was an enemy, heterodox person, municipal and state union. This flaw was the key of the

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<sup>8</sup> The *Precani* Serbs – the Serbs who live outside Serbia

frequent unreliable trade and turnover business among the Serbian provincial people, particularly of the frequent misappropriations of the social and governmental funds. The Aromanians were usually stingy until they got rich. The Serbs identified the term stinginess with the Aromanians, the misers. The third frequent flaw of the Vlachs and their descendants was the tendency towards the spill of the human blood, murders and conspiracies. Since they served as the warriors and the border soldiers for centuries, the Vlachs often killed people, which made them underestimate the sacredness of a human life, made them bloodthirsty and cruel. Thus, the massacre of the Muslims at the beginning of the First Serbian Uprising became understandable, as well as the fight to the death between the Serbian Karadorđević and Obrenović Dynasties and the massacres of the Croats and the Muslims during the Second World War and immediately afterwards. The additional flaw of the Vlachs was the extreme boastfulness, bragging and the persistent insistence on their personal traits. They would risk losing their head for the sake of bragging. They were quarrelsome and extremely fond of gossip” (p. 288-289).

#### **d.) Mandić’s Aversion to Yugoslavia**

As he was full of praise for the Illyrian Movement as the basis for the revival of the Croatian national consciousness, Mandić analysed the Yugoslavism of some Croatian intellectuals as an illusion greatly limited in time that even its originators, like Strossmayer, would renounce. “As he observed the selfishness of the Serbs, who only cared for their own interests in Serbia and supported the tyrannical regime of Khuen Hedervary, who exterminated the Croatian nation and its constitutional freedom in Croatia, Strossmayer lost his interest in Yugoslavism and returned to the Croatian state idea and the Croatian national name” (p. 297). He then cited the standpoints from Strossmayer’s letter to Rački from 10 April 1884, according to Šišić’s anthology of Strossmayer’s correspondence. According to Mandić’s citation, Strossmayer wrote: “Our nation is in great danger. The Serbs are our archenemies. It is true what, I think, Marković said that the fellow Serbs tried to stab us in the back, while we were fiercely fighting against the Magyars” (p. 297-298). Similarly to this, in his letter to Lujko Vojnović from 25 July 1893, Strossmayer pointed out: “We, the Croats, observed the Serbian fighting with a fervent wish for the Serbian victory as soon as possible... On the other hand, we could see the Serbs in great opposition to us everywhere, always in the union with our enemies and against us. Those wretched souls think that our grave would be Easter for them, whereas the grave they prepare for us would also swallow them forever” (p. 298).

Mandić considered the Act of Unification, passed on 1 December 1918, to be “unauthorised, wilful and deceitful, therefore illegitimate. According to Geneva Accord, the State of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs with the seat in Zagreb shall exist until the Constituent Assembly do not change the Constitution and proclaim the new state organisation. The delegation of the National Council of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes went to Belgrade without the permission of the entire National Council and without the permission of the Croatian Parliament; it acted wilfully, neglecting the principles the Central Committee of the National Council had already determined. The unification was carried out against the national spirit of self-determination, as the great majority of the Croatian nation was then in favour of the preservation of the state of Croatia and against

the unitary centralistic state, which was established on 1 December 1918. The Croatian Parliament never approved that unification, nor did the Croatian nation accept it” (p. 234).

In relation to Aleksandar Karađorđević, Nikola Pašić and Svetozar Pribićević, Mandić pointed out that “they were never sincere followers of the national unity idea of the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. They considered themselves the representatives of the Serbian nation and worked permanently on the Serbian statehood. They accepted the term the State name of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes because of the foreign affairs, with the special intention to further expand the Serbian state under that name. From the very beginning, they had the intention to destroy the Croatian and Montenegrin statehood, to strengthen the position of the Serbs living outside Serbia and thus weaken the Croats and the Slovenes both economically and culturally, and make them only an insignificant pendant in the State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes” (p. 324). He thus claimed that the Serbian politicians, aiming at the state development in the Serbian spirit and in accordance to the Serbian interests, counted on the Serbian multitude, the Greater Serbian dynasty and the army raised in the same spirit, as well as on the inherited diplomats and the state administration, the unification of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the privileged economic position of the Serbian business people.

In regard to the alleged Serbian economic privileges, the following Mandić’s argument was very characteristic: “The abolition of the serfdom and colonates, the agrarian reform and interior colonisation were the measures the new state used to harm the Croats and empower the Serbs. The Orthodox Serbs comprised the majority of the serfs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who paid one quarter, and in some regions even one third of their annual income to their landowners. The State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes abolished the serfdom and liberated the serfs from all obligations, but it did not provide the landowners with the satisfactory compensation. As a result of this, the leading Muslim classes of the agha and the bey were ruined in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In accordance with the agrarian reform, nobody could possess more than 50 hectares. The entire surplus was to be given to those who had cultivated the land unceasingly for the last ten years or to the state. The land that the state received was divided among 90% of the Serbs, who were called “Thessalonica volunteers.” The Orthodox Serbs also settled in the land taken over from the Catholic dioceses, monasteries and parishes. The Croatian peasants from the rocky regions of Herzegovina, mountainous Dalmatian regions and western Bosnia were not given the land for the interior colonisation, as they were not ‘the Thessalonica volunteers’” (p. 328-329). Moreover, in reference to the results of the 1910 census in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mandić specially pointed out that 73,92% of the Orthodox serfs lived there; 21,49% of the Catholic serfs and 4,58% of the Muslim ones. He reproached the Serbs because the war damages was mainly distributed to Serbia.

Although it was known for the long time that the Catholic clerical circles ordered the murder of Stjepan Radić, Mandić repeated the old false accusation that the royal factors stood behind that. “The murder of the leader of the Croatian nation in the middle of the session of the National Assembly in Belgrade was the peak of the Greater Serbian violence over the Croats, but the end of the Vidovdan Constitution and the state as well” (p. 334-335). In regard to the Cvetković-Maček Agreement on the establishment of the Banate of Croatia in 1939, Mandić said that it was “a compromise, which did not satisfy either of the sides involved. The Croats were dissatisfied because the autonomy of the

Banate of Croatia was limited, because Bosnia and Herzegovina were torn to pieces and the Boka Kotorska Bay and Srem did not become part of the Banate of Croatia” (p. 340). As Mandić stated, the Croatian youth was also dissatisfied, for they wanted the complete independence. “The secret organisation of the Ustasha Movement was carried out after the return of Milo Budak from the emigration... the Ustasha revolutionary spirit increasingly spread over the Croatian territories” (p. 342). The war that broke out on 6 April destroyed Yugoslavia, “the dungeon of the Croatian nation”. “The Croats could not fight for the preservation of such a state and its renewal. Although the circumstances were very difficult and complicated due to the Second World War, the Croats, being the old nation, could not do anything else but establish their own Independent State of Croatia (NDH)” (p. 243-245).

### **e.) The Racist Spite Instead of the Scientific Conclusion**

As he was about to reach the final conclusions at the end of this book, Mandić insisted again on the claim that the Croats were the Aryan people and that the Serbs were not of Indo-European origin at all. Mandić stated, as one of the crucial differences between those two nations, that “the Croatian kings, and dukes before them, were never autocratic rulers (“*samodršci*”) as the Byzantine Emperors and the Serbian kings were. The power of the Croatian rulers was restricted by the Croatian Parliament. As a democratic nation, the Croats dealt with all public and state matters by common consent at the meetings of their Parliaments since the most ancient times. The rulers had to govern the state in accordance with the decisions reached in Parliament” (p. 353). Since the Croats “were always a democratic nation”, as Mandić resolutely stated, they “never conquered foreign territories, nor did they forcibly impose their will on others, not even on their tribal units when they would become too much independent” (p. 355). On the other hand, the Serbs were always subjected to someone, even to the Croats!? As Mandić wrote, under the new Avarian and Bulgarian invasions in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, “the Serbs subjected themselves to the protection of the Croatian state, which established a special unit of the Croatian state for the protection of the Serbs from the external enemies at the meeting of the Parliament of Duvno in 753” (p. 356).

## **5. The Disregard of the Valid Historical Sources**

Mandić developed in detail the traditional Croatian and his own historiographic forgeries in his other books. Thus, he started his monography “*The Croatian Territories in the Past and the Present*” (The Collected Works, vol. 1, ZIRAL, Chicago-Rome 1973) with the claim about the existence of the formal imperial letter, which the Byzantine Emperor wrote to ask the Croats to settle in the Balkans. Based on the fact, found in the old sources, that around 80,000 of the Avars besieged Constantinople at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Mandić concluded that at least the equal number of the Croatian soldiers must have come to the Balkans, as if they headed directly towards the Byzantine capital. He added to that women, children and old people and reached the number of 300,000 Croats that migrated. That was simply an unbelievable methodological procedure. Then he repeated the completely unfounded thesis that they seized the entire Adriatic coast from Istria to Vlora and that some of their groups went

to fight against the Avars all the way to the Aegean Sea. Of course, this involved again the preposterous interpretation of Constantine Porphyrogenetos' chronicles, whose claims were accepted as completely true if they pertained to something positive about the Croats or were labelled as highly unreliable if they referred to something negative in relation to the Croatian present-day territorial aspirations or, even worse, to something favourable for the Serbs. If the Croats came to Dalmatia, then the territory in question was really small, as Dalmatia, at the time, was reduced to the region from Zadar to Omiš, with the islands included. If one part of the Croats separated from the main group and seized rule over Illyria and Pannonia, then Illyria referred to the interior region, to the east from the Dalmatian towns, which was traditionally called Croatia, whereas "Pannonia" could not pertain to entire Pannonia in any case, but only to one its part, probably the plain in the valley of the Kupa River, or, at the best, the region between the Kupa and the Sava Rivers. The Croats were historically known as a nation only there and the objective proof of their existence could be found as well. Everything else was a fairy tale, like that from "The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea", which was about the rule of the Croatian ruler from Illyria to Pannonia, which could mean that the imaginary state in question might include Poland as well. However, Mandić referred to the former Roman town of Apollonia, whose remnants allegedly were in the vicinity of Vlora.

To support such a nonsense as much as possible, Mandić claimed that the linguists "determined that some undoubtedly Chakavian words and dialects existed in the Albanian language. This could happen only due to the Croatian Chakavian speakers, who lived for a long time in the territory of present-day Albania, in the Adriatic region" (p. 21). Then he claimed that, at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the state of the first historically known Croatian ruler, Prince Borna, also "extended to Vlora in Albania" (p. 21). It was historically certain that Borna could not move any further to the south from the Cetina River. However, Mandić accidentally confirmed that one part of Pannonia was referred to as Croatia only after the Battle of Mohacs and the Turks, at the time, conquered Croatia all the way to Obrovac. "Due to the mentioned loss, the Croatian nobility and the freemen retreated towards the north, so they named the western part of Slovinje Croatia (Pannonian Croatia)" (p. 33). Moreover, he claimed that "the large number of the Catholic Croats was enslaved in 1415, when the Turks, in service of Herzog Hrvoje, plundered the Croatian territories all the way to Zagreb. (p. 36-37). Even more striking information ensued. "The contemporary Venetian chronicler Marino Sanuto noted that the Turks enslaved over 600,000 people from the Croatian territories until the end of the third war of Suleiman II (1532). During the subsequent wars of Suleiman II (1541, 1543, 1566) and the frequent intrusions of the Bosnian viziers from 1575 to the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, more than a million and a half Catholic Croats were enslaved" (p. 37).

Here, Mandić also complained that "The Habsburg rulers used the Vlachs in the Military Krajina to create a foreign bone in the Croatian national body, which would have the permanent fatal effect on the Croatian national being and would be a hindrance to the Croatian national consolidation and the originality of the state" (p. 45). As those Vlachs, actually the Serbs "chose to serve the foreigners at their own and the Croatian real and permanent disadvantage", he stated that "the Military Krajina and the Vlachian newcomers would become a serious worry for the Croatian Parliament and the greatest obstacle to the unification of the Croatian territories, the fortification of the Croatian state and the establishment of its full sovereignty" (p. 46). In relation to Bosnia and

Herzegovina, he stated that, until the Treaty of Karlowitz, “the local Muslims and the Catholics spoke the same Croatian Ikavian dialect with the strong additions of the Chakavian; they used the same script, called Bosnian Cyrillic; they cherished the old Croatian customs (the blood brotherhood, the Godfathers and best men, wedding and cattle breeding customs). Even today, the Catholic Croats and the Muslims form a separate linguistic and biological union, different from the Sebian immigrants” (p. 51). The Muslim element in Bosnia additionally grew in power after the Turkish defeat near Vienna in 1683. “Those Croats who converted to Islam in Dalmatia, Lika, Slavonia and southern Hungary, retreated to Bosnia and Herzegovina when those regions fell into the Christian hands. There were more than 100,000 of them” (p. 51).

In this book, Mandić expressed a certain respect and admiration for Tito, that is, for his wisdom, perseverance and shrewdness, especially in regard to his organisation of the Communist Yugoslavia “as the confederacy, since the states were equal and sovereign only in the confederacy. Nevertheless, Mandić reproached him for the Serbian numeric superiority in the ruling party and for the fact that Croatia was deprived of many territories it aspired to. “The Communist Party was guilty of granting many municipalities in Međumurje, Bijela Krajina, northern and western Istria to the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, although the ethnic Croats lived there. The separation of Bosnia and Herzegovina from Croatia, which was a larger and, above all, important part of the Croatian territories, its transformation into a new “Social Republic” and the recent attempt to ‘create’ a separate nation there by the political decree, were the anti-Croatian acts of the Communist Party and its state formation. The same party wilfully annexed Srem, Bačka and a part of Vojvodina to Serbia, without asking for the people’s opinion, thus denying them their right of self-determination. Thus, in the south, it also annexed Boka Kotorska Bay to Montenegro. Namely, when it is to be determined to what nation and what state a particular region belongs, this should not be done solely in regard to the particular municipalities and districts but the entire country in question should be taken into consideration. Since the Serbs in present-day Republic of Croatia do not comprise more than 14.2% of the entire population, Srem and Boka Kotorska should not have been separated from Croatia, although the Croats are not the majority in those regions any more, due to the historical misfortune. One part of Bačka, to the west from the imaginary line drawn from Horgoš and Vrbas towards Bačka Palanka, should have been annexed to “the Socialist Republic of Croatia”, as the Bunjevci and Šokci Croats comprise the ethnical majority of the population there” (p. 82-83). However, the Yugoslav Communists deserved the certain praise in regard to the frontiers. Istria to the west of the Raša River never politically belonged to the Croatian state, although the Croats lived there from their arrival in 626 to 1945. From that year onwards, it was politically united with Croatia, which should be regarded as the positive act of the Communist Yugoslavia” (p. 82).

#### **a) The Contradictions in Mandić’s Projection of the Inferiority of the Serbian Nation**

Wishing to prove the unprovable at all costs, Mandić falls into some incredible contradictions. For example, he says that before Bosnia fell under Turkish rule, only around 15,000 to 18,000 Romance Vlachs lived there. The logical question imposes itself – how come such a large number of Vlachs flooded into Croatia and Slavonia?

Using the numbers freely, Mandić incessantly tries to prove that the Croats were superior to the Serbs in every respect. Similarly, it is a slip of the tongue when he says first that only 4,000 Serbs and 300,000 Croats settled in the Balkans and then, having forgotten about his previous lie, he arbitrarily changes those figures. And even when he lies the most, he sets out some useful pieces of information, like the one about the mass migration of the Croats. Here, we come across the following statements: “When they came to the Adriatic, the number of Croats was ten times bigger than the number of Serbs and the Croats founded their kingdom 300 full years before the Serbs. With all their historical ordeals, the number of Croats was three times bigger than the number of Serbs before the fall of Bosnia and, if it had not been for the Turkish invasion, there would now be at least 12 million to 15 million Croats. Still, in the 100-year fighting on the fatal border between the West and the East, in the heart of Croatia, more than 300,000 Croats, on the both sides, would be killed. Almost a million Croats would be abducted to slavery and scattered all over the Turkish and other countries to Persia, India and Abyssinia. More than 500,000 Croats would migrate from Bosnia and the border regions of free Croatia to Slavonia, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy and other countries, and the Croatian national identity would be lost” (p. 112). This will lead to the following sort of reminiscences: “After the Vienna wars, there were no more than 25,000 Catholic Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thanks to their extraordinary vigour and moral, they multiplied that number to 700,000 by 1970 – that is by 24 times” (p. 113).

Here, Mandić completely ignores the factor of the so-called “*koferaši*” – a large number of Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Poles and other settlers of the Catholic religion, whom Austro-Hungary settled in order to complete the state bureaucratic apparatus. The clergy deliberately led them to declare themselves as Croats, at least starting from the second family generation. Mandić even adds: “If it had not been for these migrations, there would be over two million Catholic Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina today and the Vlachs would not have settled in Bosnia in order to till the soil of the beys that the Catholic Croats had abandoned. Accordingly, the Catholic and Muslim Croats would make up a large majority of the population today, and the descendants of the Vlachs, who call and feel themselves Serbs today, would only live in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina and would not make up more than 12-15% of the population, which is a number they had never exceeded until the Vienna wars 1683-1699” (p. 113). Having set it out as a hypothesis that the Croats represented the exclusive population of the original Bosnia, he treats it later on as an unquestionable proof that underpins new lies. Similarly, he states: “The middle-aged Bogomils in Bosnia and Herzegovina were authentic and pure Croats, like their brothers – the Catholic Croats” (p. 115). At the same time, he consciously ignores the fact that the Bogomils migrated to Bosnia *en masse* when Stefan Nemanja had banished them from Serbia with the intention of suppressing their heresy. Nemanja did not banish the Bogomil Croats, but the Bogomil Serbs. Those Serbs were angry with the ruler who had banished them from their firesides, but still, no matter how great their anger was, it could not have turned them into Croats.

We catch him out in a new contradiction. He says that: “Before the fall of Bosnia, there were no more than 80,000-90,000 Bogomils. If they had all converted to Islam, the number could not have multiplied to 150,000 Muslims, let alone 900,000 of them by 1624” (p. 115). Therefore, if all the 90,000 Bogomils had converted to Islam, the



Muslims could not have reached 150,000 in 150 years. Still, 25,000 Catholics in 1700 could multiply to 700,000 Catholics in 1970, that is in 270 years. It is indeed a professional demographic-statistical analysis. Maybe the Croats managed to multiply asexually, by simple division and geometrical progression. Mandić blathers about the Croatian origin of the population of Bosnia and the conversion of the Catholic Croats to Islam for two very simple and practical reasons. “Without Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croatian country would be spatially deformed and almost interrupted, without true unity or complete development. As Ante Radić, an HSS ideologist, once wisely said, without Herzeg-Bosnia, Croatia would seem as like half of a slice of bread, having only the crust and without the middle part. Kr. Draganović’s comparison is also picturesque when he compares Croatia without Herzeg-Bosnia to a leech spreading from Kotor to Srem, or to a man who has its arms and legs extended, and no trunk – who lacks chest and stomach in containing the main human organs. As that kind of a man is not capable of living, neither was Croatia without Bosnia and Herzegovina, either in ancient times or in the future. The natural border between the Croatian and the Serbian lands is the Drina. On that line, the Romans divided their empires and the religious and cultural division between the eastern and the western worlds of today has been built on it for centuries. This line should divide Croatia from the Serbian state. Without Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia would hardly be sustainable militarily. Its roads and tourism, on which the future Croatian country must count on to a great extent, would not have the natural short connections, but would be directed on long roundabout routes. Bosnia and Herzegovina would help Croatia economically as well with their developed livestock industry, fruit production and their forests. The strong Croatian state industry depends on the rich iron and other mineral layers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. And what is most important – without Bosnia and Herzegovina, one third of the pure Croats of the Dinaric type would remain outside the Croatian country – those who represent the most healthy and the most vigorous part of the Croatian nation” (p. 155-156).

### **b) The Instrumentalisation of the Muslims**

According to Mandić’s concept, a precious means of achieving this could be the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims. “Although Bosnia and Herzegovina are unquestionably Croatian lands historically, without the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim Croats they would not be Croatian today, nor could Croatia get those lands without them. The Catholic Croats preserved Bosnia and Herzegovina as Croatian national territory in community with the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim Croats...In order for the Croats to get Bosnia and Herzegovina, both Catholic and Muslim Croats should want and insist on that together” (p. 156). The problem lies in the fact that, after World War II, a large number of those Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims did not declare themselves nationally in the population census and later even declared as a particular nation. “For this reason, some fear that they could be even recognised as Serbs one day” (p. 157). Mandić claims that the Serbs had absolute power, that they ruled over life and the death under Communist rule. “Regarding this Serbian pashalic, it is courageous to not declare oneself as Serbian and not to sit at a richly-set table that they had appropriated with undemocratic violence and kept it exclusively for themselves. If the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims do ‘not declare their nationality’ or declare themselves as ‘the Muslim nation’ under this pressure, it is not that they actually do not

declare their nationality, but by this, they declare that they are not Serbians. In the future, when true human and state freedom reign in Bosnia and Herzegovina, those 'undeclared' Muslims will then speak the language of the blood that runs in their veins, namely – that they are Croats and that they cannot be anything else" (p. 157). Perhaps then, they will return to their original Chakavian dialect and repugnantly dismiss Shtokavian as the foreign one.

Here, it is only important that Dominik Mandić "knows for sure" why the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims cannot be Serbians in any way. "Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims cannot be Serbians because that is not who they are in reality. Because of the Croatian blood and language, religious affiliation and thought, cultural life and true, deep feeling, they are completely different from the Serbians and they could never unite with them and blend as one nation. An individual can betray his own blood and his nation out of personal interests and the love for themselves. We call them traitors and renegades. Still, one whole nation or its considerable part, like the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim Croats, cannot and will never commit a general and complete treachery against themselves, their blood and their true nationality. The Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims cannot declare themselves Serbians because that would signify their religious doom in the near future, as well. Both the Catholic and the Muslim religions are universal, general human religions and, consequently, they are not associated or identified with any particular nations. A Catholic or a Muslim can be Croatian, French, English, Egyptian, Indian and Chinese. In accordance with that, both the Catholics and the Muslims understand and know that faithful members of various religions can be good members of the same nation. Like both the Protestants and the Catholics are good Germans, English and Americans, who mutually respect and love one another as the members of the same nation, also the Catholics and the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the entire Croatia can and must love and help one another as the members of the same Croatian nation. As for the Serbians, the situation is different. The Orthodox religion is connected inextricably with their national identity. They are only and exclusively the members of 'the Serbian Orthodox Church', and they have St. Sava and other Serbian saints, the Serbian national-religious customs (family saint's day – *slava*, oak branch, etc.) and their Serbian Patriarch, the supreme ruler of their Serbian Church. A Serbian is not completely and truly Serbian if not a member of the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Sava. For this reason, if the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims declare themselves as Serbians, the very spirit and the concept of the integral and complete Serbdom would force them to embrace the Serbian Orthodoxy eventually, either individually and gradually, or as a group and together" (p. 158-159).

History has so far recorded the conversion of a great number of Serbians to Catholicism, especially significant literary men and scientists, and never have religious intolerance and proselytistic intentions been directed at them. Proselytisation and missionary work are the characteristics of the Roman Catholic Church. What the distinguished Croatian intellectuals and historians considered to be the Croatian weakness – the lack of a national church – the Serbians overcame in good time by forming their own autocephalous church organisation and now Mandić reproaches them for that as a negative characteristic. There are many examples of very high religious tolerance in the Serbian past, which is an incomprehensible term to the Catholic Croats, since they had absolutely forbidden and mercilessly persecuted any attempt to introduce Protestant dogmas until modern times. It is a well-known case that the

Muslims in Lika were converted to Catholicism after the Turks had been banished from those regions. For this reason, it is highly hypocritical and unconvincing when Mandić insists on the following conclusion: “That the inclusion of the Orthodox religion into Serbdom and their identification has resulted and will always result in the Serbian demands that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims convert to the Serbian Orthodoxy or be destroyed” (p. 159).

### c) The Quasi-Linguistic Constructions

Here, Mandić’s quasi-linguistic constrictions are the most interesting in which we come across the following statements: “In the middle ages, the Bosnian Bans and Kings, the squires and the wide masses of people spoke the Shtokavian dialect of Ikavian. The charters of the rulers and the gentry and the tombstones (the *stecci*) were written in Ikavian in middle and western Bosnia. All the literature or of the Bosnian Christians and Bogomils was written in Ikavian, as well. Ever since the middle ages, the Catholics and the Muslims in middle and western Bosnia have spoken Shtokavian Ikavian, while it is Orthodox Iekavian in eastern Herzegovina and Bosnia. The descendants of the Orthodox Vlachs from those regions spread Ikavian all over Bosnia, Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia. Although the villages and the houses were close to each other, one part of the population spoke Ikavian and the other Iekavian. That was the case until within our own lifetime. Another notable linguistic phenomenon, that brings together the Muslims and the Catholics into a close linguistic community, is the Chakavian dialect. Chakavian characteristics are found in the old Bosnian charters, on the standing tombstones from the Middle Ages and in the Bosnian Christians’ heritage. Even today, the Muslims and the Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina pronounce some words in Chakavian and use a Chakavian accent” (p. 170). It is very important that Mandić lets this statement slip – that Iekavian Shtokavian is not a Croatian linguistic product. Similarly, Shtokavian Ikavian cannot have any connections with the Croatians as well, because Mandić himself states that the vernacular originates from southern Russia and Ukraine. What next! If the Vlachs had actually spread a vernacular, then it would have been the Romance one, not the Serbian Shtokavian dialect with a Iekavian pronunciation. The Orthodox Serbians spread that vernacular, in whose blood partially ran Vlach blood as well, as it unquestionably runs even today.

## 6. The Manipulations Using The Chronicle of the Priest Dukljanin

All of Mandić’s book *Red Croatia in the Light of the Historical Sources* (ZIRAL, Chicago-Rome, 1973) represents far-fetched explanation of the absolutely unfounded statements from *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* and its Croatian recension, which he tries to represent as an independent work under the title *The Kingdom of the Croatsians*. In the introduction, he explains that he actually polemicises with all the other Croatian historians, starting with Ioannes Lucius from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, through to Rački from the 19<sup>th</sup> and Tadija Smičiklas, Vjekoslav Klaić and Ferdo Šišić from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. “In numerous and valuable works, Rački covers the history only of the Croatsians between the Cetina and the Raša, namely the former White Croatia. He ignores the regions south of the Cetina, in particular from the Neretva and east of the Vrbas, because he does not consider that territory Croatian. From

then on, until the present day, writing on Croatian history remains under the shadow of Franjo Rački, the most influential Croatian historian. Both T. Smičiklas and Vj. Klaić write about the Croatian history, but they only cover the past of the Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, namely the former White Croatia. Even Dr Ferdo Šišić, a distinguished scientist and a long-standing professor of Croatian history at the Zagreb University, sticks only to the theses of I. Lucius and F. Rački. One thing that had an unfavourable effect on Šišić was that, in order to publish his main works on Croatian history, he also had to ask the Serbians for help – Sv. Pribičević and the Serbian Academy in Belgrade. Of course, this attitude of the Croatian historians suited the Serbian historians who, without serious protest, extended the frontiers of the historical Serbian national territory to the Cetina in Dalmatia and Livno in western Bosnia” (p. 11-12).

Regardless of that, the phantasmagoria of the completely invented Council of Duvanjski was rejected by serious science as completely irrelevant long ago, and also the mentioning of “Red Croatia” by the Priest Dukljanin in the same context, Mandić persistently insists that it is an authentic historical testimony. “The testimony of the Priest Dukljanin concerning Red Croatia has first-class validity. As a true son, he knew the name of his own mother land and to which nation it belonged. If he said that Duklja belonged to Red Croatia and that, accordingly, the Red Croats lived there, just as the White Croats lived in White Croatia, we should believe him. Regardless of the historical value of *The Chronicle*, which has not yet been confirmed, the Priest Dukljanin could not have lied about this, even if he had wanted to. As he himself says in the introduction, he wrote the work due to the supplication of the priests in the seat of the Bar archdiocese – for them to use it as well as for his lay citizens, both old and young. Addressing these people, the Priest Dukljanin could not have invented non-existent names for their own country or relate the people of Duklja to the White Croats, if those relations had not existed in reality” (p. 20). Furthermore, Mandić is ready to go as far as to even produce a thesis that the alleged that *The Kingdom of the Croats* is a work that was created before *The Chronicle*, although it is actually a Croatian adaptation of *The Chronicle* itself. That he is a forger is testified by the fact that, on the page 44 of his book, he gives a fragment from Dukljanin’s introduction, both in Latin and Serbian, and what is written in the Latin source as “*sclavinica littera*”, he translates as “the Croatian language”.

Saying that *The Kingdom of the Croats* - that is, the later Croatian recension of *The Chronicle* - is an older work that the Priest Dukljanin himself used, Mandić ascribes that forgery to Mihail, King of Duklja. In other words, Mandić claims that it was written at his request in order to justify the proclamation of Duklja as a kingdom and to show “that, in the old times, the Croatian common kingdom had its seat actually in Duklja and that the Archbishop in old Duklja (later, the archdiocese was transferred to Bar), Lower Dalmatia, by the decision of the well-known Council of Duvanjski. The work was written in Croatian and was entitled *The Kingdom the Croats* precisely because for that reason, with the aim of acting and convincing the Croatian circles in the new kingdom that Mihajlo had not introduced anything new, only resurrected an ancient reality. Since Duklja was never a seat of the country and the Croatian Kingdom, it was Mihajlo – as we have to conclude – who ordered the author of *The Kingdom the Croats* not to talk about the present times, but to end with events that happened a hundred years before. In this way, the living people could not remember things that the work mentions or refute

the main false thesis of that first and oldest work in the national vernacular about Croatian history” (p. 56-57). It is a good thing that Mandić confesses, nevertheless, that the document abounds in lies and invented facts, created with the concrete political aims, but he searches for those aims in the wrong time and in the wrong place. For this reason, Mandić hides the time of the text’s creation, based on the very liberal translation of *The Chronicle* from Latin, so he hurries to add his own comment: “the work was written in old Chakavian, which the Croats had spoken from the time of their arrival in the south and in Duklja” (p. 59).

The Croatian recension includes references to an allegedly older document titled *Methodos*, which the Croatian historians confirmed had never existed. For this reason, Mandić criticises Ferdo Šišić, who proved this, and says: “Šišić’s proving that this paragraph was introduced later and that *Methodos* had never existed as a written work is hyper-critical and unconvincing” (p. 59). In the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Andrea Dandolo, the Venetian Doge, re-wrote *The Chronicle* and adjusted it to his own views. Still, some writers from Dubrovnik occasionally cited that document as well, although there were people who disputed it, which Mandić confesses when he emphasises: “according to our knowledge, of all the older writers from Dubrovnik, there was only one Benedictine in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, whose name is not familiar but who came from the priory of St. Petar and Pavle near Dubrovnik, who disputed the overall value of *The Chronicle of the Priest Dukljanin* and, accordingly, its statements in chapter nine on the unique Croatian country from Istria to Drač in Albania, as well. In that, he mainly referred to Lucius's work titled *De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*. He mentions Porphyrogenitus, as well as some other Byzantine and Western writers, but his knowledge of the old sources is incomplete in comparison with our knowledge today. The written work of the unknown Benedictine from Dubrovnik is today kept in the town museum of Padua, under the title *Antiquitatum Iliricarum*” (p. 69-70). Mandić pointedly insists that the author of the work is anonymous; but still, even the priest who wrote *The Chronicle* is unknown, as is his later Croatian editor, whose intellectual creation he pronounces *The Kingdom of the Croats*.

### a) The Modification of *The Chronicle* by Ivan Đakon

Mandić’s attempt to modify *The Chronicle* by the Venetian historian Ivan Đakon from the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century seems especially ridiculous. Đakon writes that Prince Mihailo of Hum caught the son of Petar II Orseol, Venetian Doge, at the Croatian border. Mandić writes that the expression *finis* (the end) does not mean the border here, but scenery. Since the old *Chronicle of Split* that Šimun Ljubavac, a nobleman from Zadar, handed over to Ioannes Lucius in 1653, states that some deputies from Split presented themselves to the Hungarian King Coloman as “White Croats”. Accordingly, Mandić “shrewdly” concludes: “If the Croatian representatives of middle Dalmatia and Lika call themselves and their compatriots ‘White Croats’, there must have existed some other Croats who were not ‘White Croats’, whose name two men named Petar could not speak. Those were ‘the Red Croats’ in Red Croatia who had their own King Bodin in 1102, or his heir Dobroslav, so they had neither the need nor wish to hand the crown of their kingdom to a foreign, Hungarian ruler” (p. 75). Similarly, Mandić manipulates an old Russian document from the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century entitled *Nestor’s Chronicle*, which says

that all the Slavs originated from Illyricum and that they migrated from there to the north and the east. In his chronicle, Nestor mentions “the White Croats” and Mandić deduces from the story that, if “the White Croats” existed, then “the Red” Croats must have existed as well, because the white colour cannot be without the red one. According to that logic, wherever there is something white, there must also be its red counterpart. Mandić explains the fact that Nestor does not mention “the Red Croats” as follows: “the Red Croats lived in the region of the Adriatic flow and never close to the Danube. For this reason, when naming the Danube Slavs, he mentioned only the White Croats, because they alone possessed the Danube lands from Karantija, in the middle ages – the land of *Carantians*, as far as Serbia and extending to the east from the Drina and to the south of the Sava at the time” (p. 79). However, in his document, Nestor mentions all the Slavs – among those in the Balkans, especially the Carantians (nowadays the Slovenians), the White Croats and the Serbs. Maybe “the Red Croats” existed somewhere far away at the time, as well. Probably they lived somewhere on American territory like the other red-skin people, but Nestor did not know about them. Still, Mandić tries to convince us that Nestor did know about them, only did not want to mention them. Nevertheless, Mandić draws an astonishing conclusion from a document that does not mention the Red Croats at all: “Nestor’s chronicle explicitly mentions the White Croats in the western part of the old Croatian state in the Adriatic, and indirectly mentions the Red Croats, who had their own independent country to the south of the Neretva at the Nestor’s time” (p. 79).

### **b) The Geographical Maps According to the Pope’s Wishes**

With a wide debate on the various meanings of the terms Illyricum, Pannonia and Dalmatia in the various historical periods or in the works of writers of the same period, Mandić’s final goal is to limit Illyricum to the region of what is now Albania and Epirus and to extend Dalmatia northwards to the Raša and southwards to Valona. However, at the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, many considered the entire mountainous inland of the Balkans to be Illyricum and Dalmatia was limited precisely to the region between the Krka and the Cetina. Even the area from Skradin to Rijeka was never called Dalmatia at the time, but Liburnia. Also, the name Upper Dalmatia was lost very soon in the south, while the name “Red Croatia” never existed, nor was it recorded in any document. Still, Mandić tries to make up for the lack of a historical manuscript that could be veritable, at least to some extent, by frequently repeating that term. Accordingly, it happens that he repeats the apodictic statement an infinite number of times, with various stylistic variations: “the division of Dalmatia into Upper and Lower Dalmatia and their identification with White and Red Croatia are the basic geopolitical claims of the earliest Croatian chronicles - *The Kingdom of the Croats* and *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*” (p. 130). It really is a huge problem that no one has ever mentioned anything similar to “Red Croatia” – except for the author of *The Chronicle* and science established long ago that *The Chronicle* itself had almost no historiographical value, only a literary one, being a literary curiosity of the time when it was created. For this reason, Mandić consistently insists that *The Chronicle* and its later Croatian recension are two chronicles that appeared at different times, one of them being the older one. When some authors – contemporaries – identify the then Croatia and Dalmatia, they always have the narrowest Dalmatia in mind, not the one Mandić would

want. Even his crucial evidence that the Split Metropolitanate extended to Bar at one time means nothing, because all that was the territory of the Byzantine country and Split was never a part of Croatia, but the Croats had the centre of their Roman Catholic church organisation outside the state borders. On the other hand, they would like to additionally appropriate all the areas under the jurisdiction of the Split Metropolitan as their own original state territory.

Mandić modifies the information given by Porphyrogenitus that the ancestors of the Duke of Hum or Prince Mihailo Višević came from the Visla, by saying that they came from the upper basin of the Visla, where the Croatian homeland was. However, according to reliable data, the Serbians lived around the middle and the lower basin of the Visla, the Belarusians were to the east of them, and the White Croats were to the south. As for the Pope's letter to Croatian King Tomislav and the Hum Prince Mihailo shortly before the Council of Split in 925, in no way can this be proof of Mihailo's submission to Tomislav, but only of the equal status of both rulers, independent from each other, whose church seat was in Split – that is, on a third state territory. The fact that the Serbians from Hum, Travun and Duklja at the time, before the final Christian schism, belonged to the Roman rite and the Roman church organisation cannot prove that they were therefore Croats. In order to underpin this forgery, Mandić insists on the thesis that the original Serbians only lived between the rivers Laba and Sala and not between the Laba and Visla, although with this, he opposes a huge number of historical sources, neatly systematised by Relja Novaković in his book *From Where did the Serbians Come to the Balkan Peninsula*. After all, only the Bishop of Nin, the Croatian Bishop, was subjected to the Croatian King Tomislav, his ruler, rather than the Split Metropolitan in any case. At least on church issues, Tomislav obediently subjected to the Split Metropolitan. The Split Metropolitan was in charge of the Slavic land and the Slavic state is not recorded anywhere. The Slavic land actually means the land of the various Slavs – the Serbians, the Croats and maybe the Slavonians, even if we accept that Slavonia was included in the Split archdiocese, at least at some point. After all, the presence of Serbian aristocrats at the Council of Split in 925, which no serious scientist questions, testifies clearly in favour of this. However, Mandić consistently corrects every statement where it says “the Slavic land” in the original documents, even in the Pope's letters, into “the Croatian land”. Whenever the Slavs are mentioned, he is convinced that it refers to the Croats – or maybe he knows that it is wrong, but tries to deliberately mislead the readers. Similarly, on page 155, he gives an extract from an original letter of Pope Leon VI from 928 in the Latin language, where it clearly says “*Sclavinicam terram*” and “*Sclavinorum terra*” but, in his own translation of the fragment, he writes “the Croatian land”. Therefore, he does not even try to hide his own forgeries. In order to strengthen the forgery to a great extent, Mandić categorically claims that no Serbian lord attended the council of Split that was mentioned here. Afterwards, he repeats an infinite number of times that the mere mentioning of Illyricum and Pannonia demonstrates that Porphyrogenitus confirmed the existence of “Red Croatia” as well.

### **c) Double Standards for the Same Historical Document**

When Constantine Porphyrogenitus writes about the Serbians, he is utterly unreliable, no matter how accurate he is. When he mentions the Croats, even casually

and in general, then his statements are completely true. Mandić writes in the same manner and does not miss a single opportunity to use and abuse any text by foreign writers, including Byzantine and Arabic ones, who actually demonstrate that, as they were uninitiated, they did not differentiate between the Serbians and the Croatians, and even confused one nation with the other sporadically. The real validity of Mandić's "scientific" method is also demonstrated by his attempt to suggest that, in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Anna Comnena, in the biography of her father, Emperor Alexis I, does not use the expression Arbanitōi to refer to the Arbanases from Bodin's country, but to the Croatians. On page 187, he claims that the letter "b" should be read as "v", because "even St. Cyril introduced the Greek letter 'beta' into the Slavic alphabet with the pronunciation of our letter 'v'" (p. 187). That is completely false as well, because the Greek letter 'beta' in the Slavic language is "b" and not "v". But using "v" instead of "b", Mandić gets "Arvanitōi", and that form is now similar enough to the expression "Hrvati". Afterwards, he draws a conclusion as a high "scientific" authority: "Anna Comnena, a contemporary of the Priest Dukljanin and King Bodin, therefore testifies that the subjects of King Bodin were the Croatians. Bodin's state extended from the Neretva to the Drim River in Albania. Accordingly, in the writing of Anna Comnenos, we come across a contemporary testimony that the Croatians lived from the Neretva to the Drim in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. With that, she confirms that the statement of the Priest Dukljanin about Red Croatia is real and true, as well" (p. 190).

In the same manner, Mandić treats a work of the Byzantine historian from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Michael Attaleiates. Attaleiates writes that Basilakes, a Byzantine emperor, gathered an army of Byzantines, Bulgarians and Arbanitōi – obviously the Arbanases – in 1077 and 1078 near Drač. Mandić arbitrarily changes even that into Arvanitōi since, according to him, the Arbanases never lived around Drač, only the Croatians did. He concludes again: "Therefore, Attaleiates testifies that, in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatians lived right next to the province of Drač in Duklja. That is actually the first mention of the Croatians in Duklja after Porphyrogenitus, recorded in 1080, and we talk about that here in relation to the testimony of Anna Comnenos who recorded that the 'Arvanitōi' originated from Bodin's state, from Duklja. Even Attaleiates, who wrote his *History* around 70 years before Anna Comnenos, testifies that around 1077-1078 the Croatians lived on the border of the Byzantine province of Drač, in particular in Duklja, in the country of the first King of Red Croatia" (p. 192). That is how he names Mihail, who was crowned a Serbian King, but Mandić gives him the title that he supposedly found in a work by Ivan Skilices from the 11<sup>th</sup> century – "ruler of those that are called the Croatians" (p. 192). However, Mandić himself confesses that Ferdo Šišić claimed that the Croatians were mentioned there in the context of a military order that King Petar Krešimir IV sent to help the Bulgarian insurgents, to whom Mihailo, King of Duklja, sent his son Bodin and they even proclaimed him Emperor there.

Mandić even does not hide that some Byzantine writers mixed the Serbian identity with the Croatian one, and he quotes the well-known historian Jovan Zonaras, who lived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and who, in his voluminous work entitled *The Review of History*, says at one point: "in the third year (=1073) of the rule of this Emperor (= Mihajlo VII Duka), the Croatian people, whom some people also call the Serbians, rose up in arms in order to conquer the Bulgarian land" (p. 193). Completely ignoring that mention of the Serbians, Mandić comments that "here we also come across testimony that the subjects of Mihajlo, the first King of Duklja, and of his son Bodin were Croatians, in particular



that Duklja, Travunja and Zahumlje, where they ruled, were Croatian lands in which the Croats lived” (p. 193). However, directly after that, Mandić explains why, in his view, the Serbians were mentioned: “the beginning of the Zonaras’s statement is interesting. He read Kedrenos’s descriptions of the battles in Duklja in 1040 and 1042, where Kedrenos repeatedly mentioned the Serbians. In Kedrenos’s transcript, he read a short note of Skilices that, in 1073, the Serbians attacked Bulgaria. Zonaras knew that this was not true, so he clearly emphasised that the attack on Bulgaria in 1073 was done by the Croats, not the Serbians as some people claim in their writings, putting the Serbian name when they should put the Croatian, ascribing Croatian deeds to the Serbians. Therefore, the Byzantine historian Zonaras confirms the statements of his contemporary and the priest of Duklja about Red Croatia and the Croats, who populated the country of Duklja in the middle ages. Zonaras exclusively claims that the ones who raided the Byzantine Bulgaria in 1073 and fought battles there were Croats. In particular, those were Bodin and his assistant Petrilo. The Bulgarian insurgents and the Serbians took part in those battles as well. Still, since the leadership of the war was in the hands of the Croats, Bodin and Petrilo, and at the order of ‘Mihajlo, the ruler of the ones called the Croats’, Zonaras thus blames the Croats for the entire attack” (p. 194). In a similar manner, Mandić tries to correct Jiricek, who interprets the data of the Byzantine writer Nikitas Koniates on Nemanja’s attack on Croatia and Kotor as two separate attacks, trying to present that the attack on Kotor was actually an attack on Croatia. However, he has difficulty proving this, considering that all the serious Croatian historians, especially Rački, Šišić and Šufraj, consistently called the rulers of Duklja Serbian Princes and Serbian Kings, which he involuntarily observes in the footnote on page 201.

Where the Byzantine writers state that Duklja is a Serbian country and Stefan Vojislav a Serbian King, Mandić simply dismisses their testimony. To him, the statements of those who were not completely initiated and who created confusion, like Ivan Skilices, who writes “the Serbian people, also called the Croats” (p. 202) or Briani, who uses “the name ‘Croats’ as a synonym for ‘the Serbians’ and ‘the people of Duklja’” (p. 203). Referring to the mutiny in Bulgaria in 1073, Mandić says that the insurgents received the greatest help from “the Serbians, but under Croatian leadership” (p. 203). Here, he draws the most far-reaching conclusion: “At that time, in Rascia, was the Grand *Zhupan* Petrislav, the son of Mihajlo, Prince of Duklja, so everything that the Serbians did in the vassal province of Raša, was ascribed to the ruling Croatian nation in Duklja” (p. 203). On several occasions, he states a similar thesis on the Croats as the nation who ruled over the Serbians. However, he finds the datum by Constantine Porphyrogenitus most bothersome – that the Serbians, immediately upon coming to the Balkans, populated Neretva, Zahumlje and Travunia. To this, he persistently opposes the reverie of the priest of Duklja and his own far-fetched interpretation of the particular historical events. His main thesis for this refute is that, at some places in his voluminous work, Porphyrogenitus “only expressed his own personal opinion, formed according to some facts, that he could have interpreted wrongly. One of these personal judgments is that extract where he talks about the Serbian settlement in Travunja, Zahumlje and Neretva. Namely, when Porphyrogenitus was writing his work, these lands were ruled by Časlav, *Zhupan* of Rascia, who had been a refuge in Croatia previously, then a prisoner in Bulgaria and finally the ruler of the territory from the Cetina to Boka Kotorska and from the Adriatic to Posavina in Bosnia. Časlav was a member of the

Eastern Church and recognised the sovereign rule of Byzantium. Consequently, he and his Serbian nation especially supported Porphyrogenitus. Out of that subconscious love for the Serbians, and in order to show the greatness and the expansion of the Byzantine Empire, Porphyrogenitus ascribed all the lands, ruled by Serbian Prince Časlav, protected by Byzantium, to the Serbians and falsely established that the Serbians had possessed those lands ever since their arrival to the Balkans in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. However, I hold that, in *The Croatianhood of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, I have already proved sufficiently that we must not conclude anything more from Porphyrogenitus's works than that the population of Bosnia, Travunja, Zahumlje and Neretva were the subjects of Serbian *Zhupan* Časlav in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and in no way ethnic Serbians. This is because the Croats had settled on those lands while arriving in the south and always lived there and belonged to their national Croatian state from the Raša River in Istria to the Drim in Albania" (p. 206-207).

Therefore, Mandić opposes himself to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, because he does find anyone else. He is, it seems, capable of entering the subconscious of the Byzantine Emperor and the renowned historian after a thousand years. As an additional argument, he uses the fact that Porphyrogenitus never exclusively stated that the Serbians populated Duklja. Notably though, he did not mention that the Croats lived in Duklja either. Furthermore, Mandić especially finds bothersome that, at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, in his work titled *Strategikon*, the Byzantine writer Kekaumenos wrote about "a Serbian from Trebinje" who destroyed the Byzantine army of 40,000 soldiers in Duklja – referring to Stefan Vojislav. Although the historical facts point unquestionably to Vojislav, Mandić claims that "Kekaumenos clearly distinguishes 'a Serbian from Trebinje' from 'Vojislav of Duklja'. According to Kekaumenos, those are two completely different persons so, according to this Byzantine writer, Vojislav of Duklja must not be Serbian... Kekaumenos was an experienced old military officer, who knew the Balkans well, so in all probability, he knew from his own experience that Duklja was not a Serbian land. Accordingly, when talking about Stjepan Vojislav, he does not call him Serbian or identify him with 'a Serbian from Trebinje', who defeated the Byzantine army in 1402. Therefore, Kekaumenos must not be referred to as a writer who could talk about the Serbian possession of Duklja" (p. 208-209). As crucial proof for his thesis, Mandić states the fact that Kekaumenos does not call Vojislav 'a Serbian from Trebinje' on any other occasion, instead using his full name. "When he was writing about the case of Katakalon, a strategist from Dubrovnik, he knew that the former was outwitted by Stjepan Vojislav, the ruler of Duklja, who ruled over Zeta and Zahumlje and had his secondary capital of Ston, the capital town of Zahumlje" (p. 209).

#### **d) Mandić Underrating the Byzantine Kedrenos**

However, it appears that the Mandić's biggest problem is the Byzantine historian Georgios Kedrenos. "The only Byzantine writer that calls Stjepan Vojislav 'the ruler of the Serbians' and that talks about him and his actions in relation to Serbia is Georgios Kedrenos. In his work *A Review of History*, he mentions Stjepan Vojislav three times in relation to the Serbians and Serbia" (p. 209). Kedrenos explicitly says "'Stjepan, named Vojislav, ruler of the Serbians', who returned to 'the land of the Serbians', from which he banished Theophilus Eroticus" (p. 209). When Vojislav escaped from Byzantium, he occupied "the Illyrian mountains and conquered the Tribals, the Serbians and the

surrounding people” (p. 210). When Emperor Monomakh sent an army against Vojislav, the Serbians started withdrawing purposefully, and then ambushed the Byzantines and defeated them catastrophically. In the third place, Kedrenos mentions that, as the ruler of “the Tribals and the Serbians”, Vojislav’s son Mihailo concluded a peace agreement with the Emperor. Kedrenos was a contemporary of both Stefan Vojislav and of the Priest Dukljanin. Mandić underrates him as a monarch who probably did not travel a lot (as if Mandić himself was not a monk) and a compiler who copied other writers. When Kedrenos mentions the Tribals from the Illyrian mountains, Mandić claims that he refers to the Croatians, although it is obvious that those are the Arbanases. “The other Byzantine writers often, we could even say regularly, call the Serbians the Tribals, but Kedrenos calls the Serbians by their real national name and he uses the old Illyrian name of the Tribals to refer to another Slavic people, ruled by Stjepan Vojislav and his son Mihailo. Those were the Croatians from Red Croatia, as Kedrenos’s contemporary, the priest of Duklja, wrote. In accordance with that, although talks about the Serbians exclusively as the subjects of Stjepan Vojislav and his son Mihailo, Kedrenos does not deny the Croatian existence in Duklja. What is more, he confirms the Croatian existence in Red Croatia as he says in his writing that there was another Slavic nation in those lands before the Serbians and that nation could only have been the Croatian one, because there were no other Slavic nations in Raša and Duklja except the Serbians and the Croatians” (p. 215). Poor Mandić, he pretends not to notice that Kedrenos mentions that the Tribals were the Slavic people.

That deceit, no matter how naïve and primitive, has a deeper meaning for Mandić, because afterwards he says: “both Kekaumenos and Ivan Zonaras talk about the well-known battle in 1042. Kekaumenos, whose work was Zonaras’s source and whom he did not even take seriously, calls the winner of this battle ‘a Serbian from Trebinje’. Stjepan Vojislav’s main village was in Trebinje, in the inherited land of his father Dragomir and he calls him Serbian because Vojislav, in the first and the second mutiny, mainly led the Serbians to rise up in arms against the Byzantines and seized that extremely important province from Byzantium. Ivan Zonaras calls Vojislav ‘a Scythian’, as some Byzantine writers called the Russians and the Slavs in general. He also says that Stjepan Vojislav ruled over ‘the Tribals, the Serbians and the other similar nations’. Therefore, he places the Serbians second, as does Kedrenos and he first mentions the Tribals – the term he uses to refer to the Croatians – when naming the nations ruled by Vojislav” (p. 216). Still, nobody has ever called the Croatians the Tribals. They were sometimes called the Goths, but the Goths are not mentioned in Duklja, either. As if mentioning it in passing, Mandić says that Archdeacon Ivan of Gorica, a Zagreb historian who lived in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, called Vojislav the King of the Croatians and, in 1956, Zlatko Tanodi, a Croatian professor, additionally repeated his statement identifying Stefan Vojislav with the Croatian King Stjepan. Tanodi claims that Mihailo, King of Duklja, was a brother of Petar Krešimir IV, the Croatian King. Mandić dissociates from those claims, but he elaborately exposes them in any case, knowing in advance that they are many among the Croatians to whom those nebulous statements would appeal.

### e) Looking for an Alibi in Undiscovered Archaeological Findings

When, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Western writers, William Tirski and Raimund von Aguilers, described the Crusade war in 1096 and 1097, they called that territory from Istria to Skadar Slavonia and Dalmatia. Mandić changes that into “Croatia”. They consistently call the nation found there the Sclavs and Mandić interprets that to mean the Croats and that the language of the Sclavs is the Croatian language. They considered Bodin “the King of the entire ‘Slavic country’, that is Croatia, since White Croatia did not have a King at the time, after the family of Trpimirović had died out” (p. 220). Dominik Mandić interprets Pope Alexander III in the same way, who, in 1180, “sent to Dalmatia and the entire Slavonia” his legate, lower scribe Theobald. He carried special letters to the Bosnian Ban Kulin and Mihailo, Prince of Zahumlje. Therefore, according to the conviction of the Roman official circles, Zahumlje and Bosnia belonged to ‘the entire Slavonia’, and that was the term used in Rome to designate the entire ‘Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia’” (p. 220). The entire Slavonia in this context could have only referred to all the Slavic lands, without specifying the countries they were divided into at the time. Still, Mandić persistently insists on his own view. “The expression ‘Dalmatia and the entire Slavonia’ means nothing other than the common name for the divided Croatian Kingdom” (p. 220). Was it possible that the Croatian name was already so embarrassing at the time that the Pope persistently evaded mentioning it, instead using an utterly general one? Further on, Mandić gives his astonishing construction: “Namely, that the Croatian lands were divided into two at the time: into free Croatia (*regnum Croatiae et Slavoniae*) ruled by Béla II (1172-1196) and Byzantine Croatia (*regnum Dalmatiae et Croatiae*) ruled by Manuel Comnenos, his son Alexios II in question. Using the term ‘Dalmatia and the entire Slavonia’, Rome encompassed the both the kingdoms of the Croatian nation. Whether Rome included the most southern part of the Croatian lands, Travunja and Duklja, is not clear. As far as we know, the Pope’s legate Theobald did not go into those areas. The Byzantines organised those areas as a special administrative unit and named it ‘Dalmatia and Duklja’” (p. 220-221). Mandić could at least have explained to us why the Croatia under Hungarian rule was free and the Croatia under Byzantine rule was not!

Let us see the crucial evidence with which Mandić underpins his claim that Zahumlje has always been Croatian. “The constant efforts of the Croatian Bans and the Croatian-Hungarian Kings to free Zahumlje from foreign rule and to annex it to the lands of the Croatian Kingdom prove that the Croats always considered Zahumlje as a Croatian land and a constituent part of the Croatian Kingdom. Accordingly, Croatian Ban Andrija (1198-1205) liberated Hum from the family of Nemanjić and annexed it to the Croatian banate. From 1234-1249, Zahumlje was ruled by Grand Prince Andrija, a descendent from the old Croatian ruling family in Zahumlje. He had hostile relation with the Serbian Kings and recognised the sovereignty of the Hungarian-Croatian Kings. His son Radoslav, *Zhupan* of Hum, explicitly said in 1254 that he was “a loyal subject to the Hungarian King”. Around 1278, Serbian King Stjepan Dragutin re-conquered Hum but, from 1304 to 1321, the Croatian Bans Šubić ruled there again. In 1322, Stjepan

Kotromanić annexed Hum to the Croatian Banate of Bosnia and, from then until 1918, the Serbians never again ruled in Zahumlje. In the second life of Zahumlje, from 626 to 1918, the Serbian rulers did not rule in Zahumlje even for a full 100 years, even including the rule of Časlav Klonimirović (circa 949 – circa 960) and various members of the Nemanjić family in the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. What is more, the Serbian rule was often interrupted, as already mentioned, by the Croatian rulers, whenever they had enough strength for that” (p. 222-223). The Hungarian Kings tried to annex Zahumlje to Hungary. In their geo-strategic intentions, there was never any kind of the pro-Croatian sentiment, no matter how much the Croatian historians appropriated them as their own rulers. Why didn't Radoslav, *Zhupan* of Hum, write that he was the loyal subject to the King of “Hungary and Croatia”? If we decide whom Hum belonged to exclusively according to the length of their rule and if the foreign occupation can be named one's own in such a manner - with the Croats naming the Hungarian rule the Croatian one - then the Serbians could safely name the Turkish rule their own, especially when we are familiar with the incredible degree of Church-national autonomy they enjoyed for a long time under Turkish rule. The Serbians could call all the Turkish sultans Turkish-Serbian ones, following the Croatian model, as they call the Hungarian Kings Hungarian-Croatian ones.

When the Roman Bishops or the Pope call the Croatian rulers the Kings of Dalmatias (in plural), Mandić immediately concluded that “namely, according to the royal titles that the officials gave to the Croatian Kings Tomislav and Krešimir IV the Great, we should conclude that, during their rule, the Croatian country extended over the entire Lower and Upper Dalmatia and that those were the White and Red Croatia that the priest of Duklja mentioned” (p. 226). In reality, that was only a nominal rule over a few city regions with pronounced political individuality, like Zadar, Trogir or Split, which had the status of almost independent princedoms on the territory of the then extremely narrowed territorial area of Dalmatia – between the Krka and Cetina. Similarly, nowadays, when somebody sometimes says “in the Indias”, they bear in mind that India was made up of numerous independent and half-dependent princedoms under British rule, before acquiring independence. On the other hand, from the titles of the Serbian rulers as the masters of “all the Serbian and littoral” lands, Mandić draws a thesis that they themselves were aware that only Rascia was Serbian and everything else was foreign. “The Serbian Kings, as well as the Serbian religious rulers, did not include ‘the littoral lands’ in ‘all the Serbian lands’, because they knew that the Serbians did not live in Duklja, Travunja and Zahumlje but the Croats did and, in accordance with that, those lands were not Serbian, but the Croatian” (p. 230). Actually, the Serbian rulers referred to the littoral Roman population, to whom they gave certain autonomous rights, like Kotor for example.

Mandić finds the following two arguments significant. First, that the population of Hum, Duklja and Travunia was subordinated to the Roman Church, and second, that the sacral objects had some characteristics similar to the ones on the Croatian territory. Lacking something more tangible, he does not lose hope at least. “Once the archaeological and artistic monuments of the southern regions are studied expertly and in detail, science will, without any doubts, impartially find extensive material to prove that Red Croatia belonged to the Croats” (p. 239).

## f) The Confrontation with Real Linguistics

Afterwards, he switches to the linguistic sphere. He starts by complaining about Dobrovski and Kopitar. “Josip Dobrovski (1753-1829), a Czech from Moravska, known as “the father of Slavic studies”, was to first to divide the nations and the lands of the Slavic south according to dialects and vernaculars. Namely, according to him, the Croatian language spoken in the then Croatian capital Zagreb and its surrounding area was of the Kaikavian dialect. Therefore, the Croats were the ones who spoke Kaikavian – that is, all who lived to the north of the Kupa and to the west of Bjelovar, all the way to the Tirol borders. In that way, Dobrovski even included the Slovenians as Croats, and called all the others Illyrians or Serbians. Jernej B. Kopitar (1778-1844), a renowned Slovenian Slavist, fought all his life for distinguishing the Slovenians from the Croats. He proved the opposite argument – that the Kaikavian dialect was Slovenian and that therefore, the Kaikavian Croats were Slovenians and that they should be called likewise. Kopitar proclaimed the Chakavian dialect itself as Croatian. He identified the Shtokavian dialect with the Serbian language, as did Dobrovski, and ascribed all the regions to the south of the Kupa and to the north and east of the Velebit to the Serbians... Pavao Josif Šafarik (1795-1861), a Slovakian Protestant, first a professor, and then the head master of the Serbian High School in Novi Sad (1819-1833), elaborated on the ideas of Dobrovski and Kopitar and tried to lay down a ‘scientific’ foundation for Pan-Serbdom. He ascribed the Croatian literature – of Bosnia, Dalmatia and Dubrovnik - to the Serbians and his first step was to proclaim the Croats a mere branch of the Serbian nation. Šafarik’s bizarre linguistic and ethnographic claims spread in the West, because he was renowned as a Slavist and his works had been published in the great German language. A Slovenian, Franjo Miklošič (1813-1891), the main professor of Slavic studies at the Vienna University and a renowned scientist and a writer of many linguistic works about South Slavic history in the German language, followed the paths of Dobrovski, Kopitar and Šafarik. Vatroslav Jagić and Milan Rešetar, the well-known Croatian Slavists, could not evade the influence of the official Slavic study. They were driven mad by the state of the Croatian historiography at the time, according to which, the Croats did not live south of the Cetina River or east of the Vrbas River in Bosnia (Račka) from their arrival until the 11<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 240-242).

Although Mandić himself states: “Chakavian is spoken by the Croats in the Croatian and the Dalmatian littoral area from the Cetina River to Kopar in Istria” (p. 240), he cannot reconcile himself to reality and continues the pseudo-scientific speculations. He reproaches the highly recognised Slavists for not having asked the people in various regions to identify their national name, neglecting to see that, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the answers to precisely this question would completely extinguish the Croatian national ideology over all of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, the Military Border and Slavonia, because the local population did not possess a consciousness of Croatianhood. Only much later, the due diligence of the Roman Catholic friars in particular, artificially sowed the seeds of Croatianhood, when their Vatican headquarters finally gave up on the “Illyrian” project of incorporating the Serbians into the sphere of Western Christianity. Mandić criticises the founders of the Slavic studies in the following manner: “The basic mistake of the mentioned Slavists and all of those who followed them was that they had not asked the people in the

particular provinces about their identity and their name. On the contrary, they thought that they could determine their nationalities themselves according to their false linguistic theses. They did not take into consideration that neither the dialects themselves, nor even the languages, contain the essential characteristics that separate one nation from another. Sixteen nations in Central and the South America speak the Spanish Language, but they are not Spanish. The Irish, the Canadians and the Americans (in the USA) speak English, but they are not English. The Slovenians and one part of the Croatians speak Kaikavian, but they think of themselves as two nations. The Ikavian variant of the Shtokavian dialect is exclusively the language of the Croatians in Dalmatian Zagora, Lika, Bosnia, western Herzegovina and the Dalmatian littoral area between the Cetina and the Neretva. Iekavian is spoken by the Croatians on the territory of the former Republic of Dubrovnik, in southern Herzegovina and in the river basins of the Neretva and Bosnia, as well. Only the Ekavian variant of the Shtokavian dialect is Serbian, but even that is not specifically Serbian – not only and exclusively theirs, because Ekavian is used by the Macedonians, the Croatians in Srem, the Kaikavian Croatians and the Slovenians. Still, there are some accurate claims by Kopitar and Vuk. Namely, that the Kaikavian and the Shtokavian dialect cannot be called exclusively Slovenian, Croatian or Serbian. Only the Chakavian dialect is exclusively Croatian, spoken today only by the Croatians and nobody else. That is a basic and uncontested fact” (p. 242-243).

There is absolutely no doubt that Chakavian is exclusively Croatian and nobody has ever tried to steal it from the Croatians. However, the crucial question is – why did they abandon their own language and accepted a foreign one? In Latin America, the Spaniards, as conquerors, imposed Spanish on the submitted Indians. The English did the same thing in the countries that they ruled. However, none of the foreign conquerors – Hungarians, Turks, Germans or Italians – succeeded in imposing their own language on the Croatians. And the Serbians did, though they never ruled over the Croatians. Ikavian is not Chakavian, and Iekavian is spoken far away from every Croatian ethnic territory. In order to appropriate Shtokavian, the Croatians first appropriated the Serbian lands in which it was originally spoken, and then proclaimed the Serbians who brought Iekavian into Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia as Croatians, particularly if they had previously managed to convert them to Catholicism. The manner in which Mandić tries to prove that the Chakavian-speaking area was spoken significantly wider in the past is especially awkward: “the second fact – scientifically-proven, although not studied enough – is that, at some time in the past, the Chakavian dialect was not only spoken in the regions where it is used today. Strong remaining traces of the Chakavian dialect are found in the entire Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro. It proves that the Chakavian-speaking area extended from Istria to Albania and from the Adriatic Sea to the Drava in the north and the Drina in the east. All those areas comprised one linguistic unit in the past, which had its centre of strongest influence in the Chakavian area of today, where the Chakavian dialect has survived even to this very day due to its original strength and entrenchment. The linguistic expansion of Croatian Chakavian coincides with and confirms the writing of the old Croatian chronicle *The Kingdom of the Croatians* and *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* on the Croatian national and state territory. Those Croatian domestic sources from the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries testify to the fact that, ever since they settled in the southern lands, the Croatians had their own large Croatian national country for many centuries that extended from Istria to Drač, in particular to Valona in Albania and from the Adriatic to

the Drava and the Danube in the north. The resilient traces of the Chakavian dialect in all those regions confirm that the writing of both those oldest Croatian chronicles is true and real” (p. 243-244).

Traces of the Chakavian dialect are difficult to find southwards of the Cetina, in the littoral area. They were found in Pelješac, but nothing more than traces, while in the island of Lastovo they developed their specific Chakavian form, whose traces could have occasionally been found in Dubrovnik. The Chakavian dialect in Bosnia was only spoken in its furthest west, but almost nowhere in Herzegovina. It is almost impossible to find the traces of the Chakavian dialect in Montenegro. It is absolutely impossible that the Chakavian-speaking area extended from Istria to Albania and from the Adriatic to the Drina and the Drava. Even if it were true, what could Mandić actually prove? He is proving that the Croats existed long ago, but that they ceased to exist after being assimilated by the Shtokavian, that is the Serbian masses. Admittedly, he claims that that Shtokavian mass was not originally Serbian, as well as that only few thousand Serbs settled in the Balkans, bringing “their” West-Slavic language. If even that were true, it would mean that those Serbs immediately blended into the Shtokavian mass they found there, which took over their name. Even then, having taken over the Serbian name, those Shtokavian Slavs, remained entirely different from the Croats. The Croats brought the Chakavian dialect then, they spoke it in the Balkans for almost a thousand years and used it as their mother tongue, until the Turks destroyed them as a nation. Even today, Chakavian has survived there where the remains of the former Croatian nation have survived. Even Mandić himself agrees that “the languages of the South Slavs belong to the Eastern group of the Slavic languages – they in particular are similar” (p. 244). We, Serbs, take pride in our Russian origin. What is more, even the name of one of the first Serbian states, Rascia, is associated with Russia, and the names of the Serbs – *Rašani*, *Rasci*, *Rasciani* – also reminds us of the Russian. However, not all the South Slavic languages are of East Slavic origin, only Serbian, Bulgarian and Macedonian, if we can actually talk about Macedonian as a particular language. The comparative Slavic linguistic established long ago that Slovenian-Kaikavian and Croatian-Chakavian were incomparably closer to the West Slavic languages, according to their original characteristics, and that they were considerably influenced by Shtokavian in the later period.

In relation to that, Mandić insists that the Croats, as a Slovenised nation of Iranian origin, have kept many expressions of their ancient language as well, but that they spoke one variant of the West Slavic language. “When they came to the southern parts of the Croatian lands of today, the Croats spoke that Slavic language of theirs, which had acquired the main features of the Chakavian dialect of the Croatian language even when they were behind the Carpathians. We are of the opinion that it was different to other similar languages in that the special Chakavian features of the Croatian language had already been developed at the time, with a strong traces of ancient Iranian heritage. Moving to the south, the Croats were bringing the Croatian language of the Chakavian dialect with them while, in the new homeland, they found the Kaikavian Slavs and the Shtokavian Ikavians, who had already settled in those regions before them, having come from the Slavic north-east” (p. 256).

Then a complete fairy tale follows. Mandić constructs it using far-fetched interpretations of historical sources, taking over all the old inherited historiographical forgeries and making up his own Franciscan lies, inspired by the centuries-old Roman



Catholic tradition. “When the Croatians came to the south and cleared Dalmatia of Avars and, as the agreement with Byzantine Emperor Heraclius implied, they first populated the entire area of Dalmatia from Raša in Istria to Budva in Boka Kotorska. The chief, leading Croatian tribe occupied the central position and settled around the former Dalmatian capital – Salona – from the Cetina River to the Krka. The other tribes occupied the other parts of Roman Dalmatia – ancient Liburnia from the Krka to the Raša, Lika, Bosnia, Zahumlje and Travunja through to Kotor. As many Croatians came from the north, one part separated from the others and occupied the Roman Lower Pannonia between the Kupa, the Mura and the Drava. The other part went southwards and occupied Illyricum – at the time of Porphyrogenitus, this was the name of the littoral areas of the former Roman provinces of Praevalitana<sup>1</sup> and New Epirus, which corresponded to the Duklja of the middle ages, or Montenegro and littoral Albania today” (p. 257).

Still, not only do the written sources not mention such a large territory occupied by the Croatians, but neither are the oral traditions of the Serbians, the Arbanases and the Greeks familiar with such a phenomenon. This especially refers to the second part of Mandić’s construction, which states: “now, the Croatians took over the role that the Avars had at the time of the first Slavic settlement in the entire occupied territory. They became the ruling class, the representatives of the Croatian statehood and the guardians of the Croatian name and the Croatians national unity. As the mere character of such a position required, the Croatians spread out over the entire new Croatian national territory” (p. 257). Spread out, and then disappeared without a trace. “They conducted the state organisation according to their Slavic and ancient Iranian customs, based on wide tribal self-government, but in such a way that all the tribes recognised the supreme power of the head of the first Croatian tribe settled in the midland, whose name was ‘the King of the Croatians’ (*dux Croatorum*)” (p. 257-258). It should be mentioned in passing that “dux” means Duke, not King. Mandić’s incessant striving for Croatian racial superiority and dominance over the other Slavs they came in contact with, is also a mere phantasmagoria, because the Slavs no longer recognise nobody else’s leadership in the Balkans after the Avars, save for the Byzantine one – with the exception of the Bulgarians, who did actually subdue one part of the Slavs, blended with them but left them their name. In reality, Mandić yearns to artificially ascribe the kind of the historical role that the Asiatic Bulgarians had to the Croatians. Finally, the end of the fairy-tale construction follows: “In the Byzantine era, as mentioned above, Dalmatia was divided into Upper Dalmatia, from the south to the Cetina River, and Lower Dalmatia, from the Cetina River to the Raša River in Istria. The Croatians divided their country in the same way, only they gave some parts Iranian names. Namely, the Croatians named southern Croatia, from the Cetina to the Vojuša in what is now Albania, Red Croatia and western Croatia, from the Cetina to the Raša was White Croatia. The northern part carried the old name – Pannonian Croatia or ‘Slavonia’, after the name ‘Slav’ that the Croatians used for the western nations in the middle ages” (p. 258). Therefore, whenever the Western nations mention the Slavs in any context, we know today that they refer to the Croatians. Otherwise, to whom else? There is no ancient name of Pannonian Croatia. Ferdo Šišić invented this name as he was deciding between “Posavska” and “Panonian”.

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<sup>1</sup> also Praevaliana or Prevalis

It is interesting that Mandić confesses that Byzantium had supreme power over the Croats, after all. The question then ensues: how is it possible that there were two supreme rules, the Byzantine one over the Croats and the Croatian one over all the Slavs? It is true that neither the Serbs nor the Croats had state organisations in the true sense of the word for two entire centuries after coming to the Balkans, but instead they lived as colonists on the old Byzantine proprietary territory, previously devastated by the barbaric invasions. However, the devil was awake in friar Mandić. “During all that time from the settlement to the death of Krešimir the Great in 1073, the state unity of all the Croatian lands was preserved, although sometimes it was somewhat weakened by external influences. During that long period, the Croats blended and completely assimilated with the ancient Slavic population, both in language and in blood. In the beginning, the Croats in all the regions of the Croatian national territory – namely from Trieste to Valona, then from the Adriatic to the Drava in the north and the Drina in the east – spoke the Chakavian dialect, that they had brought from the Carpathians. Over time, they assimilated their language with the ancient Slavic population that also spoke the Eastern dialect, so that the ancient population adopted the Chakavian dialect in places where the Croatian newcomers were greater in numbers than the ancient Slavs and in the littoral areas of White Croatia from the Cetina to Istria. That language assimilation progressed in such a way that many characteristics of the Eastern dialect finally entered the new Chakavian dialect. In places where the Croats were in the minority compared to the Slavic population, like in the southern, eastern and northern areas, the Chakavian Croats adopted Kaikavian, especially the language of the ancient Slavs. Still, they strongly imprinted the influence of Chakavian onto those dialects in all these regions, which was even stronger in the particular regions where the Croats composed the majority. Besides White Croatia, the Chakavian influence was the strongest in the southern littoral areas from the Cetina to the Bojana – that is, in the territory of Red Croatia: in the krajina of Neretva, western and southern Herzegovina, in the territory of the ancient Republic of Dubrovnik, in Boka Kotorska and in Montenegro. Even today, there are resilient remnants of Chakavian in the vernacular” (p. 258-259).

However, the real troubles ensue for Mandić when he has to give any relevant evidence for his claims. There is always a huge disproportion between the fanciful hypotheses that he regularly presents as irrefutable apodictic judgments and the tenuous arguments he offers afterwards. Similarly, here he reduces “resilient remnants of Chakavian” to the following: “in his article *On the Language of Dubrovnik from the Lexical View*, M. Tentor numbers 223 Chakavian words with the same meaning both in Cres and in Dubrovnik, but which did not exist in the Croatian literary language. 114 of these words – that is, more than a half - were used by the Croatian people in the surrounding area of Široki Brijeg, my birthplace, at the time of my childhood. At the time, and maybe today as well, other Chakavian remnants were used in the surrounding area of Široki Brijeg, such as the final ‘m’ being pronounced as ‘n’ (*rukon, nogon*), ‘jes’ was used instead of ‘jest’, etc. The Muslim Croats in Mostar and elsewhere pronounced ‘j’ instead of ‘lj’ (*jubav* instead of *ljubav*). In Bosnia, ‘šč’ is used instead of ‘št’ in many words. In Montenegro, the old Chakavian accent on the last syllable has remained in use” (p. 259-260). The Croats did exist as a nation and settled in the Balkans. It is proved that they spoke Chakavian. Upon settlement, they blended in with other nations. In places where they were the ethnic majority, they assimilated others;

where they were in the minority, they were the ones who were assimilated. What Mandić is trying to achieve now is to proclaim all the nations that the Croats found in the Balkan territory, which some surely peripheral part of the Croatian nation blended with as entirely Croatian. As if the Croats had been a plague, where one of them appears, the entire area was infected.

As for the Serbs, Mandić goes to the opposite extreme. He is convinced “that the Serbs – who came from the north as well as the Croats, but in a later period – did not influence the development of the South Slavic dialects at all. As Porphyrogenitus’ *De Administrando Imperio* tells us, a small number of Serbs came from the north, so Emperor Heraclius could place them in a camp in Thessaly, which was called ‘*Srbište*’ (‘*Serbia*’) after them. Apart from that, in around 920, Bulgarian Tsar Simeon catastrophically destroyed and scattered the Serbs, so that no more than 50 free people – noblemen – remained in the entire area of Rascia and some refugees in Croatia and Byzantium. In 1020, during the first known enumeration of the population in the dioceses of Emperor Basil’s central Balkans, there was only one diocese with only 15 parishes in the entire area of Serbia (Rascia, at the time), while at the same time, the Croats had more than 15 dioceses. The Serbian language had the same destiny as the Bulgarian language. Due to their small number, both nations lost their own language and adopted the language of the more numerous Slavs that they had found in their new homeland. The Serbs once lived in the furthest Slavic west and they must have had their own vernacular, which must have been a western variant, with the essential characteristics of the Lusatian Serbs of today, with whom they were related. When the Serbs headed south, they naturally brought the vernacular of the western group with them. In the Balkans, they conquered a great number of the Slavs of the first movement, organised them politically and gave them their national name. Still, they lost their west Slavic language among the ancient, more numerous population and adopted the Shtokavian dialect of the Slavs who lived in the Balkan inland areas at the time and who had come from the east Slavic region” (p. 260-261).

Listing completely arbitrary viewpoints on the following pages as well, Mandić wrote that “the continual folk tradition and Croatian consciousness of the South Croatian countries from ancient times up to now also told us of the Croatianhood of Red Croatia” (p. 263). Of course, this tradition did not exist anywhere but between Istria and the Cetina River. We must acknowledge that Mandić was right when he emphasised that the Serbs and the Croats permanently “constituted two separate social groups and had never felt as one people and one uniform identical ethnical and cultural whole, not even when one of those two people totally or partially possessed the national territory of the other” (p. 263). However, it was complete nonsense when he claimed that “the Chakavian linguistic treasure contained precious material, which, alongside other sources, proved that, upon their arrival in the south, the Croats settled across all the countries from Trieste to Vojuša in Albania, from the Adriatic Sea eastward to the Drina and Mura rivers, and northward to the Drava and Danube rivers” (p. 262). It is even greater nonsense is when he said that “all these countries represented a uniform Chakavian area for a long time; they had belonged to a joint and uniform Croatian country and, even today, they made the historical area of Croatian people indisputable” (p. 262). After that, Mandić’s nonsense lost all track of reality when he explained that the Serbs and the Croats occupied each other’s national territories: “This occurred when, at the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Raša placed itself under the protection of Croatia, when Croatian Duklja conquered Raša, when

Croatian Bosnia conquered Serbian lands, or when Raša occupied the land of Red Croatia” (p. 263-264).

As one of the crucial pieces of evidence of the blood, cultural and spiritual unity of the Croats and the inhabitants of Slavonia, Bosnia, Zahumlje, Duklja and Dalmatia, Mandić presented the fact that the foreigners called all these inhabitants Slavs and called their language Slavic. The pieces of evidence that followed were affiliation to the Roman Church, the Slavic language in religious service and the Glagolitic script, and, in order to prove that all this was Croatian, Mandić warned: “The Croats, namely, were the first of all the Slavs to accept Christianity. The priests who spread Christianity among the Croats, had to preach the word of God in the Croatian folk language from the beginning, or their entire work would be useless and without success” (p. 266-267). An unbelievable appropriation of Old Church Slavic as Croatian then followed: “According to the law of need, the priest translated religious morality into Croatian, which they presented to the Croats - first of all, the holy gospels and Sunday epistles. Over some 200 years, from the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Church Croatian language built itself finely and first translations of Sunday gospels and epistles were completed. These translations into the Croatian Church language reached *Sclavinia* in Greece through Red Croatia, from which it reached the Slavs in Macedonia. St. Cyril heard about the Croatian church translations from them and used them when he composed the first liturgical books, which, together with his brother Methodius, he brought to the Moravian Slavs in 863. In Moravia, the saint brothers translated the entire service (mass and prayer book) into the language of the then Moravians, of course, sticking to spiritual and church expressions that the Croats had created during their two-hundred-year long Christian life” (p. 267). So, the Croats first translated into “Croatian”, but with which script? The Croats must have had some script of theirs, older than the Glagolitic script of Cyril and Methodius?! But where were they hiding it? Or perhaps the Croats invented the Glagolitic script and Cyril and Methodius took it over from them!

In any case, Mandić adamantly persevered in his forgeries. The more stupid and senseless they were, the more persistently Mandić repeated them. In this sense, he continued: “The Old Church Slavic language was preserved in church books for centuries and its base was composed of the Croatian language” (p. 271). Then, he appropriated the form of Cyrillic stenography, that so-called *bosančica*<sup>9</sup>, and named it a Croatian Cyrillic, although it was created at the Serbian court of the Nemanjićs. When he appropriated the Bosnian Cyrillic, he reached a new “far-reaching” conclusion: “The fact that the Croats of Bosnia and Red Croatia did not want to use Serbian Cyrillic is a powerful and indisputable proof that the population of these countries did not feel Serbian, but completely different from the Serbs; therefore, for the sake of their literacy, in which national individuality was most emphasised, they created their own, new alphabet which the Cyrillic Serbs could not read, and also the Croats, who knew the ‘Croatian alphabet’ or ‘Bosnian Cyrillic’, could not read Serbian Cyrillic. With the creation and usage of a special Croatian script, the cultural gap between the Croats and the Serbs was deepened and maintained in its prime up to our time, both with the Catholic and Muslim Croats” (p. 272). However, the Croats wrote with the Latin script as well, though only for texts in Latin before the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 273). Mandić himself admitted that there were no “monuments in Croatian written in the Latin script before the middle of the 14th century” (p. 273). Mandić added:

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<sup>9</sup> Bosnian Cyrillic

“The Croatian literary language, which gradually developed in Croatian sacral and secular literature until the 15<sup>th</sup> century, maintained powerful remnants of Chakavian, which the Croats spoke in all Croatian countries since their arrival at the Adriatic Sea. Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, leadership in Croatian literary creation was taken over by the free Croatian Republic of Dubrovnik and it maintained this leadership until its downfall in 1806. Therefore, Dubrovnik is rightfully called the “Croatian Athens” (p. 274). This name could not certainly have been attributed to Dubrovnik before the twentieth century, but it is interesting that Mandić here opposed all the former scientific interpretations of the presence of traces of Chakavian in the literature of Dubrovnik. As he said: “Literary historians claim that Chakavian arose in the oldest literature of Dubrovnik under the influence of the upper and middle Dalmatian Chakavian literature... This is incorrect. The people of Dubrovnik inherited Chakavian from their Zahumlje-Duklja hinterland, from which they received the Iekavian variant of the Shtokavian dialect. There are powerful Chakavian remnants in national speech in this area even today, but they were more numerous, of course, in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 274).

Bearing in mind that diverse variants of the Old Church Slavic long remained as a literary language with the Serbs, Mandić constructed that Vuk Karadžić drew “the Serbian language closer to the Croatian in that he took the variant of the Herzegovinian Croats, which the literary writers of Dubrovnik, Bosnia and other writers of Croatia used to write their works several centuries before Vuk, as the basis of a new Serbian literary language. In order to overpower the general resistance of the Serbs against the acquisition of Croatian instead of the former Serbian, Vuk maintained Serbian Ekavian instead of Herzegovinian Iekavian in his literary language” (p. 284). Mandić was able to retroactively ascribe Croatianhood to the poets of Dubrovnik, especially if they let slip mention of Croatia and Croats in their poems. According to Mandić, all the foreign writers who mentioned “Illyrians” and the Illyrian language had the Croats and Croatianhood in mind. When Abu Abdallah Muhammad Ibn Idris, a famous Arabian geographer of the twelfth century, wrote that there were two countries on the Adriatic shores, “a Croatian and Dalmatian country and Isclavonia” (p. 307), Mandić immediately interpreted it to mean that two Croatian countries were in question because the Slavs were regularly Croats. “Idris gave the title Isclavonia to the land from Dubrovnik to Drač, because that country constituted a special Croatian kingdom – Red Croatia. In order to make it clear to the reader that there were two Croatian states on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, Idris gave them two different names. He used the already recognised name for the western country – “Croatia and Dalmatia” - and he gave the title “Isclavonia” to the southern Croatian country based on the usual name of the Croats in Italy, which was “Sclavi” or the Greek name “Sclavinoi” or “Sclavonia” (p. 308). Mandić was glad if some foreign travel writer confused the Serbs and Croats, but he had to spice it up in the end with Štedimlija, for he had never found any other pillar save for the Priest Dukljanin. “Savić M. Štedimlija, a native Montenegrin, wrote the entire work and published it in Zagreb in 1937; in it, he presented the current Croatian traditions in Montenegro: the names of the places, folk customs and tradition. We refer readers to that work, for we cannot discuss it here in further detail” (p. 322). Mandić concluded his Red Croatian lamentations in the following manner: “Ancient Duklja was the only area that the Croats had withdrawn from due to historical difficulties, and mostly due to the work of religious representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Since the 17th century, the latter have continually spread Serbdom among people in order to strengthen Orthodoxy, as if there was no Orthodoxy

without Serbdom! In addition, broad population strata in Montenegro permanently resisted Serbianisation due to their historical subconsciousness and demanded that their Montenegrin name and state should be recognised. Irrelevant to the current situation, Duklja was indisputably a Croatian country. Therefore, Croatian historians should cover the history of Duklja from now on, particularly the Kingdom of Duklja, as an integral part of Croatian history. And the Montenegrins of today, in whom the blood of the ancient Croats runs, should be met by the Croats with sympathy and helped in their struggle for independence and the autonomy of Montenegro and the Montenegrin people” (p. 326).

## 7. Mandić's Speculations on Bosnia

In his three extensive books, Mandić condensed his contemplations, imagination and ideological constructions according to the crucial historical issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first of them, *The State and Religious Affiliation of Medieval Bosnia and Herzegovina* (ZIRAL, Chicago-Rome, 1978), explicitly represents politically tendentious reconsiderations of Bosnian-Herzegovinian history, in order to subsequently attach a Croatian national character. If the expressly suggested intellectual pretensions were not utterly sad, it would be very witty how Mandić explained the origin of Bosnia, its name and state organisation, presenting all this as originally Croatian with funny arguments. “The very country of Bosnia, in its limited medieval meaning of the land from the mountain Ivan-planina to Zavidović Gate southward from Maglaj, acquired its name through the political organisation of old the Croatian country. Namely, during the division of the conquered lands among the various Croatian tribes, which was the basis for the organisation of the old Croatian country, the Croats stuck to the borders of the ancient Roman provinces. Therefore, the lands near the lower course of the Bosnia River were allocated to a different Croatian tribe to the other lands that had laid around the middle and upper course of that river and which had belonged to the Roman province of Dalmatia in Roman times. Thus, the lands around the lower course of the Bosnia River became a part of Pannonian Croatia or Slovinje (regnum Sclavoniae), and those southward from Zavidović Gate became a part of the Adriatic or Dalmatian Croatia. The Pannonian areas around the lower part of the Bosnia River were early named Usora and Soli, based on the parishes with the same name, and, during the entire Middle Ages, they did not actually bear the name Bosnia. The Croats from the Coastal Region, where the original centre of the Adriatic Croats was, used the name Zagorje for the Croatian state entity that was created around the middle and upper course of the Bosnia River but, quite early, this area started to be called Bosnia, as well, after the name of the main river that ran through this province” (p. 53). What was the link between the political organisation of the old Croatian country and the name Bosnia? None! Relevant sources say that the old Croatian country appeared at the beginning of the ninth century. Until that time, the Serbs and the Croats lived in their sclavinias, parishes under Byzantine control, where they had a certain degree of interior autonomy. They had no countries during the first two hundred years after their arrival and, therefore, the historical documents are silent about them. They were excluded from the serious historical courses. There was no “division” of the conquered countries. The Croats also settled there where the empty areas and conditions for living were. Thus, the Croats who settled in Istria had never been an integral part of the Croatian country, nor had even thought about it. A unified Croatian country was not their preoccupation. None of the Slavic peoples paid

attention to the borders of the ancient Roman provinces and the borders had been persistently changing even under the Roman rule. Who “allocated” land in this way at all? Perhaps it was a housing commission. We have already seen that Pannonian Croatia did not exist at all, and Mandić himself confirmed in several places that the Kaikavian Slavs had lived in Slavonia, among whom a certain number of Croats settled perhaps, but that they must have been assimilated quite rapidly. Bosnia had never existed as a Croatian state unit, and how can its name be of Croatian origin if the first Croats named it Zagorje?

New “pieces of evidence” in Mandić’s repertoire follow: “The fact that the country of Bosnia acquired its name through Croatian state regulation has its evidence in the similar names of other Croatian areas of ancient times. Ancient Croatian parishes - Pliva, Gacka and Cetina – acquired their names according to the rivers in western or White Croatia. The province of Neretva in Red Croatia acquired its name after the river of the same name. The province of Zeta in Duklja was named after the Zeta River as well. In the northern part of the Croatian country, Moravia was named after the Morava River, and it still bears this name today and belongs to the Czech state” (p. 53). He only missed mentioning another piece of evidence here for his argumentation to be complete. In “Orange Croatia”, the old “Croatian” province of Raška acquired its name from the Raška River. However, what he missed here would be compensated for somewhere else perhaps, therefore, Mandić continued with his story: “The name of the old Croatian area of ‘Neretva’ is an example of the manner how a Croatian state regulation, a Croatian political province, could have a critical role in the origin of the name of the country of Bosnia. Regarding the initial Croatian state regulation, a particular tribe settled in the coastal areas from the Cetina River to the Neretva River. Only those areas westward of the Neretva River, where this tribe lived and self-governmentally ruled, were called ‘Neretva’, while other areas around the middle and the upper course of the Neretva acquired another name - Zahumlje, named after another Croatian tribe, which lived as self-government in this area. Therefore, the name Bosnia only referred to the area that belonged to the Croatian state unit around the upper and middle Bosnia River, which was under the rule of the tribal ruler known as a ban, in that this name did not spread to the areas around the lower course of the Bosnia River, which were initially allocated to Pannonian Croatia and did not become a part of medieval Bosnia until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and even then only as a separate governing area” (p. 54). Wrongly interpreting Porphyrogenitus’ mention of the arrival of a part of the Croats into Illyricum, which reliably referred to what is now Albania, Mandić saw it as a basis to pronounce all the countries between Croatia and Albania as Croatia, i.e. the Princedom of Nerenta, Zahumlje, Travunia and Duklja, although the historical sources testified that the local Serbs called them by this name by themselves or were forced to do so by others over time, particularly if one bears in mind that this area, which was an independent princedom for a long time, was called Paganja, as well.

Mandić’s following speculations were exclusively based on the *Chronicle of the Priest Dukljanin*, and he persistently tried to present that three different works were in question here, emphasising the so-called *Methodus* mentioned in the *Chronicle*, and the Croatian edition of the *Chronicle* from two centuries later as completely individual texts. However, before the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the tenth century, no one had ever mentioned Bosnia anywhere and Mandić unconsciously contradicted himself when he stated that the Hungarian ruler Béla II (persistently calling him a “Croatian-Hungarian” king) allocated the ducat of Bosnia to his son Ladislaus in 1139. According

to the example of Slavonia, the ducat of which belonged to a Herzog (i.e. a duke), normally a member of the royal family, and which was indirectly ruled by a ban, a similar thing occurred in Bosnia. Formally, it was under the authority of a son of the king and, practically, under the control of a royal governor who was named a ban. The first historically confirmed ban was Borić and Bosnia certainly had had no bans until it came under Hungarian rule. It could only have had princes or zhupans, like Croatia or all the other Serbian countries. The settlement of the Croats in the area of the upper Bosnia River to the Drina River was merely Mandić's invention and wittering, particularly his reference that, at the invented Duvno assembly in 753, "the Bosnia of that time had been united with Raška, which was subjected to the Croatian country, into an individual Croatian unit under the name of *Surbia*" (p. 65-66).

However, even the rule that "Croatias" had differentiated according to the ancient Roman administrative division did not last long with Mandić, because it could not apply to Hum and Travunia. Thus, he felt compelled to tell another story now: "Even during the initial period of the Croats, who had settled in the entire area of Roman-Byzantine Dalmatia in a special agreement with the Emperor Heraclius I in 626, Zahumlje and Travunia were not regulated as an individual governmental unit. They were not mentioned at the illustrious Duvno assembly in 753 when, upon the existing tribal divisions and for the sake of easier management, the Croatian country was divided into three huge self-governing units: western or White Croatia, southern or Red Croatia, and Zagorje or Bosnia. The area of the future Zahumlje and Travunia was included in southern or Red Croatia at the Duvno assembly. However, since the Duvno assembly concluded that each state unit was divided into a number of banates or principedoms, which were divided again into parishes, we maintain that Zahumlje and Travunia became individual governmental units immediately after the Duvno assembly in 753, upon the conclusions of the assembly" (p. 90). Mandić here achieved a new "scientific quality", surpassing even the Priest Dukljanin in lying. He spoke of the division into banates, which had not been mentioned in the *Chronicle*. So far, Mandić blindly claimed that everything that was stated in the phantasmagorical wittering of the Priest Dukljanin was the absolute truth. Then, he stated that everything that had not been mentioned in the *Chronicle* did not exist at all or he subsequently manipulated its existence in the statements of the Priest Dukljanin. However, afterwards, when he spoke of the pronunciation of Stefan Vukčić Kosača as herzog in 1448, he did not mention that the full title was *Herzog of St. Sava* and did his best to prove that the title of herzog was a form of Croatian ruler. "According to medieval understanding, the title of herzog signified a ruler who was the first after the king in Croatian countries" (p. 133), but the Croats never had such a title. It was only after their annexation to Hungary that a Hungarian king nominated his son as a Herzog of Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia. Croatia itself was too tiny for such a powerful title. Three countries together though – that was something else. It is very important here that Stefan Vukčić Kosača had the title of herzog as the ruler of a practically independent country. Therefore, the example of Ladislaus of Naples, who named his regent Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić as Herzog of Split, is not adequate for comparison, at all. In any case, the term "Herzog" signified the same as "duke" or "dux". Mandić was also aware of these entanglements and he wanted to challenge, by all means, the fact that Stefan Kosača pronounced himself as herzog. He would prefer that some foreign ruler appointed this title to him as his vassal, even if it was a Turkish sultan. "In accordance with the Bosnian historical tradition, our opinion is that Stjepan Vukčić acquired the title of Herzog legally



from the Emperor Friedrich III, who was the guardian of his minor cousin Ladislaus V the Posthumous, a Hungarian-Croatian king. In the mentioned charter of the January 20, the Emperor Friedrich III called Stjepan Vukčić by his old Croatian title of *vojvoda* (duke), not translating it as 'dux'. So, Stjepan had not yet acquired the title of herzog. After his receipt of this charter, Stjepan Vukčić had to address the emperor Friedrich again, who gave him the desired title of herzog during 1448. In order to give a holy meaning to his new title, Stjepan Vukčić had to beg the emperor to give him the title of 'Herzog of St. Sava', for Stjepan ruled over Mileševa, where the remnants of St. Sava lay, and, not far from there, was Sokol, its capital of that time, which was settled in the area between the Piva and Tara rivers" (p. 135-136). Was Stefan Vukčić the first Serbian ruler who pronounced himself as the bearer of some official title? Perhaps, he was indeed a Croatian ruler? But if so, why did not he pronounce himself as the Herzog of St. Nikola Tavelić, for example? Why did he need a Serbian national saint? Furthermore, the serf-like heart of Mandić was convinced that dignitaries regarded a title bestowed on him by a powerful foreign ruler as much more valuable than if he was sufficiently powerful and independent to pronounce himself on his own.

### **a) The Interpretation of Bosnia as a Self-Governmental Province of the Federal State of Croatia**

Mandić was able to spice up his frauds and quasi-historiographical considerations with juicy lies that any educated Croat must be ashamed of. For instance, he stated that, from the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> c. to the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> c, Bosnia lived "peacefully as one of the self-governing provinces in the Federal State of Croatia. The Bosnia of that time, as far as we can gather from our sources, did not show any aspirations for separation from the common Croatian state or for the expansion of its borders to the disadvantage of other Croatian federal units" (p. 190-191). Although it is indisputable that, at the time of the Turkish invasion, a part of the Croats converted to Islam, Mandić's statement that only Croatian Muslims settled in Bosnia with the withdrawal of Turkish borders eastward from the south appears grotesque: "Muslim Croats, who withdrew from Bačka and Baranja, and later from Slavonia, Lika and Dalmatia, settled in Catholic and Orthodox towns and villages in Bosnia and Sandžak. Their number exceeded a hundred. Afterwards, a large number of Muslims settled in Sandžak, originally Croats from Montenegro and of the Iekavian variant" (p. 170). How could the Croatian Muslims move away from Bačka and Baranja, when the Croats had never lived there? Mandić opposed the aspiration for Bosnian individuality, emerging from an instinct for self-sustainability, to the Bosnian Bogomils, whose appearance he tried to date a hundred years earlier as a Bulgarian inheritance in order to avoid the fact that Stefan Nemanja banished them from Raška. He explained this as follows: "The fact that the 'Bosniac identity' could not have developed towards carelessness about other Croatian countries, or towards the complete separation of a Bosnian unit from the joint body of Croatian people and the annexation to some other people, was prevented by two basic forces that affected the historical development of Bosnia: the geopolitical connection of the Bosnian areas with other Croatian lands and the national unity of the Bosnian people with the Croats in other Croatian provinces. On the basis of these two forces, the middle Croatian country on the Adriatic Sea, with its centre between Zrmanje and the Cetina River, initially maintained all the Croatian countries in its field of government, with what is now Bosnia and Croatia among them. If

foreign forces tore these provinces away from the Croatian middle country, it would manage to get them back to its national centre using geopolitical and national law” (p. 191-192).

Although the Bosnian rulers gradually expanded their power over all the surrounding countries, especially insisting on its legal inheritance of the Serbian dynasty of the Nemanjićs and even placing the Serbs at the first place of their royal title, Mandić continually ascribed the absolutely alien aspiration to them of gathering all the Croatian countries under their control. They had probably never heard of Istria, Carnaro or Liburnia. They sought to occupy Croatia southward from Velebit and Dalmatia and often parts of Slavonia, and they gradually added these countries to their royal title - even the lower areas and western parts where the Croats originally lived but which was not called Croatia. Mandić lamented that Croatia had been subdued to the power of foreign rulers, who appointed their herzogs and bans, who were mainly of foreign blood. Therefore, it had no centripetal force to attract others in to its composition. “Because of this, Bosnia became the centre for the Croatian countries to gather around. Every time an enterprising ruler sat in the throne in Bosnia, eager for power and dominion, he endeavoured to collect as many Croatian countries as possible under his control. The Bosnian rulers were also assisted by geopolitical laws concerning the relation of the Bosnian countries with the Croatian ones and the national unity of the people in Croatia and Bosnia. This gathering of Croatian countries around Bosnia was particularly visible when the kings of Croatia, for the sake of their personal and Hungarian interests, sought to weaken the Kingdom of Croatia, or when the Croats, unsatisfied with Hungarian kings, asked for support and assistance from the Bosnian rulers” (p. 195-195). The wish is father to the thought. Bosnian rulers conquered those territories that they were able to, and which were sufficiently weak. However, Mandić created a new paradox when he said: “The Croats of the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia were the main obstacle for medieval Bosnia to manage to gather a majority of the Croatian countries around itself. Over many centuries, they had become used to state life and administration, and were thus not willing to abandon Croatian statehood and cede it to the Croatian minor - the border unit of Bosnia. Another indirect cause was the ‘Bosnian Christians’, those who mostly contributed to the medieval ‘Bosniac identity’, a Bosnian particularity. The Catholic Church, the greatest medieval power, waged war for religious reasons for more than 250 years, from 1203 to the downfall of Bosnia in 1463. This war, which was regularly waged in a military manner between the Hungarian-Croatian kings and the Croatian herzogs, permanently weakened Bosnia and did not allow it to expand its power over all the Croatian countries” (p. 195-196).

### **b) The Dissolution of a Non-Existant Kingdom According to Dominik Mandić**

However, we come across Mandić’s crucial stupidity in his categorical statement: “The endeavour of Bosnia to expand eastward over the Drina River cannot be seen anywhere in Bosnian history. From times immemorial up to the downfall of the kingdom, Bosnia fought to maintain its countries up to the Drina River, but did not seek to extend eastward from this river. This was opposed by two basic forces, which affected the historical development of Bosnia: the development of the land and the national difference of the people, which lived eastward from the Drina River... This river, with its deep bed and steep banks, prevented the Bosnian Croats from crossing to the eastern

side, and prevented the local population on the other side to pass over into Bosnia” (p. 196). So, there were greater differences between the Shtokavians who lived in Bosnia and Serbia, than they were between the Bosnian Shtokavians and Croatian Chakavians. That is all about the difference between “common people”. But Usora and Soli were parts of Serbia for longer than of Bosnia, and probably the same was true of Srebrenica. Not to mention Hum and Travunia. In its prime, Bosnia was not able to expand over the Drina River, for a powerful Despotate was there, while the weak and feudally broken Hungary was to the west. However, the last Bosnian king Stefan Tomašević did not become a Serbian despot by accident and personally ruled over Smederevo several months before the downfall of the Despotate.

With every new telling of the same imaginative story, Mandić added a new element. Here, speculating with the help of the *Chronicle* of the Priest Dukljanin, and mentioning the invented Duvno assembly for who knows which time, he explained: “In order to strengthen and better secure the defence of the Serbia of that time, which came under the protection of Croatia, the Croats at the Duvno assembly joined a part of their state territory, Zagorje or Bosnia, with Raša and created a new Croatian state unit, placing a member of Croatian royal house or, possibly, the then ruler of Raša at its head. Since Raša was a greater part of the new Croatian state creation, and in order to simultaneously express recognition to the Serbs who accessed the Croatian country, the Croats gave the name of Serbia to their third state unit. Yet, so the domestic Bosnian Croats would not begrudge it, the assembly preserved the borders of Bosnia up to that time and secured its inner self-government even in the new state structure” (p. 205-207). He wrote about Ljudevit, a prince of Slavonia, who crossed the Drina River in 822 in order to escape to the Serbs. He might as well have written that Ljudevit crossed the Volga! But, following his fairy-tale, Mandić explained that his completely illusory ideas and arbitrarily presented theses gave him enough basis “to put the beginning of Serbian autonomy, i.e. the separation of Serbia from the Croatian country, in the time when the Byzantine Empire fought against Croatia from 807 to 817 - i.e. after they had recognised the supreme power of the new western emperor Charlemagne in 803. In 822, when Ljudevit Posavski escaped to the Serbs from the Franks, they did not accept the power of Borna, a ruler of the Adriatic Croats, but belonged to the opposite Byzantine political circle” (p. 208). As if the Serbs had ever observed the supreme power of Borna above themselves. In addition, Mandić found it very important to explain that Bosnia, of itself, allegedly recognised the supreme power of the Hungarian king or, in his words, “Croatian-Hungarian” king. His “proof” was that Ban Borić participated alongside King Géza in the Hungarian-Byzantine war. “Had Bosnia been forced several years ago to subject to the Hungarian-Croatian king, Borić and the Bosniaks would have taken advantage of the war circumstances to liberate themselves from king Géza. If Borić and Bosnia faithfully and persistently assisted the Hungarian-Croatian king in his fights against the Byzantine Empire, this meant that neither he, nor his predecessor, nor Bosnia, were forcibly subjected to him but of their own will based on national unity with Croatian people in the kingdoms of Croatia and Dalmatia - and Slavonia, which recognised Géza as their legal king. The Bosnian people and their bans were aware that they belonged to the Croatian people and, therefore, following the dissolution of the kingdom of Red Croatia, they wanted to enter the structure of those countries where the kingdoms of Croatia and Dalmatia had been in since 1102, and to which the state of Bosnia had belonged in the past for many centuries” (p. 218). If there were a trace of scientific correctness and academic morality in Mandić, he would

reason more objectively; therefore, regarding the fact that Bosnia came under Hungarian control at the beginning of the twelfth century, he would conclude that the Hungarian king had appointed Ban Borić in the same manner that he had appointed Slavonian and Croatian-Dalmatian bans. What is then more natural than the ban, appointed by royal will, following his ruler in wars? After all, the history of European feudalism shows that feudal interests regularly prevailed over feelings, desires and national passions. The Bosnian ban was not appointed by the people; he was appointed to govern the people. As the kingdom of Red Croatia had never existed, the non-existing kingdom could not have dissolved. And, with regard to the possible consciousness of the inhabitants of Bosnia about their belonging to the Croatian people, and therefore wishing to follow their destiny under the control of a foreign ruler, it is impossible that even Mandić's sick mind could have believed so. After all, Mandić himself elsewhere presented the way that banates were created and bans were appointed, revealing that his intellectual structure could not overpower the facts that it itself had reached with his artificial constructions. "When Béla IV gained victory over ban Ninoslav in 1254, he took the fief parishes of Usora and Soli away from Bosnia and created an individual banate out of them, which he gave as fief to various Hungarian-Croatian lords. At the end of 1272, the ban of Usora and Soli was Henrik, not the Bosnian ban Stjepan Prijezda" (p. 263). Anyway, bans and other lords will occasionally become outlaws and independent of the central royal authority, but that is another story, one told many times in feudal Europe.

### **c) The Desecration of Miroslav's Gospel**

Dominik Mandić wangled all kinds of things in order to diminish the significance of Serbian statehood and ruling tradition to the medieval Bosnian country. His main problem, again, was the first Bosnian king Tvrtko. "When he crowned himself with the Serbian Raška crown, Tvrtko did not have the Serbian country or the Serbian people before his eyes. He did not have in mind to gather the Serbs and renew the Serbian empire. He only had Bosnia and its interests in mind. The crown of the old and famous kingdom of Raška served only as a means of achieving international acknowledgement of the independence of Bosnia and of accessing fees that the inhabitants of Dubrovnik paid on Mitrovdan<sup>10</sup> to the kings of Raška. Tvrtko's neglect of the Serbian goals and interests was noticed by many contemporary Serbs, the writers of Serbian chronicles of that time and the royal genealogy. Neither they nor their successors regarded Tvrtko, or his successors, as Serbian rulers and, therefore, they did not count them and keep evidence among Serbian kings" (p. 285-286). Mandić, of course, lost sight of the fact that the later cult of rulers was developed within the Serbian Orthodox Church and that the Bosnian rulers could not be so popular within it precisely due to their heterodoxy, Bogomilism or Catholicism. If the Serbs accepted Croatian historiographical manners, they would also then "treat all the Hungarian kings as "Hungarian-Serbian" rulers with every reason, since they had called themselves kings of Serbia in the title of their rulers for almost seven hundred years. Therefore, they would treat every Hungarian historiographical achievement, victory in war or territorial expansion as a Serbian success. For instance, Mandić elaborated the fact that the Hungarians annexed the area between the Cetina and Neretva rivers, the so-called Rama, to their country in 1137, in the following way: "At the

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<sup>10</sup> St. Demetrius' Day, on 8 November

time of Gradihna, the Croats from the western Croatian kingdom invaded the north-western part of Podgorje in 1137 and separated the parish of Rama from the kingdom of Duklja and annexed it to the kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia. Since then, the Hungarian-Croatian kings had the title of ‘the king of Rama’, by which they meant the southern Croatian kingdom of Red Croatia, or Duklja, to which the parish of Rama had belonged until then” (p. 341-342). Right, that’s what they thought!

For utterly obscure reasons, Dominik Mandić found it nesecerry to “prove” that Prince Andrija of Hum was not a son of Miroslav, a son of Nemanja, but he went even further. He tried to wrest the famous *Miroslav’s Gospel* from the prince of Miroslav, refuting that it had been written upon his order as it contained elements of liturgy: “Miroslav’s Gospel was not composed according to the Eastern rite or written in a Bulgarian-Serbian edition of Ekavian variant, as was the custom with the Serbs during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century. Our Gospel was written in Croatian Cyrillic or *bosančica*, in its initial development, while it was created under the influence of the Croatian Glagolitic and Latin script. The language of Miroslav’s Gospel was the one of the Croatian edition of the Old Church Slavic Glagolitic books, which were linguistically closer to the original translation by the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius than to the Bulgarian-Serbian edition. The artistic adornment in Miroslav’s Gospel was done in Roman sets under the influence of the West, specifically of Italy, as were similar works in Dalmatian Croatia of that time. Croatian two-wattle and three-wattle can be found in this adornment, which the Serbs had never used. There is not a single Serbian mark in Miroslav’s Gospel: either in script, or language, artistic expression and ritual practice. All these marks are Croatian and, therefore, Miroslav’s Gospel should be enlisted among the works of old Croatian, not Serbian, literature” (p. 371).

This is not the end. What follows is a completely fantastic explanation of Mandić’s plot. Of course, a poetical fiction of ultimate free expression is in question. “Until 1163, Zahumlje, where Miroslav’s Gospel originated from, belonged to the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia. Here, the rulers were Croatian domestic provincial princes of the Catholic religion of Roman rite. They retained the power after 1163, when the emperor Manuel Comnenus occupied these areas. Cultural and artistic life in Zahumlje developed under the influence of the West, particularly from Italy, as in the nearby Dalmatian Croatia. Regarding their religious service, the inhabitants of Zahumlje, like other Croats, used Old Church Slavic Glagolitic books of Croatian editions but, in their civil life, they used their own Croatian Cyrillic, which we usually call *bosančica* today. Deacon Gregory wrote a gospel for a prince of Zahumlje of the Croatian domestic family and Catholic religion using, for support, the Glagolitic Gospel in a Croatian edition, which was used in Zahumlje at that time. In all probability, this prince was the father of Andrija of Hum, who ruled over Zahumlje in the third quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Orbini noted that the father of Andrija of Hum was Miroslav. Around 1174, when Miroslav, a Serbian prince and brother of Stefan Nemanja, occupied a larger part of Zahumlje with its capital in Ston, he found the Gospel at a court of the former prince Miroslav and presented it to his brother Nemanja or his son Rastko (Sava). They, upon becoming monks, took the Gospel to the monastery of Hilandar on Athos, where this precious Croatian piece of work was kept, until King Aleksandar Obrenović was presented with it and until it was brought to light in Vienna in 1897” (p. 371-372).

### c) Footnotes as Proofs of Forgery

Mandić's note about "Croatian" Carantania and Serbian tribal organisation presents a particular howler in this book. Thus, he pointed out that he had justifiable reasons for not dealing more thoroughly with the first question: "I am not mentioning Carantanian Croatia, either here or elsewhere in this work, for it came under a foreign power soon after the settlement of the Croats in this area and never belonged to the Croatian country, apart from those initial years" (p. 395). Meaning that it had allegedly belonged to the Croatian country during those initial years. He did not have time to construct this fairy-tale imaginatively by himself, but I suppose someone will appear who will complete this according to his initial idea. On the other hand, as if tribal organisation was a high civilisational achievement, he wanted to take over all the studies of Serbian scientists on this subject. Therefore he insisted: "What the Serbian historians write about Serbian tribal organisation is mainly taken from southern and eastern Croatian areas and refers to the Croatian tribal organisation" (p. 414). The works of Konstantin Jireček, Jovan Radonić and Nikola Radojčić are in question here. For the sake of curiosity, it is useful to present what Mandić wrote about the Serbian king Dragutin Nemanjić who, as a duke of Mačva, Usora and Soli, asked Pope Nicholas IV in 1291, allegedly due to the increasing Bogomil heterodoxy, "to send several Franciscans to Bosnia who can speak the Croatian language of the Bosnian people in order to convert them to the Catholic religion. Dragutin asked for Croatian Franciscans, because he had got to know them as good and keen priests at the court of his mother Jelena, who had two Croatian Franciscans at her court as her clergymen and as secretaries for letters in the national language" (p. 481). The only problem is that the term "Croatian" was not mentioned at all in the correspondence between Stefan Dragutin and Pope Nicholas IV, which Mandić confirmed accidentally by presenting an excerpt from the Pope's letter in Latin in a footnote. By the way, it was Mandić's standard manner to burden the texts of his books with numerous footnotes, which often were not connected with his thesis and inventions. One can find many quotations in Latin, used to fascinate the primitive people with his "high education" but, for a more knowledgeable person, they actually present evidence of Mandić's forgery, which most often included the translation of the Latin term for "Slavic" as "Croatian".

## 8. Argumentation that the Heresy Created in Orthodoxy Belongs to the Catholics

Dominik Mandić used over 600 pages of the book *The Bogomil Church of Bosnian Christians* (ZIRAL, Chicago-Rome-Zurich-Toronto, 1979) to prove the unprovable - that the Bogomils appeared in Bosnia at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> and not at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and that heresy appeared in Catholicism and not in Orthodoxy. He acknowledged the thesis that the Bogomils were a key factor of Bosnian individuality, but he would like, by all means, to exterminate the fact that they appeared in Bosnia after Stefan Nemanja banished them from Serbia. In addition to their Manichaeus doctrine, he related French and Italian Cathars or Albigensians, apart from Bulgarian sources, in order to give it a more general dualistic meaning. He used the Roman-Catholic activities on their suppression, including Crusade wars, as evidence of the Croatian ethnical origin of the Bosnian population. However, among the quantity of materials he gathered with indisputable effort, Mandić missed the fact that the first information on the Bosnian

Bogomils originated from King Vukan, a son of Stefan Nemanja. “In 1199, Vukan sent word to Pope Innocent III that the Manichaeus heterodoxy had spread severely over Bosnia and Zahumlje” (p. 79). There is no information in the sources before this and therefore, Mandić’s claims on the appearance of the Bosnian “Christians” at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century are unfounded, as well as his thesis that the tombstones - the so-called *stećci* - were of Croatian origin.

When he engaged in proving the Croatian origin of the *stećci*, Mandić continually referred to the practice of parts of Serbian people to erect such monuments, croatianising them forcibly. “The erection of tombstones with huge and finely processed stone was first done by the Croat Pagans in the province of Paganja or Neretva, between the Cetina and Neretva rivers, in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century, which had been 200 years before the appearance of the Bogomils in Bulgaria. The pagan Croats were inherited by the Catholic Croats and, since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, by Croats who were the followers of the Bosnian Christians. Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Croats converted to Orthodoxy started to erect tombstone *stećci* in Duklja and Travunia, and these Croats were forcibly converted to Orthodoxy by the Nemanjić, mainly at the time of King Uroš (1282-1321)” (p. 122). The erection of the *stećci* is primarily related to the burial of the dead on their own property rather than in church graveyards, which existed among all the Serbian people and which is one of the elements of differentiation between the Serbian and the Croatian national traditions. However, Mandić was able to use striking differences as proofs of similarity and analogy. In this way, he said: “This is where Bosnia and the south-eastern Croatian countries (Red Croatia) were differentiated from western Croatian countries (White Croatia) and the northern areas (Pannonian Croatia or Slovinje), where the burial was strictly performed in church or in common dedicated graveyards. This tells us that religious forces were active in Bosnia and Red Croatia that allowed and approved of individual burials on private property, in contrast with the Catholic Church, which the Croats of White and Pannonian Croatia exclusively belonged to. In the early Middle Ages in Europe, only pagans and, later, only neo-Manichaeus, considered burials on private properties to be permitted and honourable. One should draw the conclusion from this that there were neo-Manichaeis in the eastern and south-eastern Croatian countries, on the territory of what is now Bosnia and Herzegovina, who influenced the local population, and that the burials were performed on private properties over the entire Bosnian area until the downfall of the Bosnian kingdom. The adornment and art on medieval *stećci* in Bosnia and Herzegovina bear undoubtable traces of Croatian folk art, and regularly express religious motifs regarding the afterlife. The Croats adopted some of these ornaments from Christianity after their conversion, such as the cross, palm, lily, grapevine, keys of priestly authority, etc. But, most of the religious motifs on the steles originate from Croatian paganism - i.e. the oldest Croatian Iranian tradition, such as the swastika, the presentation of eternal life and mercy in the three-wattle and wavy lines, various drawings of the sun and light, the tree of life, etc.” (p. 124).

### a) Croatianisation of Serbian *Slava*<sup>11</sup>

Continuing to burden parts of the study (which was indisputably valuable) with the continual repetition of empty phrase about Croatian Bosnia, the Croatian folk customs of

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<sup>11</sup> (family) saint’s day; celebration of the patron saint

Bosnian population, etc, Mandić got involved in the appropriation of one of the oldest Serbian - expressly Serbian and exclusively Serbian - custom – the *slava*, which is unknown among all the other peoples in the world, not only the Slavic ones. Mandić subsequently croatianised the Serbian *slava* and, when he revealed it as a custom of the Bosnian Bogomils, he used it as additional “proof” of their Croatian ethnical affiliation. Regarding this, he wrote: “It is of great significance that the guest Radin and, thus, the other Bosnian Christians, celebrated the ‘Christened name’. This was an old folk custom of the Croats from Red Croatia, which was celebrated on the day of the patron saint: with music, dance and singing. According to the description of the bishop Pavle Dragičević, the Catholic Croats in Herzegovina celebrated their Christened name for a full three days in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. During the celebration of the *slava*, relatives, friends and acquaintances used to come to greet the family and be treated; during long drinking sprees, toasts were continually proposed to the host and the blessing of “the patron saint” was called upon the family and its property, that the fire should never be extinguished in this home - i.e. that the family should have sons and heirs forever. The ‘Christian name’ was first mentioned in sources in Bosnia in 1391, when the *Zhupan* of Hum, Bjeljak Sanković, and his brother, duke Radič, swore by their Christian name of St. George and St. Michael the Archangel... A lot has been written about the ‘Christian name’ and its *slava*, but there has not been enough study yet about the origin and significance of the *slava*. In our opinion, the celebration of the ‘Christian name’ appeared when the Croats of Nerenta converted to Christianity at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The celebration of the ‘house gods’, which was celebrated by the ancient Romans and Slavic pagans with great feast, was transferred, under the influence of the church, to the celebration of that saint, whose name each head of the familial community obtained at his christening - upon the conversion of the Croats to Christianity. The title comes from: the celebration of the ‘Christian name’. Celebration of the Christian name, Sunday and festival is one of the most distinguishing and visible differences between the Bosnian Church and all the other Bogomil-Cathar churches” (p. 467-468). And then the grotesque final conclusion comes: “The celebration of Sundays and festivals in Bosnian Churches must have originated under powerful pressure and influence from the Catholic environment and folk religious beliefs, and this is particularly the case in the celebration of the ‘Christian name’... In Red Croatia, where Bogomilism first appeared in the Croatian countries, the people cared so much about the celebration of the main saints festivals, the days of the familial ‘Christian names’, that the Bogomils could not manage to sway or exterminate this celebration and, consequently, they adjusted not only to the celebration of Sunday and compulsory great holidays, but they celebrated the ‘Christian name’ of their families as well” (p. 460). Absolutely unaware of what he was doing, Mandić presented the main proof that the Bosnian Bogomils were Serbs, pointing out that they celebrated their Christian *slava*. The most striking evidence that the Catholicised Orthodox Serbs were involved is presented in the form of the Catholics who retained their Christian *slava*, possibly shifting the day of its celebration according to the Gregorian calendar.

### **b) Lyrical Exaltation Instead of Scientific Work**

In two individual books, Mandić dealt with some important issues of the history of Roman-Catholic church organisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. His *Diocese of Duvno from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century* (Croatian Theological Academy, Zagreb, 1936) was his



attempt to strengthen the church significance of Duvno in Croatian history, starting from the unreliable information by the Priest Dukljanin that King Tomislav had been crowned there. In the preface, Mandić wrote: “When the Croats occupied these areas, Duvno became a seat of the prince of a Croatian tribe, a *zhupan*, from whom it obtained its medieval name *Županjac*” (p. V). Mandić Presented his study *Franciscan Bosnia. The Development and Management of Bosnian Vicarage and Province 1340-1735* (Rome, 1968) as a supplement to his three volume monograph on Bosnia and Herzegovina. He began the study with a statement that the “native inhabitants of these countries with Croatian origin, almost all of whom adopted Bogomilism in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century, were converted back to Christianity in great numbers by the work of the Franciscans. Under the Turks (1463-1878), the Franciscans were the shepherds of the Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the carriers of the western culture, the guardians of the national Croatian name and representatives of the Catholic Croats in public life” (p. V). Here as well, quoting original documents, Mandić regularly translated the expression “Sclavonia” from the Latin documents as “Croatia”, explaining this in the following manner: “Starting from the early Middle Ages until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, ‘Slavs’ was the name for all the Slavs in general, but this name was particularly and most usually given to the Croats as the Slavs closest to the Roman countries. Accordingly, the country where the Slavs/Croats lived was named ‘Slavonia’ (=Croatia) by the foreigners. The names ‘Slavs’ and ‘Slavinia’ were accepted by the Croats themselves as names for their people and their country, when speaking with foreigners or writing documents in Latin. Since the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when the Byzantine Empire conceded their ‘Dalmatia’ to the Croats - i.e. several coastal towns and Adriatic islands - then the Croats started to call their country: the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia, or the Kingdom of Dalmatia and Croatia. The foreigners always translated this as the Kingdom of Dalmatia and Slavonia” (p. 27-28).

Mandić’s explanation is utterly naïve. Slavonia was mainly a name for what is now Slavonia, and then for all Balkan Slavic countries together. This was indirectly confirmed by Mandić himself when he tried to see these countries as Croatian ones, which can be seen in the following excerpt: “At the establishment of the Franciscan province of ‘Slavonia’, all the countries where the Slavs/Croats lived, from Trieste to Skadar in what is now Albania, were allocated to it. However, the first provincial headman of ‘Slavonia’, as seen from the oldest sources, did not choose Zadar as his seat, or any other town that was in the hands of the Venetians at the time, but went to the real, free ‘Slavonia’, where the majority of ‘Slavs’/Croats lived and set the seat of the province in Split, which was the greatest town and the centre of the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia of that time. The then archbishop-primate of Croatia had its seat in that town, as well” (p. 28). By the way, the archbishop of Split had never had the title of “Primate of Croatia” - or at least not only of Croatia. And when Mandić wrote of the arrival of the general of the Franciscan order to visit the Franciscan province of Dalmatia in 1339, he renamed this province Croatia and complained that the foreigners called entire country Hungary. “At the end of February 1340, when Pope Benedictus XII wrote him a letter, he was still in Split or in some nearby priory of the Kingdom of Croatia and Dalmatia, which the foreigners often named ‘Hungary’, for it had the same king as the Hungarians did” (p. 49). In 1340, when Friar Peregrine Saxon was pronounced a Franciscan vicar of a Bosnian vicarage, Mandić wrote that friar Peregrine “learnt the Croatian language of the Bosnian people quite fast and asked that other missionaries, who came to Bosnia from abroad, should learn

the folk language of the Bosnian Croats” (p. 58). But, we can immediately see the footnote where Mandić referred to the original document of Ljubić’s *Act* and that it was about the “lingua Slavonica” and that the Croats were not mentioned anywhere.

Regarding the Bosnian Franciscan Vicar Friar Bartol Alvernski, who was in that position from 1378 to 1408, Mandić wrote that, at the beginning of his missionary work, he “started to love the Croatian people with a true apostolic heart, people whom he came to direct to the way of God; he learnt the Croatian language and, from that time on, he loved the Croatian country as his new homeland and worked for it tirelessly” (p. 79). Without wincing and with complete confidence, Mandić wrote about this five-century old love, no trace of which could be found in authentic documents. He believed that such lyrical exaltation was quite adequate for a study with serious scientific pretensions.

## **9. Untruths About the Ethnic Structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The heart of Mandić’s trilogy is the book *The Ethnic History of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (ZIRAL, Toronto-Zurich-Rome-Chicago, 1982). He started the book by repeating his, several times exposed, nonsense about the enormous number of Croats who settled in the Balkans and ruled over all of Dalmatia, Pannonia and Illyricum in the most comprehensive meaning of these geographic terms. He openly lied here, stating, for example, that “Porphyrogenitus expressly mentioned that Zahumlje was inhabited by Croats from the area of the upper course of the Vistula River, where the town of Hrvat, on the site of what is now Krakow, was the centre and capital of the northern White Croats” (p. 25). This piece of information simply could not be found in Constantine Porphyrogenitus and Zahumlje was actually inhabited by Serbs from the lower course of the Vistula River. Another nonsense is Mandić’s insistence on one of the Croatian tribes allegedly inhabiting Bosnia, about which an utterly grotesque explanation followed. “The ruler ruled over the given tribe self-governmentally, but all of them recognised the supreme power of the ruler of all the Croats, whose seat was initially in Nin, near Zadar. In the Croatian case, we have an example of ancient Slavic joint rule by various members of the ruling house, but under the supreme power of the eldest brother, which secured unity and the joint defence of the country” (p. 26). With such incoherent and vain stories, Mandić regularly compensated for the lack of serious historical sources to support his excessively arbitrary thesis. Thus, following the phantasmagorias of the Priest Dukljanin, Mandić told a story that may have suited Catholic Croatian ear that had been softened for years but, from the aspect of modern historiography methodology, it is absolutely unscientific. An example is his writing, over and over again, about the completely invented Duvno assembly in 753, with such confidence as though he himself had attended it. “According to the habits of that time, the record used to be drawn at the end of the assembly and it used to be signed first by the ruler of the Croats, then by the Papal and Imperial envoys, the metropolitan of Split and all the bishops of the Croatian country, and then by the secular lords of the Croats. This record was composed in Latin, which was the official language of the countries set on the land of the former West Roman Empire. Since the majority of the Croatian lords and governors of that time could not speak Latin, and upon the wish of the Croatian ruler or the suggestion of foreign envoys, the Latin record of the assembly decisions used to be translated into Croatian even during the assembly meeting, in order to serve as a reference book for the Croatian officers for good country government. Since there was no suitable, adequate

expression in Croatian, the published work was given the name *Methodus*, i.e. *The Book for Systematic Country Government*" (p. 26-27).

What follows is Mandić's standard forgery of Ivan Kinamos and Ibn Idris. When Idris wrote about the Slavs, he called them "Sakalibah", which Mandić always translated as the "Croats". He endeavoured to present Andrija Dandolo and Flavio Biondo, the copyists of the Priest Dukljanin of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, as serious writers, particularly when Biondo said: "Raška and Bosnia are considered parts of the Kingdom of Croatia" (p. 34). When Laonicus Chalcondyles, a Byzantine author of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, wrote about the Illyrians, Mandić regularly claimed that the Croats were in question; Mandić even regarded the supplements of the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Anthology of Supetar*, which were added in the 14<sup>th</sup> century - in which the imaginative writer explained that seven *bans*, a Bosnian among them, used to choose a Croatian king - as a serious historiographical piece of work. As a proof that Bosnia was not a Serbian country, he stated that Stefan Nemanja did not attempt to annex it to his country and that St. Sava did not establish Orthodox episcopates in it. "Had the Serbian people lived in medieval Bosnia, they would have striven for and created state unity with the other Serbs in Serbian national country during numerous political changes in the Middle Ages. If the Bosniaks were not ever a part of the Serbian national country, except during the temporary occupation by Časlav, this means that the Bosniaks really did not want that, that they did not feel themselves to be Serbs and did not seek the expansion of the heterodoxy "in the country of the Hungarian king - i.e. in Bosnia" (p. 40): "Vukan did not say that Bosnia was a Serbian country at that time, or that this Serbian country had been occupied and governed by the king of Hungary, but he simply said that Bosnia was a country of the Hungarian king. Of course, Vukan did not mean this to say that Bosnia was a Hungarian country, for the Hungarians had not inhabited Bosnia on their arrival at Podunavlje, or had ever occupied it by arms, or inherited it according to the medieval perception. Under the term 'the King of Hungary', Vukan meant the Hungarian-Croatian king, who was often named only 'the King of Hungary' for the sake of brevity. As already presented in the first part of our work *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, the Hungarian-Croatian kings of the Middle Ages regarded Bosnia as their country on the basis of Croatian national and state law, and this was acknowledged by everyone, even by Vukan Nemanjić. In Vukan's testimony, namely, we have proof that the medieval Serbs did not regard Bosnia as a Serbian country but a Croatian one, where the Croats lived and which lawfully belonged to the Croatian country, which had lived in alliance with Hungary since the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century" (p. 40).

### **a) The Exorcism of the Serbian Spirit and Driving in the Croatian One**

Regarding the undertaking of the Serbian Tsar Stefan Dušan the Mighty in 1350, Mandić interpreted the resistance of Stjepan II Kotromanić and the Bosnian gentry in the following manner: "Had the medieval Bosniaks and Zachlumians been Serbs and felt a national union with Serbian people in old Raška, they would indisputably have embraced the Serbian Emperor Dušan Silni during his undertaking in 1350, and would have permanently remained in his huge and, at that time, glorious Serbian country. But if they hid from Dušan in mountainous and fortified towns and if they rejected his control as soon as he went away from Bosnia and Zahumlje, it means they regarded Dušan as a foreigner, that is, they did not feel themselves to be Serbs. Throwing off Dušan's Serbian empire, the

Bosniaks and Zachlumians established the government in their countries of their domestic ban Stjepan II Kotromanić who, at that time, recognised the supreme power of the Hungarian-Croatian King Ljudevit I and who lived in a state union of that time that included the entire Croatian people” (p. 42). When he found it politically necessary, Mandić completely ignored the factor of the Bosnian Bogomilism, as well as the fact that Dušan’s preoccupation had been directed at Constantinople, that he had preferred to conquer ethnically Greek or Bulgarian countries, if that was for the purposes of his final goal, rather than wanted to unite all the Serbian countries around Serbia. And the extent of the love of Bosnian population towards the Croats and Hungarians, as well as his feeling for the “Croatian” national entity, is demonstrated in the Crusade wars, which were waged against Bosnia upon the Pope’s order by “Hungarian-Croatian” kings and Croatian herzogs.

Mandić classified everything that presented the basic characteristics of Slavic genealogical and tribal organisation as specifically Croatian. Thus, he dealt in the same way with the procedure of its developing feudal system and the manner of its functioning. Then he tendentiously insisted on the invented detachment and differentiation from the Serbian. He said: “As we can see from the oldest sources, the Serbs were not divided into tribes when they came to the Balkans. Accordingly, their social and state organisation did not develop on a tribal basis as it did in Bosnia and other Croatian areas. The ancient Serbs in Raška were not acquainted with tribal welfare and did not know or use the following names: tribe, noble land, noble. At that time, medieval Bosnia had an equal social organisation and used the same names as the other Croatian countries, which tell us that the medieval Bosniaks belonged to the Croatian social and national union, not to the Serbian one” (p. 54-55). Furthermore, Mandić stated that the Bosnian bans and kings had not been autocrats like the Serbian rulers, but limited by the will of the gentry’s assembly, the so-called *stanak*. “Bosnian state organisation... is a faithful picture of the Croatian state system. In Croatia, as in Bosnia, the rulers of the same ruling house were chosen since times immemorial, according to the principle of seniority (seniorate), and not according to the principle of the first-born (primogeniture). As in Bosnia, ancient Croatian rulers were not autocrats or irresponsible despots, but were limited in their ruling decisions by the approval of the ruling council for smaller acts and, regarding more significant matters, by the consent of the state assembly. In Croatia, since the first centuries of their arrival at the Adriatic Sea, a number of witnesses and guarantors alongside the ruler used to swear and sign the charters” (p. 63). This certainly cannot be the feature of a national spirit but a testimony to a weak ruler and strong gentry. Mandić insisted that the word *sabor* (assembly) is Croatian and that the word *zbor* (assembly) is Serbian, although the principle of *sabornost* (assemblage), not *zbornost* (assemblage), was maintained by the Serbs for centuries. Even in the medieval documents of the rulers, he “found” the expressions of the “Croatian” spirit and, therefore, concluded: “Until the crowning of King Tvrtko I with the Serbian crown, the Bosnian charters had been written according to the model and form of the Croatian charters, both in terms of content and diplomatic designations, and had been different from the Serbian charters, which were written according to the Byzantine chrysobulls with long and puffed introductions. Bosnian charters, like all the Croatian ones, were dated according to the birth of Christ, while, in Serbia, the years and date were counted since the creation of the world according to the Byzantine custom. Serbian charters were written in the language of Church Slavhood, which was very different to the common folk language. Bosnian charters were written in the pure folk language of the Ikavian dialect, like those in Croatia, which were

written in Croatian. A strong admixture of the Chakavian, which is unknown in Serbian charters, can be found in the Bosnian charters, as in the Croatian ones. All this tells us that the Bosnian charters should be classified as the diplomatic treasure of the Croatian people, not the Serbian” (p. 66).

In addition to such arguments, Mandić added the fact that Bosnia was subdued to the Western cultural influence, primarily due to the intensive effect of the Roman-Catholic missionaries. As he had already pronounced in his other documents, that the Bosnian variant of Cyrillic stenography was the Croatian Cyrillic script - although it had always been known as *bosančica* in science - Mandić here reached a further-reaching conclusion. “The fact that the native inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Middle Ages did not accept the Cyrillic script - the one the Serbs used - but created a new script, different from the Serbian one, which they permanently used while the Serbs used their Cyrillic script even then when they went over to Bosnia and Herzegovina, is evidence that the native Bosniaks and Croats, from times immemorial up to the present, had never felt themselves to be Serbs or as members of Serbian national culture” (p. 77). He also insisted on the linguistic differences, claiming that the Serbs exclusively spoke in the Ekavian Shtokavian dialect, which they had allegedly taken over from the Slavs from the Don River of the first migration. As for the Croats, Mandić here elaborated his initial pseudo-linguistic construction to the limit, in the following manner: “In their northern country, the Croats spoke the Chakavian dialect in two variants: Ikavian and Iekavian. The Ikavian was spoken by those Croats who lived in what is now the east of Czech Republic and northern Slovakia, and the Iekavian was spoken by those who lived between the Upper Vistula and the Saale River, where the people of today speak Iekavian. When they reached the south and occupied and inhabited the Roman provinces of Dalmatia, Illyricum and Pannonia, the Croats spoke in their Chakavian dialect everywhere, which they had brought from the north. The Croats had preserved the common Chakavian dialect up to now in the Adriatic coastal region from the Cetina River to Istria (where there was a small number of Slavs before the migration) and on islands. In what is now Bosnian Posavina westward from Ukrina and in the area between the Sava and Drava rivers westward from Lake of Vukovar, the Chakavian Croats of the Iekavian variant mixed with the Kaikavian Slavs of the first migration. In the southern Adriatic coastal region, with its centre in Zahumlje, and in Bosnian Zagorje, the Chakavian Croats of the Ikavian variant started to rule and settled among the Shtokavian Slavs of the Ikavian variant from the first migration. The Chakavian Croats settled among the Ikavian Shtokavian speakers of the first migration in the areas from Imotsko and Duvno to Bosanski Petrovac, and from Dinara to Vlašić and Borja” (p. 79).

However, in comparative Slavic linguistics, it is indisputable that the Chakavian dialect only branches into two variants: Ekavian (which Mandić did not mention at all) and Ikavian. It is possible that northern Ekavian Chakavian was developed under the influence of the nearby Kaikavian speakers and that the southern Ikavian suffered the influence of the neighbouring Shtokavian. However, the Iekavian variant has no connection with Chakavian. The Chakavian in the Iekavian variant has never existed. But, Mandić completely ignored unquestionable scientific facts if they did not suit his ideological constructions. He acted as if those facts did not exist at all or treated them as completely irrelevant and therefore continued his own story. “Excluding the current area of the Chakavian dialect, the Chakavian Croats had blended into a harmonised unity with the Slavs of the first migration in all other areas in terms of blood and language, during the first and second century after their arrival. The Chakavian Croats adopted the Kaikavian -

i.e. the Shtokavian dialect of the Ikavian variant - from the Slavs of the first migration and the Slavs accepted the Croatian name as the state and national one. During this linguistic blending, the Chakavian Croats exerted an immense Chakavian influence in all the areas they inhabited. In Red Croatia, south of the Neretva River, Chakavian Iekavian took over the Shtokavian Ikavian. A similar thing happened in medieval Bosnia, eastward from the valley of the river of the same name, yet to a lesser extent. In addition, the old Shtokavian Ikavian was maintained among people simultaneously with the Chakavian Shtokavian Ikavian in southern Red Croatia, particularly in Bosnia, until the arrival of the Turks” (p. 79). However, what Mandić cannot refute by any means is the fact that the Ikavian Shtokavian speakers did not identify themselves as Croats anywhere, even if they were sworn Catholics, until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the leading Croatian intellectuals accepted Vuk’s Serbian literary language as their own. Furthermore, Mandić added the following, perhaps to make his construction appear more convincing: “The Serbs had never spoken the Chakavian or Shtokavian dialect of the Ikavian variant. Therefore, wherever we find Chakavian, or the Shtokavian Ikavian or Iekavian mixed with Chakavian characteristics, this is where the Croats had lived since ancient times, and these areas should be attributed to the linguistic area of the Croatian people” (p. 79).

The less relevant evidence he has, the more self-confident and apodictic Mandić is in his claims. To this extent, he continues: “We can ascertain from authentic and indisputable sources that the people of medieval Bosnia and the western parts of Zahumlje in the mid 14th century spoke the Ikavian dialect, and the people from eastern parts spoke both Ikavian and Jekavian, but all these dialects were strongly influenced by Chakavian. In its turn, the Ikavian dialect with numerous Chakavian traits was the official, formal language of the Banate of Bosnia, of the royal court, and of the county and other noble courts” (p. 80). With regard to Ikavian, it is actually present in Bosnia, and therefore it was easy for Mandić to offer evidence from old records. However, both Jekavian and Ekavian are also present and Mandić places the blame for this on Serbian clerks in Dubrovnik. As Mandić comments, allegedly, “the Ekavian dialect does only appear significantly in eastern Herzegovina after the decline of Bosnia (1663), when these territories were inhabited by the Vlachs of Raška, led by Serbian priests and monks. They have introduced the Ekavian dialect and a new way of establishing the date, counting from the beginning of the world according to the Byzanto-Serbian custom in the eastern parts of Herzegovina” (p. 86). But what about Chakavian? Mandić offers only one “proof” - the term “greb” instead of “grob”. Nonsense! And even more absurd is the following comment: “This shows us that the newly inhabited Ekavians succumbed to the influence of the exceedingly numerous native Croatian population, which retained and used many Chakavian expressions and features in their speech” (p. 87).

### **b) Belittling the Original Documents**

The most trouble Mandić has when forced to misinterpret the old, original documents that explicitly testify that the Serbs are the people of Bosnia and Zahumlje. Concerning papal bulls, such as Urban III’s bull from 28 March 1187 stating that Bosnia is a kingdom of *Serbija* [Serbia], he claims they are a fraud of the Dubrovians because of the rivalry between the archbishops of Dubrovnik and Bar over the expanding of their dioceses or the submission of the archbishop of Bar to the metropolitan of Dubrovnik. But this may lead to the conclusion that the Archbishop of Dubrovnik was the

Metropolitan of the Serbian Catholics, after the Archbishop of Bar. Concerning the famous 1234 charter of Mateja Ninoslav, Ban of Bosnia, in which Serbs are denoted as Bosnian population and in which their possible disputes with the Morlachs from Dubrovnik are regulated, Mandić claims in a highly infantile manner that it applies to the Serbs travelling through Bosnia. Emperor Dušan's charters mention Serbs, Vlachs and Dubrovians, i.e. three ethnic groups on this territory. Grgur Vukosalić, ruler of the South Zahumlje, also regulates the customs for Serbs, Dubrovians and Vlachs in 1418. Vladislav, Prince of Hum, in 1451 and Herzog Stefan in 1454 - and even Juraj Hrvatinić, Ruler of the Lower Lands as the nephew of Duke Hrvoje in 1434 - also specify the Serbs and Vlachs as their inhabitants. Nobody ever mentions any Croats. But, insisting on the religious aspect, Mandić sets out a completely unsustainable thesis that all the Serbs of that time were Orthodox, even though he himself admits on separate occasions that the Serbs originally accepted Christianity through Roman ritual, which implies that, even later, a significant number of Serbs should remain Catholic. This is why his conclusion that the Serbs did not live in the territories of Bosnia and Hum because Orthodox churches were not widespread there, is out of place. Quoting his words: "if there had been a large number of them in Bosnia and Zahumlje, they would undoubtedly have had their eastern Orthodox priests and churches. But in the entire area of Bosnia, we cannot find any trace of Orthodox priests or churches in authentic historical sources, until the arrival of the Turks" (p. 163).

Mandić's basic linguistic fable also gets reshaped here, when compared with previous variations. "At the time of their first migration, the Slavs came to the Balkans led by the Huns, the Goths, the Gepids and the Avars. They lived in these peoples' countries and were shattered into small tribal groups without a joint national identity. When the Croatians and Serbs came to the south, they, each in their separate state territory, blended with the Slavs of the first migration into one entity: in state, language and nation. From the Drina River to Istra, and from the Drava to the Adriatic Sea, and in the littoral area all the way to the river of Vojuša in present-day Albania, the Croatian state spread in which all the Slavs, both those of the first and of the second migration, called themselves and felt Croatian. Where there were few Slavs of the first settlement, such as in the Adriatic Primorje [littoral area] from the Cetina River to Istria and on the islands, the Croats preserved their old Chakavian dialect. In Zagorje, from Lika through the central parts of Bosnia and today's Herzegovina to Duklja, the Chakavian language of the ruling Croatians and the Shtokavian Ikavian of the old Slavs formed the Shtokavian-Chakavian dialect. In the west of this territory, people spoke the Shtokavian dialect of the Ikavian vernacular, with strong influences from the Chakavian dialect. In the south-eastern parts, from the Bosnia and Neretva Rivers and all over medieval Duklja, people spoke the Shtokavian dialect of Jekavian (p. 168). He repeats that the Serbs spoke "the Slavic western dialect, which was identical to the language of the forefathers of today's Lusatian and Kashubian Sorbs" (p. 168). Since there is no linguistic evidence for such a thesis, Mandić again has to resort to non-scientific speculation. "Given that there were too few Serbs compared to the Slavs - Shtokavian Ekavians of the first settlement - they completely merged into Ekavian linguistically and, from ancient times, they exclusively spoke the Shtokavian dialect of Ekavian (p. 168).

As it is absolutely indisputable that the Croats spoke exclusively Ekavian as a west-Slavic dialect, there is no evidence whatsoever that the Serbs were originally a west-

Slavic people and Natko Nodilo ascertained they were east-Slavic. Never did the Slavs call themselves or feel Croatian - anywhere outside the territory between Istria and the Cetina River, Mountain Gvozd and the Sea - nor was there any Croatian state outside of this precisely bordered territory. The Croats probably found some Slavs who had settled earlier and assimilated them by imposing the Chakavian language on them. It is not unlikely that a certain number of Croats occasionally lived deep inside Serbian territory, but they were assimilated there by accepting Shtokavian, leading to the loss of any ethnic Croatian trait. Not to mention that Mandić incessantly seeks to present the Croats as a higher race that ruled over the conquered Slavs. The Shtokavian-Chakavian dialect was never established. Like Kajkavian, Chakavian was under the strong influence of Shtokavian for centuries and therefore distanced itself from the west-Slavic languages and acquired characteristics of the east-Slavic ones. This process was entirely natural. On the other hand, Chakavian also had to have some influence on the adjacent Serbian-Shtokavian, but this mostly came down to the assumption of some terms and expressions. All the Serbs were exclusively Shtokavian speakers and there is no evidence that Shtokavian was imposed on them since they were a minority. Most Serbs spoke the Shtokavian dialect of Jekavian, and the Chakavian dialect of Jekavian never existed. Shtokavian can be divided into the old Shtokavian language of Macedonia, the mid-Shtokavian or Prizren-Timok dialect, and the new Shtokavian dialect which covers Ekavian, Jekavian and Ikavian. In linguistics, Ekavian is considered to be a more modern dialect than Jekavian, while the Ikavian dialect is considered anachronistic.

Dominik Mandić also proves to be an unbelievably unscrupulous liar by claiming that Kinnamos states that the Bosnian population is Croatian. He writes that, “at the end of the 12th century, Byzantine writer Kinnamos noted from personal experience that, in Bosnia, west of the Drina River, live the Croats, who are different from the Serbian people and have specific national customs” (p. 169). Kinnamos certainly never mentioned any Croats living west of the Drina River. On the other hand, Mandić tries to explain the fact that neither the Serbian Orthodox nor the Muslim population of Raška (which he believes to be the full extent of the original Serbia) speak Ekavian but Jekavian, in the following manner: “Pre-war Sandžak was an old central Serbian territory, where the people spoke only the Ekavian dialect. If, in the last centuries, Croatian Jekavian took strong roots in this area, it was brought by Montenegrin Muslim Croats from the old Red Croatia, where they had spoken Jekavian since ancient times” (p. 34). Besides, Mandić minimizes the part the Bogomils played in the Islamization of Bosnia, claims that the Orthodox Christians converted to Islam only in individual cases and, concerning the Bosnian Catholics, whom he previously named Croatian through no fault of theirs, he says that they widely turned Turkish on various occasions. It is of special importance for us that he gives a detailed description of the long Turkish ravages of Croatia and Slavonia and the transfer and enslavement of a vast number of people. “The number of slaves in modern sources is usually cited in round numbers, which are likely to be exaggerated. But when all these numbers from the sources add up, and when you add to that the number of slaves taken in frequent, repeated smaller battles, then we have to conclude that, from the end of the 14th century to the end of the 18th century, almost a million Croats from all Croatian territories had been taken into slavery by the Turks” (p. 306). After the final Turkish breakdown at the city walls of Vienna in 1683 and the following Austrian offence, a large number of Muslims from Slavonia, Srem, Bačka, Banat, Hungary and Croatia undoubtedly



immigrated to Bosnia. However, all these “muhajirs” Mandić refers to as Croatian, although there were many Serbs and Slavonians among them - Croats too, of course, as they were also Islamized under Turkish rule. There is no doubt that today's Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina have some Croatian blood, but their language testifies to their primary Serbian origins.

### **c) The First Serbian Uprising from the Vatican's Point of View**

Since he could not completely ignore the process of Muslim emigration from the liberated part of Serbia into Bosnia, Mandić quantitatively belittles it and jumps at the chance to call the First Serbian Uprising a slaughter of Muslims. So he writes: “In 1804, when the Serbs slaughtered the Muslims all over their Serbia (“the slaughter of dahijas”), some Muslims fled to Bosnia. Hence the surnames: Valjevac, Užičanin, Beograđanin, etc. Some of these fugitives could actually be descendants of the old Serbs that individually converted to Islam. But most of those emigrant Muslims were either descendants of those Muslim Croats who retreated from Slavonia, Srem and South Hungary, settling in Serbia at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, or of Muslim Croats from Bosnia who settled in Serbia as Turkish officials or soldiers throughout the centuries, especially at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of these emigrants also descend from Asian Muslims, who were Slavicized in Serbia. Anyway, the number of emigrants of Serbian origin that ran away from the massacre to Bosnia was so small that it does not even count statistically when determining the predecessors of today's Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The insignificant number of Serbs that converted to Islam, we will include among the Orthodox Vlachs in the next statistical count” (p. 341-342). Then, invoking his alleged researches into old and contemporary sources, although it is absolutely impossible according to the principles of statistical theory, Mandić gives uncorroborated results that state that 10-12% of Muslims descend from the Bogomilian and 70-75% from the Catholic “Croats” of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The immigrant Croatian Muslims from the surrounding “Croatian” lands, including the Montenegrin ones, comprised 12 to 13%. Those of Turkish and other Asian origins made up 2-3% and the Vlachian (including Serbian) 1-2%. And then, instead of explaining the methods used to calculate these approximate percentages, he continues with the following “highbrow” conclusion: “As is shown in the aforementioned statistics, 95-97% of today's Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina originate from Croats and they have merely 3-5% foreign blood. Therefore, the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina are the most numerous Croats by blood. The Croats from Pannonia between the Sava and the Drava rivers, and those from Dalmatia, the islands and Istria, have much more foreign blood. The former were Croatized over the centuries and assimilated by blood with a vast number of immigrant Hungarians, Germans, Slovenes and other Slavic peoples, while the latter turned Croatian and assimilated with a large number of old Romanians, Italians and Vlachs, before the Turkish migrations” (p. 342).

But how to deal with the fact that, although Mandić relentlessly and retroactively inserts the adjective “Croatian” even when speaking of old records in which the word is completely unknown, there is no evidence of the existence of any Croatian national or even ethnic identity in the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, not even among the fervent Catholics. The following story is too naïve even for children: “Led by the new

religious rapture and the penetrating force of the Turkish empire, the Islamized Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina wanted to convert all Croatian states to Islam and subject them to the Islamic Turkish government. They found an immediate obstacle in the Croats from the Kingdom of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia, who fought under their national Croatian name. This is why, in Turkish Bosnia, the Croatian name became connected to enemies and politically questionable. The Catholic Croats hid their Croatian name, so as not to arise suspicion of identifying and collaborating with the Croats from the Croatian Kingdom, who were one of the main obstacles to Turkish progress towards the west. The Muslim Croats use the Croatian name more and more seldom, since they were against the Croats from the Kingdom of Croatia who hindered the spreading of Islam, which they accepted, and the strengthening of the Islamic Bosnia, which they love and fight for. But besides all this, the Croatian identity and the Croatian name never completely died, either among the Catholic Croats or among the Muslim Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH). The Catholics and Muslims in BiH were well aware that they were blood brothers, separated only by the religion they follow. Both knew they spoke the same language and they were aware they were a branch of the Croatian people” (p. 346-347).

This specific mimicry, found in the existing awareness of their alleged Croatiandom but also in their persistent silence about it, gets a quasi-theoretical explanation. “As is the case with other peoples, the keepers and bearers of the Croatian national name were educated people who had broader views and came in contact with other peoples. The distinguished and educated Muslims from Bosnia, when encountering Turks, Persians or Arabs of the same religion in Istanbul or some place else in the East, could clearly see that they are completely different linguistically and nationally. Then they would feel that they were from Bosnia - Bosniaks - and that they spoke the ‘Bosnian’ language. But, at the same time, they also knew that Bosnia was a province, the same as many other Turkish provinces, and that they were a part of the general Croatian population and spoke the Croatian language. In the same way, when Catholic priests and merchants from Bosnia went west and met the Italians, Germans and other peoples and saw that they had a common national name along with the provincial ones, they instantly felt they too had their common national Croatian name along with the provincial Bosnian name. During the Turkish reign, when the people in Bosnia did not want or did not dare (for political reasons) to emphasize the Croatian name, they spoke of ‘Bosniaks’ and ‘the Bosnian language’, or simply: ‘our people’, ‘our language’ and ‘our country’. Yet, the educated Catholic Croats in BiH also used the expressions like ‘Slavic’ or ‘Illyrian’, as did the other Croats, in order to adapt to the names of the time that foreign peoples used for the Croats. However, among the native Croats in BiH, both Catholic and Muslim, the awareness that they were Croatian was permanent and they used the Croatian name for the people, language and the Bosnian country. These names we can find most often among Bosnian writers, mostly historians and poets, who were the primary forces for preserving and spreading the national name and glorious national past in Bosnia as in other countries” (p. 347-348).

In trying to give evidence to corroborate his principal premise, Mandić relies on the fact that, after the central part of Bosnia fell under Turkish reign and its north-western part under Hungarian reign, the Bosnian Franciscan Vicariate was divided into the Vicariate of Srebrenica and the Vicariate of Croatia in 1514, so that Croatian Bosnia mainly consisted of the territories west of the Vrbas that used to belong to Croatia. His

other “proof” is that the so-called “Water Croats” [*Wasserkroaten*], who live around Lake Balaton in Hungary, speak Shtokavian, which means they emigrated from Bosnia. He even claims that their name in German originated from an irregular pronunciation of the adjective “Bosnian” or through the permutation of “bosen” with “vosen”. As a third proof, he uses the unfounded hypothesis that the *Bunjevci* are Croats who originate from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The fourth is based on the assumption that the Bosnian Catholics who joined the Turkish army, the so-called *Predavci*, were ethnically Croatian. In line with this, he says that the inhabitants of Žumberak “originated in the old times from somewhere around Lake Skadar and therefore were old Croats from Duklja who converted to Orthodoxy and accepted the Byzantine liturgy during the Serbian rule over Duklja” (p. 362). The Turks moved them to Glamoč as their soldiers, from which they “jumped into” Žumberak. By the way, he also states that the Vlachs, Slavs and *Predavci* fled from Turkey into “free Croatia”. “The Vlachs were a non-Slavic population, which the Turks used as rapid penetrating troops, as back-up crews in fortresses and as keepers of gorges and roads. The “Slavs” and *Predavci* had the same duty. The sources use the name “Slavs” for the native Croats from the part of the former Kingdom of Slavonia that was conquered by the Turks - that is, from today’s Slavonia. The *Predavci* were Catholic Croats from the Bosnia-Herzegovina of that time who joined the Turkish army. Slavonians were used as auxiliary Turkish troops in Slavonia, while the Vlachs and *Predavci* were used in that capacity all over the Bosnian Pashalic and even in Slavonia” (p. 363). Concerning the *Predavci* issue, Mandić further states: “In 1770, Croatian historian Baltazar Krčelić recorded that the *Predavci* in the Croatian states of the 17th century were Catholics of the Roman ritual, but that a significant number of them were converted to the Greek ritual by the Orthodox bishops and priests” (p. 365).

As his sixth argument, Mandić states that the leaders of a group of Catholics from western Herzegovina, having moved to Dalmatia in 1719, considered themselves Croats. And this is all concerning the domestic records and their preposterous reinterpretation in Mandić’s book. Although none of the six cited “proofs” gives him the right, Mandić, unscrupulously and guided by his own imagination and ideological goals, construes the following far-fetched conclusion: “Emigrants from all over Bosnia-Herzegovina from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries all called themselves Croats and were called that by those among whom they settled in Croatia, Hungary and Venetian Dalmatia. The “Bosnian Croats”, who originated from northern and central Bosnia, also considered themselves Croatian. These were later named “Water Croats“ in Austria and Hungary. The *Bunjevci* and *Uskoci*, mostly from western Bosnia-Herzegovina, also called themselves Croats. The same was the case with the “*Predavci*” from various parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Many of the old native people that emigrated to Dalmatia from western Herzegovina and southwest Bosnia were also called Croats. The Croatian emigrants from BiH could not acquire national identity by moving to free foreign countries, primarily to Austria and Hungary. Conversely, they had to have it in their native country and then bring it with them. Such a Croatian national consciousness must have existed among their brothers and relatives who remained under Turkish rule in various parts of BiH, and also among those who still followed the old Catholic religion and their national consciousness which they must have brought along while running away. This Croatian national consciousness must have been present among the Muslim Croats. The latter lived in the same villages, often in the same family homes, as the refugee Catholic Croatians until the Vienna wars (1683-1699), so they had to have the

same awareness of their belonging to the Croatian people as did the Catholic Croats who emigrated” (p. 368-369).

#### **d) Insistence on the Position of the Catholic Court**

Alongside a few foreign authors who referred to peripheral Bosnian areas, such as Bihać or Livno, as Croatian, Mandić especially insists on the fact that, in 1656, the Supreme Catholic Court, the *Rota Romana*, decided in its general session that “only the Croatian lands: Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia can be called Illyrian and that only the people from these countries can benefit from the College of Saint Jerome” (p. 374). When, immediately afterwards, Mandić quotes the Court’s resolution, we see that it does not mention anywhere that those lands are Croatian, but only Illyrian: “We hereby decide and promulgate that the true and authentic land of the Illyrian people, according to the Bull and thought of the aforementioned Sixtus V, was and is Dalmatia or Illyricum, which consists of: Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia, completely excluding Carynthia, Styria and Carniola; and only those who were born in one of these four provinces: Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia can be accepted” (p. 375). Hence, the position of the supreme Catholic court that Bosnia is an Illyrian country is irrefutable evidence for Dominik Mandić that it is Croatian. Besides, no matter which context a few friars, originally from Bosnia, used in reference to Croatia or the Croatian language, even if they were in service in the real Croatia and Dalmatia of that time, for Mandić this is proof of their deeply rooted Croatian national identity, brought from their birthplace in Bosnia or Herzegovina. Even the completely innocent Mavro Orbin suffers, since Mandić claims in his text that Orbin wrote that the “Bosniaks, out of all the tribes of Croatian language, have the purest and the most beautiful language; they boast they are the only ones to preserve the purity of the Croatian language” (p. 398). However, as Mandić himself provided Orbin’s fragment in its original Latin version, we can immediately see that Mavro Orbin praised the Bosnians for having the purest and the most beautiful language of all the Slavs and that they are the only ones today to preserve the purity of Slavic language.

#### **e) Problems among the Friars**

Still, Dominik Mandić has the most difficulty with Friar Matija Divković, born in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Friar Dominik Andrijaš from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, so he tries to belittle their testimony on the Serbian character of Bosnia: “In this century, western Catholic writers mention the Serbian name in Bosnia twice. A Bosnian Franciscan and the leading Bosnian writer, Friar Matija Divković (1563-1631), had the letters of Croatian Cylliric or *Bosančica* cast in Venice in 1611 and used them to print his works. In these works, Divković refers to these characters as ‘Serbian letters’. Divković was born in Jelašak in eastern Bosnia. This part of Bosnia had become almost completely Orthodox even before the second decade of the 17th century, when Divković wrote and printed his works. Many Orthodox parishes and monasteries were founded in Papraća and Vozuća. Divković had seen both spiritual and secular books written in Cyrillic in the hands of the Orthodox priests and monks that were under the Serbian patriarch in Peć. This is why he thought Cyrillic was the ‘Serbian script’. Since *Bosančica*, which the people and clergy in BiH used for a long time, was also a type of Cyrillic, Divković mistakenly concluded

that these were ‘Serbian letters’. However, he did not know that the founders of Cyrillic were not the Serbs but the Bulgarian priest Cyril of Preslav and that it was not introduced to the Croats in southern parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina through the Serbs, but through the Bulgarians during their rule in Zahumlje and Bosnia (990-1018). Out of this Bulgarian Cyrillic, the Croats made their own under the influence of the Latin alphabet and round Glagolitic, which the Croats from Bosnia-Herzegovina used at that time. This Croatian Cyrillic had only been in touch with Serbian Cyrillic, both secular and ecclesiastic, in the sense that they were both derived from Bulgarian Cyrillic. However, although he called the letters of Croatian Cyrillic or *Bosančica* ‘Serbian letters’ out of ignorance of the historical development of the alphabet, Divković never called his own language or that of the people in Bosnia Serbian. In 1611, he published his work *Christian Doctrine* for the Slavic people... in the Slavic language... Divković calls his language and the people in Bosnia ‘Slavic’ as the Dubrovians and other Croats in littoral Croatia called their language and their Croatian people at that time. Nobody called the Serbs or their language ‘Slavic’ then. They were called Serbs, Rascians, Vlachs and *Hrkaći*. If Divković calls his language ‘Slavic’ and the Catholic readers for whom he writes ‘Slavic people’, he therefore confesses that the Bosniaks are Croats, as are their nationals in Dubrovnik, Dalmatia and other Croatian regions who were often called ‘Slavic’ at that time, the same as their language” (p. 381-382).

Whatever anyone said or wrote about Bosnia, Mandić interprets their words and thoughts to turn even the most opposite standpoint into a testimony that the Bosnians are Croats and that Bosnia is a Croatian country. To this end, he continues: “Another mention of Serbia is in the Roman *Processus* of 1624 for the transfer of Archbishop of Skadar, Friar Dominik Andrijaš, to the Cathedra of Stephen in Mostar. In this *Processus*, two witnesses declared that Andrijaš was born in Popovo in Serbia and that the Diocese of Stephen (i.e. the Mostar Diocese) is ‘in Lower Serbia’. The witnesses, who were friends and followers of Friar Dominik Andrijaš and also worked with him, gave their aforementioned statement so that he would become a bishop in central Herzegovina, because they knew from the works of Mavro Orbin that Popovo and central Herzegovina were a part of Serbia for a while and under the reign of Serbian rulers. But the main reason for their insistence on placing Popovo and the diocese of Mostar within the borders of Serbia in 1624 was to facilitate the transfer of the Archbishop of Skadar Andrijaš to the Diocese of Stefan or Mostar, which did not actually exist. To put as thick a veil of mystery around the imaginary diocese as possible for the Roman circles of the time, which knew little of the Balkan countries, Andrijaš’s witnesses testified that Popovo and the Diocese of Mostar were in ‘Lower’ Serbia, which was known in Rome to be somewhere in the central Balkans” (p. 382-383). In conclusion, whenever his Roman Catholic brothers stated something that could retroactively be harmonised with the aspirations of the Croatian national ideology, at least through tendentious interpretation, then we are dealing, according to Mandić’s words, with essential and implecably credible sources. However, if some of them, even if they are Archbishops, publicly stated something that favoured the Serbs and opposed Croatian aspirations, they always have to be unscrupulous liars and frauds who inflicted great damage to the ‘general’ interests out of selfishness and petty gain.

## f) The Seed of Evil Bears Fruit

Besides, Mandić openly states here that it was actually the Franciscan friars who intensely worked on the insertion and shaping of Croatian national identity. He emphasizes that “it is a great achievement of the Bosnian Franciscan province that it supported the awareness of belonging to the same people among the Croats during the hardest of times... This province covered the territory from the Adriatic Sea to Buda and from the Drina River to the fortress of Trsat. With its ecclesiastic organisation, it was the sole thing uniting many separated branches of Croatian entity into one for many centuries. Through its members and their work, it maintained an awareness in people that the Bosniaks, Dalmatians, Slavonians and Croats in the free Banate form a single national community and belong to an old and once united Croatian people” (p. 395-396). This assessment of the Franciscan role is essentially correct, but it can only apply to the period from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and all the other Roman Catholic priests also took part in this. Previously, there were simply no such nationalist tendencies and only the religious affiliation was relevant. This is why the following opinion is highly questionable: “Through their sacrifice and efforts to preserve the Catholic faith, the Franciscans in BiH also nationally preserved that part of the Croats that, even today, in the easternmost and the most exposed part of the Croatian territories, fearlessly professes their Croatian name” (p. 395). Actually, making use of their poor education and knowledge of history, and especially by way of identifying religion with nation, the Franciscans artificially implanted the Croatian national identity into Bosnian Shtokavians, i.e. the Serbian Catholics who were eventually denationalised as they were religiously isolated from their Orthodox origins. Mandić presents this in a somewhat different manner: “Since the same monastic community, the Bosnian province, gathered members from various Croatian territories and of various nationalities, the Franciscans upheld the awareness that they were all members of the same people and that the whole population of their various places of origin belongs to one Croatian people. This national identity was first nurtured in domestic monastery schools, where all the clerical apprentices of various nationalities were taught that they were all ‘us Croats’ ... The sense of belonging to the Croatian people was transferred to the masses by the members of the Bosnian Province now living and working in one and then another part of their vast jurisdiction” (p. 396).

Mandić certainly got one thing right. The Catholic Serbs were systematically and persistently ‘taught’ that they were Croats and, after a few generations that had suffered this brainwashing, the seed of evil bore its fruit. Apart from the preservation of the Catholic religion and the implanting of the Croatian national identity into the brains of their naïve sheep and whole flocks, as Dominik Mandić further insists, “the third achievement of the Franciscans was that they paved the way for and significantly contributed to the formation of a unique literary language of the Croats in the Shtokavian dialect. In the Middle Ages, all the Croatian kings from the Neretva River to Trsat and from the Adriatic Sea to Kapela spoke Chakavian dialect. From Kapela to Lake Balaton and from Srem to Slavonia they spoke Kajkavian. Even the oldest Croatian literature, especially that pertaining to the Glagolitic liturgy, was written in the Chakavian dialect. However, in the littoral and northern parts, under the influence of foreign factors and cultures, Latin suppressed Croatian in public life. Only Bosnia and Zahumlje resisted this influence. In these areas, both the rulers and the aristocracy of the

Bosnian Christians wrote in the pure national language, in the Shtokavian dialect of the Ikavian vernacular. Since the forties of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Franciscans of the Vicariate of Bosnia also took part in this effort, leaving only the main parts of the liturgy in Latin, continuing it when the Bosnian national rulers, aristocrats and the church of Bosnian Christians became extinct after the fall of Bosnia. To educate the faithful Catholic people, the Bosnian Franciscans wrote and printed books in the pure vernacular - in the Shtokavian dialect of Ikavian and Jekavian. Through the written works of the Bosnian Franciscans, the open, advanced minds of the Chakavian and Kajkavian dialects realised that the Bosnian Shtokavian vernacular was more sophisticated than the other dialects used by the Croats” (p. 397-398).

A few Chakavian Croatian and Kajkavian Slavic friars, like Bartol Kašić, Jakov Mikalja and Matija Petar Katančić, from the 16<sup>th</sup> and especially the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, actually started writing in Shtokavian as well, at least in some of their works. “From the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> until the beginning of the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Bosnian Shtokavians - while fleeing from the Turks with their Franciscan shepherds - flooded major parts of Dalmatia and Zagorje, and then the whole Slavonia, Bačka and southern Hungary. In this way, Shtokavian became the language of the majority of Croats as early as the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the south, the former Byzantine-Roman town of Ragusa accepted the Shtokavian dialect of Jekavian through the influx of the surrounding Croatian population from medieval Duklja, Travunija and Zahumlje, under the national name of Dubrovnik. From the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, significant Croatian literature was produced there and was written in Herzegovinian Jekavian. Therefore, when efforts were made to finally establish a common literary language for the Croats during the Croatian national renaissance in the 1830s, nothing seemed more logical than to use the Shtokavian dialect, which the Franciscans already used to create such enviable Croatian literature. Since the promoters of the Croatian national renaissance, Ljudevit Gaj, Janko Drašković, Stanko Vraz and others, were all Kajkavians, they started learning the Shtokavian dialect from the song-book of Friar Andrija Kačić (1704-1760), who was raised by a Franciscan order in the Bosnian province and wrote his poems in the folk manner, using Bosnian-Herzegovinian Shtokavian” (p. 398-399). Here, Mandić ascribes to the Franciscans the preservation of the “Croatian” diaspora as their fourth achievement, saying: “Finally, we should give special credit to the Franciscans of the Bosnian province for having accompanied the Herzegovinian, Dalmatian and Bosnian Croats in their exile during Turkish rule and for having preserved with their spiritual efforts the pure Croatian language, Croatian memories and identity. This should be especially emphasized in the case of the *Bunjevci* and *Šokci* in Vojvodina, and the ‘Bosnian Croats’ in western Hungary, who were later named the ‘Water Croats’” (p. 399).

### **g) Unfounded Insistence on Sokollu Mehmet Pasha’s Croatian Origins**

Concerning the Bosnian-Herzegovian Muslims before the Vienna wars, Mandić claims without any supporting records that they were “completely aware that the native Catholic Croats were their blood brothers and that they all belonged to the same Croatian people that lived in the surrounding Croatian states. Furthermore, the Croatian Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina preserved their old Ikavian Croatian language with

strong influences from the Chakavian dialect; they used a special Croatian script called *Bosančica* and the Croatian way of counting years and naming the months; they preserved many old Croatian national rituals in their family and social life, as well as the old folk beliefs, or superstitions about fairies, witches and werewolves. The Croatian national identity of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims would become especially prominent whenever they came in touch with people of different nationalities outside Bosnia. In Istanbul, the Bosnian janissaries called their language Croatian; in this way, they also expressed their Croatian origin and affiliation. Even many of those who reached the highest state position in the Turkish Empire, the position of Grand Vizier, proudly called themselves Croatian and are recorded in old Turkish sources under this name” (p. 400-401). Mandić’s passionate and immense desire for this to be historically true is obvious, and he writes as if it actually was, trying to present his vivid imagination as the reality and pure truth. Next, he states that the Vienna wars and frequent epidemics of severe contagious diseases led to great migrations, the immigration of Catholics and the settling of Muslims. “Naturally, it attenuated the old blood bonds and, with them, the old clarity and awareness of the congenerousness of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims and Catholics. And what is more important, after the Vienna wars Bosnia withdrew into a shell and became a strong fortress of Islam. The Muslim Croats from the surrounding Croatian states, as mentioned before, retreated to Bosnia, and fought there to defend their Islamic religion, along with the native Muslim Croats. On one side were the Catholic Croats from free Croatia, who fought to conquer Bosnia and unite it with the other Croatian lands, and on the other side were the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim Croats, who fought to defend Bosnia so that they could profess their Islamic religion there” (p. 401).

The Bosnian Muslims were so fanatical about the Islamic religion and so religiously motivated that the Turks did not need any reinforcement to defend Bosnia and could, therefore, use their regular military forces on other fronts. “During these fights, mutual animosity understandably flared up instead of brotherly, national love, so the Bosnian Muslims stopped claiming to have the same origin as the Catholic Croats, against whom they fought to preserve Bosnia, which they (the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims) saw as the only guaranty and safeguard of their Islamic religion. The Turkish state, which had no support in BiH, either national or linguistic, also started trying to strengthen its position in the country early on by identifying the Islamic religion with the Turkish nationality. The state officials and others called Islam ‘the Turkish religion’ and the Muslims ‘Turks’. However, even in this cold period, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims preserved their Ikavian Croatian language and their old Croatian rituals; they used Croatian Cyrillic (*Bosančica*) and defended Bosnia even from Istanbul, when they felt it interfered with what they held sacred and old. And when the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims, after the occupation of BiH in 1878, realised that the new Christian state and the Catholic Croats were not the enemies of Islam and that they were not trying to usurp their Islamic religion, a change ensued even in their national expression. So, after the occupation of BiH, the Muslims from BiH soon started emphasizing their Croatian national name again; first the educated people and then also the masses. The Croatian identity and the unity of the Croatian Muslims and Catholics became especially evident during the Bosnian Assembly of 1910-1914, and then during World War I (1914-1918) and World War II” (p. 401-402).



Stating concrete examples of the imaginary success of the Croats who turned Turkish, Mandić again makes false claims. He calls Mahmud-pasha Veli Croatian, although historical sources show that his father was Greek and his mother Serbian. Ahmed-pasha Hercegović was the son of Herzog Stefan Vukčić Kosača and had no trace of Croatian in him. Sinan-pasha Borovinić was a cousin of the Bosnian Duke Radoslav Pavlović. The records are ambiguous whether Rustem-pasha was Serbian or Albanian. Even for Sokollu Mehmet Pasha [Mehmed-pasha Sokolović], Mandić wants to ascertain his “Croatian” origins at any cost. How this preposterous Croatization can seem grotesque is shown in the following fragments by Mandić concerning the language and national customs of the Bosnian Muslims. Thus, “in the reports of Dubrovian envoys in Istanbul, it is often stated that the Bosnian Muslims in faraway Istanbul emphasized that they spoke the same language as the Dubrovians, which in their minds meant: they were of the same Croatian people, of which Dubrovians were an excellent branch” (p. 420). Not only can Mandić read other people’s thoughts, but he is also capable of penetrating into the thin nuances of thoughts in human brains even from a distance of several centuries. Or, “Until the present day, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims have preserved the ancient Croatian customs related to certain festivities that follow the old Julian Calendar. This tells us that Muslims did not accept these rituals after the reform of the Gregorian Calendar in 1581, but that they continued observing them after they had converted to Islam, which for most of them happened before the 1590s when the Catholics in Bosnia abandoned the Julian Calendar and accepted the new, amended Gregorian one” (p. 435).

#### **h) Religious and Racial Factors in the Assertion of the Catholic Rights to Bosnia**

Dominik Mandić is apparently descended from a cat. No matter how and from which height he is thrown, he always lands on his feet. He always has an explanation for retroactively presenting anything as Croatian; the only difference is the used quantum of words. “The national hero songs accompanied by the *gusle* were also equally sung in BiH by the Catholics and Muslims, only among the former the Croatian Catholics usually win, and among the latter, the Muslims do. And the ancient folk superstitions - the belief in fairies, witches and werewolves - also survived equally among the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims and Catholics. The melody of the Bosnian *sevdalinka* lyrics was also formed through the lovely combination of native Croatian national songs with Oriental motifs that were brought to Bosnia from Istanbul and other eastern countries by the Bosnian Muslims. Even the folk embroidery and carvings were inspired by the same old Croatian motifs in the Catholics and Muslims in BiH, often interwoven with eastern motives” (p. 345-346). Summarising the treatise of the famous Ustasha “anthropologist” Ćiro Truhelka, *On the Origins Of the Bosnian Muslims*, published in 1942 in occupied Sarajevo, Dominik Mandić constructs the alleged “somatological-biological testimony” that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims and Catholics were significantly different from the Orthodox Serbs. “In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 46.9% of Muslim, 46.8% of Catholic and 56.3% of Orthodox citizens had dark eyes. 47.9% of Orthodox citizens had dark skin, while the same skin type had 11% fewer Catholics and Muslims. 9.4% of Muslims, 7.5% of Catholics and 5.6% of Orthodox are of purely fair type. And precisely because of the Slavic blond hair and white-reddish skin – the primary trait of the Bosnian-

Herzegovian Muslims – Truhelka concluded they were the purest Slavs in Bosnia. This means that the Muslims best preserved the original type of the old Croatian population in Bosnia-Herzegovina” (p. 436). Citing a few random examples of mutual friendship between the Catholics and Muslims, Mandić boastfully states: “During World War II, Croats from all over Croatia protected their Muslim brethren from slaughter and destruction with their best military forces, especially in the eastern parts of BiH, until the moment when the winning Allied armies took it upon themselves to defend the lives and property of all people from the war-torn countries in Europe” (p. 454).

Having trouble explaining and then relativizing the fact that the most prominent Bosnian-Herzegovinian Franciscan friars, such as Toma Kovačević, Stjepan Verković, Grgo Martić and even in certain periods Ivan Franjo Jukić, were prominent advocates of Serbian national ideology, Mandić finds relief in the fact that most Catholics were nevertheless supporters of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as they were eventually driven to put most trust into the religiously homogenous European force. As for the Muslims, a few individuals, such as Osman Nurija Hadžić, Hamdi-beg Džinić, Safet-beg Bašagić, Edhem Mulabdić, Hadži Mehmed Džemaludin Čaušević, Ademaga Mešić and others who embraced the Croatian national idea are Mandić’s precious stronghold for deducing additional conclusions about the ethnic Croatian nature of the Muslim population. “As for the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Serbs, everyone knew from everyday contact that they spoke a different language (Jekavian) and used a different script (Cyrillic) than the Muslims and Catholics. It was also highly evident to anyone that many Bosnian-Herzegovinian Serbs had very dark skin. The educated Muslims even knew from history and family traditions that the Serbs were not Bosnian natives but later immigrants, a new ethnic population in a country that had different ancestors and no national unity with the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims and Catholics. Historical study and personal reflection convinced the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims that they were Croatian and that they could not be anything else, unless they were to deny themselves and their origins” (p. 491).

However, apart from the racial factor, Mandić takes the religious factor as the most significant basis for differentiation. “Even in their position on the relationship between nationality and religion, the Muslims were closer to the Catholic Croats than the Serbs of the Serbian Orthodox religion. The Muslims and Catholics, as the followers of common universal religions, could easily distinguish religion from nationality. Members of different peoples could be Catholic or Muslim on the one hand and, on the other, members of these religions could be equally good citizens of their own or any other nation. So the Muslim Croats were equally good and perfect Croats as the Catholics, who had no advantage in being better and more perfect Croats than the Muslim Croats because of their religion. The Serbian understanding is different. They had their own national Serbian Orthodox religion that included the honouring of Serbian national saints, the preservation of Serbian national rituals and the celebration of the Serbian Orthodox past. Whoever did not completely accept and love this deep inside their soul, was not a true, full and perfect Serbian. Therefore, the Catholics and Muslims, if they declared themselves Serbian, remained imperfect Serbians, second-class members of the Serbian people – unless their acceptance of coherent and complete Serbdom brought them under the wing of Serbian Orthodox religion” (p. 491-492). But Dominik Mandić would lose his scientific identity and friarly credibility if he did not again enter some flagrant forgery in his text, such as that the *Gajret* was pro-Croatian as he very skilfully

presented in the following paragraph: “The Bosnian-Herzegovinian educated Muslims first spread their Croatian conviction in words and writing in the advanced circles in cities and towns, from where the Croatian name and identity gradually spread as far as the most distant villages. The merits for this go to the Muslim writers of history and literature from the 1880s onward. An especially powerful means of spreading education and, with it, the Croatian name among the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims were Muslim literary magazines *Behar* (‘Blossom’) in Sarajevo from 1900 to 1910, and *Biser* (‘Pearl’) in Mostar from 1912 to 1918. It is worth mentioning the magazines *Muslimanska Svijest* (‘The Muslim Consciousness’) and the gazettes of student support groups, the *Gajret* until 1922, and the *Narodne Uzdanice* (‘The National Mainstay’) after that” (p. 492). The *Gajret* was actually an association with a markedly Serbian national spirit.

Mandić finishes the extensive lamentation on the privileged position of the Orthodox and persecution of Catholics in the Turkish state, which allegedly led to massive religious conversions and transfers to Islam and Orthodoxy, by reviewing the individual parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. A typical example of his way of deducting can be found in the following quote: “We can see from the histories of many Orthodox families that a large number of Catholic Croats in present-day Pounj and Bosnian Krajina converted from Catholicism to Orthodoxy. These Orthodox families were native to those areas and only the Catholic Croats could be native there. And the blond appearance of a significant number of the present-day Orthodox Serbs in central and western Bosnia – the light, blushed faces with blue eyes and blond, reddish hair – tells us that they originate from the native Catholic Croats” (p. 584). Although he never conducted such a research and although, in that sense, it was not scientifically possible, Mandić claims that his “researches” showed that the present-day Bosnian-Herzegovinian Serbs descended: “1. From the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Croats of Bogomilian religion – 2-3%; 2. From the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Catholic Croats converted to Orthodoxy – 30-32%; 3. From the non-Slavic Vlachs – 50-52%; 4. From the other non-Slavs: Greeks, Armenians, Albanians, and Aromanians – 6-7%; 5. From the immigrant true ethnic Serbs – 8-10%” (p. 609).

Such an extensive forgery simply had no chance of maintaining at least an apparent consistency, as Mandić would inevitably get lost in the excess of historical facts that he could not include in his manipulations and that he omitted as contradictory to his artificial constructions. In this way, in the comprehensive miscellany of his scientific works *Discussions and Appendices from Old Croatian History* (Croatian Institute of History, Rome 1963), Mandić writes in a scientifically respectable article entitled *Dalmatia in the Exarchate of Ravenna from the mid 6<sup>th</sup> to the mid 8<sup>th</sup> centuries* “that, in 732, the Prefecture of Illyricum spread only to the Drina River and did not include Byzantine Dalmatia that was a part of the western Byzantine exarchate in Ravenna” (p. 50). So there is no reason to search for Illyricum in today’s Albania through to the Vojusa River or to reduce Albania to Illyricum. During the immigration of the Croats and for two centuries afterwards, Illyricum was inland, the hinterland of the narrow belt of Dalmatian towns to which the whole of Dalmatia was reduced. Therefore, when Constantine Porphyrogenitus wrote that the Croats settled in Dalmatia, he referred specifically to the area of towns covering Split, Trogir and Zadar and some surrounding islands. If a part of them defected and took over Illyricum, that certainly does not mean the whole of Illyricum but specifically the territory from Mountain Gvozd to Dalmatia,

which received the ethnic name Croatia. The part of the Croats that went to Pannonia most likely only took over the slopes of Pannonia north of Mountain Gvozd, because it was impossible to conquer it entirely. Also, if there had been any mass settling in Slavonia, then Croatian Chakavian would have prevailed over the Slavonian Kajkavian dialect. Besides, in the text *The Arrival of the Croats in the Adriatic*, Mandić admits that “the names of the Croats and Serbs first appear in written sources as late as the 9<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 52).

Since the famous Slovenian historian B. Grafenauer established that, according to Porphyrogenitus’ words, Illyricum and Pannonia “could not be two different provinces that were far apart, as the Croats who lived there had only one Archon, therefore their common Archon” (p. 70). In his attempt to refute this, Mandić notes that, in this case, “the Illyricum that Porphyrogenitus mentions, would be in the Roman-Byzantine provinces of Noricum, in present-day Slovenia. Namely, according to Diocletian’s division of the state, the two Noricum provinces, along with four Pannonian ones and Dalmatia, comprised the Pannonian Diocese, which was usually called West Illyricum. This is how J. P. Šafárik, Lj. Hauptmann, and some others also interpret Porphyrogenitus – that his Illyricum was identical to Noricum” (p. 70). When he finds it necessary to corroborate his constructions, Mandić puts the maximum trust in Porphyrogenitus and treats his work as completely coherent and consistent. When he does not like some of Porphyrogenitus’ statements, especially about the Serbs, Mandić is ready to find many flaws in the Emperor historian. Even for the completely fictional work, the *Methodus*, he claims that it is worth far more than the records of Porphyrogenitus. In Mandić’s treatise entitled *The Incorrect Claims of C. Porphyrogenitus Regarding the History of the South Slavs*, we find the following statement: “The Croatian domestic, national records contained in the *Methodus* have first-class historical importance and are worth far more than the work of C. Porphyrogenitus, written two centuries after the *Methodus*” (p. 235). Since Porphyrogenitus is, according to Mandić’s beliefs, extremely biased in a pro-Serbian way, all his claims are false and incorrect if they cannot fit into the Mandić’s basic fable, the outline of which he summarises in this same treatise in the following way: “When the Croats liberated Dalmatia, Illyricum, and Pannonia, they settled in these lands so that each of the seven tribes received a separate part of the conquered lands. The first Croatian tribe, which was directly ruled by Klukas, the eldest brother from the ruling family, settled between the Cetina and the Zrmanja Rivers back to the mountain of Vlašić in present-day Bosnia. Another of the seven tribes settled between the Cetina and the Neretva Rivers. The third tribe settled between the Neretva River and the Boka Kotorska Bay, the fourth in Illyricum or in the Adriatic convergence of the former Roman-Byzantine provinces of Prevalis and New and Old Epirus – from Boka Kotorska Bay to Vlora in Albania. The fifth tribe settled in the medieval Bosnia between the mountains of Borje (the Borje, Vlašić, Komar and Vranica mountains) and the Drina River. The sixth settled in the area from the Zrmanja River to Istria and the seventh tribe settled in Pannonia. At the helm of every tribe was one of the seven brothers and sisters from the Croatian ruling family. Each tribe had autonomy in its province but, according to the old Slavic tradition, all the tribes still recognized the supreme authority of the eldest brother from the ruling family” (p. 241).

In this miscellany, the article *The Unwritten Chapter of Croatian Literacy* is also interesting since Mandić, apart from extensive speculation on Croatian literacy in the

national language immediately after the arrival, gives additional “arguments” for his claim that, by ‘Slavs’, western writers always mean Croats. “The term ‘*Sclavorum*’ can only be related to the Slavs in Istria and Dalmatia... The Pope calls the Croats ‘*Sclavs*’ since, as their neighbours and closest of all the Slavs, they were the bearers of Slavdom in the eyes of the inhabitants of the Apennine Peninsula. Rome and Italy learned of Slavdom through the Croats and, for them, the Slavs were represented by the Croats, so they did not need any specific national name. When one says ‘Slavs’ (*Sclavs*), everyone will know they mean the Croats, the Slavic neighbours of the Italians. Even today in Italy, the term ‘*Slavo*’ primarily refers to the Croats, and then to the Slavs in general. Besides, Agathon’s term ‘*Sclavorum*’ (NB. it refers to the document of Pope Agathon dating from 680 – V.Š.) cannot be related to other Slavic peoples since it is known that the Christian missionaries at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> century did not operate among any Slavs other than the Croatians” (p. 393).

## **A. The Untenability of Mandić’s Methodology**

### **1. Roman Catholic Misuse of Historical Science**

As the most prominent characteristic of entire Mandić’s publicist writing, petty-political aggression could seem to be proof of his ignorance and dilettantism to the uninformed. However, he is a highly educated Roman Catholic friar who, in a disciplined manner and with fanatical persistence, performs a task that he probably set for himself, encouraged by ideologically like-minded people and completely devoted to a single project in which the principle of morality is sacrificed to the principle of political utility. Whenever it is useful, Mandić is ready to declare half-truths or infamous lies as perfect truthfulness and the criteria of objectivity. From the standpoint of the basic principles of scientific methodology, his improvisations often seem chaotic, rather naïve and superficial. But in the least, they are proof of intellectual precipitancy combined with religious fanaticism and ideological zeal. But their teleological orientation is always accurately measured, the effects on the uninformed masses skilfully programmed and in accord with the centuries-long belief of his spiritual landmarks that the end justifies the means. The abuse of science for the purpose of extremely base and primitive political causes sets the responsibility of the author proportionally with his knowledge and competence. Although he is aware of the unfoundedness of his basic theses and constructions, Mandić cunningly forms an image of himself as a man who has it all figured out and who is capable of presenting his knowledge in a rather clear and concise manner to the uninformed readers, who are, by the way, hungry for precisely the type of “truth” that is being served to them here and are unprepared for any kind of doubt or questioning. Mandić first carefully selects the available facts and existing scientific statements, then polishes, reshapes, forges and puts them into a completely different context or interprets them in a highly tendentious manner so that they often get an entirely opposite meaning.

The more obscure and enigmatic some periods in history are for contemporary historiography, the easier it is for Dominik Mandić to go through them and imaginatively fill in the scientific holes. He easily projects his modern visions into the most distant past, gives new content and meaning to real or fictional events retroactively and adjusts them to his romantic enthusiasm and the triviality of the political interests,

the realisation of which he is devoted to. In his visions, the actual truth has to be systematically reshaped into the desired truth and, in this process, every fact that cannot be adjusted has to be ruthlessly sacrificed. To this day, scientific history has often been burdened with old mythologies, but Mandić's typical pattern of thought and research is to first create a new mythology and then to subject all the scientific knowledge acquired so far to it. The ideological reinterpretation of scientific statements destroys the science and recognizes the false, illusory awareness, whose main forms of existence are phantasmagorias. The more imaginative the publicist, the more worthy he is of the overall appraisal of the ideologically like-minded. In historiography, everything is possible if it is usable today in political actions and if it is ideologically functional. People like Dominik Mandić are not the victims of misconception but of a pseudo-intellectual addiction of its own kind, from which there is no way out once you give in to it, because the streamlet of lies has to form a torrent to sustain itself and the torrent leads to the overall deluge. In such a deluge of lies, not only is it hard to reach the real truth but it is of no interest to most people. The grotesque system of moral values disqualifies in advance any who seek for the objective truth as a rebellion against the prevailing psychology of the herd. The reflective retrogression positions itself as the ultimate intellectual achievement and critical opinions and methodological approaches are disparaged as the imputations of enemy ideology and rival political projects.

Dominik Mandić and his teachers and followers are no academic enthusiasts but moral reprobates. They deliberately avoid building historiographical ideas based on approved sources but adjust those sources to the ideas, which means that they subject the true records to their rampant imagination. Imagination prescribes a desired methodological approach and principle in advance. The real history is polished, reshaped, constantly perfected and finally turned into a fairytale that additionally stupefies the masses that are already nationally indoctrinated to the point of being grotesque. This is a form of suppression, subjugation and oppression of the individual and collective human consciousness, and even a form of the instrumentalisation of the people who succumb to such indoctrination. It has been shown that national vanity can have much more self-preserving energy at times than the aspiration for truth as one of the main elements of humanity. The megalomania of this newly-formed nation is proof of an almost incurable disease in the human flock that succumbed to it and which, imbued by this, has started a political action as an instrument of the centre of power, of the perfected manipulative possibilities and abilities. The creators of lies and forgeries are primarily capable of instilling into their deluded flock - the human sheep - the typical arrogance of ignorance that treats any knowledge that comes as a product of critical mind and reflection in a boastful, ignorant and intolerant manner. The ignorance of a bunch of religiously bigoted and ideologically indoctrinated followers creates the impression of superiority and confidence, while intellectual superficiality and relativization of morality create the false feeling of self-sufficiency in the target group.

With his books, Dominik Mandić showed us that he can achieve anything in historiography that he previously envisions. He sees science as an ox yoked to the Roman Catholic plough that occasionally gets hit by the ideological whip. As a true virtuoso, not only in the tendentious interpretation of actual historical sources, but also as the "creator" of new, imaginary and forged ones, Mandić showed in practice how fragile the tenets of reliability and authenticity are when confronted with pseudo-scientific propaganda and pamphlet publicism, trying to forcibly put on the scientific

halo. Mandić is not at all interested in the differentiation of time layers in the historiographical sources he uses. He establishes the degree of their authenticity based on their usefulness and efficacy in the development of his initial ideological concept. He does not believe historical research should establish, verify or re-examine the veracity of the original hypotheses, but must “prove” it relentlessly in regard to facts. It is known in advance that a hypothesis is plain truth and the “scientist’s” goal is to corroborate this unquestionable “truth” with the products of mythomania in a manner that is as imaginative and inventive as possible. That is why every critical approach to historiographical researches should be fiercely attacked in advance as a nationally detrimental and dangerous endeavour for the clerical-fascist doctrine. All historical evaluations should follow propagandistic usefulness and be consistent with the idealistically constructed pattern. The task of the “scientists” is to mutually compete to see who will invent the more “creative” complements to successfully develop the original model.

## **2. Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja, a Work of Unique Obscurity**

Mandić’s primary, and often sole, point of reference in recorded historical sources is the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* and he constructs all his phantasmagorias based on it. In an elaborate treatise written as preface to the latest edition of this writing (Old Serbian Literature, Vol. I, Prosveta – Srpska Knjizevna Zadruga, Belgrade 1988), Slavko Mijušković explained, in a well-argued and systematic manner, the prevailing scientific positions on “the work of a special kind and unique obscurity”, as it was defined by Nikola Radojčić (p. 9). As Mijušković adds, it is a work of obscure and disarrayed content, preserved “in a transcript from the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century that is only a part of the once integral text of the Priest. The first part of this incomplete text, up to the death of Časlav, was translated into our language from an earlier, now lost, Latin transcript by an unknown Croatian who added the description of the legendary death of King Zvonimir to his translation. As opposed to the incomplete Latin version of the Chronicle, its even less complete Croatian translation, or Croatian edition, is called the *Croatian Chronicle*” (p. 9). The Croatian edition is preserved in a 1546 transcript and is kept in the Vatican along with the Latin transcript from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Even Ivan Lučić (Johannes Lucius) noticed that the Priest of Duklja “confuses regions, genealogy and chronology in such a way that it is clear that he wrote something closer to fairytales than history” (p. 13). In 1798, Engel also claimed that this work cannot be considered a serious historical record at all, “finding its content absurd and also doubting its antiquity” (p. 13). Mijušković here uses the previous critical publication of Ferdo Šišić, who stated that Krauss discarded the Chronicle in 1854 “because its story is in continuous opposition to other preserved sources” (p.14). Dümmler was of the same opinion in 1856.

### **a) Kukuljević’s Amortization of the Holes in the Chronicle**

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ivan Kukuljević, one of the most authoritative Croatian historians and national ideologists, wrote: “What critical value *Croatian Chronicle* and *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* have is known by everyone who examined the old historical background of the Croats and Serbs a bit more closely. Both of these

chronicles contain very little historical truth and their authors did not stick to either the necessary development or to the course of history. There are so many ridiculous anachronisms and such a confused piling up of the names of various Croatian, Serbian, Neretvan and other princes, zhupans and kings, that one must wonder how anyone could write such false and confused things if one did not know that everything was written then as old men narrated or sang, them and that people created history the same way that heroic folk songs are made ... ut beside all this, we cannot claim that this chronicle of ours ... has absolutely no value. He who can separate the wheat from the chaff can also find a few pure seeds for a future critical history in this overgrown field and could, therefore, use this chronicle of ours the same way that the Hungarians use their Nameless scribe of King Béla” (p. 14). Unfortunately, Kukuljević either could not or would not point out any such historiographically relevant seeds in the Priest’s work.

### b) A Poetic but Not at All Scientific Work

Pointing out that Mavro Orbin uncritically accepted every statement of the Priest, while they were energetically questioned, apart from Lucius, by Byzantologists Difren and Banduri, Ilarion Ruvarac noted: “the Priest of Duklja confused and mixed up the order of the old Dalmatian, Croatian and Serbian zhupans and kings; he first confused the Serbs with the Goths of *Sendlad*, *Ostroil* and *Svevlad*, and considered them the first three, as he stated, Dalmatian and Serbian kings; then he confused the Moravian dukes with the Serbian princes, ... and mixed up the Croatian princes chronologically so that his entire history of the first thirty three kings, until Vladimir I, cannot be trusted” (p.15). Franjo Rački also declared that the Priest’s Chronicle “gets more and more unreliable the further back it goes into the past... The historical value of the Duklja Chronicle is slight and that of the Croatian Chronicle is absolutely non-existent” (p. 17). In Vatroslav Jagić’s opinion, “the Duklja Chronicle has more importance as a part of our literary history – namely folk poetry and literary heritage – than as a historical record” (p. 17). Šišić emphasizes the importance of the evaluation of the Priest’s work by Guilferding, who wrote that “the Chronicle is so full of the names of Serbian and Croatian kings who never existed that, at first sight, it seems impossible that anyone would choose to use it. But is there any historical background in it or is absolutely everything fabricated? No, beginning from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja carries a clear impression of historical narration – not entirely accurate but based on actual tradition that is generally in concordance with contemporary Byzantine records; also, with regard to earlier times, there are many glimpses of unquestionable historical facts that cannot be precisely determined since they are intertwined with fabrications and fables. The greatest disadvantage is that everything is mixed up in Priest of Duklja’s work, the Croatian and Serbian events, the names of real, historically known rulers of both peoples with obscure names of small bans and zhupans; and, to add to all this confusion, there is a large amount of fabrication. It is not possible to completely purge the historical background of the Priest of Duklja, to extract from his narrative a clear and entirely authentic history of Serbia in an epoch of which he is the only witness; but the general nature of this epoch is portrayed rather vividly and clearly in his work” (p. 20-21).

**Comment [PC22]:** Translators’ note: We were unable to find any source in order to transcribe the name so we left it as written in the original.



### c) Recognized Manuscripts by Four Authors

Based on stylistic and conceptual analysis, Konstantin Nikolajević concluded that the Chronicle is comprised of fragments by at least four authors. Stojan Novaković's opinion was that Priest's stories "of many events were either confused or apparently poetry" (p. 21), but that his geographical data is significant. Ludwig von Thallotzy wrote in 1896 that the Chronicle "should be unconditionally rejected unless its data can be corroborated by some more reliable sources" (p. 22). In an academic speech in 1902, Ljubomir Jovanović insisted that the Chronicle, "apart from the middle section which comes as some kind of a link, has two parts. The first is the Croatian Chronicle, the so-called *Libellus Gothorum*, which could not have originated from Bar, either in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century or before (as some believe), because its appearance then does not fit with the overall development of Serbian education and literature since it is a purely Croatian composition in essence (and there was never any Croatiandom in the area of the Archbishopric of Duklja) and because it does not set its events in Zeta or the surrounding areas. On the contrary, the stage of its events is the northern Adriatic littoral and the surrounding areas, where the Croatian spirit and traditions were naturally developed, where medieval science flourished (of which there are notable traces in the entire work) and where the theory that the Goths were Slavs and that the Croatian population there was descended from them was generally accepted (whereas the Serbs had entirely different theories about the Goths). But the proof that the *Libellus Gothorum* could not originate from there, either in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century or earlier, is its incredible content and, by reviewing its data and by examining the language of the Croatian edition of this record, it can be determined as a fact that it must have originated from various written records and obscure folk traditions and from combining these materials and deducting from them, approximately at the beginning of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, somewhere in the littoral area close to the Cetina River. On the other hand, the other part of Priest's writing contains an essay that could be called the Chronicle of Zeta, since it must actually have been written in the Zeta littoral area, but only after the 12<sup>th</sup> century... The Priest's errors when talking about the events of the 11<sup>th</sup> century show that they were not written by a man who was, as it was believed, born at the end of that century. These mistakes could have been made at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Meanwhile, the Littoral rose to such cultural heights that there could have appeared literary writers with such works. In all odds, this work also had to suit a practical, political need, the need of that Serbian Catholic policy that Zeta emphasized many times during the rule of the Nemanjić dynasty. The entire content of this essay proves this point. The present pseudo-Chronicle of Duklja is made out of both these Chronicles. At the beginning is the well-known preface, the translation of which, in Lučić's edition, was the cause of many wrong opinions on the composition of this record. The academician spent some time on this preface and showed that it must have been written by someone who transcribed the Slavic original of the pseudo-Chronicle of Duklja in Latin script, at the request of his fellow-citizens (somewhere in the northeast part of the Adriatic littoral) and the priests from Bar, who must have found out that he possessed such records. This must have been done in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and, since then, the document gained ground and, through various transcripts, reached those who published the first printed version" (p. 23-25).

In 1911, Konstantin Jireček also expressed the attitude that the remarkable linguistic distinctions between the parts of the Chronicle prove that it was not written by the same man. “The genealogy lacks many rulers who are known from inscriptions, charters and Venetian, papal and Byzantine records; instead of them, there are many names that we cannot corroborate with any document” (p. 26). In 1915, Pavle Govinski expressed the opinion that the Chronicle was Serbian and that it was written by an Orthodox Serb in his own language and then some Catholic priest, Croatian or Dalmatian in origin, translated it into Latin. As Ferdo Šišić summarizes, Rovinski noted that “the translator inserted ‘a lot of his own material’ while translating. Personal and geographical names suffered first and then the translator added some explanations and other insertions, at times inaccurate, e.g. on the paganism of the Slavs and the alleged Christianisation of the pagan Slavs according to St Constantine-Cyril and on the assembly at Duvanjsko Polje based on his conclusions” (p. 27). Contrary to Nikola Radojčić, who even immoderately praised Šišić’s 1928 edition and adaptation of the Chronicle, Slavko Mijušković decided to verify the authenticity of Šišić’s translation in the Vatican library. He reports on his results: “We have found errors in Lučić’s, and even more in Šišić’s work; namely, during the collation of the Vatican manuscript with Lučić’s printed text, Šišić did not correct some of Lučić’s grave mistakes that not only alter the meaning of certain fragments but also make them paradoxical. He also made new mistakes, due both to misreading the Vatican manuscript and to inadmissible interventions in the text itself” (p. 32). It has been shown that, “in comparison to Lučić’s errors, those made by Šišić are not only more numerous, but also far more dangerous with regard to the original interpretation of Priest’s text preserved in the Vatican manuscript” (p. 32). Especially interesting is the fact that, out of all those who had published the Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja, only three men compared the authenticity of the available translation with the oldest transcript from the 17<sup>th</sup> century - Lučić, Šišić and Mijušković.

#### **d) The Important Results of Mijušković’s Research**

This way, Mijušković ascertained through access to the Vatican manuscript that the Priest’s preface “does not mention any written sources and that Šišić inserted them into his edition of the Chronicle based on Orbin’s translation, even though Orbin left considerable evidence of arbitrary modifications of the Priest’s text, as even Šišić found out (as we mentioned earlier). Truth be told, the Priest drew on his general education for some historical clerical names, the names of Byzantine emperors, as well as Totila, Attila, the well-known Thessaloniki brothers etc., and some historical events, such as the Saracen ravaging of our coast and the like, but his numerous confusions and chronological impossibilities related to known and important historical figures and events clearly prove that he did not use any written sources while writing. Granted, he does mention two books in the Chronicle – the *Methodus* and *Liber Gestorum Beati Vladimiri* – but, apart from the fact that the existence of these two books is rightfully doubted, he does not say that he used them as a source, only that he directs those who would like to learn more about his topics to them ... As for the mention of Red and White Croatia (which, in our opinion, were recorded by Doge Andrea Dandolo (+1354)), we do not deny the possibility that the Priest learned of them from a written source, maybe the same one that Dandolo used. With respect to our conviction about the time of the origin of the Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja, we could assume that he used

Dandolo as a source in this aspect, but if this were true – if the Priest had Dandolo's Chronicle – he would not have hesitated to copy it word for word. Although we cannot entirely dismiss the Priest's direct usage of some written documents, we can say that he only wrote what he heard in stories, but that he also altered those stories through the immense confusion and haziness of his 'knowledge' of history and with his own incredible imagination, so much so that we cannot claim that the Chronicle preserved the tradition of our ancient history" (p. 43-44).

Mijušković believes that the Chronicle cannot be a historical document, nor can it express any oral national tradition. Of the "attempt to identify his written sources", he describes it as the most futile ever (p. 44). He particularly disputes that the Priest wrote about events directly prior to and during his lifetime. "The interpretations of the Priest's preface up to now and 'the obvious fact' that he writes about the latest described events as from his own immediate experience, as a witness to these events, are the main arguments in favour of the claim that the Chronicle was written in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. But the result of the combination of these two, in our opinion completely misguided, arguments was threatened by the fact that Lučić's edition ends with the abbreviation 'etc', which clearly indicates that the Chronicle was not finished. Besides, one can tell that the Chronicle is not finished from the fact that the last two narratives are interrupted without any conclusion in content or style.

"In order to diminish this otherwise irrefutable counter-argument to the result based on the aforementioned combination, Šišić committed a very severe scientific sin: he categorically claimed that the 'etc' 'added' at the end of Lučić's and Črnčić's editions does not exist in the Roman (Vatican) manuscript or in Orbin's printed edition. While collating in the Vatican, we were rather surprised by this claim since we found at the end of the 'Roman' manuscript a very distinctive, clear and calligraphically decorated version of the otherwise conventional 'etc' symbol, precisely the same as the one appearing in school coursebooks. Even if this symbol appeared only here in the Vatican manuscript and if Lučić left it out of his printed edition, we could not imagine that Šišić missed it or could not interpret it, especially because of its prominent characteristics. Besides, there is one more aggravating circumstance in Šišić's case: he encountered the same symbol before in the Vatican manuscript (at the end of the narrative of St Vladimir) and here he interpreted it correctly, as did Lučić in the printed edition" (p. 45-46).

With this forgery, Šišić deliberately tried to degrade any further debate on the deficiency or incompleteness of the text of the Chronicle, so that its origins could be placed more convincingly into the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The scientific circles believed Šišić to the extent that no one questioned his claim – not even Radojčić, who was convinced that the Chronicle was not complete, assuming that "it was ended abruptly perhaps due to the death of the author" (p. 47). Without any verification, Vladimir Mošin believed Šišić's word in 1950 and, based on that, claimed that the key argument for the thesis of the incompleteness of the Chronicle is not applicable. As Mijušković continues, "the claims that the Chronicle originated from the 12<sup>th</sup> century are refuted by numerous elements and expressions it contains. A large portion of these elements and expressions were impossible, not only for the 12<sup>th</sup> century but also for the 13<sup>th</sup> and some even for the 14<sup>th</sup>. Some past researchers of the Chronicle, and especially Šišić, ascertained this, but they have simply, irresponsibly and without foundation ascribed all these portions and expressions they considered impossible for the 12<sup>th</sup> century and later to the subsequent

insertions. So many of these later inserts have been proclaimed (by several researchers of the Chronicle) that, if we accepted that the original Chronicle was written in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, not much would remain of it and even that would be not only historically but also stylistically irrelevant. It was not only because he must have intimately felt the considerable unreliability of the ‘argumentation’ in favour of the claims that the Chronicle originated from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but also because of some rather sensible opinions that the Chronicle was written much later, that Šišić tried unsuccessfully to prove that the Chronicle was in use since the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century by the creators of the well-known forged documents from the island of Lokrum, Archbishop Jovan Mlečanin of Dubrovnik, Archdeacon Thomas, the Dubrovian chronicler Miletius, some glossarist from the 14<sup>th</sup> century registry of documents of St Peter’s monastery in Poljice, Doge Andrea Dandolo, etc. If we were not convinced of the almost complete absence of the Priest of Duklja’s written sources and that he wrote mostly based on what he heard and made up, we could prove more successfully that the Priest actually resorted to the works of these aforementioned people himself – who allegedly used his work” (p. 47-48).

**Comment [PC23]:**  
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Not confident in his claims that various authors since the 13<sup>th</sup> century have used the Chronicle as one of their sources and wanting to confront the opinion that this document came in to being several centuries later, Šišić constructs seven arguments that Mijušković, after thorough analysis, turned into counter-arguments, proving that the way of writing dates, some geographical terms, sacral structures, etc. actually testify to the later origin of the Chronicle. In favour of the opinion that the Chronicle is far younger than was usually scientifically assumed, Mijušković adds the following: “Apart from the established fact that the Priest was not familiar with the founders of the Vojislavljević dynasty – a fact that would be sufficient to rule out its origin in the 12<sup>th</sup> century even without the numerous arguments that we provided in support of our claim for a far later origin of the Chronicle – there are still many very grave errors in his description of the quasi-contemporary events or events very close in time. And besides, he does not mention the most significant state and clerical events from the time of Vojislav’s heirs, Mihailo and Bodin, at all” (p. 76). As the Priest of Duklja, among other things, wrote about two rulers named Bodin where, as it was presented, the uncle ruled after the nephew, “Šišić tried to somewhat resolve this unbelievable conundrum - proven not only by the Vatican manuscript and Lučić’s printed edition, but also (with slight differences) by Orbin’s Italian translation - through his own intervention in the Priest’s text in an entirely prohibited manner, by creating one Bodin out of the two” (p. 77). The Priest of Duklja could not tell such ridiculous stories to contemporaries of the events in question. He could only “serve them to the readers who lived much later than the last event described in the preserved Latin manuscript of his work” (p. 78). Based on a large number of convincing indicators, Mijušković determined that the Chronicle could have originated some time between the mid 14<sup>th</sup> and mid 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Apart from this, Mijušković concludes that the whole description was written by a single author and reproaches Ivan Črnčić, Ferdo Šišić and Vladimir Mašin for dividing the Chronicle into chapters in their editions, therefore creating an even bigger mess. Bearing in mind the chaotic presentation of the events from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, with huge mistakes in content and chronology, “every reader needs to be aware of the type of impossibilities he will encounter in his earlier narratives. There, among many other things, he will find figures from the 6<sup>th</sup> century who live and act at the same time as figures from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, like Totila and Pope Gelasius II. Then there are kings

from the 5<sup>th</sup> century who fight against kings from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, like Attila and Tomislav, and even some kings who managed to be born, reign, have children and die in only three years – and there is quite a few of these, as Jireček determined. Of course, under these circumstances and since he has already become familiar with the reigns of Bodin the nephew and Bodin the uncle, the reader will not find it odd to discover grandfathers ruling after their grandchildren in the descriptions of older times ... The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja should be completely dismissed as a historical record” (p. 89).

Mijušković does not even accept the assessments of any geographical reliability or accuracy in the Priest of Duklja’s work. “As for the Chronicle as a source of historical geography, we primarily stress that it can be used as such for the period after the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when it could have originated the earliest – and then only with a certain reserve. The same criteria should apply to both historical and geographical data provided by the Priest’s, namely one should reject them if they cannot be verified in other records, since the later proven existence of geographical names to which the Priest links his stories from much earlier times cannot be a guarantee that the corresponding name actually existed before the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Contrary to the mentioned favourable assessments of the reliability of his geographical data, which we find unrealistic, is the statement by Rovinski that the geographical names also suffered so that one cannot identify them with certainty, and some were – which is even worse – wrongly interpreted because of their coincidental similarity with some names that were probably of later origin, which, of course, does not only result in errors in the historical-geographical marking of some sites or areas but also significantly complicates the interpretation of the text of the Chronicle” (p. 90). Ascertaining that the Priest’s work cannot actually be called either chronicle or a genealogy but only historical fantasy or paradox, Mijušković is, however, ready to qualify it as literary writing, calling its author our first authentic writer of *belles lettres*. “*The Chronicle of the Priest Of Duklja* should be considered as a literary work and, as such, it is qualified not only by its imaginative note, but also by the narrative manner of the author, the vividness of the imagination with which he creates non-existent events and figures, his distinct sense for tradition in an (although moderately) artistic manner, his efforts to discreetly suggest to the reader moral lessons on good and evil, heroism and weaknesses, his sometimes even theatrical description of certain details and his efforts to enliven his stories with elements such as duels, conspiracies to poison, ambushes, betrayals under siege and the like. Because of all these attributes, the Chronicle belongs among the *belles lettres*. It has been qualified at least as far more belletristic than historical by Ivan Lučić and then by Vatroslav Jagić. And even by Šišić, who attributed significant historical and geographical importance to the Chronicle” (p. 91).

On the issue of the White and Red Croatia as names for Lower and Upper Dalmatia, Mijušković thinks that the Priest might have heard or read it somewhere, since they had been used before by Venetian Doge Dandolo. Given that this question also occupied Šišić, Mijušković quotes the opinion of Nikola Radojčić in a special annotation, who says: “But the division of the littoral area into the White and Red Croatia is still problematic, since the name Red Croatia is completely unclear. The historical critics do not know what to make of it. Nor does Šišić, of course. But, precisely because of the Red Croatia that he cannot renounce, he still kept his old opinion at least partially that, when Byzantine historians of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries talk about the Croats, they

actually do mean Croats and not the Serbs. I have, however, compiled a number of facts proving that the Croatian name is used there as synonymous for Serbian ... These facts clearly reveal that the term Croat is used to designate all the Serbs, or *Dukljani*, not only a part of them. Yet, Šišić managed to construe a new hypothesis ... that the Croats are mentioned as part of the Serbs; he referred to the similar case with the Czechs and Poles. However, the sources do not corroborate this. They either mention the Serbs (i.e. *Dukljani*) or the Croats. I have already emphasised the peculiarity of this identification and stated that Byzantine writers usually give old or geographical names as synonyms for modern peoples, instead of new ones” (p. 156-157). In view of that, Mijušković adds: “We are of the opinion that the solution of the mysterious appearance of the name Red Croatia – which has not left any significant trace in history because there were no political, administrative, ethnographic or geographical bases for this name – should be sought in the fact emphasised by Radojičić, namely that that sometimes the Croatian name was used ‘as a synonym for Serbian’. The best proof that the use of the terms Red and White Croatia was not only rare but also entirely unimportant is that they are not mentioned in any documents of the papal or any other office” (p. 157).

The question of the so-called *Methodus*, mentioned by the Priest of Duklja, is also discussed here. “This word, which purportedly implies the book of laws established by King Svetopelek, has been discussed a lot. Šišić devoted a lot of time to dealing with it. He stated what was said about *Methodus* by various writers before him and then gave his negative opinion on various positions and assumptions related to this alleged book of laws” (p. 159). Mijušković then quotes Šišić’s opinion: “Can one even build combinations and hypotheses based on a word that does not and never did exist with the meaning (even in a figurative sense) of ‘the collection of various acts and documents’ or ‘the miscellany of laws’ or ‘the demarcation of boundaries between two municipalities’. This fact, opposed to those unfounded conclusions and conjectures, is enough in itself, not only to raise suspicion but also to deny everything stated in the would-be mysterious Slavic book of the Priest of Duklja, the *Methodus*” (p. 159-160). Mijušković agrees with this attitude but also points out: “Indeed, the period itself in which the Priest envisioned the creation of this book, which is nothing more than a product of his imagination, gives Šišić the right to find its existence impossible. But whenever he thinks he can, Šišić tries to assign many of the Priest’s absurdities to others, to later glossarists. He did the same with this one” (p. 160). In addition, Mijušković proved with precision a large number of Šišić’s forgeries in the translation itself and the distortion of names during their transcription.

## **B. A Comparison of Mandić’s Writing and the Serious Scientific Approach of Relja Novaković**

Serbian historiography as a whole approached the study of the oldest Serbian and Croatian history since their migration to the Balkans much more seriously and critically, and a typical example of a conscientiously and scientifically founded study is certainly the book by Relja Novaković, *Where Serbia was Situated from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Naučna Knjiga – Historical Institute in Belgrade, Belgrade 1981). At the same time, Novaković presents the acquired knowledge of history and the still unsolved problems of scientific research, pointing out that there are far more problems than actual knowledge. But the objective recognition of the problem is itself far more precious than

imaginary knowledge and the readiness to base it on more or less skilful forgeries. Most important of all, a successful definition of a problem is a half of its solution. The first problem in clarifying the oldest Serbian history emerges at the very beginning. “We still do not know for sure if only one group of Serbs arrived during the settling of the Balkan Peninsula in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries or if there were more ethnic communities bearing this name, which could have arrived from different areas of Europe at different times and settled in different regions. If there were any such cases, we can make a big mistake if we include all these Serbs into one Serbian state” (p. 8). Past writers give a lot of information on the spread of this name into mutually very distant areas and also draw attention to the parts of the Serbian population that lived under different tribal or regional names.

Anyhow, it is very important to point out that, no matter how many groups of the Serbs settled in, they did not find the new areas completely empty, so it was impossible for them not to fall under any influence of natives in anthropological, linguistic, cultural and civilisational aspects. “Since it is certain that the Balkan area that the Serbs settled used to be home to mostly Romanized Illyrian and Greek natives, not to mention others from the more distant past – then also partially the Avars and diverse Slavic groups, small or large that, either with the Avars or on their own, came from various directions other than where the Serbs came from decades before, we wonder if we are allowed to group the history of this small or large area under the history of the Serbs alone – and that mostly because we do not know the names or origins of the other inhabitants?” (p. 9-10).

The scarcity of historical sources from the age of Serbian illiteracy leaves many unresolved puzzles and mysteries and a conscientious researcher must treat every piece of information with precision and criticism without succumbing to arbitrariness and feelings. “History is not sensitive to affection nor does it tolerate it, just as there is no use in reshaping the past to our liking. History does not tolerate any ‘love’ or ‘hate’, nor can it offer anything else than facts in return. It becomes clearer and more understandable when we consider all the facts at their places of origin and follow them through centuries in their true relationships” (p. 22). The author is completely aware of all the problems that burden research into the oldest Serbian and Slavic history, he does not aspire to achieve any final solution and is also “convinced that many past obscurities and unacceptable solutions are the result of inapprehensible disregard for or miscomprehension of the geographical and spatial relations” (p. 21-22). The absurd situations this can lead to, we have already seen in the case of Croatian pamphlet historiographers, whose many fictitious constructions were geographically impossible, although they sounded nice.

## **1. The First Records of the Serbs in the Balkans**

The Serbs were first mentioned in the Balkans in a document by the Frankish chronicler and biographer Einhard from the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, who described the Frankish wars with Prince Louis of Pannonia. Historians took his report that state representatives, including those of Abodrit, Guduscan, Timok and Louis, met in Herstal in 818 at the court of Frankish emperor Ludwig rather lightly. Einhard writes that Borna was a Guduscan prince. “Historians, and not just domestic ones, consider him the Prince of Littoral Croatia at that moment and maintain that it was to be expected that he would

be with other envoys in Herstal. However, it seems that this problem is still a bit more complicated than it appears” (p. 24). This old document states that “Borna was the prince of Guduscan and was at the meeting in Herstal as their elder. If this was true, and in all likelihood it was, why did the learned Einhard, who described the events with so much detail, call Borna only the Prince of Guduscan and not the Prince of Croats ... There is no mention of the Croats and Croatia in this, in our opinion, very important place. Einhard must have had a reason to do so and we have to try to find out why” (p. 24-25). Novaković draws attention to the Peace of Aachen between the Frankish and Byzantine Empire in 812. Earlier historiography believed that the Byzantine Empire kept the Dalmatian towns under this agreement and that their hinterland went to the Franks, meaning that the whole of Croatia was included. This conclusion was deduced from the general principles of the agreement, since its individual clauses were not preserved.

However, it is hard to think that the Peace of Aachen could bring about such a division that would only give the Dalmatian towns, in the narrowest sense, to the Byzantine Empire and allow the Frankish to occupy the rest of Littoral Croatia, including the nearest hinterland of the Dalmatian towns. No logic, either diplomatic or military, would justify such a territorial demarcation. It is known that Charlemagne had to accept the clauses of the Peace of Aachen concerning Dalmatia, primarily because of the lack of a fleet and the impossibility of defending the potential Dalmatian territories from the sea. The signing of the Peace of Aachen came after the obvious success of the Byzantine Empire on the sea, which was a favourable time for achieving increased and more secure superiority on the Dalmatian coast. This superiority would be reduced to minimal if it got only towns and their closest surroundings while Francia got all the remaining territories, right behind the town walls so to speak. Such a demarcation would not be convenient to Francia either. It could not defend these territories from the sea and it would be almost as difficult to defend them from the land, since these coastal areas would be too far from Pannonia and other regions where the Frankish power was somewhat greater and from which it could have a more direct and more effective control. Besides, if Littoral Croatia was under Frankish rule, it would be immediately threatened by the Byzantine Empire, for whom, alongside the superiority at sea, the fortified Dalmatian towns would be a solid standpoint in a battle for almost unprotected hinterland as a potential part of Francia. After all, was not Francia at war for four years with Louis, who organised, an entirely defensive war in one part of Pannonia and still it barely managed to suppress the uprising? And what could it do if it came to defending the Littoral Croatia, fighting against a much stronger and more dangerous enemy than Louis?” (p. 25-26).

The conclusion practically imposes itself. The periphery of the Byzantine coastal towns had to stretch all the way to the Velebit-Dinaric divide, which means that most of Croatia remained a part of the Byzantine Empire. On the other hand, it is certain that “all the events related to Louis’s uprising in Pannonia only occurred in the territory that was ceded to Francia after 812.

“By all the odds, Littoral Croatia had nothing to do with these events. It was impossible since it did not exist as a sovereign country but was under Byzantine rule, so its potential involvement in the events during Louis’s uprising would mean the Byzantine Empire breaching the Peace of Aachen and, as we know, it did not interfere with the Frankish-Slavic war in Pannonia from 818 to 823. However, as we also know



that Borna, as the Prince of Guduscan, was directly involved in Louis's confrontation with the Frankish, protecting the Frankish interests, it is clear that we must only seek the area of his activity in the territory appertaining to the Frankish sphere of interest, which could only be outside Littoral Croatia of that time and belonging to the Byzantine sphere of interest" (p. 26-28). This area of Guduscan and the title of prince that their leader had could have been the reason why Krbava (Corbavia), Lika and Gacka later had a special status in the Croatian state. Borna stood out while fighting for the Franks in the war, so he became the Duke of Dalmatia instead of Guduscan in 819 and, in 821, the Duke of Dalmatia and Liburnia – but Croatia is still not mentioned. Of course, the Dalmatia in Borna's title means only the Frankish part of Dalmatia and certainly not the Byzantine one. Borna was obviously the lord of the Frankish territories between Velebit and Louis's Pannonia. And when Einhard writes that "Louis invaded Dalmatia with his army, why should that mean he went all the way to its littoral area? Isn't it more natural and sensible to think that Louis, having crossed the border of his province, entered the area of continental Dalmatia that bordered on his Pannonia?" (p. 29). It is completely illogical that Louis would embark on a raid two or three hundred kilometres away amidst a grave Frankish threat just to punish Croatia. "An invasion of the so-called Littoral Croatia would put him in conflict with the Byzantine Empire, since this area was under its rule. We do not have any proof that there was an independent Croatian state there that could fight a war on its own as early as in the 820s" (p. 30).

#### **a) Implicit Information about the Serbs**

The information that Novaković deems so precious related to the Serbs from which the Prince of Pannonia sought refuge in 822, "was interpreted in rather different ways, but mostly in the sense that Louis went to the Serbs in Bosnia, somewhere near the Vrbas River, allegedly close to Littoral Croatia, though some even thought that he fled even farther east, to the Serbs close to the Drina River. All this shows how little it is known about the original settlements of the Serbs in the Balkans and how reasonable it is to try to learn as much as possible about them. As opposed to the previous interpretations of Einhard's mention of the Serbs, N. Klaić points to Srb, in addition to the aforementioned chronicler's information, which is not only fundamentally new, but also a very significant and acceptable reference that should definitely be taken into account when searching for the areas where the Serbs settled on arrival in the Balkan Peninsula. The Serbs to whom Louis went over to should certainly be sought somewhere not very far from his Pannonian territories or in the area of Sisak, since Einhard's mention of *Siscia Civitate* certainly did not refer only to the city, just as, in all likelihood, *civitatem eius* does not mean city specifically, but also the broader area or region. So, it is highly probable that these Serbs should be sought either at the scene of earlier events or somewhere in the immediate vicinity. It is possible that Einhard isn't talking about the Serbs that lived around present-day Srb alone, but also in Lika and perhaps even in the wider part of this territory. However, the possibility that the area in question is around the Grmeč and Kozara mountains should also not be ruled out. While wondering where these Serbs could have been, one should bear in mind why Louis crossed into the Serbian territory. It is quite possible that he went to them hoping to find understanding, which they had possibly expressed during the wars with Borna, especially during the conflict at the Kupa River. There is no point looking for these

Serbs as far as the area of the mid or upper Vrbas River, over two hundred kilometres away from Sisak, or anywhere farther east. It would be highly pointless for Louis - as a fugitive, meaning with little armed forces - to run away to some distant Serbs with whom he never had any previous contact and, on top of everything, to kill the prince that received him hospitably in that unknown country and seize his territories. However, it sounds completely different when we imagine these Serbs of Einhard in an area that was always either directly involved in or somewhere near the events described. It is very probable that one part of the tribe in this territory was against the policy of Borna as a Frankish protégé. Louis might have known that and, when he left his seat to travel to the Serbs, probably through the valley of the Glina or Una Rivers, he could have tried to strengthen his position by removing the enemies in this new environment" (p. 31-33).

Relja Novaković's possible explanation of the conditions in which Louis's breach of faith in the Serbian refuge occurred seems very sensible: "He could only have taken on such an endeavour in an area he knew well and where he had a certain number of proven supporters from the earlier times, while such actions somewhere in the centre of Bosnia or even farther east would be close to madness. It would be unprecedentedly impertinent for a fugitive in a faraway country to kill the native prince and simply annex his territory. However, it sounds completely different when we understand that this Serbian country was in the area not far from the Pannonian border, somewhere, say, from the Plitvice lakes to Srb, or further down towards Lika or the Sana and Una Rivers. This Serbian country may not have been small since Einhard says that Louis killed one of their princes. Most likely there were more counties. Only under these terms can one accept Einhard's claim that, having killed one of the princes who received him, Louis annexed his territory to his own. In the conditions Louis was in at the time, this annexation is only understandable if the newly-annexed territory bordered on his earlier territories. It seems to be pointless to consider that this annexed territory could be separated from his existing territories by a small or large belt of land appertaining to some other figure, and to guess who that figure could be. So, if we examine a little closer the aforementioned Einhard's statement, it seems logical that, in Louis's escape to the Serbs, we should think only of the Serbs who lived around the Una River at the time, whether more to the east or west it is hard to say. In any case, they had to be somewhere in the vicinity of Louis, as Smičiklas also pointed out: "Having realised that he would not be able to resist, he fled to the neighbouring Serbs." He left Sisak and hid among the closest Serbs, and his murder of the prince and the annexation of his territory already show that Louis had not given up the intention of reinforcing his jeopardized position by retreating from Pannonia. After all, this can be seen from what Einhard goes on to say - that Louis, having left Sisak, sent delegates to the imperial army promising that he would come himself. In all probability, this was a tactical move for which he did not need to run all the way to Bosnia or to some Serbia proper, as some would like to represent it - if such a thing even existed at that time. Louis temporarily left Pannonia for a safer mountainous area where, as it seems, he tried to gain support among the Serbs. Later, if his manoeuvre of sending delegates to the imperial army failed, he would probably try to prolong the fight against the Franks from this area. It appears to be the only way to understand why Louis sent delegates to the Frankish general. If he had gone to a distant region, it would virtually have not been necessary for him to convince the Franks of his loyalty. This way, given that he certainly hid in a territory under Frankish rule, it is understandable that, as a rebel and fugitive, even for tactical reasons, he rushed

to convince the Franks that it was not necessary for them to continue the attack on his territory since he was even ready to prove his loyalty to the Frankish emperor by personally coming to him" (p. 33-34).

Louis's plan failed and he was soon killed in Dalmatia while staying with Borna's uncle, which historiographers interpreted to mean that Louis was killed in Croatia. In all likelihood, he did go to the Frankish part of Dalmatia, which also included the Guduscans. "One should bear in mind that Einhard knows of the stories that, in his time and before, the Serbs held and inhabited a large part of Dalmatia ... When we add to this that Louis killed one of the Serbian princes and that he speaks of the Serbs as a people, it seems that we can even more rightfully claim that it is quite possible that we can include the valley of the Una River in this large part of Dalmatia, even more so since the whole of Einhard's description of Louis's war with Borna and his conflict with the Serbian prince refers almost exclusively to the territory from Kozara and Grmeč mountains, over the Una to the Kupa River. From some later sources, we see that Einhard was quite well informed when he pointed out that the Serbs to whom he went also lived in some other parts of Dalmatia, no matter that this remark of his sounds rather general. When we compare this piece of information with other data on the geographical position of the Serbs in those early centuries, the picture becomes much clearer. However, it should be noted that Einhard's mention does not yet give us the right to use the term Serbia at that time. The existence of the Serbs in a certainly spacious area of Dalmatia does not mean that, in less than two hundred years since the first settlement, the term or name 'Serbia' appears in all areas inhabited by the Serbs. We do not know how this term originated, we cannot even, as we will see, be certain where it originated. We first encounter the term 'Serbia' in Porphyrogenitus' writings but we cannot understand his descriptions that well. Although he once mentions the name 'present-day Serbia', no one in historiography has yet managed to determine its geographical position, even approximately. That is why every piece of information, even the smallest, about an ethnic group on the territory of the former Roman Dalmatia in the Middle Ages is precious" (p. 35).

Einhard proved a very reliable and, for his time, expert writer, but the Serbs as a people were not one of his important preoccupations and he never got involved in the details of their geographical position. "Not even the mention of 'a large part of Dalmatia' says much. Einhard does not tell us clearly whether this means there were no Serbs outside of Dalmatia at the time. If we would understand that Einhard rightfully said that the Serbs then inhabited only a large part of the former Roman Dalmatia and not other provinces, and if we would find in other sources even the slightest hint of this being the case, then it would be very significant for our search for the original settlements of the Serbs in the Balkans and for the origin, spread and disappearance of the term Serbia in certain areas at the time of interest. As for the western part, according to Einhard's words (and Smičiklas thinks the same), it could be said that 'beyond Mountain Velebit was a separate banate that spread towards Istria. We can assume this because, even as early as the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, those three counties - Lika, Krbava and Gacka that the Franks call 'Guduscan' - fought for independence'. This, so to say, geographically segregated area with a Slavic population of whose origin we know nothing save that a part of them was called the Guduscans, was bordered in the north by the then Slavic Pannonia, in south and southeast by Littoral Croatia and in east by land where both the Serbs and Croats could have lived at the time. In all probability,

this is the area that will become a part of Croatia a few decades later, as recorded by the drafter of Chapter 30 of DAI (*NB. De Administrando Imperium – V.Š.*), noting that a part of the Croats separated from Dalmatia and took over Illyricum and Pannonia. It is very possible that the writer in the process called the former Borna's Dalmatia and Liburnia Illyricum, as opposed to Littoral Dalmatia. This penetration of the Croats into the north certainly happened after the liberation from Byzantine rule and at the time of the cessation of Frankish influence in Pannonia. The Croats strengthened their power in the western part of Lower Pannonia, probably before the Hungarians stabilised in Upper Pannonia after the defeat near Augsburg in 955" (p. 35-36).

## 2. Novaković's Analysis of Porphyrogenitus' Text

### a) The Territorial Determination of Croatian Extension

With regard to Chapter 29 of Constantine Porphyrogenitus' document and his listing of the Slavic tribes that settled in Dalmatia, Novaković draws the rather sensible conclusion "that the Serbs in his time lived right next to the Croats and behind the *Neretljani* [Narentines], *Zahumljani* [Zachlumians], *Travunci* [Travunians], *Konavljani* [inhabitants of Konavli] and *Dukljani* [Docleans], although we can see elsewhere in DAI that the writer also considers the inhabitants of these areas to be of Serbian descent, save for the *Dukljani*. Why is it that the drafter of Chapter 29 does not call them Serbs? We do not know for sure, but it is possible that, over two or three centuries, the basic mass of the Serbs in Dalmatia separated into several areas that prospered faster than those in inland Dalmatia because of the specific geographical circumstances. Perhaps this is why the writer of Chapter 29, as in the other chapters, calls them by the name of the region they inhabited instead of by the name under which they arrived in the Balkan Peninsula. However, apart from the information about the names of the Slavic tribes that settled in both Dalmatias, the writer also gives us information about when these tribes overthrew Byzantine rule. This way, we get confirmation of our assumption that the Croats were under Byzantine rule before and during the uprising of Louis (818-823), which means that the littoral Croats could not participate in the Frankish-Slavic war in Pannonia on their own" (p. 39).

As regards Chapter 30, in which, among other things, the author mentions that Croatia bordered on Serbia at the Cetina River and Livno, Novaković here deals especially with the fact "that some Croats separated from Dalmatia and went to Illyricum and Pannonia. From which Dalmatia could they separate from if not the Littoral one? The same conclusion, it appears, can be drawn from the fact that the Croats in Illyricum had an independent archon who only sent friendly letters to the archon of Croatia – apparently meaning Dalmatian Croatia, the only Croatia in his time since he, in all likelihood, does not yet see any Croatia in Illyricum and Pannonia, only Croats (although it is symptomatic that writer says that they also had their archon). His listing of eleven Croatian counties proves that he is only thinking of Littoral Croatia. It seems quite clear that he sees only those eleven counties as Croatia at the time and did not know of any other. Even Krbava, Lika and Gacka were not a part of the term Croatia for him at that time; they were only under the rule of a Croatian lord. The term Croatia would include them only later. It is interesting, however, that the writer does not say anything about those Croats who went to Illyricum and Pannonia except that their

archon sent friendly letters to the Croatian archon. We do not know for sure where and when this new Croatia started developing, but we assume it was in Krbava, Lika and Gacka and the part of Pannonia over which Louis ruled in his time. Borná's and Louis's territories probably became attractive during the 9<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries to the strengthened Dalmatian Croatia and it gradually took them over. Before this state of affairs, which is more an assumption than a certified fact, the writer described an almost clear territorial expanse of Croatia of his time. This was the territory of those eleven counties and, for him, this alone was Croatia" (p. 42-43).

### **b) The Serbs and Croats, Inhabitants of Byzantine Provinces**

Porphyrogenitus' rather precise territorial determination of Croatia is extremely significant since, from Chapters 31 and 32, we see that Serbia was on the territory between Croatia and Bulgaria, although Novaković questions whether Raška was a part of Serbia or at least whether it had always been. From Chapter 3, one can unmistakably see that "Porphyrogenitus thinks that the Serbs in Zahumlje are of the same origin as the Serbs in present-day Serbia, about which he talks in Chapter 32, but he still does not call Zahumlje Serbia. Searching for a solution, it comes to mind that perhaps, in the beginning the present-day Serbia and the littoral areas were one, which then separated over time, probably under the influence of the coastal Romanic towns, forming special territorial-political communities in the Littoral area, either based on some geographical characteristics or on some earlier administrative-ethnic division. The basic population after the arrival of the Slavs could be made up from Slavic immigrants, mostly Serbs, but certainly mixed with past inhabitants of different origins" (p. 69). Here Novaković emphasizes that we do not know "when it came to this separation from the original Serbia" and to the foundation of "present-day Serbia" and the land of the *Zahumljani*, but it is possible it happened sometime between the rule of Byzantine Emperor Michael II (820-829) and the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, sometime during the rule of Serbian Archon Vlastimir (archon of present-day Serbia?). This was an age of turmoil in the Byzantine Empire and of the liberation of certain Slavic areas from Byzantine rule, so it is not impossible that this was a chance for the littoral areas of Paganía, Zahumlje, Travunia with Konavli and (perhaps) Duklja to secede from the originally undivided Serbia, and for the remaining parts to form a separate, larger archonship that Porphyrogenitus named 'present-day Serbia'. For the time being, we cannot tell how this complex issue could be resolved in any other way" (p. 70).

In Chapter 34, as Novaković further states, Porphyrogenitus informs us not only that Serbs of the same origin as those from Zahumlje and Serbia lived in Travunia from the beginning, but also that "sometime during the rule of Serbian archon Vlastimir, Travunia became independent, though its archons still recognized the rule of the Serbian archon, which could have reflected the state when Travunia and present-day Serbia were joined in a united territorial and political structure (the original Serbia?)" (p. 72). The problem arises in Chapter 35, when "the writer does not give the origin of the *Dukljani*. He does not say that they originate from the archon who escaped to emperor Heraclius and, when he states that Duklja was inhabited in the same way as Croatia, Serbia, Zahumlje, Travunia and Konavli, he leaves out Paganía, although he will emphasize in the very next chapter that its inhabitants also originate from among those Serbs of the time of Emperor Heraclius. Why he did not do as he usually did here, we cannot know for sure

at the moment, but there must be a reason. Actually, it seems that there are only two assumptions: either the Emperor accidentally failed to mention that the *Dukljani* belong among the same Serbs he mentioned in previous chapters and which he will mention in the next, or he knew that the inhabitants of Duklja of that time were not Serbian in the true sense. It seems there is no third assumption. But if the *Dukljani* were not Serbian, why did the Emperor not say who they were? In addition to this question, one must ask how these Slavs came to Duklja? Duklja was farthest south of all the mentioned Croatian and Serbian areas and, from the writer of Chapter 30 of DAI, we learn that its neighbours on the mountain side were the Serbs. The Serbs were also its neighbours to the west (the Travunians), but we do not know the origin of the Slavic inhabitants on the other sides. There is a certain doubt regarding the inhabitants of Metohija. We assume that its Slavic inhabitants could have been Serbs, but only because we imagine that the mountain side, viewed from Duklja, also refer to the direction towards Metohija. Therefore, if we were to judge by the neighbours that the writers of DAI speak of, the inhabitants of Duklja could also have been of the same origin as the inhabitants of other littoral areas and 'present-day Serbia', but we cannot be sure of this until we at least find out who the other neighbours of the *Dukljani* were" (p. 74-75).

The dilemma remains and appears unsolvable, at least not with a hundred percent certainty. "If we ascertained that the neighbours of *Dukljani* on all sides were the Serbs, we could assume that the inhabitants of Duklja were also Serbian and that Porphyrogenitus failed to mention this. For now, this remains an assumption. Archaeological, linguistic, anthropological and other research might help us learn something more reliable about the early inhabitants of Duklja. In the period after the 10<sup>th</sup> century, they are mostly called the *Dukljani* and Serbs but, at the time of Porphyrogenitus, we cannot claim they belonged to the Serbian ethnic group and we also cannot claim that they did not. We simply do not know anything about them in that time for sure. What we know about them from later times does not solve the problem of their origin. By the way, as we have seen, Porphyrogenitus also mentions Serbia here, with Croatia and the littoral Serbian areas, which once again confirms that this Serbia existed in his time and was located close to Croatia, Zahumlje, Travunia and Konavli. This adjacency was not interrupted by any other territory, otherwise the Emperor certainly would have mentioned it and, to reiterate, since we know the approximate borders of Croatia and the littoral Serbian areas, we realise that the 'present-day Serbia' could only be in their immediate vicinity at his time" (p. 75). The fact that, primarily according to Porphyrogenitus' records, the Serbian countries and Croatia liberated from Byzantine rule in the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century and gained independence, actually marks the beginning of their history. Up to then, they were Byzantine provinces with certain autonomous rights, for example, to elect the zhupan. The existence of some Serbian or Croatian states in the first two hundred years of their Balkan lives is out of question.

This means that, when it overthrew Byzantine rule, Croatia "could conduct independent policies and begin the expansion of its territory and influence, first toward Krbava, Lika and Gacka, then farther towards the Sava and Vrbas Rivers. This could probably have happened only after the 830s. Until then, White (Dalmatian) Croatia was, under Byzantine rule, only one of the administrative units of the Empire in all probability and the domestic archons only regulated some relations inside the Croatian community and took care of its obligations to the Empire. Perhaps this is the reason why some archons, as in 'present-day' ('Christianised') Serbia, became known in White

Croatia only after the 9<sup>th</sup> century, since they only appear as archons – generals – from this time and even the Byzantines and other adversaries mention them as legitimate representatives of the countries with which they were at war or forming alliances” (p. 80). Novaković states here that even this newly liberated “present-day” and “Christianised” Serbia that spread behind Croatia, Pagania, Zahumlje, Travunia and Duklja did not originally include Bosnia and Raška, though it spread to their territories later. Raška was yet to be liberated from Bulgarian rule. Novaković finds it “likely that it did not free itself, since the ‘present-day’ Serbia and Duklja grew strong in the meantime and Raška, then and later, depended on the strength and influence of one or both of them” (p. 81). As for the original Serbia, of which Porphyrogenitus speaks, “it seems that his present-day Serbia formed the original Serbia together with the mentioned Serbian littoral areas, but these separated over time and became, in a way, independent and started being called after their geographical traits and, by ‘Serbia’, people increasingly meant the territory behind the littoral areas from Metohija to the Croatian border. And while we are certain, following Porphyrogenitus’ narrative, that the far northwest border of present-day Serbia approximately as far as the Cetina and Pliva Rivers and Livno, we are not sure about its south-eastern belt, though we assume it also included Metohija” (p. 85).

### 3. The Serbs in the Report of Archdeacon Thomas

When it comes to the different interpretations of the term *Urborum* from the report of Archdeacon Thomas concerning the Church Council of Split in 925, given that this name does not mean anything on its own and follows the term *Croatorum*, as it is said that Croatian representatives were present, Novaković accepts the opinion of Franjo Rački that this was a mistake and that it should read “*Serborum*” because, if it referred to the representatives of towns, it would read “*urbium*”. “Bearing in mind that the church jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Split was not limited to the ethnic and political territory of then Croatia alone and that it is quite probable that there were no strict ethnic boundaries between the Croats and Serbs and that they interfused in the border-areas, it seems entirely natural that Serbian representatives were also present at the Council of Split. If it is true, as some believe, that Prince Mihailo Višević of Zahumlje was at the council, we do not need any better confirmation that the Serbs were there in Split in 925, along with the Croats, no matter that Mihailo was of the Litcik family or tribe; he was then the prince of Zahumlje and Porphyrogenitus clearly states that the *Zahumljani* were Serbian in origin, meaning, of course, most of the *Zahumljani*. Let us see what else could support the opinion that *Urborum* means *Serborum*. If we look closely at some western chronicles, we will notice that the Polabian Serbs are given different names, such as *Serbs*, *Serbli*, *Servi*, *Sirbi*, *Siurbi*, *Sorabi*, *Serbi*, *Suburbi*, *Surabi*, *Surpe*, *Surfe*, *Surun*, *Survi*, *Suurbi*, *Sverbi*, *Svorbi*, *Zrbi*, etc.. However, there are manuscripts that mention the name *Urbi* (*Zrbi*), of which the second plural case is ‘*Urborum*’, the same as in Archdeacon Thomas’s writing. It should be added here that there is also the grammatical form *Urbium*, not meaning towns but Serbs” (p. 91-92). So, for example, Schetgen and Kreutzig claim that the “*Urbs*” from Regin’s Chronicle should be read as *Surbs*, which the Iordanus and the monk Egoismansis did. Asseman also agrees with this. Ritter draws attention to the fact that Fredegar wrote about Prince Dervan, saying that he was *Dux Urbiorum*, which should be read as *Dux Surbiorum*.

**Comment [PC24]:** Translators’ note: We were unable to find any source in order to transcribe the name so we left it as spelled in the source language.

Gebhardi also states that one of the names for the Serbs is Urbs. Adelung also interpreted Fredegar's Urbs as Serbs, which Zeuss also points out in 1837. These are all very authoritative writers and sources.

Novaković believes that all these pieces of evidence are enough for a competent "decision on Thomas's *Urborum*. This can only mean the Serbs and, since only the Croats are mentioned at the Council of Split apart from them, there is almost no doubt that these two peoples were neighbours. If there were a third people in between, it would certainly participate in the council as well. Also, if there was a third people between the Serbs and the Croats, Porphyrogenitus would be the first to mention it and, when he says that Serbia borders on Croatia somewhere near the Cetina River and Livno, what could be more natural than to say that Thomas's record is one confirmation more that the Serbs attended the Council of Split, primarily because both the Serbs from Zahumlje and from present-day Serbia were in the immediate vicinity of the area that gravitated towards the ecclesiastical centre in Split. It only needs to be examined whether this *Urborum* relates solely to the Serbs in the littoral areas or perhaps to the Paganians and Zachlumians, or to the Serbs in other littoral regions as well. It is not likely that it relates to the Serbs in present-day Serbia" (p. 93).

At the same time, all of the most important Serbian medieval writers, such as St Sava, Stefan the First-Crowned [*Prvovenčani*], Domentian, Teodosije, etc., explicitly treat the littoral areas – especially Zahumlje and Travunia – as unquestionably Serbian from ancient times. In these areas, as in Duklja and Podgorje, "the name of Serbia and the Serbian state started spreading ... It is clear that the name Raška never spread, either geographically or state-politically, outside the territory where we find or at least surmise this name. Only the name of Serbia and the Serbian state spread and this is by no means coincidental. We could clearly see that the core of the Serbian medieval state formed in the area where even Porphyrogenitus finds the descendants of the Serbs from White Serbia. So, the imposition or spontaneous spreading of the Serbian name started from the centre of the original Serbian state... Raška was outside this original territory for a long time, though it later became understandably interested in the events, in which it was involved by a combination of circumstances, especially after the rulers from the 'the old kingdom' were imposed on it. These rulers led it into the fight for supremacy, which caused the name of Serbia – the country that imposed its rule through Duklja (Zeta) on new territories that were very important for further development – to be mentioned more and more often and, apparently, more and more convincingly alongside the name of Raška. The identification of Raška with Serbia or Serbia with Raška went so far as to create the belief that it was one country with two names. However, there is no need to emphasize what misconceptions could have stemmed and indeed did stem from this belief" (p. 138).

#### 4. Other Byzantine Sources

Analyzing the documents of Byzantine writers between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Novaković notes that their terms are often imprecise and complicated to interpret. For us, it is important that these documents were collected in the third volume of the book entitled *Byzantine Sources for the History of the Peoples of Yugoslavia* (Belgrade, 1966) and, based on this immediate access to them, we can ascertain just how unscrupulous a forger Mandić is. As regards Scylitzes' report of the repeated subjection of Serbia to the



Byzantine Empire, Novaković comments: “The opinion that this only means Duklja or Zeta is probably correct, although we notice that other Byzantine writers of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, when they speak of the Serbs and Serbia, imagine a territory far wider than Duklja. In support of the assumption that this, in all likelihood, means Duklja alone is the fact that ‘he took over the country of the Serbs by banishing Theophilus Eroticus.’ If this meant all the Serbian countries, the Byzantine Empire would probably not have left just one governor, if this is what Eroticus actually was. We assume that Scylitzes, just describing the events in Duklja, used the word Serbia without thinking he made a mistake because he thought it was clear since he mentioned the primary protagonists of the events – Vojislav and Mihailo. As a contemporary, it might have seemed clear in this combination that he meant just one part of Serbia” (p. 156). In addition, “another Byzantine writer, Kekaumenos, who describes the same events as Scylitzes, referred to Vojislav in two ways, as the Travunian Serb and as Vojislav the Toparch of Duklja” (p.157). Scylitzes’ continuator wrote that “the people of Serbs, which some call Croats”, showing that it was hard for some authors to see the difference between the Serbs and Croats from a distance, since they were two peoples with similar but not identical languages. Contesting all the interpretations that the Croats lived in Duklja, Novaković says that, “in 1072, the Croats remained what they were and lived in the same place as when they had arrived, covering perhaps even some parts of former Paganian at the time, whereas the *Dukljani* in 1072 were also the same people whom some called the *Dukljani* and some referred to them as Serbs, possibly because of the confusion of the geographical term for the ethnic one. We have never found any hint that the Croats from the Cetina River and Livno penetrated as far as Duklja. This is why, when Vrienius says that both the Croats and *Dukljani* rebelled, molesting the whole of Illyricum, this can only mean that the Croats and *Dukljani* in question are in fact the Croats and the Serbs, which actually rebelled against the Byzantine Empire, but each from their own territory. If this happened at the time when the rule of the lords of Duklja spread to the whole of Serbia, it could have been the case that some Byzantines applied the name of Duklja to the whole Serbian area, so it would be understandable that Croatia was the first neighbour of this Duklja, which remained in its original place” (p. 160).

### **a) The *Dukljani* and Croats – Two Separate Peoples**

Concerning Vrienius’ report on the action of the imperial army against the Dukljans and Croats, Novaković notices that “the mere formulation ‘*Dukljani* and Croats’ shows that these were two separate peoples that could jointly oppose the Byzantine army at the time, but it is possible that Vrienius first beat the Dukljans (and Serbs) and then the Croats, ‘thus imposing *Romean* [Byzantine] rule upon every city ...’ Hence, Vrienius’ report should not create any confusion, nor should it suggest that the Croats and *Dukljani* are the same. He always clearly distinguishes the Croats and *Dukljani*. For him, they are not Croats or *Dukljani*” (p. 160). As opposed to Nicephores Vrienius, Scylitzes’ continuator uses the expression “the people of Serbs, which some call the Croats” and Ioannis Zonaras says “the people of Croats, which some call the Serbs”. After all, “as is known, only these two Byzantine writers create this confusion; no one else. If we dismiss this confusion as mere misconception, we will easily determine that, at the end of 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Croats and Serbs (*Dukljani*) lived mainly on the same territories as when they had arrived in the Balkans” (p. 162). Anna Comnena and Kinammos

explicitly considered the Serbs a Dalmatian people. This confirms our thesis that Mandić forged Kinammos by inserting a comma that entirely alters the sense of his sentence, since the original says that the Drina River “separated Bosnia from the rest of Serbia. Bosnia was not subjected to the arch-zhupan of the Serbs, but its people instead had a special way of living and government” (p. 168). It is of special importance here that “Kinammos says that the Byzantines passed through the country of the Serbs to get to Dalmatia, reaching all the way to Scardona, without mentioning any other country; it cannot be any clearer that, by the country of the Serbs, he also meant old littoral Serbian states. It must be that the main Byzantine conquests mostly happened on Serbian territory, but it is strange that Kinammos does not mention the country of the Croats when it is obvious that the Byzantines also conquered their towns; apart from Duklja, he only mentions the towns on Croatian territory” (p. 171). Kinammos’ data is important because it testifies to the Serbian borders in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. “The western border of the Serbian countries still passed close to the Cetina River, while the eastern one remained on the Ibar River or on the western slopes of Mountin Kopaonik, with apparent tendencies to penetrate into the valleys of the Rasina and Toplica Rivers and therefore approach the West Morava and the South Morava Rivers. To the north was Bosnia, west of the Drina River, which was traditionally linked to Serbia but which, at this time, ‘was not subjected to the Serbian arch-zhupan’” (p. 172).

Based on the synthetic examination of data from old Byzantine documents, Novaković draws the following conclusion: “From Porphyrogenitus until Choniates inclusive, Serbia and the Serbian state are discussed in all records as a country whose core should be sought in the littoral area, from which it soon, if not right away, spread to the territory of Zagorje (“toward the mountain sides”). There are no records of Duklja being a part of this core at the same time, but it is mentioned very early as a part of the Serbian state. It apparently remains unquestionable that there seemed to be two, or maybe three statehood cores in the development of the early Serbian state. One would be the Travunia-Zachlumian core (probably the oldest) and the other was Podgorje (Zagorje), which could form Porphyrogenitus’ “present-day Serbia”, together with the littoral countries. It is highly uncertain whether Bosnia was also a part of this “present-day Serbia” or if it was, like Duklja, a separate entity, whose population could have been related to the Serbs and which was for a while, even during the first few centuries, strongly connected to the events in Serbia. However, possibly as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Bosnia gains more and more independence and, in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, it was certainly not subjected to the Serbian arch-zhupan, though that does not mean its political liaisons with Serbia were entirely broken. It is possible that both Serbia and Bosnia, as well as Duklja (the third statehood core), strived very early, maybe again as early as 10<sup>th</sup> century, to also act independently in the area of territorial expansion.

“It is interesting that there are no evident records that would show that the Serbian state had territorial aspirations over the traditional border-area ‘towards the Cetina River and Livno’, while Bosnia was rather active in this sense and acted primarily towards the Vrbas and Una Rivers and towards the north and east” (p. 174-175). Only Choniates wrote that Stevan Nemanja also subordinated Croatia, but without determining precisely which parts of it, so Novaković thinks it could be the territory of the Kačić tribe by the Cetina River. “As for Serbia and the Serbian state, the terms did not remain contained in one geographical area there, either. With the strengthening of military and political power and with the escalation of animosity toward Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire,

the early Serbian state started exhibiting an interest in the countries east of Podgorje more clearly, in all likelihood from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible that its interest in the countries east of the Lim River was influenced by the events in Raška and Hvosno after the retreat of Bulgaria – that is, during Byzantine-Bulgarian conflicts in this area. Anyway, if not in the 10<sup>th</sup> then certainly in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbian or Serbo-Doclean state successfully penetrated the territory of Raška, since its previous internal dynastic conflict created favourable conditions for the stronger combining of interests that more and more obviously led Raška into dependence on the Serbian-Doclean rulers. But in time, given the geographical position in relation to important areas from where Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire always threatened, Raška increasingly positioned itself as the new core in Serbian state” (p. 175).

## 5. The Roots of Historical Misconceptions

Later historiographers have often – usually out of ignorance – created confusion on the issue of the relation of Serbia and Raška, considering these two names practically synonymous. “Although Raška appears relatively late in history, Byzantine and domestic writers started treating it as an important territory since, in their writings on the Byzantine-Serbian relations in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Serbian state usually came into conflict with the Byzantine Empire through Raška, so Raška gradually became identified with Serbia and the impression was formed that there was no other Serbia than the one that spread between the Ibar, Lim, Drina and West Morava Rivers. Old Duklja, under the name of Zeta, positions itself rather early as an influential area and eventually a period in history occurs when there was an inexorable struggle for supremacy between Zeta and Raška (actually Serbia and Zeta) and, in this struggle the old centres of the Serbian state – Zahumlje, Travunia and Podgorje – became so repressed that they almost fell out of sight. So, in the later talk about the history of the Serbian state, the term Serbia is also mentioned, but its geographical position is discussed so vaguely that it is almost impossible to determine it from these descriptions. This is why many – not being able to combine the spatial and chronological parameters that had not really changed significantly until the end of Middle Ages – resort to what is clearer and has more historical references, and simply by the history of Serbia submit mostly the history of Raška, vaguely including the old Serbian areas, sometimes presenting them as the legacy of the state of Raška, although it was actually the other way round” (p. 175-176). In addition to the strong corroboration in the original historical records, Relja Novaković also compiled and systematised more or less corresponding facts from traditional historiography, referring to the works of Mavro Orbin, Đorđe Branković, Farlatti, Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, Jovan Rajić, Simeon Piščević, Francis Xavier Pejacsevich, Johann Engel, Kaspar Zeuss, Pavol Jozef Šafárik, Vjekoslav Đorđić, Konstantin Nikolajević, Franjo Rački, Alfred Rambo, Alexander Maykov, Stojan Novaković, Konstantin Jireček, Konstantin Grot, Vjekoslav Klaić, Benjamin Kallay, Ljubomir Sovalević, Ljubomir Jovanović, Miloš Milojević, Ivan Marković, Vico Adamović, Natko Nodilo, Stanoje Stanojević, Lubor Niederle, Vladimir Đorović, Ferdo Šišić, Marko Vego, Dvornik, Ivan Božić, Sima Ćirković, Jadran Ferluka, Bogo Grafenauer, Jovanka Kalić, Nada Klaić and Ante Babić – who, each in their own way, contributed to the political-historical and geographical understanding of early Serbia.

Relja Novaković pays special attention to the book *Red Croatia* by Dominik Mandić and to his attempt to prove that Red Croatia actually existed, as the Priest of Duklja wrote, on the territory from the Cetina to the Vojusa Rivers in Albania. The general impression is that Mandić “reinterpreted the original data, adjusting it to his own combinations” (p. 356), and also relentlessly “omitted everything that got in his way” when quoting sources (p. 357). Novaković explains this in detail by stating that, more than once, he noticed that “Mandić avoids citing records that can disturb his combinations” (p. 360). Mandić’s shameless forgeries are no problem for historical science, so they can only cause a headache in the sphere of political propaganda. However, by no means naïve is the way in which Vinko Foretić proved the past existence of Red Croatia, following the Priest of Duklja, placing it in the territory of Duklja and taking the edge off historiographical controversies and paradoxes with the thesis that the Serbs and Croats on the territory from the Neretva to Bojana Rivers mixed for centuries as two congeneric peoples. His goal is to prove the “prevailing” Croatian character of Dubrovnik and Kotor in any way. And, like Mandić, Foretić invokes Porphyrogenitus’ record that a part of the Croats separated after their arrival and left for Illyricum and Pannonia, as well as the fact that, for unknown reasons, the Emperor historian failed to mention the ethnic character of Duklja after testifying that Travunia, Zahumlje, Pagania and Bosnia were originally Serbian. Here it becomes prominent that Novaković did not entirely dismiss the data from the Priest of Duklja’s document, instead trying to treat it as an original historical text in spite of its factual and logical flaws.

#### **a) A Special Critical Review of Dominik Mandić and Vinko Foretić**

Novaković involves himself only with Mandić’s and Foretić’s weaknesses and inconsistencies, denying that Porphyrogenitus’ *Illyricum* denoted Duklja. “We have to ask ourselves again when, how and why the Croats went to Illyricum and Pannonia, to what Illyricum and to what Pannonia they went, and how many of them there could be. All this is important for the solution of the concept of Red Croatia. But we should not forget the issue of Dalmatia either. We are under the impression that both Porphyrogenitus and Anonymous count Duklja as part of Dalmatia, as does the Priest of Duklja. For him, it is a part of Upper Dalmatia. But, if that were so, if these two basic sources included Duklja within Dalmatia, we wonder how it is possible to interpret it to mean that those Croats who left Dalmatia to settle in Illyricum and Pannonia could settle in Duklja as Illyricum, when both writers include that same Duklja as a part of Dalmatia? Also, approximately how many Croats left the clearly bounded Dalmatian Croatia (White Croatia)? If an area (Red Croatia) gets its name from the people that inhabit it, we must assume that there were approximately as many of that people as in the country from which they left, because Red Croatia, as some imagine it, was maybe even larger in size than the one in the north (Dalmatian, White Croatia). But, if that were so, why did the writer who left us the information on the migration of a part of the Croats, still use different names for the area between the Cetina River and Lake Skadar and indicate that its inhabitants (except those of Duklja) were known as the descendants of the Serbs? Duklja remains unexplainable but, if it was also a part of Dalmatia, would Porphyrogenitus, thinking of Duklja, say that a part of the Croats left Dalmatia and crossed to Illyricum? It is very important to establish when this migration occurred. If

we believe Porphyrogenitus' presentation of the brief histories of Duklja, Travunia, Zahumlje, Pagania and even Croatia and Serbia, we cannot even imagine that this migration occurred at the time of all those events described by the Emperor in these chapters. The writer of these lines mentioned in a suitable place that he suspected that this immigration related to the period after the suppression of Louis's uprising and to the territories of Krbava, Lika and Gacka (Illyricum also used to be there) – and, farther, to the territory of the former Roman province of Pannonia” (p. 368-369).

Since Vinko Foretić thinks that the fact that Byzantine writers from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries mentioned the Croats in Duklja (although as an ethnic minority) also supports the Priest's data on Red Croatia and the subsequent thesis that it was precisely in the territory of Duklja, “we have to ask, hopefully rightfully, a few questions: 1) If Red Croatia originally spread from the Cetina River to Lake Skadar and included the hinterland of Podgorje along with the littoral areas, why is only Duklja mentioned as the mother country? When, from where and which way did the Croats come into Duklja, shaping it into the mother country of Red Croatia, and how many of them? 2) If the Croats became a minority in Duklja as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, we rightfully expect an explanation why and how this happened? Which events are thought to be crucial for such big changes in the Red Croatia that allegedly existed in Duklja from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries? 3) What happened meanwhile in other areas of Red Croatia between the Cetina River and Lake Skadar? 4) What was the position of White Croatia, allegedly the mother country, toward the disappearance of Red Croatia in Duklja? 5) If both the Croats and the Serbs recognized Byzantine rule right up until the 820s, as Porphyrogenitus claims, we wonder what the position of the Byzantine Empire was toward the processes that led to gradual disappearance of Red Croatia from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of 9<sup>th</sup> centuries and the conversion of the originally Croatian population into a Croatian minority as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries? 6) If Byzantine rule was dominant from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, we assume that there were no significant changes in the relations between certain areas at that time, since the Byzantine Empire would certainly not allow any major conflicts among the Slavic population that could jeopardize its supremacy, and it certainly had to take care of the littoral areas because unwanted changes there could allow foreign enemies the chance to interfere in possible disputes. 7) We presume that, in the earliest time, from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, both the Serbian and Croatian areas were still fairly underdeveloped economically and culturally, especially those in the Adriatic hinterland. If this were the case, we must wonder what forced these large or small groups to move and whether there had already been such cases ‘that, for example, the Serbs in less frequent groups moved to settle in the ‘farther’ littoral areas?...

“It seems that, in the case of the Croatian and Serbian ethnic groups, stronger economic-political and military organisations first emerged in the littoral areas and that their expansion started from there and moved inland. Hence the impression that neither Raška nor Bosnia had a leading role in the Slavic state at first. It seems that Raška was gradually included into the events in Duklja and the littoral areas from Duklja to Pagania through Podgorje and it is possible that the original Bosnia also came into closer contact with the small littoral states through this area, though it could be influenced very early on from both the southwest and the west by Croatia. But, it should be noted again that it is not certain whether all this could have happened while both the Serbian and Croatian kings were under Byzantine rule. We do not think that we can expect any significant

change among the Croats and Serbs before the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 371-372).

While Franjo Rački avoided declaring himself definitely concerning the Priest of Duklja’s Red Croatia, and while Vojislav Klaić flirts almost coyly with this fabrication, a few more Croatian historians before Mandić and Foretić took this statement for granted. In 1902, Ivan Marković, writing on the Archbishopric of Bar, claimed that Duklja represented Red Croatia and that more Croats than Serbs lived there – and the Serbs, running from different wars, especially the invasion of the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon, overflowed Zeta, Zahumlje and Travunia and therefore ethnically took over these states from the Croats. “Dismissing almost all of Porphyrogenitus’ records on the origin and affiliation of the Slavic inhabitants of the abovementioned littoral areas, Marković bases his examination on the then still vague data of the Priest of Duklja regarding the existence of Red Croatia in Upper Dalmatia, but since he nevertheless felt he could not oppose the later mentions of the Serbian name in these same areas, Marković calls on Porphyrogenitus for help, adopting his reports on the escape of the Serbian claimants to the throne into Croatia and of the departure of a part of the Serbs after Simeon’s intrusion into Serbia. Of course, there is no need for extensive argument on how absurd these claims are – that it was enough just for the Serbian refugees to come and repress the Croatian name in Zeta, Zahumlje and Travunia where it should, if it ever had existed there, been at least three centuries old” (p. 274).

### **b) The Forgeries of Ferdo Šišić and Marko Vego**

Although Ferdo Šišić stuck to the documents of Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his research into early Croatian and Serbian history, he “is not consistent in the adoption of Porphyrogenitus’ records. When he first mentioned the *Neretljani*, *Zahumljani*, *Travunians* and *Konavljani*, Šišić did not state what the Emperor had to say on their origins ... He calls them the South-Dalmatian Slavs” (p. 300). Šišić does this in several cases. “Even when he describes the geographical positions of the south-Slavic areas, he does not pay much attention to Porphyrogenitus’ remarks that the inhabitants of some of these areas were descend from the non-Christianised Serbs. He could not avoid this piece of information, but it is as if he rushed through it” (p. 302). Relja Novaković comments on Šišić’s megalomania concerning the presentation of the Croatian state borders during the rule of Petar Krešimir IV as spreading to the Neretva and upper Drina Rivers, close to Zvornik, through Đakovo and the Drava River, in the following way: “This enormous Croatian territory in the 11<sup>th</sup> century is hard to explain without a more thorough analysis of the Croatian relations with the neighbouring Slavic countries on whose accounts it spread – primarily Bosnia and Duklja, which also grew stronger and spread somewhere around that time. It seems that there is no evidence that such a spacious state could appear among the Slavic countries in the west of the Balkan Peninsula in the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century without causing a deeper disturbance among them” (p. 304). Marko Vego was far more ruthless in this regard, as he claimed in *The History of the Land of Hum* (Samobor, 1937) that the Croats spread all over Dalmatia, Pannonia and Illyricum after their arrival, and that Hum was purely Croatian – certainly ethnically and maybe even state-politically. He also appropriated the whole of Bosnia, claiming that the Croatian name was originally more spread than the Serbian. Vego fervently tried “to convince his readers that Porphyrogenitus was wrong when he stated that the Slavic

inhabitants of Zahumlje were originally Serbian. Without prior verification, he set out the thesis that the state of Hum was a part of the ‘Croatian national, and perhaps even state entity’ from the very beginning – and, in order to prove it, Vego was forced to invent combinations that were indeed original, but not acceptable” (p. 307).

Incessantly combining his assumptions and fabrications, trying to present them as true facts and results of comprehensive research and reasonable explanations, Vego inevitably over-schemed himself eventually and he fell into the labyrinth of his own constructions and got lost in the chaos of contradictory opinions. “Vego first said that the land of Hum belonged to the Croatian name from the beginning. But when it was time to reconcile this opinion with the Emperor’s claim that the *Zahumljani* were Serbian, Vego invented Serbian refugees and a Serbian prince who was allegedly a Byzantine exponent. Hence, because of these refugees and the Serbian prince the Emperor hastily counted the *Zahumljani* as the Serbs. However, Vego then suddenly stated that it is not certain whether the Serbian Prince Časlav took over Hum, so we have to wonder how a few dozen refugees that never actually ran to Zahumlje but Croatia, could suppress the Croatian influence that, according to Vego’s words, existed there from the beginning. Also, how do we interpret the fact that the state of Hum came under the Croatian influence again after Časlav died, if he never governed Zahumlje?” (p. 312). These manners are present in almost every Croatian historian. Their hearts bleed incessantly because Porphyrogenitus, as the most authoritative source by far, explicitly confirmed that the inhabitants of Bosnia, Pagania, Zahumlje and Travunia were the Serbs. They would like to neutralise this in any way possible and their attempts could be classified in a broad spectrum of assumptions, from the statements that these were some unidentified Slavs to the highly unscrupulous insistence on the claim that they were Croatian. In this regard, following some thoughts of Ferdo Šišić, F. Dvornik claims that Bosnia belonged to Croatia at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 10<sup>th</sup> centuries until Časlav annexed it to Serbia. However, this is directly opposing Porphyrogenitus’ records since he “never implies that Časlav waged any war of conquest in his lifetime, but only says that he restored the country and strengthened his position in it. If this is how it happened, how is it possible to think that Bosnia belonged to Croatia until Časlav, since we would then have to wonder how Časlav restored Serbia together with Bosnia if it never belonged to Serbia until 950? Besides, if it belonged to Croatia before Časlav, we must ask ourselves how come the Hungarians did not go into war with Croatia after invading Bosnia, since it would be expected that the Croats would resist the attacker by defending its territory instead of Časlav, who went to war with the Hungarians as far as the upper Drina River. And how could it happen that Porphyrogenitus inserts the information on two inhabited towns in Bosnia into the chapter about Serbia, based only on a single military success that ended in Časlav’s death – which would, if Bosnia was not Serbian, make it impossible for it to remain a part of Serbia” (p. 324-325).

### **c) Objection to the Work of Nada Klaić**

While appreciating *The History of the Croats in the early Middle Ages* by Nada Klaić as a work processed in a most modern way, Relja Novaković gives his most severe objection concerning her thesis that the *Neretljani* [Narentines] did not belong to either the Serbian or Croatian core at the time of settling and that Porphyrogenitus considered them Serbian because he projected the political state of affairs of his time back into the

7<sup>th</sup> century. “This implies that we do not know the origins of the *Neretljani* and who lived in this area from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and, if it is said that Porphyrogenitus, speaking of the Serbian origin of the Narentines, transfers the image of his time, then this could mean that the inhabitants of the Narentine area in the 10<sup>th</sup> century were indeed the Serbs. However, this interpretation complicates things significantly since one must ask where the Serbs were from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and how they managed to impose their name onto the Slavic inhabitants of the Narentan area” (p. 37). An additional question is should be posed here: “How is it possible that the Serbian origin of the Narentines is a political affair of Porphyrogenitus’ time?” (p. 37)

## **II. The Critical Approach of Nada Klaić to the Earliest Croatian History**

When compared to every other Croatian historiographer, Nada Klaić, professor at the University of Zagreb, had the most objective approach so far to the earliest Croatian history. The book *The History of the Croats in the Early Middle Ages* (Školska Knjiga, Zagreb, 1971) is a synthesis of her reports, scientific positions and other research results. In the first part, over approximately a hundred pages, Klaić elaborates on the most important historiographical sources and the results of past Croatian and Yugoslav historiography concerning the basic problems in the research into this period. Of the thirty preserved documents related to Croatia and Dalmatia until the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, she says that “critical analysis, primarily of the diplomatic form of the documents and then of their historical content, showed that they were, unfortunately, created at a later time” (p. 3), although they are still of some value. A certain critical approach to these documents was demonstrated by Franjo Rački to a lesser degree and Ferdo Šišić somewhat more, but they had no followers in this field and even they abstained from any extensive endeavours. “For this reason, historical criticism has regressed more and more since that time; what is more, it almost no longer exists” (p. 4). For example, in the works of Josip Nagy, there is “no trace of objective critical analysis” and he “finds an interpretation that removes any doubt about the authenticity of the royal deeds of gift for every forged fact or term” (p. 4).

Miko Barada failed to prove the authenticity of the documents of princes Trpimir and Mutimir, but he “did not care much about the obvious discrepancies in his arguments when he thought he determined not only the authenticity of the documents but also the script in which the originals were written” (p. 5). Lovro Katić “remained for the rest of his life faithful to his defence of the suspicious documents” (p. 5) included in the disputed original materials of the Church of Split. When Viktor Novak ascertained that the alleged deeds of gift of Zvonimir and Stjepan II to the Benedictine nuns from Split were forged, “almost all historians attacked him” but “no one could present scientific evidence to support the opposite view” (p. 5). Nevertheless, these attacks left marks on Novak’s personal mind-set and he was far less critically sharp in his later works. Milan Šufraj “starts with the wrong assumption that certain ethnic groups also determine legal categories” (p. 5).



## 1. A Blow to the Foundations of the Greatest Delusions

Proving that many historical forgeries developed from the mundane needs of the authors - most often monasteries - that tried in this way to defend some rights of theirs, Nada Klaić dedicated special attention to the speculations concerning *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*. Concerning this, she shows that “it is not the case that the greatest attention in Yugoslav historiography was drawn by the work that least deserves to as an actual historical source”. Since this work originated at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it had four editions to this day; the original Latin, its 1601 Italian translation by Mavro Orbin, the Croatian edition from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the first 23 chapters to which the legend of the death of King Zvonimir was added and, finally, a translation of the Croatian edition into Latin, published by Marko Marulić in 1510. Klaić says of this chronicle that “it is too distant a source for the history of the Croats in the age of national dynasty” and that its writer “knows little or almost nothing about the events north or west of the Cetina River” (p. 17). Its Croatian edition especially “demonstrates the intentional insertion of the Croatian name into the original text of the Priest of Duklja” (p. 17).

Serious historians have never treated *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* as a reliable historical source, although Rački “appreciated its geographical data” and Šišić believed him to be “our first literary writer” (p. 17). In the preface to the interwar edition of the *Chronicle*, Šišić wrote that the Priest of Duklja was most likely Serbian. Nada Klaić says that it is a compilation “of very different reports that are sometimes not even related in content” (p. 17-18), in which various earlier genealogies, hagiographies and legends are inserted, the originals of which are not preserved. Finally, the real chronicle of Duklja includes only the events from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries of the history of Duklja. The priest of Duklja confirms in the introduction that he translated the document entitled *The Kingdom of the Sclavs*, or the Slavs, from Slavic to Latin.

### a) A Scientific Review of the Forgeries of Dominik Mandić

In this regard, Nada Klaić mentions the main Croatian forger of historiography, Dominik Mandić, saying: “Identifying the name *Sclavs* with the name Croats, D. Mandić tried to prove in a number of his works that the Croatian edition is older than the Latin one and that *Regnum Sclavorum* is the Kingdom of the Croats. Mandić thinks that the chronicle entitled *The Kingdom of Croats* originated in Duklja and that “it was mainly written to justify the declaration of Duklja as a kingdom” ..., since, allegedly, “Duklja was a part of the general Croatian kingdom from ancient times.” Without any sense of actual Croatian development, he claims that this chronicle was written “between 1074, when Mihajlo started acting on the independent kingdom of Red Croatia after the death of Krešimir the Great, and 1081, when Mihajlo, the first king of Duklja, died” (p. 18). In his *Discussions and Appendices from Old Croatian History* Dominik Mandić, as Klaić notes, “still has to admit ‘the inaccurate basis and other weaknesses’ of this source whose main purpose, as he thinks, is to demonstrate that Duklja was ‘the centre and its ruling the principal bearer of state life of all the Croats in the first centuries of their life in the Adriatic littoral’” (p. 18).

After all, if the Priest’s phantasmagoria about the original existence of a single Serbian-Croatian state under a certain ruler named Svetopeleg was taken for granted, then one should bear in mind that he located Red Croatia in Upper Dalmatia. Upper

Dalmatia certainly cannot be Duklja. According to Klaić's comments, the text of the *Chronicle* stated that, "Svetopelek's state fell into two parts – one of them, Primorje, was divided into White Croatia (*Croatia Alba*) or Lower Dalmatia and Red Croatia (*Croatia Rubea*) or Upper Dalmatia. As the Priest says, Svetopelek called the part of his state that was to the north of the Adriatic-Pontic division line Serbia or Zagorje (*Transmontana*), which was then divided into Raška and Bosnia. Remaining faithful to the image of Svetopelek's 'Croatian-Serbian' state – certainly invented – the Priest sometimes spoke of the rulers or bans of White Croatia. These are all rather unreliable reports, so critical historiography barely takes them into account" (p. 19).

The data of the *Chronicle* related to the Priest of Duklja's time or that immediately before his life could be historiographically relevant - such as the records of King Tomislav and his fight against the Hungarian King Arpad. "It is not hard to distinguish from the quoted Priest's reports that he knew almost nothing about the Croats and the part of Svetopelek's state that he called White Croatia or Lower Dalmatia. Therefore, the setting of the so-called Assembly at Duvanjsko Polje into the Croatia of the Trpimirović family was wrong, mostly because it is now proven that the Priest of Duklja used the hagiography of St Constantine or the Slavic original of Constantine's legend as a part of his Chapter IX, but reshaped as he saw fit. This was the much disputed '*Liber Metodios*'. The Priest intentionally linked the Christianisation of the Slavs in the Adriatic littoral area with the missionary work of St Constantine. Kocelj from Constantine's legend became Budimir, whom Methodius baptized on his passage to Rome. The Priest's description of the assembly at Duvanjsko Polje is opposed to the assumption that Svetopelek (Svatopluk) could be any of the Croatian rulers. The Assembly took place in Omiš, on the Priest's border between White and Red Croatia, precisely in the middle of the imaginary Svetopelek's state. The centre of this state was not a place in Croatia – the Priest only knew of Vinodol as the border of White Croatia – because Svetopelek was indeed crowned at the 'Assembly' at Duvanjsko Polje, but buried in Duklja (*In Civitate Dioklitana*) and all his successors were elected there. The chronicler of Duklja revealed himself the most when he spoke of the alleged King's order that the two archbishops, Salonitan and Doclean, should be declared saints.

"The alleged jurisdiction of the newly appointed archbishops corresponded to the political borders of White and Red Croatia. Therefore, the Priest wanted to demonstrate that the Archbishopric of Dubrovnik never existed, which is understandable because of the fight between Bar and Dubrovnik from the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century onward" (p. 12-20). However, in some cases, Croatian historiography based some of its statements on the Priest's reports "that could be at least partially supported by some other source" (p. 20). Nada Klaić provides concrete examples based on the Priest's writings according to which it can be assumed, "that Mihajlo Krešimir II took over Bosnia, that Krešimir and Gojslav recognized the rule of Basil II, who penetrated all the way to the White Croatian borders. The claim of Tomislav's success in Slavonia could also be supported by some other records. But there is no reason to support the opinion that the 'Assembly at Duvanjsko Polje' was held by Tomislav or any other Croatian ruler. It also cannot be the foundation for the claim that Tomislav was crowned as a Croatian king there" (p. 20).

What is most important in all this is the fact that "historiography has not yet found a satisfactory answer to the question of how the Priest of Duklja arrived at the names of White and Red Croatia. Perhaps we could dismiss his names as a figment of his imagination if some Byzantine writers from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries did not agree with

the Priest when they mentioned the Croats in Duklja. Therefore, a hypothesis was set out that Red Croatia (Duklja and Dalmatia) was an independent political unit until the time of Nemanja (V. Klaić). According to another opinion, this name was given because Byzantine writers identified the Serbs and Croats in this way. However, it seems that the third opinion is the most acceptable, stating that it was ‘an existent, actual group of people who bore the Croatian name ... meaning an area (in Duklja) that was joined to the Croats.’ It is quite obvious that such an assumption does not mean that Red Croatia was a part of the Croatian state, “and not even that these are ethnic Croats in the same sense as in Croatia, where this name was not only national but also political (of the state)” (p. 20). In Nada Klaić’s opinion, the Croatian edition of the *Chronicle* is much more relevant to Croatian history because of the appendix that contains the report of the murder of King Zvonimir. Recent historians mostly agree with the opinion of Ferdo Šišić that the Croatian edition of the *Chronicle* originated in the 14<sup>th</sup> century “because of the content of the annotation in the Cartulary of the St Peter monastery in Solin that also dated from this century. Šišić agreed with Rački on this dating but not with Jagić and Crnčić, who opted for the 15<sup>th</sup> century. On the contrary, Vladimir Mošin approached the long stated opinion of Luka Jelić that the Croatian edition appeared before the Latin one, which is, therefore, its remake” (p. 20-21). On such arbitrary theories, Dominik Mandić built the hypothesis about the Assembly at Duvanjsko Polje, dating it in 753, and presenting it for the first time in 1957. “The hypothesis is typical of Mandić’s manner since, not only is he not familiar with the critical approach to sources, but he builds hypotheses on entirely unfounded assumptions” (p. 21).

### **b) Evidence of Flagrant Rewriting of the Original Chronicle in the Croatian Edition**

The textual connection and interdependence of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* and its Croatian edition is unquestionable, but all claims that the edition is older than the original are out of place. The Croatian edition is not even a translation “but, in some places, a very free adaptation” and the Croatian editor “did not abstain from changing the text wherever he needed to. By this we do not only mean minor additions to extend a sentence. The changes in question are deliberate interventions in the Latin text that stand out because they show that the author knew less of history than the Priest of Duklja did and that he only used him as a source. It is typical of the author of the Croatian edition to insert the Croats where they do not appear in the Latin edition. The author of the Croatian edition obviously did not know the name Slavs because he did not want to use a term that was no longer known in his time. He was confused by the Priest of Duklja’s Chapter IX that abounds unusually in information. He turned Svetopelek into Budimir who ruled over the sacred populace and edited out the names of rulers and popes as he pleased. It is also important that he left the name Red Croatia out and that he only knew about the White Croats and Upper Dalmatia. He probably thought that the Priest of Duklja became confused since there was no Red Croatia in his time. In the last general chapter he did not abstain from making fundamental changes in the Latin model because he needed a logical introduction to lead into the description of Zvonimir’s death that he added. He presented the Croats as unworthy of a good ruler. And Zvonimir was this good ruler who “could see no evil”, which was why “he was not fit for the Croats”. The rewriter of the Latin edition remained faithful to the image of Budimir’s ideal political

unit because even Zvonimir ruled over Primorje and Zagorje. However, when “the Pope and the Emperor of the great city of Rome” invited Zvonimir to join a crusade, “the God-cursed and unfaithful Croats” killed their King, saying “Better that one dies than a mass of people”. Their dying King therefore cursed them “never to have a lord of their own language but to always be subjected to the foreign one”. When the Hungarian King Béla heard about Zvonimir’s death, he came to Croatia and conquered the Croats, thus punishing them for the murder of good King Zvonimir” (p. 21-22).

Besides, the Croatian edition also contains the story of the division of the original joint Serbian-Croatian state, but it says that the south part, from Dalma (actually from Omiš at the Cetina confluence) to Durrës, was inhabited by the Serbs. “He named the Croats inhabiting the area from Dalma to Valdein the White Croats, i.e. the Lower Dalmatians. And he named the territory from the place of Dalma to the town of *Bandalon*, which is now called Durrës, Upper Dalmatia, and *Surbija*, which is Zagorje” (p. 22). Concerning the added story, Nada Klaić concludes: “It is quite clear today that the Appendix is a legend without any historical background. The last words of the dying King show that this legend – unlike many others – wanted to explain why the Croats did not have a ruler ‘of their own language’. The opinion that the writer of the Croatian edition had of the Croats was so unfavourable that it is highly unlikely that this form of the legend of Zvonimir’s death originated in Croatia. Since the author of the Croatian edition did not say in the Appendix anything more or better about the Croats than the Priest of Duklja, it is very likely that he lived far away from Croatia. It is very difficult to set the time of origin of the Croatian edition without any prior linguistic examination. The portrayal of the social and political relations in the last chapters of the Croatian edition could point to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Croatian edition is, therefore, the younger version of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*. The changes that the unknown author of the Croatian edition made are of no value to us and the legend of Zvonimir’s death is just the oldest known version and this gives it a certain advantage over younger legends” (p. 22).

### c) The Demystification of the Work of Archdeacon Thomas

Nada Klaić believes that the work of the Split Archdeacon Thomas is also an unreliable historical source, even though the hundred years younger Thomas is incomparably more learned and educated than the Priest of Duklja. He identified the Slavs in general, and especially the Croats, with the Goths. However, his catalogue of the remembered archbishops of Split is valuable and he also inserted the names of Croatian rulers into it. “Because of this system of entering information, Thomas mentioned Tomislav and Branimir as princes (dukes) and Držislav as the first Croatian-Dalmatian King who received the symbols of royal power and the titles of eparch and patrician from Byzantium” (p. 24). There was a debate concerning the authenticity of a chronicle and an original fragment by Archdeacon John of Gorica of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Vjekoslav Klaić and Ferdo Šišić believed them to be forgeries, while Franjo Rački “defended both the author and the text of the Chronicle” (p. 29). However, as Nada Klaić comments, “it should be emphasized that, amidst the raging fight between the Croats and Hungarians in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the content of this fragment was very inconvenient since it contained reports that neither the Croatian nor Hungarian historiography wanted to accept as authentic. The author of the fragment began his

description with king Stephen I Arpad and wondered how it was that Hungary lost the western part of Slavonia (from Lonja to the Styrian border) to the Croatian kings. Croatian historiography could not accept this since it did not want to hear of any Hungarian rule in Slavonia from Tomislav to Krešimir IV.

“The Hungarians were not indifferent either if it would be proven that Croatian king Krešimir helped Stephen I and received a part of Slavonia in return for this – which later went to Krešimir’s daughter and Emerich’s fiancée – because the Croatian King Zeanus (Stjepan) requested this part after 1035 according to the records in the Fragment. The Chronicle further tells that, when Emperor Henrik led Petar back to the throne, the Croatian king Stjepan ‘*Voisclavus Apelatus*’ raided Serbian areas all the way to the Drina River and set Praska as ban. But when Andrew came to the Hungarian throne, he renewed the royal rights over Slavonia and appointed his brother Adalbert (Béla) as ban there. The brothers then forced the Croatian king to restore Slavonia to its old borders - to the Cetina River. Talking further of the events in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the author arrives at Zvonimir who, with his wife, the sister of Géza and Ladislaus, received the part of Slavonia that Stephen I once allotted to Krešimir’s daughter. Strengthened by this affiliation, Zvonimir reached the Croatian throne. Therefore, the author of the Fragment wanted to demonstrate how the power over the west part of Slavonia constantly shifted in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but that the Croatian ruler had the right to it because it had been the dowry of the Croatian princess since 1035” (p. 29).

After serious work, Milan Šufalj determined that “John of Gorica was the author of both the Fragment and Chronicle and that he used some Pécs chronicle from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The information about Adalbert (Béla) and some other data led to this conclusion. He correctly pointed out that the borders of the ceded Slavonia corresponded to the borders of the Bishopric of Zagreb, while the data on Croatian ruler Stjepan Vojislav was probably taken from some South Dalmatian chronicle but was corrupted. The writer switched the names of the rulers of Croatia and Duklja and this could easily have happened at a time when the names Croatia and Serbian were synonymous. Neither Croatian nor Hungarian historiography agreed with this opinion, although no one tried hard to disprove Šufalj’s evaluation of the Fragment” (p. 30). Franjo Rački and Miho Barada used this source to interpret the Hungarian-Croatian relations in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and Nada Klaić says that “precisely the fact that the figures and some events described in the Fragment are historically accurate does not allow us to support the authors who completely neglect this source. What is more, it is not unlikely that the author of the Fragment was indeed John of Gorica” (p. 31).

#### **d) The Epic Interpretation of the Pacta Conventa**

However, the most important document discussed by earlier Croatian historiographers is certainly the *Qualiter* or *Pacta Conventa* because it was the basis of official, political and scientific opinions on the nature of Hungarian-Croatian relations over the centuries. “Political reasons, therefore, forced on historiography the duty of defending the authenticity of *Pacta Conventa* at any cost” (p. 31). Its unknown author wrote that the Hungarian King Coloman made a pact with the representatives of twelve Croatian tribes with three clauses: “first, that these aristocrats keep their territories at peace; second, that none of the twelve tribes pays tax or tribute to the King, and third, that in case of a defensive war, each tribe brings ten cavalymen to the Drava River at

their own expense – if the king sends for them – and, from there, they are to fight for Hungary at the King's expense for as long as the war lasts" (p. 32). As Nada Klaić points out, "earlier historiography especially cared to prove that the *Pacta Conventa* was "a state and legal" contract and that the Croatian people therefore negotiated with Coloman through their representatives on an equal footing. Without bearing in mind that such contracts were completely unknown and impossible in the 12<sup>th</sup> century circumstances, some authors, especially jurists (Kostrenčić and Mandić), still support the theory of the state and legal character of the *Pacta Conventa*. However, Šišić's oscillations in the interpretation of this source could have directed the historians to the main problem a long time ago. Namely, if he denied the public law character of the *Pacta Conventa* in 1914 under the pressure of a scientific conscience and objective analysis of the source, it was clear how this source can be finally judged, despite his later silent change of mind" (p. 32).

In this regard, another important question was raised, which N. Klaić presents in the following way: "It is important that earlier historiography did not pay much attention to the actual existence of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The recent historiography progressed in this view. Given that the *Pacta Conventa* served as a source for social rather than political relations, the question of how, where and when the aristocracy of the twelve tribes formed in Croatia should have been answered. While trying to answer this question, there was much wandering, especially because the starting point of the examination - that is, the claim that the twelve tribes actually existed in 1102, was incorrect. This is the main reason why M. Barada could not save his theory of the twelve tribes or of the origin of 'the gentry aristocracy', so Lj. Hauptmann disproved it easily. However, Hauptmann also could not prove that the *Pacta Conventa* actually originated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. No one actually doubted the existence of some of the twelve tribes in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, but no one managed to prove the existence of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes before the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century. Actually, since Hauptmann declared the *Pacta Conventa* to be a forgery, a critical historian could only establish the time of origin of the *Pacta Conventa* using the authentic sources about the twelve tribes" (p. 32-33).

The first authentic document on the establishment of the twelve tribes and the oldest manuscript in which the text of *Pacta Conventa* was written appeared in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. "Authentic sources showed that the basic content of *Pacta Conventa* was not false. The members of the twelve tribes actually did enjoy exemption from taxes – certainly after 1347, when the pact was formed. It appears that the military obligation of each tribe in the *Pacta Conventa* was also correctly recorded, since it is highly likely that the King reduced it for the lower aristocracy in the county of Luka, so that individuals did not have to go to war, but only ten cavalymen from each noble municipality (or tribe). Therefore, the *Pacta Conventa* was not a 'state and legal' contract or decree or 'free historical composition' (Barada), but a story of the alleged nobleness of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes from 1102 onward. This legend, as many others, had the purpose of showing how old the nobleness of the lower Croatian aristocracy was and this is why there is no evidence that it was ever used in the public or official life of medieval Croatia" (p. 33).

### e) The Seven Nonexistent Bans

An unquestionable historical forgery is the Appendix to the Cartulary of the St Peter monastery in Solin in the Poljice littoral area near Split, in which the anonymous author wrote that there were seven bans in Croatia (of Croatia, Slavonia, Požega, Podravina, Albania and Srem) who elected a king if the previous died without a male heir. Six tribes allegedly gave bans and the other six župans. “The historical essence of this story is out of the question” (p. 34). Even the Split text of the anonymous author, known by the reveals such as “Lukari-Ljubavac”, is a forgery with no historical value, although Ferdo Šišić thought it could be authentic.

### f) A Discussion of the Question of the Authenticity of Porphyrogenitus’ Claims

Nada Klaić discusses the questioning of Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ writing on the Byzantine domination in the Balkans at the time of the arrival of the Serbs and Croats and its crucial role in the Christianisation of the Croats. The Emperor historian described how the Serbs and Croats, at the order of Emperor Heraclius, settled in Dalmatia “after chasing the Avars out (the Croats) or finding the Avarian land abandoned (the Serbs)” (p. 37). Analysts observed discrepancies in his work and some stated that this chapter was inserted afterwards, especially the part concerning the position of Great or White Croatia and the description of the political position of the White Croats in their ancestral homeland” (p. 37). This went so far as to disqualify the Emperor’s statements *a priori* as a result of his fantasies. “However, when even extensive examination of the name Croatian in Czech, Russian and Polish sources until the 11<sup>th</sup> century showed that the Emperor’s White or Great Croatia was not ‘a fantasy land’, as V. Jagić claimed, the Emperor’s authority was re-established. Since that time, he was only reproached for not knowing anything about the settling of the Serbs but still composing a text about the Serbian migration according to the Croatian migration (Grafenauer) and, quite understandably, for increasing the role of Byzantium when he had the least reason to do so” (p. 37).

However, as N. Klaić continues, “the content of Chapter 32 leads to the conclusion that the Emperor knew much more about Serbian than Croatian history, which is, after all, understandable. He knew the Serbia of the 10<sup>th</sup> century especially well. He gave a detailed description of the political state of affairs and even ended this Chapter by listing the ‘inhabited’ towns in Christianised Serbia; to this he added the towns in ‘little country’ of Bosnia” (p. 38). Out of the other Byzantine sources, it is interesting that John Scylitzes wrote in his mid 11<sup>th</sup> century chronicle about Bodin’s 1073 uprising against the Byzantine Empire: “the Serbian people, which some call Croats” (p. 39). Even later, it would often happen that foreigners, not realising the distinctive qualities of the two Slavic peoples, would switch their names or identify them as synonyms.

### g) Evaluation of the Works of Croatian Historians

Evaluating the historiographical works of Croatian writers, N. Klaić emphasizes the importance of the work of Johannes Lucius who published the book *The Kingdom of*

*Dalmatia and Croatia in Six Volumes* in 1966 in Amsterdam, since this author processed a lot of source material. The works of Josip Mikoci from 1806, Ivan Švear from 1839 to 1842 and Šime Ljubić from 1864 could be considered historical-publicist curiosities of their own by their quality, but without any scientific significance. The first historiographical syntheses of early Croatian history by Tadija Smičiklas in *Croatian History* from 1882 and by Vjekoslav Klaić in the first of his five volumes are long out of date and without any scientific significance today. In Nada Klaić's opinion, the most important authors of works dealing with the earliest period of Croatian history are Franjo Rački in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and Ferdo Šišić in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of the latter is much greater since Rački could not give a complete and rounded synthesis. Šišić's work *The History of the Croats Under Home Rule* is factographically accurate and, as for its downsides, Nada Klaić thinks that "the most prominent is Šišić's aspiration to present the earliest Croatian-Hungarian relations in modern terms. Transferring the concept of a modern state into the early Middle Ages, Šišić – and his followers – tried in vain to prove the international character of the *Pacta Conventa* or the alleged union of the Croats and Hungarians at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century" (p. 56). Everyone who later wrote reviews of Croatian history stuck to his framework and his basic image, such as Katić in 1936, Barada in 1943 and Hauptmann in 1944. Of the 1939 work *Croatian Culture Over a Thousand Years* by Josip Horvat, Klaić says it was written "in a free publicist spirit", generally assessing that: "Unbounded by scientific strictness, Horvat could quite understandably allow himself liberties that strict scientific and critical history do not tolerate" (p. 58). Concerning the 1965 book by Zvonimir Črnja entitled *Cultural History of Croatia*, Nada Klaić points out that Črnja often replaced the facts with vulgarizations and bold, but inaccurate claims" (p. 58).

Concerning the ethnogenesis of the Croats, "the political circumstances that distorted the results that objective science could obtain" (p. 59) were quite influential in the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the lack of source materials. Franjo Rački believed that the Croats were ethnographically just one tribe at the time of settlement and that this tribe genetically divided further into five or seven clans, their aristocracy stemming from the typical Slavic social relations of that time. "Rački's Slavic theory would be replaced a few years later by Klaić's Croatian theory. This shift from Slavic to Croatian theory or, more precisely, from Slavic to non-Slavic, paved the way for different combinations intended for political purposes after Klaić" (p. 60). Based on the records of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and Archdeacon Thomas of Split, Klaić concluded that the Croatian aristocracy originated from the time of their migration, so Nada Klaić quotes one of his works, explaining the basic thesis of Vjekoslav Klaić: "The conqueror Croats found themselves a chosen, noble class of the population compared to the previous, conquered inhabitants, whatever their origin; they were the masters of the conquered land and all the previous inhabitants were their subjects" (p. 60) She notes that Klaić, "however, allowed that every ethnographic distinction disappeared over time", but that "a significant social and legal difference remained". "Therefore, the population had from then on been divided into noble Croats and constrained people or serfs on 'the estates of the noble Croats' ... As soon as the question of social duality arose, there was just one step left to the proclamation of the conqueror Croats or the 'masters of the Slavs' for foreigners" (p. 60).



However, it was not Vjekoslav Klaić that made this step, but Polish Gumplowicz. “Not caring much for the accuracy of the historical method and the necessity of historical proof as a sociologist, he claimed, based on rather superficial arguments, that the Croats were Goths who turned Slavic, nothing less than the descendants of the Goths that retreated into Galicia after 375 and became the rulers of the Slavs there. As one of the standpoints for his claim, he used Archdeacon Thomas’s records of the Goths... The very example provided by Gumplowicz shows how dangerous and wrong it is, from the scientific point of view, to use a medieval writer of the 13<sup>th</sup> century to prove historical facts that are nine centuries older. In addition, the Gothic theory on the origin of the Croats is still corroborated only by the ‘Gothomania’ of two writers: the Priest of Duklja and Archdeacon Thomas. It certainly also had roots in Herder’s understanding of ‘the meek Slavic soul’ and Slavic pacifism, the traits that allegedly did not allow the Slavs to create their own state. Sociological research purportedly led to the same results so, all of a sudden, a belief appeared that foreign conquerors organized the states of all the Slavs” (p. 60). Such a view was held by J. Rus, the Slovenian geographer. “As opposed to Gumplowicz, he believed that the Croats were ‘Gothicised’ in the Balkans. In the later debates, ... Rus did not hesitate to claim that the Croats were one of the most numerous east-Germanic tribes. The Slavs settled among these allegedly Germanic Croats and the Croats gave them ‘the statehood qualities’, i.e. the dynasty and aristocracy” (p. 60). J. Kelemina supported this Rus’ position. “Most of the critics firmly rejected this Gothic theory. Granted, this was not so hard to do as Rus’s constructions were either a figment of his imagination or a product of his ignorance of the matter ... And the critique of Rus’s linguistic sources – especially regarding names – proved that he was under a misapprehension that arose from a lack of awareness of ‘principal Germanic laws’ ... Only K. Šegvić appraised the Gothic theory ... Therefore, based on weak foundations and sometimes burdened by the pressure of unhealthy political ambitions, the Gothic theory on the origin of the Croats could not sustain itself” (p. 60-61).

Ljudomil Hauptmann entirely built the Iranian-Caucasian theory on the origin of the Croats, inspired, like some other historians and philologists, by the discovery of the personal name of *Horoatos* on the Crimean Tanais tablets from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. Niko Županić attempted to prove that “the original Croats were not Slavic, but a foreign tribe from Asian Sarmatia that was thrown into the Transcarpathian Slavic homeland amidst the storm of the Migration Period, where they subjected a part of the population and started calling it Croatian” (p. 61). Županić invoked M. Vasmer who, in his philological research, constructed the conclusion that all South-Russian peoples, such as the Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, Ossetes and Kimerians, were of the Iranian origin and that the word ‘*hurvata*’ means ‘friend’ in Old Persian. Some Slavists also included the Circassians among the Slavs-Antes, as a people of Caucasian-Iranian origin. “After Hauptmann, M. Barada is another historian who tried to prove the Antean origin of the Croats, but the critics dismissed his attempt as entirely unscientific” (p. 62). Such arbitrary discussions about ethnogenesis had to remain completely futile and pointless. “Even if it could have been proved that the personal name of *Horoatos* came from a tribe, would it be possible to look for the origin of an entire tribe based solely on this fact? The genesis of a tribe is a far more complicated process that is almost impossible to discover relying on historiography alone. The archaeological discoveries point to the mixing of different cultures on the territory that is believed to be the original homeland of the Croats. Therefore, we can return for now to the earlier historiographic opinion that

saw no reason to separate the Croats and Serbs from the other Slavs” (p. 62). In any case, even solving the problem of the origin of the name Croatian, “did not necessarily mean the solution of the genesis of the people bearing this name” (p. 62). In this matter, Tomo Maretić determined that “etymological examinations cannot be corroborated with the meaning of the word” (p. 63).

## 2. A Step Back in the Science of History

Unmasking a large number of historiographical legends that were passed uncritically among historical and pseudo-historical writers – such as the appropriation of the Narentan King Slavac as an alleged Croatian ruler, or the legend of the murder of Croatian King Zvonimir because he wanted to take the Croats into a crusade when Pope called on him, even though there is no possibility of any crusade being planned at the time – Nada Klaić again stops at the question of the *Pacta Conventa*. “It can be somewhat understood that the so-called *Pacta Conventa* or *Qualiter* (as M. Barada started calling this source) – the alleged contract between King Coloman and the representatives of the twelve tribes of the Croatian Kingdom – served, until 1918, as a support for the theory that the earliest Hungarian-Croatian relations were based on a purported ‘international contract’. Earlier historiography ... meant to use the *Pacta Conventa* to refute the claims of Hungarian historians that Croatia was a conquered country. The fight between Hungarian and Croatian historians was all the more obvious since neither of the adversaries could corroborate their claims with authentic source material. Having collected an enormous amount of literature, Ferdo Šišić still decided in 1914 to deny the public-law character of the *Pacta Conventa*. At the time, he claimed that it was not a ‘public law act’ and nor was it ‘international’, instead it was a simple royal decree issued to a certain, ‘very large number of people in Croatia, in Kapela to the south’ ... But, this decisive step that, by his own admission, Šišić made on the basis of ‘original analysis, primarily of the sources themselves, and then of the entire literature’ ... was so bold that even he became scared of it and soon returned to the opinion of earlier historiography. This is why, in *The History of the Croats*, the *Pacta Conventa* was again a ‘public-law contract’ or ‘agreement’ that was allegedly in accordance ‘with the system of government of that time’ ... In this way, Šišić, who saw the problem very clearly in 1914, not only brought back futile discussion based on a wrong premise but also completely unnecessarily rendered it impossible to continue by keeping quiet about his own objective results” (p. 73).

As contemporary historians of public law, such as Marko Kostrančić and Oleg Mandić, both distinguished university professors, “each in their own way support this outdated ‘public-law’ theory on the *Pacta Conventa*, their opinions can be regarded as misplaced. All the more so since, in the meantime, even the historical critics dismissed the *Pacta Conventa* as an authentic source. In other words, after Šišić, the *Pacta Conventa* only interested historians as a source for the area of social problems, not the political history of the Croats ... Hauptmann finally decided to declare the *Pacta Conventa* a forgery that was, in his opinion, made in the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century. Since he had nothing but the alleged analogy with Andrew’s so-called Golden Bull of 1222 to justify the *Pacta Conventa* at that time..., after his work, the task remained for historiography to try and answer this question. This was not so hard. In other words, when a critical historian has to decide between a single forgery - that is the

*Pacta Conventa* – and several authentic sources, i.e. the documents from the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century – he does not really have the freedom of choice and must opt for the authentic sources. And these showed more than clearly that the institution of aristocracy of the twelve tribes in the Croatian Kingdom was formed around 1350 ... Its members were in the territory of the county of Luka, where even M. Barada placed them ... As the almost nominal rule of the Arpads and Angevins in Croatia until 1347 prevented the formation of a separate class of lower gentry, it seemed obvious that the origins of this gentry should be dated to the period when the Hungarian-Croatian king first gained ground in Croatia. This could not have happened before 1347. Thus, the actual authentic sources indicated the correct solution of the origin of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes.

“Seen in the light of this solution, the alleged *Pacta Conventa* is nothing more than a probably failed attempt on the part of this small Croatian aristocracy to disguise the time the real nobility was obtained with a story of three hundred-year long nobility. It was much more elegant to show a nobility that not even the distinguished aristocratic families of the then Croatia could show, like the Bribir family, the Frankopan family, the Gušić family of Krbava and other. So, when historians ... return to the *Pacta Conventa* as a source for the origin of the gentry or as a ‘public-law’ contract, they make a double mistake: not only are they unable to prove the existence of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes before the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century with authentic sources, but they cannot give an answer to the question of how such a contract could appear in the feudal 12<sup>th</sup> century. After all, objective contemporary historiography has chosen to dismiss the *Pacta Conventa*..., so this is additional proof that any unfounded insistence on outdated theories is harmful to historiography. Besides, it shows Croatian history in an entirely wrong light because it gives Coloman a power in Croatia that he never had” (p. 73-74).

To curb the feudal magnates, the king often had to form alliances with the lower gentry, as was the case all over Europe. “The legend of the origin of the twelve tribes had no other purpose to Coloman in 1102 but to support the allegedly old origins of the peasant gentry of the county of Luka” (p. 81). Therefore, there is no doubt that “if, despite this solution of the problem of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes, various attempts to revive the outdated ‘public-law’ theory of the so-called *Pacta Conventa* do appear in literature, then this could only be done in a methodologically impermissible way; since every historian or jurist that gets involved in the discussion of the problem after Hauptmann has to start by reviewing the source. And the so-called *Pacta Conventa* or the origin of the aristocracy of the twelve tribes in 1102 can still be defended only if the forgery is given the advantage over authentic sources. Accordingly, either the works of Mandić himself... or some seemingly critical remarks... of other authors are of no value for critical historiography because they mean a step backwards. Besides, they are a product of unhealthy phenomena in Croatian historiography” (p. 81).

### **a) Pseudo-Historiography in the Example of Gregory of Nin**

Over the last decades, the long pseudo-historiographically formed and developed legend of the role of Gregory of Nin in the struggle for the use of the Glagolitic script as the first unquestionably Slavic script in church documents, was convincingly refuted. As Nada Klaić reports, Lovro Katić and Miko Barada “determined with strong enough evidence that this bishop of Nin fought for precedence among the Dalmatian bishops and that he was not a leader of the Glagolitic fighters. Since then, every regression to the

earlier interpretations of the policy of Gregory of Nin must be considered a failure. All the more so since Barada, in my opinion correctly, especially emphasized that the Dalmatian bishops, as the suffragans of Constantinople, were the protectors of the Glagolitic script. Therefore, even if it was allowed to divide the church into the Latin (allegedly feudal and rich) and Glagolitic (allegedly popular and poor) based on language, the image of reality would be reversed: the Croats faithful to Rome and dependent on it could only defend the Latin language of the liturgy, while the Dalmatian bishops had enough reason to keep their prior custom in the use of church language. Therefore, the opinion of Vladimir Babić (*History of the Yugoslav Peoples I*, p. 194 and further) should also be dismissed as outdated and unfounded. But, the same should be done with the unsuccessful attempts of Josip Hamm (*Glagolitism and its Significance for the South Slavs...*) who tried to prove that 'glagolitism' was a markedly Croatian movement. This is why I thought it was necessary to warn about the unsustainability of the theory of the Croatian Glagolitism and return the debate to the basis that was already partly established by M. Barada (*Historical Background of the Croatian Glagolitism in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Centuries*)" (p. 88).

Earlier forgeries concerning the Slavic liturgy language were disproven but new ones were made persistently. Ivan Srebrnić was trying to prove the alleged tolerance of Pope John X toward the church language but he "constructed his own theory by simply trying to eliminate what was in his way from the sources" (p. 88). Kerubin Šegvić "maintained that he can conclude that not only was the fight for the unification of the church language led in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but also that Bishop Gregory of Nin lived and acted in this time" (p. 88). They denied the authenticity of the preserved Assembly documents for this purpose, despite the fact "that even today, a writer could not be found who would know how to forge such source material" (p. 88). Ferdo Šišić accepted the false image of the conflict between the 'Glagolitics' and Latins from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. "This is why he saw Croatia as divided into two parties: the lower gentry and lower clergy who were fighting against the conclusions of the Assembly, and the court, aristocracy and higher clergy allegedly forming 'the reformist party'. This image took him over so much that he never verified it through sources and, what is more, never hesitated to interpret the failure of 'state independence' with such a seemingly wrecked state in the country. According to Šišić's opinion, the main purpose to this struggle was given by Priest Vulfo, who purportedly fought for the separation of the Croatian state from the Dalmatian one" (p. 89). Franjo Fancev was trying to prove that Slavonia was also Glagolitic until the 11<sup>th</sup> century, following the position of Josip Mikoci. Ivan Kukuljević and Ivan Tkalčić agreed with this, but Nada Klaić concludes that "this theory has very frail foundations" (p. 90).

After the extensive introductory part and a review of historical sources and previous research, Nada Klaić begins her interpretation with the information that, after their arrival in the Balkan Peninsula, even "the closest Croatian neighbours hardly knew about the Croatian name for a long time" (p. 96). So "the Frankish chronicles give Croatian prince Borna the title of Liburnian-Dalmatian duke and call his adversary Louis the prince of Lower Pannonia; Even in the advanced Middle Ages, Hungarian chroniclers use the term Dalmatia when they refer to Croatia" (p. 95-96). At any rate, "the process of primarily strengthening and then spreading the Croatian core happens in the historical provinces of Istria, Dalmatia, Liburnia and Pannonia. However, it would be wrong to assume that this process happened equally in every part of this spacious

territory. It seems that the original core included parts of ancient Dalmatia and Liburnia that would remain classical Croatian territory in the later Middle Ages: these are banate and royal Croatia. Out of these two parts of the Croatian core, the area beyond Mountain Velebit is unquestionably older, and it is not unjustified to think that the greatest strength of the young Croatian kingdom radiated from this focus” (p. 96). It is obvious here that N. Klaić also thinks that the Croats, having arrived in the new territories, found previously settled Slavs there. In that regard, she writes: “The warrior group of Croatian conquerors, although probably small in numbers, removed the Avars and individually organized political rule in the conquered territory. However, this is only the beginning of the organisation of the Croatian tribe, since the atomised Slavic world was yet to be united. The road to the creation of larger political units was long and agonizing for several reasons” (p. 96).

### **b) Slavonia without Croatian Characteristics**

A larger Croatian political unit, in Nada Klaić’s opinion, could not be formed without foreign help. “Primarily, nature negatively influenced the attempts to blend the smaller units into a larger entity. The wilderness and harshness of the Dinaric Alps prevented the cattle-raising population that lived scattered through them from connecting under the firm hand of a single ruler. The agricultural conditions in the mountain areas of the northwest Balkans were so minute that the cultivable areas were islands in an endless sea of forests and swamps. And agriculture is one of the safe foundations on which a medieval state rests. If, therefore, the economic basis of public rule was not very firm, it was to be strengthened in some other way; this is why help was requested from outside. While there was none, the process of unification was very slow. Since only the Frankish conqueror was a firm support for the Croatian ruler, the Croatian principality rose suddenly among Slavic political units on the border of Frankish Empire as late as the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, even in this time, the process of blending is still ongoing so the peripheral provinces break away from the central authority. This is why the inhabitants of the province of Gacka crossed from Borna’s side to Louis’s, although they were forced to return under his rule. In this view, the 10<sup>th</sup> century is an important turning point, as it appears to us today: not only did the Croatian ruler cross the peaks of the Dinaric Alps but he also got down to Pannonia and placed his victorious flag on the territory between the Drava River and Mountain Gvozd. This way, the flat Slavonia entered the sphere of interest of the political unit from the Adriatic littoral area. However, neither the Croats nor the Hungarians, who organised their own state on the other side of the Drava River, had enough strength to permanently subject the open plains of Slavonia. The 10<sup>th</sup> century of Slavonian history passed in changes of power over the Pannonian basin or, more likely, in actual anarchy. And then even there, in circumstances still not clear enough, a new political unit – the *ducatus* or banate of Slavonia was established. All the way through to the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Slavonia was not under the permanent rule of either Croatia or Hungary. This is why none of the mentioned names were transferred to it, throughout the entire Middle Ages, it had the general Slavic name – Slavonic country or Slavonia – given to it by the first Slavic settlers in the 6<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 96-97).

There is no doubt that the Slavs settled in Dalmatia approximately a hundred years before the arrival of the Croats in Dalmatia. This also explains the fact that the

Slavonians and Croats spoke different languages, though both Slavic. The former were Kajkavians, as were the Slovenes, and the latter were Chakavians. As opposed to her predecessors in the field of historiography, Nada Klaić does not appropriate Bosnia and the Principality of Neretva [Narenta], but she also neglects the source documents that testify to their originally Serbian character. She is fonder of the insistence on the political particularity. If they cannot be treated as ethnically Croatian, then at least they would not be Serbian countries. In this sense, she writes: “Bosnia also fell under the neighbouring political units. The fact that the name for this special political unit came from the old name for the river around which the Bosnian state formed is proof that the political organisation formed through the gradual development of conditions among the domestic Slavic population. In other words, this means that neither the Croatian nor Serbian core directly influenced the formation of the Bosnian state. However, in the constant shift of political borders on the Balkans in the first centuries of the Middle Ages, Bosnia was not spared either from the occasional surprises either from west or southwest – from Croatia – or from east – from Serbia. However, the sources for this earliest age in Bosnia are rare and unreliable, though still clearly showing that Bosnia had its individual development that was, like Slavonia, manifested in the formation of a special Bosnian banate. But the distance of central Bosnia from the most important neighbouring political units was so great that it assured a mostly undisturbed development. This is why Bosnia has almost no role in the political development of Croatia during the rule of the Trpimirović family. The same could be said of the Principality of Neretva that only entered the same political frame with Croatia, Slavonia and Bosnia in the 13<sup>th</sup> century - that is, among the countries that were gathered by the Arpad dynasty under the crown of St Stephen. Concerning this, we are interested in the development of this neighbouring principedom that maintained supremacy in the mid Adriatic area for centuries. Following the development of the Principality of Neretva throughout centuries, we become aware of the advantage this ‘*Sclavinia*’ had over the others, primarily because it did not have *corpora aliena*, that is foreign towns, on its doorstep. This is why a Narentan pirate freely went away to the sea, of which he was the master” (p. 97).

### 3. Demographic Movements in the Scientific Work of Nada Klaić

Nada Klaić explains the demographic processes that occurred in Croatian settling and the Croatian-Roman ethnic amalgams that happened there as lasting processes in the following way: “When settling the new homeland, the Croatian ethnic element, quite understandably, did not stop at the boundaries of what would later become the Croatian state. While breaking through, it pushed the old Roman population all the way to the coast and even as far as the islands. However, neither the Slavs in the 6<sup>th</sup> nor the Croats in the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries were satisfied with this; they forced their way to the coast and across to the islands in Dalmatia. This is how it happened that two Byzantine provinces – Istria and Dalmatia – further altered their ethnic and social-economic structures due to intense colonisations in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Slavs and Croats got their place in foreign political entities in this way and contributed to the revival and further development of the almost ruined east-Roman provinces. This is the reason why we include both Byzantine provinces in medieval Croatian history, from Justinian’s reconquest onwards. Istria, however, replaced Byzantine rule with Frankish at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, but

the Slavs kept helping the new rule to build. The Slavic municipality spread in Istria to include the reduced boroughs, and its organisation grew so strong that it survived, with some changes, throughout the entire Middle Ages. Accordingly, the Slavs left a stronger ethnic and political impact in medieval Istria than did the town communes on its shores or various foreign aristocrats with supreme positions in it (margraves, princes, counts, etc.).

Byzantine Dalmatia was also brought back to life after the so-called Migration Period by the Slavs and Croats. Thanks to their colonisation of the islands, Dalmatia revived and the skeleton of the remains of Roman population only became rejuvenated by Slavic flesh and blood. Therefore the Croats and Romans lived in Byzantine Dalmatia in an undisturbed community throughout the Middle Ages. This harmonious life was supported by two facts: firstly, the linguistic distinction slowly faded since the Croats kept settling in Roman towns, bringing fresh forces; secondly, regardless of the linguistic differences, both had their own political organisation. In this way a free municipality, unquestionably the most precious ancient legacy, contributed to the fact that the 'remains of the remains' of Roman Dalmatia resisted the pressure from land and sea for centuries. Neither a Croat nor a Roman on the territory of Byzantine Dalmatia had a reason to sacrifice their political liberty to a conqueror from the land or sea. The mutual life and political interests of the whole ethnically diverse population firmly bounded the territorially shattered parts of the Byzantine province so that, after consolidation in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, it not only preserved its integrity during further development, but also secured autonomy. Needless to say, this could be possible if the Empire on the Bosphorus had enough strength to transform nominal power into real supreme power. It was not until the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when the pressure from the land took on a new form - i.e. when 'the king of Pannonians' obtained the Dalmatian province through inheritance with the Croatian crown - that Dalmatia was forced into obedience with weapons. It was deprived of its autonomy and, with the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a new era dawned in Dalmatian history" (p. 97-98).

#### **a) The Intentionally Unclear Thesis on the Croats in Foreign Countries**

Since many writers point out that, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbs settled on an entirely ravaged and almost abandoned territory and the Croats in the area where the Slavs and Avars already lived, suppressing the Romans, Nada Klaić is not sure which ethnic population prevails, whether the unspecified Slavs that came in the 5<sup>th</sup> century or the Croats that arrived a century later under their own name. However, geographic distribution of the Chakavian language testifies to the identical prevailing ethnic structure of the population of Dalmatia and Istria of that time so there is little room to doubt her statements. However, this is followed by N. Klaić's thesis on the diffusion of the Croatian population in foreign political units, so it was necessary for her to provide clarification as it is quite certain there was no significant Croatian population in Slavonia, Bosnia and the Narentan principedom, let alone in Hum, Travunia and Duklja. In the next part of the text, she probably intentionally leaves substantial doubts and the possibility of different interpretations when she writes: "Five centuries in the life of the Croats in the Adriatic area passed in efforts to spread the rule of the Croatian rulers from the original core to the neighbouring political units. If these aspirations ended in one

failure after another, then the blame is not so much on the Croatian ruler as on the nature of the land and the strength of the neighbours, since the wall of the Dinaric Alps could not be overcome from the sea even by the Roman conqueror and the Eastern Empire was powerful enough to impose its solution to the Dalmatian issue on the Croats. This is why the Croatian population lived scattered in foreign political units until the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when some of them were united by Arpad. Not until the 12<sup>th</sup> century would Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia form one whole under the supreme rule of the Hungarian king. Nevertheless, even then, none of these countries would lose its political individuality, as they had formed feudal societies and economies over the centuries, in which a part of public rule passed from the ruler to the aristocracy. They became the bearers of the political life to such an extent that the real ruler was almost a foreigner in the country. After all, this image of feudal dispersion does not surprise us at all because we encounter it all over Europe” (p. 98).

As for Istria, Klaić writes about two Croatian colonisations and notes: “The earliest Croatian or Chakavian colonisation corresponds, in the opinion of the philologists, to four groups of Chakavian dialect: Liburnian, Žminj-Pazin, Labin and Boljun. The remaining two Chakavian groups – Čepić and Čička – belong to the younger Croatian colonisation” (p. 102). It is certain that Chakavian was never spoken in Slavonia. Since the Lombards left Slavonia and broke into Italy in 568, the Avars and Slavs settled the Slavonian territories west of the Danube. The Slavs were more numerous but the Avars were dominant in military terms. The Slavists attempted to discover which language the Slavonic Slavs spoke and three basic theories appeared, Pannonian, Slovakian and Slovenian or Slavic as it was first called. According to the Pannonian theory, the Slavonians spoke the authentic Slavic dialect. Somewhere close to the end of the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Tiberius (who died in 582), the Slavonian Slavs liberated from the Avaric guardianship and started acting increasingly independently - this being forty to sixty years prior to the arrival of the Serbs and Croats on the Balkan Peninsula. Nada Klaić also draws attention to the connection of the Slovenian (Slovene – as she calls it) language with the West-Slavic languages (p. 127). The records from the document of Constantine Porphyrogenitus on the conflict between the Croats and Avars over Dalmatia are probably true, as are those of the Croatian victory and the fact that they “slew some of the Avars and forced the others into submission” (p. 136). As N. Klaić comments, “perhaps we can connect the favourable position of ‘banate counties’ in Croatia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century with this report. It would not be the case that the Anonymous singled out Lika, Gacka and Krbava as a separate administrative unit under the rule of a ban, so we should probably look for the remaining Avars in this part of Croatia” (p. 137).

Serious historiography believes that the Croatian state formed in the first decades of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and that it was not therefore coincidental that Borna was the first ruler mentioned in sources. The state did not exist before this time and Nada Klaić proves that the tribes did not form parishes because they did not have tribal names. “The name of a parish was not related to any ‘tribe’. The names were geographical, topographical or historical, taken from the antiquity or even older. In other words, this means that parishes, as administrative units, got their names after the area in which they formed. Had the Slavs who settled in the Balkans together with the Avars had their tribes, they would have kept them. Accordingly, the names of parishes in Croatia speak against the opinion that the Croats settled in these tribes as historiography envisions. Another



question is what term we should use to denote the political unit that the Croats formed after the arrival. We usually talk about the tribal unions that brought together the Croats and Slavs, or about the unique people that received the Croatian name just because the Croats took over the lead of the Slavs at the time of the fight against the Avars. This refers to the political organisation centred between the Cetina River and Mountain Velebit and which might have spread to ‘areas in the near vicinity’ in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries” (p. 146). Nada Klaić thinks that the elements of a typical state of the Croats must have originated earlier, right after the arrival and victory over the local Avars. “After all, if Croatian rule only became apparent in Dalmatia at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, we would not know how to interpret the two-hundred-year long restricted position of Byzantine Dalmatia. Only if we assume that the Croats kept the territories taken from the Avars firmly under their rule since their arrival can we find the answer to the question of why the Dalmatian citizens did not return to their old centres anymore” (p. 147). But there are no historical records of these first two hundred years.

### **b) Frankish Theory on the Christianisation of the Croats**

Until the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Slavonia was inhabited by a nomadic Avaric and Slavic population. Only after the Frankish state began spreading towards the Danube did the population structure and its way of life change radically. “With the removal of Avaric rule, the element that prevented mass settling in the Pannonian basin disappeared. This is why the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century is the age of the Alpine Slavs’ intense colonisation of the Lower Pannonia. It is assumed that such an extent of colonisation was only possible because the former Slavic countries did not have the three-field system that would enable a more rational utilisation of the land. This is why the need for land was unquestionably the basic incentive that drove the Slavic peasants to the former nomad territories” (p. 169). Therefore, the first strong state rule that appeared in Pannonia after the arrival of the Slavs enabled a shift from the nomadic way of life to an agricultural life, with the additional mass colonisation of the Slavs from the Alpine territories. “Until the third decade of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Carantanian Slovenes were no different from the other Slavic tribes inside the eastern border of the Frankish state” (p. 167). On the eastern border of the Frankish state lived the Slovenes, Slavonians, Czechs and Slovaks - members of the West-Slavic group of peoples, which is also proven by their linguistic similarities. Besides, Nada Klaić consistently calls the Slavs in general Slavs, while the Alpine Slavs, or Slovenians, she called Slovenes. According to her terminology, the Slovenes made Slovenia and the Slavs perhaps the imaginary Slavia.

Croatia was the southernmost part of the Frankish state in the Balkans. “The Croatian prince was directly subjected to the Friulian margrave and he was under the rule of the member of the Carolingian dynasty who held the Italian kingdom” (p. 206). Given that it is now scientifically irrefutable that the Christianisation of the Croats could not have happened before the year 800, this had a crucial impact on Nada Klaić, leading her to accept the so-called Frankish theory on the Christianisation of the Croats, as opposed to the Dalmatian one. “It can be considered an almost logical consequence of the political changes at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and it is justified by the Frankish church policy. The alliance between the Pope and Charlemagne included not only the duty of the latter to defend the papal state as ‘the *patricius Romanus*’ but also to help

spread Christianity among the pagan peoples. The fact that the cult of Frankish-Aquileian saints spread over the Croatian territory is certainly in favour of the Frankish theory, and the names of the priests in the oldest Croatian records also speak for it. Since the Roman towns were under Byzantine rule - foreign for the Croats - the centre of the new church life in Croatia had to become the restored town of Nin. Christianisation probably started right at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century but it was perhaps weakened by changes on the throne and the shifts of rule over Croatia. No one can doubt that the first Croatian rulers, who finally formed the principedom with the help of the Franks, supported the Catholic Church. However, an intense Christian life was actually centred on the narrow coastal belt as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> century, so this could indicate the extended paganism of remote mountain areas. It is not likely that some general wave of Christianisation spread over all the Croatian territories during the Frankish rule and it is very likely that the Bishopric of Nin had not yet been founded" (p. 204-206). Besides, every Croatian tomb found in Dalmatia and Istria dating from before 800 testifies that the Croats were not Christian. And the first Croatian prince was Borna, whose existence is confirmed in numerous written sources from around 818.

### c) Uncorroborated Claims

Nada Klaić also engages in the examination of records from Einhard's chronicle concerning Louis hiding with the Serbs when he ran away from Sisak and left Slavonia in 822. "Having left the town of Sisak, he hid among the Serbs, the people that held most of Dalmatia, as it is said" (p. 211). According to N. Klaić's words, "the Serbs with whom Louis hid while running south were undoubtedly the medieval parish and noble municipality of the same name from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (the present day Srb) that was on the Una road linking the Adriatic and Pannonian countries for centuries. Every combination regarding this record from the chronicle concerning Bosnia, which would allegedly be under Serbian rule, is not only far-fetched but also impossible" (p. 211). Bosnia at that time was east of and far away from the Serbs, but it is important to note here that the Serbs lived around the Una River, which means that Croatia could only extend as far as the Una River. It would be historically impossible that the Croats lived all the way to the Una River, the Serbs around it and the Croats again farther on towards Bosnia and the Drina River. Having arrived in the Balkans, the Serbs and Croats obtained clearly separated and mutually distinct territories. In the border areas there could have been some symbiosis, but Klaić also says that today's Srb was an independent parish and noble municipality even in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, surviving the Croatian state and over two hundred years of Hungarian rule without a change in ethnic identity. Also, everything east of the Serbs had to be Serbian, which is proven by the fact that this population continually spoke only Shtokavian, as opposed to the Croats who were exclusively Chakavians, and even Nada Klaić, when trying to prove the Croatian colonisation of Istria, uses the fact that both colonisers spoke Chakavian as the most appropriate argument. We should definitely mention her remark, primarily related to the works of Ferdo Šišić and Simo Ćirković, but also to other authors of the same conviction: "Since it is almost unknown to historiography that present-day Srb was a separate noble municipality and castrum in the Middle Ages from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the '*Natio Sorabi*' from Einhard's chronicle are mostly sought in today's Bosnia" (p. 211-212).

Aware that the Narentans and the independent principedom of Neretva (Narenta) cannot be included among the Croatian people and lands through any objective method, Nada Klaić searches frenetically for a compromise solution to avoid treating them as originally Serbian. To this end, she writes: “Out of the Slavic tribes that quietly settled and took over the Adriatic littoral and islands, those that filled the space between the Cetina and Neretva Rivers did not stand out especially. The names that these Slavic inhabitants received after settlement – they were called the Marians (seaside men), Arentans (*Neretljani*) or Pagans (*Pogani*) – show best that they did not belong to either the Croatian or Serbian cores” (p. 212). This is not a valid argument since the name Pagan can only prove the fact that they were the last to be Christianised and that they firmly and persistently, sometimes bloodily, resisted the Christian missionaries. On the other hand, why could some Serbs be regionally named the *Timočani* and *Braničevci*, while others could not be *Neretljani*?! After all, as Klaić herself admits, “Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus does talk of their Serbian affiliation, but only because he transfers the political state of affairs of his age into the 7<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 212-213). But, only three hundred years passed between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and the *Neretljani* resisted Christianity even as Constantine’s contemporaries, so the logical conclusion is that their ethnic identity did not change.

However, something else is almost unbelievable coming from the otherwise very meticulous and conscientious Nada Klaić. When describing how the Narentans settled the nearby Adriatic islands - such as Brač and Hvar - and gradually absorbed the Roman population found there, she says: “The Narentans that absorbed the Roman population were Chakavians” (p. 214). Just a bare claim without a single shred of proof. She should have offered at least one proof because, if this was true, the Narentans would unquestionably and unmistakably be Croatian. As for Brač, Hvar, Korčula and Mljet, their original population spoke the Roman language and then, after the Serbs prevailed in its structure, Shtokavian. Chakavians only settled in Lastovo in this part of the Adriatic Sea, which can be proven by preserved documents. They even spoke a specific Lastovo mixture of Chakavian and Shtokavian, which Aleksandar Belić also draws attention to in his works. Besides, N. Klaić points out that, thanks to the firmness and resolution of its population, “the Narentan state would be preserved until almost the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. No Slavic principedom on the Adriatic coast can claim such political development” (p. 215). Since there are no other serious historical sources on the ethnic affiliation of the Neretvans apart from Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ *De Administrando Imperio*, Nada Klaić tries to discredit the Emperor historian with rather arbitrary assumptions, saying that he “derived the origin of Narentans from non-Christianised Serbs because he found himself in trouble when he had to present their past, which was unknown to him” (p. 215).

Convinced that the Narentans were completely independent until the 9<sup>th</sup> century, N. Klaić further claims that “there are no records of the heirs of the first Narentan princes from the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the silence of the sources is no proof that there never were any. There are no reasons to assume – as is sometimes wrongly done in historiography – that the Narentan principedom was permanently annexed to any other neighbouring principedom at that time. With the intention of negating its political individuality, the literature usually talks of the Narentan ‘region’ rather than a principedom. Although Tomislav’s Croatia went far out of its former boundaries, the opinion that it also spread to the Narentan archipelago or to the continental part of the

princedom is unfounded” (p. 218). Here, she especially negates the claims of Ferdo Šišić from his *History of the Croats* that Tomislav extended Croatia to the Neretva River. “The starting premise of Šišić’s theory on the spreading of Tomislav’s rule to the Narentan area is the wrong number of soldiers that Tomislav allegedly had” (p. 218). However, Nada Klaić had to admit, although unwillingly, that, at the time of the attack of the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon on the Byzantine empire, Serbian ruler Petar Gojković managed “to spread its rule over a part of Pagania” (p. 218). Constantine Porphyrogenitus writes that, at the time, the whole of Pagania was “under the Serbian archon’s rule” (p. 218). He adds to this that Pagania spread from the Cetina to the Neretva, that it had three parishes and that it “bordered on Zahumlje and partly on Croatia” that “bordered on Serbia toward the Cetina River and Livno” (p. 220).

#### **d) Second-class Sources on Tomislav**

It is paradoxical that, although no one questions Tomislav’s historical role as one of the most significant Croatian rulers, the source “material from his time is unusually scarce and partially unreliable. Not a single stone monument has his name inscribed. No church remains testify to the building activities of his people” (p. 275). So Tomislav’s alleged rule over Slavonia can only be speculated about - or it can be, as Nada Klaić reasons, surmised from second-hand sources. It is highly likely that Tomislav was successful in armed battles with the invading Hungarians, but everything else is based on assumptions, even Nada Klaić’s discussion. “The victory over the Hungarians or Bulgarians did not mean the strengthening of power. If Tomislav succeeded in organising parishes in Slavonia, he could not permanently set his governors or zhupans in them. This is why Slavonia was more of an annexed than subjected province for the Croatian rulers of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, so this would also be one of the reasons why Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus talks about its independent archon even at Tomislav’s time. Slavonia would remain in this rather unstable relationship with Croatia until the first decades of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when the question of its organisation would arise under the influence of a stabilised Hungary on the other side of the Drava and Danube Rivers” (p. 279). Our only knowledge about the extent of Tomislav’s Croatia comes from the text of an anonymous author who completed the documents of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in which Tomislav is not even mentioned. Based on this, Nada Klaić summarizes: “The southeast border of Croatia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century was at the Cetina River – which was certainly crossed by Tomislav – while Livno was probably the border with the Serbs. However, as this writer includes Imota, Pliva and Pset in today’s Bosnia among the Croatian counties, it is obvious that the Croatian border left the Cetina River and, over the Dinaric Alps, included not only Livno and Imota but also the farther areas on the territory of the Upper Vrbas” (p. 284-285). Klaić states that there are no authentic records that Tomislav was ever crowned a king and she deems the earlier historiographical claims that Tomislav had a strong fleet and took over the rule of Dalmatian towns from the Byzantine Empire as misconceptions.

The misapprehension that Tomislav ruled over Dalmatia was started by Franjo Rački in his time. However, as N. Klaić determined, “the relations of the Dalmatian towns with Tomislav during the time of church councils rules out the possibility that they were under the protection of the Croatian ruler. The Dalmatians had such a hostile attitude toward the Croatian ruler that he apparently never thought of protecting them” (p. 292-

293). After all, the Bulgarians did not even threaten these towns but they pounced on Constantinople. “Even if we ignored the evidence opposing the opinion that Tomislav ruled over Dalmatia, we would see that the fundamental changes in the Byzantine world were, for Tomislav, precisely the reason why Dalmatia headed on its determined path without either the Byzantine or the Croatian ruler” (p. 293). The two rulers, Croatian Tomislav and Zachlumian Mihailo Višević, addressed Pope John X at the Council of Split, asking for a solution to the basic church problems. “The pope, without mentioning the Bishop of Nin, chastised the Dalmatian clergy for using the Slavonic liturgical language on the territory under his jurisdiction. In this way, the pope rather predetermined the position of the Council on the issue of the church territory since he bypassed the Croatian church led by the Bishop of Nin” (p. 294). This preceded the establishment of the Archbishopric of Split. Nada Klaić convincingly disproved all of her historiographical predecessors and proved that Tomislav did not attend the Council of Split at all. The Dalmatian bishops elegantly avoided executing the pope’s order to prohibit the Slavic language as liturgical at that time. A large portion of the territorial jurisdiction was taken away from the Archbishopric of Nin, Bishop Gregory was transferred to Skradin and the metropolitan of the church in Croatia was headquartered outside the Croatian borders.

Although the ban prerogatives were a form of autonomy for the three, probably Avaric, counties of Lika, Gacka and Krbava, their bearers gradually got more and more political power, right next to the prince’s, and practically became co-rulers after Tomislav. Ms Klaić says of this that: “It is unquestionable that a new age came in the life of littoral Croatia when its rulers had to put up with independent bans in mountain Croatia as their co-rulers. The symbiosis of two previously separated political units caused a collision that significantly weakened the newly unified Croatia. Although we could expect that the joining also resulted in appropriate political success, this unfortunately did not happen” (p. 313). Therefore, because of the geographical configuration, it was hard to unite the littoral and mountain Croatia, let alone attach Slavonia to it as a part of the state territory. Only after the Croatian ruler Svetoslav was overthrown in internal conflicts among the Trpimirović family, going into hiding with his son Stjepan in Hungary, the Hungarians attacked Croatia in 1027. “Presumably, this way the Hungarian court took it upon itself to return the overthrown king to Croatia, which in reality only deepened the dynastic breach in the Trpimirović family. But the Hungarian policy was at least more positive for Croatia insofar as the efforts of the Arpad dynasty formed, perhaps for the banished Trpimirović family, a new political unit in Slavonia – the banate or *ducatus* of Slavonia – which was finally united with Trpimirović’s Croatia at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 333).

### **e) Well-argued Critique of Leading Croatian Authorities in Historiography**

Speaking of the political resolution after the death of the Byzantine Emperor Basil II, Nada Klaić confirms that Zeta, Travunia and Zahumlje were Serbian lands. “During the rule of the weak heirs of Basil, Zeta took supremacy among Serbian countries with Vojislav and his heirs. Every Byzantine attempt to stop this joining of provinces failed and Vojislav already ruled over Travunia and Zahumlje” (p. 342). Vojislav’s son and heir Mihailo extended his state even more and Pope Gregory VII sent him a royal crown

in 1077. However, at the same time, N. Klaić refutes the previous general conviction of historiography that Dalmatia came under the rule of the Croatian King Petar Krešimir IV in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with Byzantine approval. “Although Petar Krešimir did have the title *Rex Croatiae et Dalmatiae* in some documents, the titles themselves are no proof of real power. Authentic sources known today do not give us the right to see the new governor of Dalmatia in this Croatian ruler. However, the claim that there were no imperial officials or governors in Dalmatia until Manuel Comnenus is correct, but this fact could also be interpreted in another way. That is, if the Croatian rulers following Krešimir IV did not have the titles that would give them the rights of imperial governors in authentic documents, and the Dalmatian notaries still entered the names of Byzantine Emperors in their documents, then the disappearance of the supreme Byzantine governor should be seen as the end result of the collapse of the theme, or catepanate. The towns under the formal supremacy of the Byzantine emperors continue their independent policies no longer restrained by anyone. What is more, Dalmatian citizens always decided on their friends and allies entirely independently. They brought in the Normans in 1074 on their own initiative, which caused a reaction from Venice, as will be seen later. This is why the last decades of Dalmatian autonomy were an age of unrestricted government, although Zvonimir came to Dalmatia with the help of the pope and the Arpad family. Only the arrival of the Arpad dynasty meant the cessation of a hundred-year long development and an entirely new position for the towns that were finally under the same Croatian crown” (p. 346-347).

Given that “the strengthening of the Serbian princedoms happened over the Narentan wall that separated the Croatia by the sea from its eastern neighbours for centuries” (p. 348), at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the more prominent Croatian rulers Petar Krešimir IV and Zvonimir had to orient their territorial ambitions in the other direction. As the conquest of Dalmatian towns was out of the question, “only Slavonia could bring any change - precisely the province that was lost to Croatia before the dynastic breach in the last decade of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Accordingly, if the end result of the efforts of the Trpimirović family was the joining of Slavonia with Croatia, then the overcoming of political duality (Croatia-Slavonia) can indeed be viewed as one of the most mature political moves of the Croatian rulers in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Another question, although not so important, is certainly whether they were the only ones to contribute to the extension of the Croatian borders to the Drava River or if their efforts met identical interests on the other side of the Drava” (p. 348). The Byzantine domination over Dalmatia remained until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but Zvonimir added to his title of King of Croatia the title of King of Dalmatia by the pope’s will, with a very noticeable political goal on the part of the Roman *Pontifex*. As Nada Klaić points out, “the popes of that time also looked for a way to subject Dalmatia to their influence. This is why, the moment they were allowed to decide on the Dalmatian ruler, they crowned Zvonimir with a double crown: Croatian and Dalmatian” (p. 349).

Disproving Ferdo Šišić and other Croatian historians of similar opinions, Nada Klaić proved that the Princedom of Neretva was never a part of the Croatian state. It was either independent or under Byzantine or Serbian rule - or the rule of Macedonian Emperor Samuil in certain periods. It is not only irrefutable that the Narentan princedom was again independent as of 1025 but also that its rulers had the title of king, like the Croatian or Serbian ones. Ms Klaić also proved that the famous Slavac was a Narentan, not a Croatian ruler, as previous historiography had claimed. Even the littoral slopes of

Poljice, between the Split county and the Cetina River, or from Žrnovnica southwards, were parts of the Narentan principedom. On the inland, it reached as far as the slopes of Mosor. Its capital was probably Omiš. The ruler Slavac certainly had the title of king (*rex*), while some known Narentan rulers of the 11<sup>th</sup> century had the title of littoral Duke. “The Narentan principedom did not participate at all in the crucial events in Croatia at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, as we know today. However, the Narentan princes still kept the power in their country. Indirect evidence that the Narentan principedom did not enter Arpad countries in 1102 is the fact that the Arpads never had the name of any land in their title that could imply their power over Pagania. The complete silence of sources concerning the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century is the reason why it still cannot be determined how and when the Kačić family became hereditary Narentan princes” (p. 485).

The methods that Nada Klaić uses in her historiographical researches are unquestionably critical although not always consistent and without weaknesses. It would be too much to expect that an individual scientist, no matter how talented and competent, critically reviews all of Croatian historiography so far, mostly Romanticist and pamphlet. Especially since she was in her most fruitful period, from the point of view of the extent of her publications, the most politically biased and transformed into a means of ideological manipulation and score-settling. Such a heated atmosphere could not leave even the most serious and objective writers cold. As Klaić herself notes, some fifteen years after World War II, “The pre-war political state of affairs often imposed the subjective interpretations of historical facts even on objective historians” (*Yearbook of the Historical Society of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, Sarajevo 1959, p. 333). However, the state of affairs was even more unbearable in this sense after the war. In the review that this quote comes from, entitled *Recent Works on the Social Issues in Medieval Croatia*, Klaić proves to be not only a skilled polemicist but also a thorough theoretician, successfully critiquing the works of some of the most recognized scientific authorities of the time, such as Oleg Mandić, Miho Barada or Ivan Božić. This way, she significantly contributed to the elucidation of the origin and development of Croatian feudal society.

### **f) Comprehensive Analysis of the Croatian Feudal Society**

In the treatise entitled *The Historical Background of the Croatian Glagolitic in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries*, Klaić proves that Glagolitic was the script of the Croats outside the borders of the then Croatia, formed in spite of the resistance of the Croatian rulers who were blindly devoted to the papacy. As opposed to the then pope Alexander II, who insisted on the exclusive use of Latin as the church language, the antipope Honorius V approved of the old-Slavonic language and the Glagolitic script in churches under his control, so the main confrontation was over this issue. The Dalmatian march of the Istria-Kranj margrave Ulrich, with its centre in Bakar, was a suitable political setting for the spread of the Slavic liturgy. The confusion over the location of this part of Dalmatia was caused by the fact that this territory used to be called Liburnia. The Dalmatian march was conquered after 1070 by Ban Zvonimir, probably with Hungarian help, and he kept this title until Pope Gregory VII crowned him as the Croatian-Dalmatian king. Zvonimir never tried to eradicate the Glagolitic and Slavic liturgy, and he could not have even if he had wanted to.

The authority of the Middle Age rulers was based primarily on the size and economic strength of their personal and family estates, which were used as means of competition with the feudal aristocrats. A truly powerful king was simply the one who led in wealth and managed to force everyone else to obey. Those who did not have large estates were usually weak rulers and marionettes in the hands of feudal lords. The last Croatian kings also had very small estates and the aristocrats surrounding them grew more and more strong economically. This conditioned the weak actual power of the Hungarian king Coloman and his successors in the annexed Croatia after 1102. In separate texts that preceded her coursebook, entitled *The History of the Croats in the Middle Ages* (University of Zagreb, Zagreb 1965), she explains this in the following way: “The Arpad position in Croatia was rather insecure from the very beginning of their rule since it was not based on ‘contracts’, which were quite unknown for the patrimonial type of state in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but only on family links. This was crucial for the further development and position of Croatia as a part of the Arpad countries and also for the position of the Arpads. Since they did not find any further royal estates in Croatia to build their power on, they settled with the circumstances they had encountered. As even Zvonimir started giving away royal rights and the anarchy intensified the process of feudalisation of public rights, the Arpads barely managed to give away any honours in Croatia. However, they did not manage to install *marturina* there as the basic tax on land either.

Coloman’s attempt at this failed and the rulers, who were occupied with dynastic problems in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, apparently left Croatia to develop on its own. And this could only go in the direction of the independence of the zhupans, who finally became independent dynasts at the end of the Arpad rule. The example of the Šubić family, which had the hereditary zhupan honour in the parish of Bribir in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, is just one of the best known. The unique position that Croatia had, given its relation to the king, was not based on any contract – not on the purported ‘*Pacta Conventa*’ – but on the actual development that undermined the foundations of the royal power even before the Arpads sat on the Croatian throne. The former opinion that Coloman privileged the members of the twelve tribes was based on the conviction that the so-called *Qualiter* – i.e. the alleged contract between the representatives of the twelve tribes and Coloman – was authentic. Today, it is proven that it was a forgery from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Accordingly, the loss of state independence was particularly important for the political position of Croatia. Since the political centre was moved to the Danube basin with the new dynasty, Croatia continued its proper political development in a new, rather peripheral position. However, this led to the faster victory of feudal anarchy, but excluded the immediate power of the ruler at the same time. Croatia preserved this specific position until the re-establishment of royal rule in the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century. But even this gaining of independence was gradual. During the rule of the first Arpads, Croatian lands were connected through a common ban and sometimes even a Herzog, and the separate coronation was also one of the signs of a formal connection. However, the separate coronation disappeared soon, and each country got its own ban. Only a few Herzogs, for example Andrew, the brother of King Emerick, or Coloman, the brother of King Béla IV, managed to gather the zhupans from the Drava River to the sea, but such occurrences were almost an exception during the 200-year rule of the Arpads” (p. 25). Therefore, instead of the fairytale of Croatian autonomous wholeness, in reality we have the extreme feudal fragmentation and autocracy.



The situation in Slavonia was completely different. “At the time when the Arpads had almost no estate in Croatia, almost all of Slavonia was theirs. The king was, therefore, the first and greatest estate-owner in the country. It also happened that the land gradually transferred to private owners, but the base of the landed estate was incomparably greater” (p. 28). Given that Slavonia was permanently “under direct Hungarian influence, it had the same political and social development as the Hungarian countries. As counties were also organised there, they remained the foundation for the class society even after their gradual decline. The aristocrats, however, soon replaced the royal power there as well, but the kings could ally with the lower gentry and the cities they built and fight against them. Looking for a counter-balance to the power of the oligarchs, they allowed the lower gentry to organise under the leadership of a ban into a new type of counties: noble counties. But because the new society was still too weak and the Arpads did not find a way to replace patrimonial economy with another type, they also lost power there to the oligarchy” (p. 27). All this time, after the Avaric and Mongolian ravages, Slavonia was very poorly inhabited and, in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the feudal rent was so high that serfs ran away from aristocratic or church estates *en masse*. Reviewing the book by J. V. Brimley about the peasant uprising in Croatia, Nada Klaić states that this “era, when the colonisations stopped and migrations caused by Turkish invasion still had not started, significantly influenced social changes, so one of the causes of abandoned estates should be sought in the economic differentiation of the serfs” (*Historical Miscellany* 1960, p. 13). The increased corvée – often five days a week – was an even bigger problem than the already unbearable financial and labour obligations of serfs.

#### 4. The Study of Nada Klaić on the Extent of the Croatian Name

Among the numerous research works of Nada Klaić, her treatise *On the Kasegs and Croats in Medieval Croatia (Dostignuća No. 1-2/1965)*, in which she deals with the issue of the extent of the name Croat in the Middle Ages, is very important for the topic of this study. First she points out that Vjekoslav Klaić “found traces of the name Croat in almost the whole Slavic world except in Croatia. Perhaps this was not accidental. However, his omission was not corrected even by those who continued his work, although the emergence of the name Croat had to be one of the basic foundations of the theories on the genesis and origin of the Croatian aristocracy” (p. 14).

This issue is generally neglected in Croatian historiography and Nada Klaić presents her own opinion on the matter in a brief and focused manner. “Our research into the extent of the name Croat has to begin and end within the limits of medieval Croatia, meaning the territories between Mountain Gvozd and the sea. Since this was the political core from which the unification of neighbouring political units started, it should be determined what meaning the name Croat had there, even before the ethnic relations on this territory became mixed through migrations, because the existence of the name Croat outside the borders of medieval Croatia, i.e. in Slavonia, Istria, Bosnia, etc., was not a result of settlement but of a later process. It appears that we should first point out that inside the Croatian borders in the Middle Ages there was no toponym Croat! Perhaps a thorough examination could yield some examples, but it certainly would not change the conclusion that springs from this fact. Namely, if the emergence of the Croatian name in Slavic countries points to a separate settling of the Croats among the Alpine Slavs, then

such a settling of Croats did not occur in Dalmatia. It would also have left traces in the toponymy here. Does it not speak in favour of the assumption presented by Grafenauer, “that a small number of Croats settled in a separate wave of migration, not connected to the wave of Avar migration; in spite of their small number, this wave of migration caused such a powerful historical turning point among the Dalmatian Slavs that the name of the newcomers spread to include them” (p. 14-15).

### **a) The Lack of Croatian Toponyms Compensated for by Political Intervention**

Grafenauer drew attention to the wide dispersion of the Croats, from the Duleb-Volhynian area to the Baltic Sea and Carantania in the west and Greece in the south, at the time when the overall Slavic territory was becoming smaller and smaller. “This dispersion”, as Nada Klaić continues, “happened at the time of the Avaric invasions of Transcarpathia, when the Duleb alliance was broken and a part of the population emigrated from their homeland. If we apply Grafenauer’s demonstration to Croatia, we have to conclude that this Croatian-Duleb dispersion did not leave any trace in medieval Croatia. If we would look for the reason for the lack of Croatian toponyms inside medieval Croatia in a single Croatian migration, we would have to answer the question of why the string of Croatian toponyms from the Baltic Sea to Greece was only broken in Croatia. This way, we can still somehow interpret the causes of this unusual phenomenon. Perhaps they should also be sought in the constricted territory that was affected by the second Croatian wave. Compared to Croatian toponyms outside Croatia, it would not be unusual if it were proven that all the mentioned toponyms, from the Baltic Sea to Greece, originate from the same wave of migration. The lack of the toponym ‘Croat’ is excessively compensated in medieval Croatia with the political and social meaning of that name. The very first certain emergence of the name at the time of the national dynasty – *Dux Croatorum* on Branimir’s inscription – testifies to the completed process of state formation that finally got the name of the organizer. The road to the complete prevalence of this name was very long. Gottschalk, who stayed at his court, called Trpimir the ruler of the Slavs (*Rex Sclavorum*), whereas Pope John VIII also wrote to Zdeslav as ‘*Glorius Comiti Sclavorum*’. Only after the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century would the title *Rex Croatorum* become established and then, later, both forms, i.e. *Croatorum* and *Croatiae*, entered the title of Hungarian-Croatian rulers. In this way, the *Regnum* of Croatia, later joined by Dalmatia and Slavonia, became a political term until the end of the Middle Ages. It should not be particularly emphasized that this kingdom gradually changed its territorial extent” (p. 15-16).

As for social differentiation, “in this kingdom of the Croats, there were no special denotations for any social class until the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century. Not even the aristocrats in Croatia were *nobiles Croati*! Perhaps an occasional Dalmatian notary wrote that a Croatian aristocrat was Croatian but for him, everything beyond the limits of his county was – *Sclavonia*. And then, all of a sudden in the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century, there came an abrupt change in terminology. *Nobiles Croati* appeared as a specific term. Certainly, no longer only political, but also a very clear social term” (p. 16). At that time, the assembly appeared for the first time, “formed gradually under the Angevin bans” (p. 16), to which at first come the commanders of the fortresses and military units apart from the nobility, “and the assembly only later became an exclusively aristocratic class institution...

Accordingly, in the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Croats as a class term was a synonym for the lower gentry in Croatia, which gradually started organising under the patronage of Louis. Although the lower gentry also got its organisations in other parts of Croatia thanks to the king, the term *nobiles Croati* was often connected with the original aristocratic organisations, i.e. those in Luka and Knin.

This term was used especially when there was a need to distinguish other privileged and unprivileged populations in Croatia that were not included among the lower gentry. At that time, the name Croats was certainly still used for *Regnum Croatiae*. However, this political term Croats = *Regnum Croatiae* gradually changed at the end of the Middle Ages under pressure from the Turks and Venetians. The name Croats, or Croatia gradually crossed the Kupa River and finally established itself between the Kupa and Drava Rivers. But the class connotation of the name Croat also lost its original meaning outside the borders of Croatia. It was not only the aristocrat that was called Croat in Slavonia and other Slavic countries. Croat was primarily everyone who came from Croatia, regardless of the social position. Hence, the use of the name Croat once again pointed out the unsustainability of the theories on the social duality among the Croats from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The *nobiles Croati* were neither the conqueror Croats nor their descendants but the lower gentry from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards” (p. 16-17).

### **5. Ms Klaić’s Opposition to the Romanticist Enthusiasm of the Croatian Quasi-Scientists**

In her article entitled *Diplomatic Analysis of the Documents from the Age of the Croatian National Rulers (Part One)*, (*Historical Miscellany XVIII*, Zagreb 1965), Nada Klaić critically reviews the extensive scientific literature that deals with the examination and verification of the documents from the age of the national rulers, fiercely opposing any romanticist enthusiasm and idealisation that brought Croatian historiography into such a miserable state. “Very few historians of the national dynasty barely managed to break away from the duty to assume an attitude concerning the source material he used. The deeply rooted opinion that the historian’s job is primarily to unconditionally defend every preserved record left a specific mark on this literature. It is all but critical. In the end, the evidence and counter-evidence did not matter as much as the echo in the patriotic public. Since this public controlled the discussions, there was no hope of replacing the misapprehended patriotism with sober critical judgments. This is why each historian of the national dynasty necessarily has the task of paving the road for a truly scientific presentation of this, unquestionably the most interesting age in Croatian history by conscientiously approaching the source material critically and by introducing new perceptions and ways of understanding” (p. 141). A conscientious researcher needed to possess a significant amount of courage to speak truly to the fervently political public against the ideological opinion of the majority. “The case of V. Novak who critically reviewed the forgeries of the Benedictine nuns from Split is a typical example of the public reaction to such attempts. Šišić also had difficulties deciding to pronounce these documents as forgeries and Barada and Nagy did not behave much better in this sense. L. Katić certainly stands out among those who defended even the undisputed forgeries all his life” (p. 141). In Ms Klaić’s opinion, the first to apply the objective scientific presentation of historical documents and verification of their authenticity was Franjo Rački, but even his statements require a thorough review.

Concerning the credit that Rački certainly cannot be denied, “he accurately drew attention to the fact that the authentication of documents is no guarantee of their accuracy” (p. 143). On the other hand, “Ferdo Šišić, who was mostly attracted to the age of the national rulers in his fruitful work on Croatian history, did not follow Rački’s steps. And yet he was the most qualified to continue this work. The necessity of the critical evaluation of materials imposed itself on Šišić all the more since he applied an independent evaluation, both in separate treatises and in the *Guidebook for Sources on Croatian history*” (p. 145). Although Šišić also proved a large number of documents false, he was sensitive to many and accepted them because his aspirations were to demonstrate what an important role Croatia played at that time in events in the whole of Europe and the best material for this purpose was the ‘unpurified’ source material” (p.148). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Josip Nagy tried to bring the source documents from the age of Croatian national dynasty closer to the public, especially in 1925, which was celebrated as a millenary of the Council of Split. “However, in this work, he was also guided by the desire to present the material as favourably as possible so he, as we would see it, accepted Rački’s doubts and negative appraisals very unwillingly” (p. 148).

As opposed to Ferdo Šišić who, for example, “did not examine domestic materials for his theory on Slavac and, thrilled by the idea of the violent death of Zvonimir, did not hesitate to present the known facts of the crusades in his own way” (p. 148), Nagy implies that he could interpret some documents differently or more comprehensively than previous reviewers had. “However, this implied distancing from previous opinions is shown at the very beginning in the review of the documents of princes by the fact that he replaced the cautious assumptions of his predecessors with bolder claims” (p. 149). Even where the original documents were forged, he kept trying to explain that the falsification occurred as a subsequent materialisation of human memories of an actual event. “Enchanted by an excessive love for the source material, he gave it an entirely non-critical review, which is most prominent as a flaw in the description of Zvonimir’s documents. None of the documents, not even “the document with which he granted the aristocrats of Brač the freedom of trade”, is inaccurate, let alone a forgery. For every forged form or piece of information, Nagy found an interpretation that removed every doubt about the authenticity of royal deeds of gift. If something cannot be ascribed to the royal office at all, then the composer was the recipient and the problem was solved” (p. 149).

Thoroughly examining a sample of 11 documents, seven of which were already proven forgeries or suspected to be so, Nagy constructed explanations following the pattern that it actually did happen the way he wanted something to have happened. “If we take into account that Nagy described ‘the form of princes’ and royal documents’ using forgeries, the value of his results can easily be distinguished. Nagy has a basically identical attitude when he reviews private documents and their forms... Then, evaluating the remaining documents of the national rules, he tried to emphasize which documents could have been composed by the recipients and which by the rulers themselves since, in this way, he could justify the origin and existence of each diplomatic and actual forgery” (p. 151). Instead of arguments, Nagy invokes the, similarly unreliable, opinion of Kerubin Šegvić and Milan Sufflay when denying that some of the documents are forgeries (although this was already proven). “His evaluation of Zvonimir’s documents is a step backwards since he did not even want to accept the results that the science had

adopted before his writing. This equally applies to his evaluation of the documents of the last Trpimirović, Stjepan II” (p. 152).

Although Miho Barada shrewdly proved that some of Trpimir’s and Mutimir’s documents were actually forged, he stopped in his work half-way, as Nada Klaić estimates. “It is regrettable that Barada conducted a truly detailed palaeographic-diplomatic analysis, mercilessly adjusting the basic palaeographic laws to the previously set goal. It did not even bother him that his conclusions sometimes could not even be coordinated” (p. 153). Držislav Švob confirmed that the documents in question were forged. “The records of the boundaries of the Archbishopric of Split being on the Danube River also testify to the fact that Trpimir’s document is a forgery” (p. 154). However, in Ms Klaić’s opinion, “although some thoughts from Švob’s work can be accepted, it is still a complete failure because Švob subjected what is the least disputed to awkward and inaccurate examination” (p. 154). Solin-Split historian Lovre Katić “defended the contested documents with unbelievable persistence and consistence. What is more, he went so far as to defend the famous Pinci forgeries, trying to interpret the rough mistakes of the forgery as bad transcription... It is not accidental that he joined Novak’s adversaries in defending the authenticity of the forgeries of the Benedictine nuns of Split” (p. 154). And even Victor Novak, who had great merits for discovering many forgeries, showed a substantial oversensitivity, causing him to “try to interpret a number of errors – usually wrong dates – as poor transcription, text deletion, confusion etc., rather than as intentional acts of the forger” (p. 156). When one bears in mind such circumstances in Croatian historiography and “if we include the general reviews of documents in various legal histories among our literature – that, unfortunately, do not take part in the legal analysis of documents – it would be easy to see that the scientific-analytic work on the source materials until 1102 is still in it’s infancy” (p. 156-157).

### **a) On the Subsequent Croatisation of Dalmatian Documents**

It is not rare that some originally Dalmatian documents were subsequently Croatised and Milan Šufflay “was wrong when evaluating the source records on Dalmatian documents as a ‘purely Croatian document’ – it was wrong to ascribe certain legal institutions to certain ethnic groups and to create the characteristic of Dalmatian document without critically analysing the source material” (p. 157-158). For example, “just because the founder of the monastery of St Peter in Solin, Petar from Split, was called Črni and because the monasteries of St Peter in Solin and St John in Biograd were ‘outside’ the Dalmatian towns, Šufflay presented their cartularies as the beginnings of purely Croatian private documents in Dalmatia” (p. 158). The general opinion of Nada Klaić is that Croatian historiographers, applying a completely wrong methodology, “determined the characteristics of the documents of domestic rulers by conducting a diplomatic analysis and determining the forms of the documents without even paying attention to the content or the centre from where the document originated. This is why it could happen that no one except Švob doubted the authenticity of Trpimir’s document, although it counts for the church of Split some villages it did not have, not only in the 9<sup>th</sup> century but even later. However, examination of documents according to the time of origin - that is, in chronological order by date - rendered their clear grouping impossible and concealed the criteria that clearly pointed out to a joint provenance. For example, no one who examined the material from the cartulary of the monastery of St Krševan could

avoid the fact that the three oldest wills had the same wrong date and the same wrong *actum* at the end. Or, that Zvonimir's alleged documents have one form of corroboration in favour of the Archbishopric of Split and the other in favour of the monastery St Mary and that the two forgeries in favour of the Benedictine nuns from Split use forms unknown to public documents of the age of the national rulers. Such facts inevitably lead us to the conclusion that common characteristics – especially when it comes to wrong or inaccurate forms – should be ascribed to the same provenance” (p. 161). The question of dating is a separate issue that no one pays enough attention to and even Franjo Rački shows a tendency to treat it recklessly. “Negligence is especially visible in the fact that examination ends with simple conclusions, although the form of dating points to the provenance more accurately than other parts. The wrong dating of some documents serves only as one proof of falsehood for Rački, although it was he who corrected the dates in *Documents* without hesitation, in this way saving the reputation of the endangered documents” (p. 170).

### **b) Fiercely Against the Verification of Forgeries**

In the second part of this extensive treatise (*Historical Miscellany XIX-XX*, Zagreb 1966-1967), Nada Klaić concludes that Croatian historiography acted thoughtlessly concerning the examination of authenticity of this kind of historical record. Not only did it not correct what was false, but it also supported and passed on obvious forgeries as authentic. “This has had severe consequences for Croatian history. Turning a blind eye to the obvious shortcomings of documents and records from the age of the national dynasty, historians built a frail house of cards that can easily be brought down by criticism. This work, although it is only the beginning, indicates this fact” (p. 260). Then she explains her personal academic motivation to devote herself to a difficult scientific task that no one had attempted to perform thoroughly since Franjo Rački. Patiently and comprehensively studying the structure of the rulers' documents and successfully applying comparative historical analysis, she managed to create a model for distinguishing between what was authentic and false. She is aware that this work is just at the beginning and that she will come across a lot more political and ideological obstacles than scientific ones. “Precisely because it is the first critical diplomatic analysis of the documents from the age of Trpimirović dynasty, this work as a whole cannot respond to all the requests that diplomatics sets for the researcher. A lot of questions remain open or just barely tackled - not only the irrelevant ones but also the essential. This is why the further detailed analysis that will necessarily follow this attempt would verify my results and disprove or confirm the stated assumptions. But, it appears to me that only those who have, aside from knowledge, enough strength and scientific conscience to fight for historical truth can engage in further work in this field... It often happens in science that analysis of the problem itself leads the researcher to results they did not want. Then, standing on the crossroads, they have to decide which way to go: whether to take the road of historical truth or to choose cheaper laurels in the world of false fame that usually comes with suppressed truth. Every one of us makes that decision according to their inclinations and convictions. I choose the first road because I think it is the only right one” (p. 260-261).

It is important that the truth be determined for all these forged documents, but their value for the perception of certain historical facts should not be underestimated when we

put aside what made their drafters falsely corroborate some of their concrete interests, especially concerning the estate rights of certain monasteries. But we should certainly stigmatise academically and subject to strict polemical analysis the fact that “non-critical historiography – especially lately – not only hesitates to subject source documents to critical examination but it *a priori* judges every historian who takes on this thankless task. Such historians not only hinder the progress of the science of history but also misguide the public with corrupted presentations of the real state of national treasures from the age of Trpimirović dynasty” (p. 263). On the other hand, “truth be told, it should be admitted that critical analysis led us to conclusions that were opposite to our previous understanding and interpretation of some historical facts. This especially applies to the relation of the Trpimirović dynasty toward Byzantine Dalmatia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Although such facts unpleasantly surprised us on one hand, on the other they opened new views and discovered new moments in the history of Byzantine Dalmatia. For example, it is now clearer why the Dalmatian towns in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century had their own independent policy, regardless of the interests of Croatian rulers and why only Zvonimir, with the help of the Arpads and the papacy, actually took over a part of Byzantine Dalmatia. But my results are the first step on the new road of the critical analysis of sources from the age of the Trpimirović dynasty that just reopened after Rački” (p. 263).

### **III. The Discrepancy between Hungarian and Croatian Historiographies**

Hungarian historiography constantly had an offensive approach to the Croatian pseudo-historical megalomania but it was also burdened with Romanticist-idealistic national enthusiasm, persistently trying to develop the thesis that entire Hungarian population, regardless of the original ethnic distinctions, is the Hungarian political nation. However, this question is not a matter for my special attention. With a view to a complex perception of the Croatian pseudo-historical pamphleteerism, it would be of importance to see how the theses on the “Hungarian-Croatian kingdom”, “Hungarian-Croatian rulers”, “Hungarian-Croatian armies”, “federal states” or “personal union” can perhaps find support in the works of the Hungarian historians. One of the latest, synthetically written works - *History of the Hungarians* (“Klio”, Belgrade 2002), the result of joint efforts by Peter Rokay, Zoltan Gyere, Tibor Pal and Alexander Kaszas - could serve as a landmark. It was written without the traditional burdens and its authors do not hide their tendency to accept contemporary globalist ideological patterns and they assume a rather conciliatory position towards the countries and nations that the Hungarians confronted throughout history. There is not a single sentence in the book that could be deemed anti-Croatian but the available factography mercilessly destroys every Croatian pretension and the misapprehension that they preserved state-law continuity under the Hungarian crown. The bare truth must be devastating for the Croats, as there is no doubt that their country was defeated at some time and annexed to Hungary. In the title of the Hungarian kings, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia were not treated any differently to Serbia and certain autonomous rights were the expression of the feudal structure of society and not the preservation of a state identity.

## 1. The Birth of the Hungarian State

The Hungarians settled in Pannonia in 896 and began cruel ravages during the next decades, mostly in German countries. When they suffered a severe defeat in 955 in the Battle of Lechfeld, near Augsburg, they turned their attacks on Croatian and Serbian countries, and the Byzantine Empire in general. “Indeed, they had made attempts in this direction before. One of their attacks on Croatia was repulsed by Tomislav, the ruler of this country (910-930). However, after defeat at Augsburg, they started attacking these lands again. Serbian prince Časlav Klonimirović died fighting them in 960” (p. 20-21). The Christianisation of the Hungarians began at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and Greek and Slavic priests baptised them first according to the Eastern rite, but Benedictine missionaries soon took over in this affair. German, Czech and Polish knights helped them in this, as an armed escort. As the process of Christianisation rapidly progressed, pope Sylvester II sent a king's crown to the Hungarian ruler Stephen I in 1000, and the archbishop of Ostrogon Astrik performed the coronation. “In earlier historiography, when one applies the ideals of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Hungary would be at that time considered to be a united country throughout its entire territory, although it was known before that Hungarian statehood was being built gradually, by including para-state formations and creating various new units. The territories of the last independent or semi-independent tribal chiefs, Transylvania, Gyula and the territory of Ahtum should be mentioned first. They were brought under the royal rule by Saint Stephen. Less is known about the inclusion of Slavonia into the lands of Hungarian crown, about which there are many versions” (p. 25). The authors assume that Stephan I perhaps got this name at the time of his coronation, since *Stefanos* means “the crowned one” in Greek.

### a) The Conquest of Slavonia and the Subordination of Croatia

Concerning the conquest of Slavonia, historians can only say with certainty that it happened in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. “During that century, at a time which for now cannot be closely determined, the Hungarians took over Slavonia, or later northwest Croatia, with Zagreb as its centre” (p. 44). It is only known for certain that, based on the consent of antipope Clement III, “In 1091, Ladislaus founded the diocese in Slavonia and a cathedral in its centre – Zagreb. The (Arch)diocese of Zagreb included the territory of the entire medieval Slavonia, present-day northern Croatia, for almost nine hundred years. The cathedral of Zagreb was dedicated to a newly canonised saint, Hungarian King Stephen. Thus, his cult crossed the borders of Hungary in a narrow sense. Ladislaus appointed Czech Duh as the first Bishop of Zagreb, without any doubts that he would understand the language of the Slavic priests and believers. The diocese of Zagreb was subordinated to the Metropolitanate of Ostrogon until 1852, when the diocese of Zagreb was upgraded to an archbishopric. Thus, it was linked with the Church in Hungary throughout the entire Middle Ages” (p. 41). Doubtlessly, the Slavs lived in Slavonia and its centre, Zagreb, but there is no mention of any Croatians there at the time of the Hungarian conquest, nor for centuries afterwards.

The authors states that one of the reasons why relations between Ladislaus and the Pope weakened was “. . . because he also started a campaign against Croatia at the end of his rule, and the Pope saw Croatia as its vassal” (p. 40). The whole story in this book about the conquest of Croatia goes as follows: “After the death of Zvonimir, the last



king from the Trpimirović dynasty, in 1089, the Croatian throne had no heirs. His wife, Helen the Beautiful (Ilona), was the daughter of Hungarian King Béla I, and the sister of Géza I and Ladislaus I. These circumstances paved the way for the Hungarian conquest of Croatia. Ladislaus I conducted a raid on Croatia as early as 1091, but had to return to Hungary because of the invasion of the Cumans. Having crossed the Tisa River at Bečej, Ladislaus defeated the Cumans at Pograd. The conquest of Croatia was continued and finished by Ladislaus' heir, his nephew King Coloman. Having taken the Hungarian throne in 1095, he started a new campaign on his south-eastern neighbour in 1097. During this campaign, according to a Hungarian chronicle from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the last national ruler of Croatia, Peter Svačić (Snačić) was killed in a battle at the Gvozd mountain (Petrova Gora). After this, Coloman got through to the Adriatic shore and was crowned as the Croatian King in Biograd. According to Croatian tradition, an agreement between Coloman and the representatives of the Croatian tribal aristocracy preceded this act. This agreement, concluded in 1102, is known as '*the Pacta Conventa*'. The record of this agreement was preserved in sources from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, which is why Hungarian historiography rejected it as unauthentic. Regardless of its authenticity, an agreement between the Hungarian king and Croatian 'aristocracy' did actually exist. In other words, Croatia was not subjected to the Hungarian crown exclusively through the force of arms, as it was earlier claimed. Contradictory to that claim is the circumstance that, even with the later centuries-long Hungarian rule, elements of Croatian sovereignty and former independence – such as: the name kingdom (*regnum*), the title of ban, the parliament, parish and aristocracy – were preserved until its end in 1918. After the inclusion of Slovenia and Croatia into Hungary, the settling of the population from these areas into the fertile Pannonian plains began. The members of the Oslo and Kačić families, among others, settled here, and this contributed to the strengthening of the Slavic population in Hungary. Having included Croatia to his lands, Coloman continued his raid on Dalmatia. Thanks to a large number of preserved sources related to this event, we are far better informed on the conquest of North Dalmatia than we are on Croatia, and especially on Slavonia. . . In 1108, he issued, and then in 1111 confirmed, charters giving privileges to Dalmatian cities, and these can be considered authentic. With these charters, King Coloman guaranteed the right of internal governing (autonomy) to Dalmatian communes, because they had recognized the supremacy of the Hungarian King. Apart from this, he maintained the right to two-thirds of the cities' income, and the right to approve the election of the cities' princes and bishops" (p. 44-45).

Given that Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia were conquered in a short period of time, that they were territorially linked and that the Croatian rulers had earlier – by their titles – been the kings of Croatia and Dalmatia, the King appointed a regent to these countries whose title was "ban". The ban was usually a Hungarian aristocrat or a member of the Hungarian ruling family. The administrator of these provinces was a Herzog. Although the Hungarians never massively settled on the unfertile Croatian, and especially Dalmatian soil, the inclusion of these countries to the Hungarian crown still had great significance, because the Hungarian Kingdom became more or less a Mediterranean power. In the following period, the foreign trade of Hungary partially developed throughout these countries" (p. 45). This is literally everything that is mentioned about the Hungarian conquest of Croatia, and not only Croatia but also Slavonia and Dalmatia. Feudal disarray in Croatia already existed after the death of Zvonimir, and many

aristocrats did not recognise Petar Svačić as the legitimate king, so the agreement with the Hungarian ruler that took away their state independence but guaranteed the preservation of noble privileges was all the more easier for them to accept.

The fertile Pannonian plains obviously spread outside of Croatia and Slavonia, so they became attractive to their inhabitants. Slavonia actually consisted primarily of the later counties of Zagreb, Križevo and Varaždin, which were located mostly on a hilly, undulating area,, the same as present-day West Slavonia, or the area around Papuk. Croatia is mentioned two more times for the entire 12<sup>th</sup> century. When mentioning how king Géza II (1141-1162) formed special monastic knight orders to fight against the heathens – Templars (*božjaci*) and Hospitallers (*jovanovci*), the following is stated: “The most famous house of knights was in Vrana, Croatia. It first belonged to the Templars and then to the Hospitallers” (p. 51). After this, it is stated that in 1194, Béla III “ceded Croatia and Dalmatia, parts of his former legacy, to his 20-year old son. Prince Emeric was then crowned again, perhaps as the king of these countries” (p. 58). When Béla died two years later, his son Emeric inherited the entire state, but his younger brother Andrew defeated him with the help of the Austrians, forcing him to hand over Croatia and Dalmatia to his administration and support.

### **b) Bosnia in Hungarian Historical Sources**

Bosnia is also mentioned here three times. First when it is stated how, after

Béla II regained most of Dalmatia in 1136, “. . . in one of his charters appeared the title of the ‘King of Rama’ (the Rex of Rama), the territory of the Upper Rama River. Béla gave this territory, together with the title of ban (Herzog), to his second son Ladislaus to govern. The title of the ‘King of Rama’ remained among the titles of Hungarian kings until 1918” (p. 50). The territory of Rama is actually the territory of Bosnia of that time, with possible minor territorial difference. In 1165, the Byzantine Empire “. . . took over Bosnia and that part of Srem after chasing out Hungarian vassal Ban Borić” (p. 54). At the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Hungarian King Emeric suffered a setback in Bosnia. “Indeed, under the Pope’s order, he devotedly fought against the Bogomils there, preparing even a crusade against Ban Kulin, but the Pope still entrusted one of his legates with the ‘conversion’ of Bosnian heretics, instead of the Hungarian King” (p. 59). In the 1220s, Bosnia was “. . . subjected to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Kalocsa-Bacs archbishop Ugrin. He charged Kaloyan, son of Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelos and grandson of Béla III, with a crusade against the Bosnian heretics. This campaign was carried out, after many years of postponing it, by Slavonian Herzog Coloman in 1235. His results were, however, soon annulled by a Mongolian invasion” (p. 64). Apart from this, somewhere at this time, the Hungarian Dominican Province was formed in Hungary. “The Dominicans from Hungary were first entrusted with the spiritual care over Bosnia (the fight against the Bogomils) and Albania, and the Christianisation of the Cumans in present day Walachian Plains” (p. 71).

### **c) Banates as Border Defensive Territories**

We also encounter the explanation of the reason for the formation of banates in Hungary, as border-territories with a distinctive military-defensive role. “The formation of new banates on the borders was to contribute to the safety of Hungary. Thus the

banates of Mačva, on the territory of northeast Serbia; Kučevo-Braničevo, on the territory of northeastern Serbia; Soli, in the Northeast; and Srebrenica, in northern Bosnia were founded. The rulers of these banates were often members or relatives of the ruling family. Following the example of his father, young King Stephen formed the Banate of Vidin from the Vidin territory, taken over from Bulgaria. The renewed banate of Severin, which spread over Lesser Walachia (Oltenia in southwest Romania) with its seat in Turnu-Severin, should also be included among these banates. The ban of this banate was often at the same time the governor of the south-Hungarian counties between Moriš, the Tisa River, the Lower Danube and the Transylvanian mountains. This is why the name of the Banate of Severin also spread to their territory. And when the Banate of Severin ceased to exist after the Turkish conquest, the name “banate” remained on the territory of these counties and this name was preserved until present day with this meaning” (p. 83-84). Therefore, the banates and bans are in no way a Croatian characteristic. In any case, the Croatians or Croatia are not mentioned in the review of the entire Hungarian history of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, except for the remark that the state tax in Slavonia and Transylvania “. . . was paid in marten (Croatian – *kuna*) skins”. That is the origin of the name of Croatian currency. This tax was called *kunovina* even when it later became a monetary tax. Serbia and the Nemanjić dynasty were mentioned several times, and one of them even gained possession of Slavonia. “Vladislav, son of Dragutin, married Constance Morozini, granddaughter of Albert, and received Slavonia as a dowry in 1292” (p. 91). Even after the disappearance of the Arpad dynasty, the Nemanjić dynasty appeared as claimants to the Hungarian throne. The new Hungarian King Charles Robert recognized the title of Herzog of Slavonia to Vladislav Nemanjić after 1301.

Only then, at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, was the term “Croatian” mentioned again when, it was said that “. . . the Croatian aristocrats, the Šubić family, supported Charles Robert” (p. 93). After the consolidation of Charles Robert on the throne, “the Babonić family ruled over Slavonia and the Šubić family ruled over Croatia. The regional masters had their own private armies, government and judicial system and they obtained regal rights. They were on their way to becoming absolutely independent from royal (central) rule. Their only obstacle was, apart from weak representatives of the central rule under the last members of the Arpad dynasty, the circumstance that they fought against each other. During his fight for the throne, Charles Robert was forced to make concessions to the aristocrats that he wanted to win over. He had to recognize the Šubić family as Croatian bans and the Babonić family as Slavonian bans” (p. 95-96). Only after he defeated every rival claimant to the royal throne, Charles Robert was able to start settling scores with the arrogant regional masters, overpowering them one by one. “In 1322, Charles defeated the Babonić family, the regional masters in Slavonia. They, however, rebelled in 1326-1327, but Charles overpowered them and joined the remains of their territory to the Hungarian crown. His first supporters were the only ones left – the Šubić family in Croatia. Occupied with the fighting in Hungary, Charles ceded the rule over this country to Mladen Šubić in 1312, who ruled in his name, but actually independently. Charles Robert used help from the already conquered Babonić family, Bosnian Ban Stephen I Kotromanić and the Republic of Venice against his first supporters, the Šubić family.

The Dalmatian cities also came out against the Šubić family, whose rule they were not willing to accept at any price. They placed themselves under Venetian protection

with Charles' consent. In 1322, Charles attacked the Šubić family and took Mladen prisoner, carrying him back to Hungary. However, Croatian aristocrats seized his fortresses. If he was not completely successful in Croatia, he failed in Walachia" (p. 97). Ludowick (Lajos), Charles' son and heir, would also have a lot of work to do, immediately before the conquest of Naples. "The submission of the independent Croatian aristocrats who had built their power on the ruins of the Šubić territory was a much more realistic task than the conquest of Naples. Ludowick strived from the beginning of his rule to finish the plans of his father Charles Robert, who had once captured Mladen Šubić, but got no further. After an attempt by Slavonian Ban Mikac in 1344, the following year Ludowick himself came with an army to Croatia. He took over Knin where he set up a Hungarian troop; and the Croatian aristocrats, the princes of Krbava, and the Nelipić and Šubić families surrendered without resistance. In 1347, Ludowick traded the Šubić estates in Croatia for properties in Slavonia. The Šubić family then became the owners of the Zrin fortress, hence the name Zrinski. They would have a more significant role in Hungarian history later on" (p. 111).

#### **d) The Croatians without Political Influence in Hungary**

In every internal Balkan war, Ludowick I, the most powerful Hungarian king ever, ". . . as in the case of the battle against Croatian aristocrats and the Republic of Venice, relied on his cousin and later father-in-law (after 1353), Bosnian Ban Stephen II Kotromanić, who had been a faithful vassal to his father as well" (p. 113). The fact that the Hungarians ". . . captured Klis, the fortress that oversaw the road from Split to Bosnia, from the Serbs in the first half of 1356," is very significant (p. 114). There is no love or friendship expressed anywhere with the Croatians, and few consider them politically important as a conquered nation, except when a rebellion of the local disloyal aristocrats needed to be put down. However, since Ludowick I was also crowned the Polish king in 1370, the 12-year long personal union of Hungary and Poland ". . . would be the peak of closeness between the two countries in a public legal sense. Whether it remained on this level, or precisely because of it, this age of Hungarian-Polish union, or the proximity of the two nations, would for many Hungarians represent the unique ideal of coexistence of two nations throughout history. This was the most intimate period in Hungarian friendship with the Polish, the only Slavic people Hungarians lived with in cordial relations at the time, and whose friendship they had wanted for centuries" (p. 117). On the other hand, the Hungarians had no reason to want cordial relations and friendship with the Croatians, since they had conquered and degraded the Croatians on time and annexed their territory, keeping some of the Croatian aristocrats to serve them as regional and local masters.

For the 14<sup>th</sup> century, we have the records of the role of the originally Hungarian Franciscan Pauline order of in the beginnings of the Croatian school system; and for the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, that, out of the entire Croatian aristocracy, only the princes of Krbava and Krka (the Frankopans) remained faithful to the King at the time of rebellion against King Sigismund (p. 130). Even in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatians were not prominent in the history of the Hungarian state. Apart from remarks on Venetian attempts ". . . to bribe Hungarian and Croatian aristocrats" (p. 140) at the time of Hungarian-Venetian conflict over Dalmatia, during the reign of King Sigismund; the armed conflict of Matija Korvin with the Venetians over ". . . the Krk island, territory of

the Croatian aristocrat family Frankopan” (p. 171); Matija’s intention to “. . . appoint his extramarital son Ivaniš as the Croatian-Slovenian Herzog and Bosnian King” (p. 173); the record of the Battle of Krbava – given in a single sentence – is also important: “When Croatian Ban Emerik Derenčenji tried to prevent a plundering Turkish army from carrying off loot and slaves in 1493, it resulted in the Battle of Krbava Field near Udbina, in which many Croatian aristocrats died” (p. 176-177).

Much greater attention was dedicated to Sigismund’s attack on Ivan Frankopan, and the issue was, in its entirety, presented in the following way: “Ivan (Anz) Frankopan, son of Sigismund’s faithful supporter Nikola Frankopan, was married to Katarina Nelipić. Her father, Ivan Nelipić, had spacious estates in Croatia, as did Ivan Frankopan and his eight brothers, in Dalmatia. After her father’s death, Catherine, meaning also Ivan Frankopan, would inherit his properties. This would certainly lead to an enormous extension of the Frankopan family’s estate. Sigismund did not want to let this happen, and he refused to allow Catherine to be her father’s heiress. When Ivan refused to give the Nelipić properties to the King, Sigismund sent the new Slavonian Ban Matko Talovec against him in 1436. Having stripped Frankopan of the duty of Dalmatian-Croatian ban, Sigismund appointed that position to Matko Talovec. At the same time, he got involved in the dispute among the Frankopan brothers, supporting Ivan’s rivals. Matko’s invasion was a complete success. By the beginning of 1437, he had confiscated the Nelipić properties in Sigismund’s name. Sigismund then confided the government over these territories to Matko Talovec and his brothers” (p. 137).

### **e) The Consequences of the Defeat at Mohács**

Concerning the battle of Mohács in 1526, it is stated that some in the Hungarian military camp had the opinion that it was not wise to engage in battle at the moment, but rather to retreat towards Transylvania and wait for the reinforcement led by Duke János Szapolyai; palatine István Werbőczy; Pavle Timori, the Catholic archbishop of Kalosca. and even “. . . the Croatian army, under the leadership of Krsto Frankopan” (p. 186). After Hungary’s disastrous defeat, it is mentioned that Ferdinand I of Habsburg “. . . filled the empty thrones of Bohemia, Hungary, Croatia and Slavonia” (p. 188), but that “. . . the Hungarian and Croatian nobles were . . . still divided over the two claimants, Ferdinand and János Szapolyai” (p. 189). The Treaty of Varad, concluded in 1538 between the warring parties in the fight for the Hungarian throne, “. . . also implemented the division of territories: the western parts of Hungary, Croatia and Slavonia came under Ferdinand’s rule, and Transylvania under the rule of János I, while the previous masters over the remaining territories maintained their control” (p. 198). After the fall of Sziget in 1566, “. . . the spacious regions of Hungary and Croatia fell under Ottoman rule” (p. 203). It is interesting that the book speaks about the conversion of many Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, Bosnians and Albanians into Islam under Turkish rule, but the Croatians are not mentioned in this context at all. “Most of ‘Turkish’ army in the conquered Hungarian and Croatian countries were South Slavs” (p. 218), but only the Orthodox or former Orthodox Christians who converted to Islam. “The Catholic and Protestant populations of the conquered areas preferred leaving these areas rather than staying to live under Turkish rule, which, together with severe loses during the Turkish invasion, led to the desolation of entire areas, and the settlement of an Orthodox Slavic, mostly Serbian, population” (p. 218).

The Imperial Court turned the remnants of Hungary into a permanent battlefield for the purpose of the defence of German countries. The border fortresses were organized to form six general military districts, two of which were Croatian and Slavonian districts. “The height of the war tax in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Croatia was on average 3,500 forints, while the expenses of defence were between 200,000 and 550,000 forints” (p. 221). This testifies to the fact that land area was the only thing important to the empire, and that the importance of Croatia, when it came to human and material resources, was negligible; thus, it could be charged for only half a percent of the war expenses. The Turks had a similar problem. “During some periods, the overall expenses for the soldiers’ salaries on the Military Border surpassed the overall income from the conquered Hungarian and Croatian areas, so the deficit was compensated from the central Istanbul treasury, and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century from the taxes collected on the Balkans. Thus there was a question of whether the occupation of the mentioned territories was worthwhile” (p. 223). The record that, in 1591 and 1592, the Turks took over Bihać and Sisak dates back as far as the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. “During those two years, the Turks conquered 26 fortresses and captured 35,000 people in Croatia and Slavonia” (p. 236). The following year, the Long War broke out, lasting fifteen years and ending with Peace of Zsitvatorok in 1606, with a clause that future border disputes were to be “. . . solved by the border captains, the Croatian ban and the pasha of Buda, or, as a last resort, the Emperor and Sultan” (p. 242).

#### **f) The Restoration of Catholicism in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Hungary**

In the Vice-regency council in Hungary in 1608 (vice-regency?), the following, among other things, was made a law: “. . . only noblemen born in Hungary, Croatia or Slavonia have the right to a title in state government, and foreigners cannot interfere with the government of Hungary” (p. 247). Although the Calvinist Protestants took over almost the entire Hungary at one point, the 17<sup>th</sup> century was marked with thorough Roman Catholic restoration. This process was significantly facilitated by the fact that the Imperial Court in the last decades of the former century “. . . had its first success in the suppression of Protestantism in Upper and Lower Austria, the Military Border and Croatia” (p. 248). The Jesuits were the most successful and most persistent in this ordeal. “Re-Catholicization spread from the upper social classes toward the lower and, geographically, it progressed from Croatia and Transdanubia toward the western and northern areas of the Hungarian kingdom” (p. 250). Prior to this wave of aggressive re-Catholicization, most inhabitants of the entire Austria accepted Protestantism, “except Tyrol, Styria, Carniola and Croatia, where the Protestants were not the majority” (p. 251).

The Habsburgs, consistent in their devotion to the Roman Pope, and having ambitious imperial plans, tried to centralise their state as much as possible and to suppress the traditional power of the feudal classes in government. “The resistance of the Hungarian nobility and the invasions of Transylvanian princes prevented the realisation of the said policy of the court in the Kingdom of Hungarian and Croatia . . . Hungary was not only a separate entity in a public legal sense but it was also a rounded class autonomy, with a palatine and secular judge at the head, and in Croatia with a ban as the king’s valid regent” (p. 261). Immediately after the Peace of Westphalia in 1645, which had brought a precious calm in religious fights to Europe, “. . . at the centre of

attention of Hungarian and Croatian politicians, but also the broad population, were the issues of the unification of Hungary and banishing the Ottoman Turks from its territories. Considering the new political circumstances, an urgent solution to this problem was thought to be the necessary condition for the nation's survival" (p. 262). In other words, the united nations of Hungarians and Croatians, who did not agree with the inactivity of the Habsburgs regarding the confrontation with the Turks. "The Hungarian and Croatian classes were especially dissatisfied by the fact that, during the validation of the Peace of Zsitvatorok, the Ottomans put 20 counties under their surveillance, and that they penetrated deeper and deeper behind the border fortifications in their raids. The imperial Army was ready to defend Vienna in the case of the larger Hungarian invasions, but it stood by passively watching the conquests of Hungarian and Croatian cities" (p. 263).

### **g) The Croatians, Zealous Hungarian Patriots**

The following fragment shows that, in this regard, the Croatians were actually treated as an integral part of Hungarian nation: "The most prominent figures of Hungarian political life and state institutions (palatine Paul Palfi, bans Nikola and Peter Zrinski, palatine Ferenc Wesselényi, Lazlo Esterhazy, a secular judge and Croatian ban Adam Forgač and Ferenc Nadasdy), regardless of the difference in their political orientation, were dissatisfied with the domestic and foreign policies of the Habsburg court, and agreed that the formal peace with the Ottoman Empire, owing to the suffered losses, did more harm to Hungary than an open war, and that the resulting overall military-strategic, economic and political situation threatened to finally cause the collapse of state and destruction of the nation" (p. 263).

After all, ". . . the majority of Hungarian and Croatian aristocracy accepted the opinion formed by Count Nikola Zrinski, the prominent general in the anti-Turkish fights, and the most prominent Hungarian writer of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, who believed that the liberation from the Turks must be won by domestic forces, since, if it was done by the Imperial Court, the price would be the loss of independence. Zrinski conditioned the success of the endeavour with prior thorough reforms in government, economy, and military organisation, but also in the opinions of the prominent figures and social classes in Hungary. The restructuring of the army, about which Zrinski wrote a special tractate, had the biggest significance in the preparations for the coming war. Apart from removing many flaws of the outdated administrative system and enabling more efficient confrontation with the Ottoman Turks, the foreseen measures for the strengthening and centralisation of the state organs and administrative system of the Hungarian kingdom would also stabilise the country's position in relations with the Habsburg dynasty. In order to find the best solution for securing the country's future, Hungarian and Croatian politicians, besides contact with the Imperial Court and the corresponding central offices of the Habsburg monarchy, started diplomatic relations with the French, Swedish and Polish courts, German princes and, of course, Transylvanian Prince George Rakoczi II" (p. 263-264).

The Croatian ban was considered to be – apart from the palatine and secular judge – one of the three most important political figures in Hungary (the third of the three), and the authors of this book also agree with this. However, on the one and only occasion where we find the term "Hungarian-Croatian forces", used twice on page 270, it is stated

that this army freed Pécs in 1664 fighting under the command of Nikola Zrinski together with the army of the League of the Rhine. “The Hungarian and Croatian aristocracy” is mentioned several times, but most important is the fact that, what the Croats call “the Zrinski-Frankopan conspiracy, Hungarian historiography calls the Wesselényi conspiracy. Truth be told, when it came to the outright rebellion, the conspiracy had two centres: one led by Zrinski and Frankopan with Erasmus Tattenbach, the Styrian feudal lord; and the other led by Ferenc Rakoczi I in Upper Hungary. Having realised that the uprising was doomed to fail, Zrinski and Frankopan got scared and betrayed Rakoczi, but this did not save them from the death sentence. Later, “. . . after the confiscation of the estates of the Zrinski and Frankopan families, the balance of power in Croatia shifted so much in king’s favour that the victory of the king’s policy was already secured inside class institutions” (p. 276). There is also a remark that Peter Zrinski wrote literary works and poems in the Croatian language, as opposed to his brother Nikola, the most significant Hungarian writer of that time.

### **h) Concrete Evidence of the Abuse of Hungarian Titles**

The record that, in 1691, the army of Emperor Leopold was comprised of “. . . imperial infantry and Hungarian, Serbian and Croatian cavalry” (p. 302) shows how benevolent the use of ethnic symbols – which do not have concrete state-political and legal content – is. It is a matter of ethnic affiliation of the major part of the army, and not of some real national units. Anyhow, for the entire 18<sup>th</sup> century and the events that marked it, the authors found it important to mention Croatia and the Croats only a few times. The first time was when they stated that the Hungarian national parliament, which was in session from 1712 to 1715, confirmed the independent laws of Croatia and Slavonia, among other things. Then follows the record that the Croatian Parliament accepted the successive inheriting of the throne by the Habsburgs to the female line “. . . even before the official proclamation of the Pragmatic Sanction of 1713” (p. 325).

But, for the first time after 1102, Croatian political subjectivity appeared here. “The fact that the Croatian Parliament accepted this document as early as 1712 concealed the danger of a potential breakaway from the centuries-long state union with Croatia in the case that the Hungarian Parliament did not accept the document, i.e. if it chose a figure from another dynasty. Because of this possibility, and because of the wide activity that the court had developed within Hungarian circles before the Parliament went in session, the Hungarian Parliament, right at the beginning of the session, ‘voluntarily’ offered to accept the succession from the female side as well” (p. 325-326). Of course, this is no proof of potential Croatian independence and autonomy, but rather only a mere testimony to how much the Croatian and Slavonian feudal classes were under the control of Vienna at that time. On the other hand, “. . . the Hungarian Pragmatic Sanction contained another clause which the contemporaries at the time of the enactment of the document considered a secondary issue, and which later became extremely important: the countries under the crown of St Stephen, meaning Hungary, Croatia, Slavonia and Transylvania, were also to be an inseparable whole. The three mentioned laws became the basis of the development of the public-legal relations and state-legal position of Hungary until 1918” (p. 326).



### i) The Ethnic Structure of Hungary at the End of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The fact that the Empress Maria Theresa declared feudal laws for Slavonia in 1756, and then – not until eleven years later – for Hungary and Croatia, followed by the other Austrian countries, is important for the understanding of the special statuses of Slavonia and Croatia as parts of Hungary. Since these feudal laws considerably protected the right of serfs and, what is most important, transformed the relations between the aristocrats and serfs from private law into public law, “. . . the introduction of the feudal laws caused great dissatisfaction of the Hungarian and Croatian aristocracies” (p. 352). Especially impressive is the record that, in 1787, 19,000 aristocrats – members of the secular, not counting the spiritual aristocracy – lived in Croatia and Slavonia, because it uncovers the enormous number of this markedly parasitic echelon of social structure. The peak of this noble class were barons or the aristocracy “. . . of over 150 domestic aristocratic families and over 200 naturalised foreign aristocratic families that, for the most part, never moved into the country” (p. 368). Also, the authors mention data based on church and other registers on the ethnic structure of the population of the entire Hungary, and especially its narrower part, as well as of Croatia, Transylvania, Slavonia and the Military Border. From these records we see that there were 396,000 Croats, 4,000 Serbs and 2,000 Hungarians and Germans in Croatia in 1790. In terms of percentage, there were 98% Croats and 1% Serbs, considering the fact that Croatia consisted only of the counties of Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci. In Slavonia there were 131,000 Serbs, 128,000 Croats, 19,000 Hungarians and 2,000 Germans, which means there were 46.8% Serbs and 45.7% Croats. In the Military Border there were 388,000 Serbs and 325,000 Croats. Concerning the religious structure, in Croatia there were 98.8% Catholics and 1% Orthodox; and in Slavonia 52.1% Catholics and 46.8% Orthodox, which means that 9,000 Slavonian Catholics express Serbian affiliation. “In the class, political and state system in Hungary, which survived until 1848, the positions of the Croats, Transylvanian Saxons and Serbs were legally regulated. The Croats and Saxons were considered class nations (*nacii*) and they had territorial autonomy, while the Serbs, based on privileges they had received, had a wide ecclesiastical-educational autonomy (until the end of 1770s, the metropolitanate had jurisdiction even over secular people). The Slovaks, Romanians, Ruthenians and others did not have separate class organisations” (p. 378-379).

It was inevitable that the Hungarian national renaissance additionally inspired the national awakenings of the other nations in Hungary, and this was manifested in different ways, with longer or shorter time differences. “There were not many differences only between the Hungarian and Croatian (Illyrian) movement, because of the similarities in their social structures. The Croats (although to a lesser extent), like the Hungarians, had a complete social structure – from the serfs to intelligence and the aristocracy” (p. 417). Such a situation was also reflected in political and cultural lives. “The Croats had the most favourable position, having autonomy within the Hungarian kingdom and their class institutions (counties, parliament, government apparatus, Croatian representatives in the Hungarian state parliaments, etc.), through which they could act in an organised manner. This is why they were the first to have the idea of a certain level of independence in relation to the central authority. They originally intended to realise this idea in cooperation with other South-Slavic peoples (the idea, and then the Illyrianist movement). One of the first such political programs,

which also dealt with some social and economic issues, was the 1832 *Dissertation* by count Janko Drašković. Although they were in a less favourable position than the Croats, the Serbs also came forward with their political requests, as early as at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 420). After the Hungarian Parliament instated Magyar as the official language in 1843, “the official language in Croatian countries (Croatia and Slavonia) still remained Latin” (p. 428).

### **j) Hungary After the Revolution in 1848, and a Settlement with the Croats**

The revolutionary year of 1848 that shook the entire feudal Europe also stirred up the ethnic minorities in Hungary. “From the Spring until Fall of 1848, the movements of Croats, Serbs and a part of the Romanians from Transylvania were strengthened the most. Both Vienna and Pest dedicated great attention to the solution of the Croatian issue. The Hungarian government was in this case ready to do the most to find a solution, since Croatia and Slovenia were united (autonomous) countries of the St Stephen Crown. However, the Imperial Court hindered Hungary’s arrangements. On March 23, Josip Jelačić, a reliable man of the Court, was appointed as the Croatian ban, and he did everything possible to break the links between Croatia and Hungary. He worked on his own, not discussing anything with the Hungarian government, even in the case of liberating the serfs, acting without regard to newly enacted laws. He made Croatia a stronghold for the Imperial Court. When the Hungarian government recognised the full autonomy of Croatia on 27 August 1848, he was determined to lead the army against Hungary, following orders from the Court. The Serbian movement came into armed conflict with the Hungarians before the Croatian one” (p. 436). Regardless of the location of the first conflicts and the fact that Jelačić was defeated and suppressed in his first raid in Hungary, still, “. . . the greatest asset of the court was Josip Jelačić, who was returned in September to the position of the ban of Croatia and Slavonia, after having been deprived of the title for a short while . . . With the advancement of the Imperial Army under the command of Ban Jelačić, the situation grew more and more complicated. On September 23, Archduke Stephen Habsburg, the last Hungarian palatine, left the country and, before retreating to Vienna, tried to meet with Jelačić to deter him from his intentions; but Jelačić did not want to listen to him” (p. 440-441).

After the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, in 1849, Hungary was territorially broken up. Transylvania, the Duchy of Serbia and the Banate of Tamiš were separated from it. “Croatia was also separated from the countries of the St Stephen Crown, and became independent from Hungary, but under the authority of Vienna” (p. 450). In the October Diploma from 1860, the Emperor expressed his willingness to make certain concessions to the Hungarians. “This would also mean the return of some parts of the country that were seceded after the revolution, such as Croatia and Slavonia, or the Duchy of Serbia and the Banate of Tamiš (which were terminated at the end of 1860, and their territories were given to Hungary)” (p. 457). Only after the Austrian-Hungarian settlement from 1867 was Transylvania returned to Hungary. “Relations with Croatia and Slavonia were also regulated in 1868, by a Croatian-Hungarian settlement. The state-legal relations between Croatia and Hungary were suspended in 1848. The Croatian side wanted a normalisation of relations, but based on the law from 1861.

According to this law, the joint ruler and some so-called joint affairs were accepted, as long as the Hungarian side recognised certain territorial claims of the Croats (Rijeka, Međumurje, the Military Border, Dalmatia). That was the actual position of the National Party, which had the majority in the Croatian Parliament at the time, while the unionists had fewer requests. Negotiations took place, but with no success. Then the ruler himself interfered, dissolving the Croatian Parliament on 25 May 1867 and appointing Levin Rauch, a unionist aristocrat, as the Croatian ban, following Andrássy's suggestion. The unionists won the 1867 elections, with the help of altered election laws, pressures and cheating; so the negotiations over a Croatian-Hungarian settlement were sped up, and an agreement was reached the following year. According to the Croatian-Hungarian settlement, "Hungary and Croatia" are one state in relation to the rest of the monarchy and in relation to foreign countries. The Croatian side then subsequently accepted the Austrian-Hungarian settlement, under the condition that similar future agreements were to be made with its approval. According to the settlement, Croatia and Slavonia, as parts of Hungary, would receive internal sovereignty (administration, education, judicial system, religious issues, some economic affairs, etc.), led by the Parliament with the Croatian ban at the head of the government. Croatian would become the official language, and the Hungarian government would use Croatian in its communications with Croatia. A minister without portfolio would be in charge of Croatian issues in the Hungarian government. After the settlement, a delegation of Croatian representatives also had a seat in the Hungarian Parliament (42 members). Finance, defence and most economic affairs became the joint affairs of Croatia and Hungary. Croatia participated with 44% in the financing of the joint Croatian-Hungarian affairs. The Hungarian party accepted the Croatian pretences to the Croatian-Slavonian military border and Dalmatia, but arguments were had over Međumurje and the town of Rijeka. Thus, in the end, Međumurje and Rijeka ('the Rijeka Patch' – which was not directly connected to the territory of Hungary) were joined to Hungary, while the territory of the county of Rijeka was given to Croatia. In 1873, there was a revision of the Croatian-Hungarian settlement, but the essence of the original settlement was not altered" (p. 469-470).

Thus, Hungary managed to consolidate itself as a state, while Croatia did not actually receive anything tangible. "Basically, after the Austrian-Hungarian and Croatian-Hungarian settlements, Hungary regained its territorial entirety. Only the Military Border remained outside its territory, concerning government. The government of Gyula Andrássy raised this issue as early as 1868, demanding from the ruler that the Military Border be annexed to Hungary in a governmental sense as well. However, this process was prolonged, lasting over a decade (to be precise, from 1871 to 1884) and, in the end, the Military Border was included into the territories of Hungary and Croatia" (p. 470). However, Hungary did not permanently resolve the issue of its national minorities, whose overall members greatly surpassed that of the Hungarian population. Not even the Croats remained still, so they started expressing their more megalomaniac political ambitions. "Out of the non-Hungarian peoples in Hungary, only the Croats received their autonomy (through the Croatian-Hungarian settlement from 1868), which helped them build the basic elements of statehood. At the same time, the so-called 'Small settlement' still did not bring the situation under control, as the Croatian public saw it only as a temporary appeasement" (p. 498).

## **Part Four**

### **Croatian National Ideologists, from Ljudevit Gaj to Ante Pavelić, as Instruments for the Realisation of the Political Goals of Roman Catholic Clericalism**

#### **I. Introductory Remarks**

For almost a thousand years, the Roman Catholic church has had no doubts concerning its ultimate goals among the Slavic peoples. It wants to subordinate them, subjugate them and include them in its totalitarian organisational structure and religious intolerance. The first to suffer are the Serbs, as the closest; and the most important are certainly the Russians, because of their number, the enormous geographic space they inhabit and their crucial geo-strategic position. The basic recipe for the achievement of this goal is identical and simple – conversion to the Uniate church and then Catholicisation. However, the Roman Catholic missionaries encountered many obstacles and problems in realizing this goal, according to which concrete concepts of action were formed. The very first problem with the Serbs was their national name, as it has traditionally been linked to a strong sense of their own, national Christian church of the Orthodox rite. Every historical trouble and tragedy that has happened to the Serbian people has been excessively taken advantage of by the Roman Curia to force the Serbian “schismatics” to pay reverence to the Roman bishop. Those who naively consented and converted had their brains hurriedly washed, so that there would be no trace of Serbian national identity left, by giving the term “Serbian” an exclusively religious content. Just as the Islamized Serbs automatically became “Turks”, the Catholicised ones turned into South Slavs, Latins, Šokci, Bunjevci, etc.

The crash of feudalism in Europe removed the principle of ‘whose state – their religion’ and caused the rapid awakening of national identity in the European peoples, which became a dominant form of collective awareness in civil society, suppressing the religious one from the centre of attention. The Roman Catholic church had to adjust to

this process. It did not have many problems with traditionally Catholic peoples, such as the Spanish or Polish, but it did in regions where the Protestant reformation had success, such as with the Germans and especially on the Balkans, where the conflict between the Western and Eastern varieties of Christianity has existed for centuries inside the ethnic entity of the Serbian people. After the partial renewal of Serbian national statehood, at once there was a danger of the renewal of national identity in the descendants of the Serbs who had been Catholicised in previous centuries, and that they might feel a strong spiritual unity with their Orthodox brethren – which was certainly founded on a unique language. The Roman Catholic prelates were then forced to seek out an option that would keep the formerly Catholicised Serbs in their arms, and lure the remaining Orthodox Serbs to the Western Church, so that a full national unity in a new political and cultural frame would be obtained under its patronage. Concerning the high degree of the identification of Serbdom with the Orthodox religion and the cult of St Sava; and the official name of the national religious community as the Serbian Orthodox Church, they sought for a new, “more appropriate” national name that would unite the Roman Catholics and Orthodox, but which would also – through political means and ideological indoctrination – bring the Orthodox to gradual Uniatism under the slogan of Christian unity and brotherly solidarity. Such aspirations paved the road first for a controlled affirmation of the Illyrian Movement, and then Yugoslavism.

At the same time, the Roman Catholic prelates reached for the name of a former Croatian people whose remains were still present on the Adriatic coast, on the ethnically chakavian islands. This name was also preserved politically, thanks to the feudal class structures in the counties of Zagreb, Križevo and Varaždin, where the Croatian aristocrats fled before the Turks, imposing the Croatian national name on their kajkavian serfs. Although reduced to only three counties under the king’s administrative commissioner – the ban – the original names of the Banate of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia were preserved for centuries, even though it was left without Dalmatia and Slavonia long ago. Persistent claims that the Serbs and Croats are one nation with two tribal names paved the way for the gradual spreading of the Croatian name to all Catholicised Serbs, with the incessant insistence that this was the only way to achieve full national unity of the Roman Catholics and Orthodox. Thus, the realized project of the artificial creation of a national identity became the pattern of behaviour for future historical endeavours. As effectively defined by Fichte as early as 1807, a nation is a language or community of languages; the linguistic issue should be resolved first. The Chakavian language was already stunted, almost dead, and could not be reanimated into a modern literary language, and, even if it were possible, it would be limited to a very narrow population to which chakavian is the mother tongue. Kajkavian could have become the literary language, but it was the language of the Slovenians. Had the Croats proclaimed kajkavian as their literary language, it would be used in only three counties, without any future perspective.

Thus, it was necessary to “liberally” pronounce the Croats and Serbs as one unique people, and to offer it a common Illyrian or Yugoslav name on top of that. The reconciliation of the position that it was a single Slavic people paved the way for the proclamation of a common literary language. And this language could only be štokavian – or Serbian. The Vienna agreement made it possible to call the Serbian language Croatian and to reduce the ethnic distinction only to a religious one. In this unique people the Serbs are Orthodox and the Croats Catholic. However, it then took over

half a century to force millions of more-or-less nationally awakened Catholic Serbs to accept the Croatian national identity. Since the Serbs already had two renewed national states, and the European academic public treated a nation as a community of a language related to state sovereignty – according to the 1752 French encyclopaedia – the creators of the artificial Croatian nation launched a pseudo-historian concept of the preserved continuity of Croatian state right from 1102. That was the reason for the mass pamphleteer production of more-or-less imaginative historical forgeries, and the Romanticist constructions of actual events in their most politically suitable form.

Since the standardisation of the literary language was performed on a lexical basis that had nothing in common with the original Croatian ethnic substrate, the attitude toward this language could not be a natural one of nurture and preservation. When the real Croats (chakavians) and the imaginary Croats (kajkavians) accepted the Serbian national language as their own literary language, they still perceived it as foreign but necessary, as they had before with Latin, Hungarian or German. Not feeling any natural, organic relationship with it, they were ready to make rapid artificial changes so that it would differ from the Serbian original. This process of altering words and inventing new ones – actually of unscrupulous corruption of the Serbian language – is still happening even today. An artificial “national” culture is being synthesized, its “traditional” heritage and values are deliberately being fabricated, and only a barbarian nationalism could develop from the imposed “national” identity – with its primary traits as an uncontrolled urge for power, a tendency to destroy everything in opposition and totalitarian control of the social community. Real nations are a product of a long, natural and spontaneous process of the development of ethnic communities, while artificial ones are the result of strict ideological orientation inside a short-term policy of the realisation of certain interests, mostly those of powerful foreign factors.

The ideological wanderings through the Illyrian Movement and Yugoslavism are the original expression of the search for a form of political unification of the South-Slavic population in Austria, whose centre would be in a markedly Catholic Zagreb. The official name of the preserved banate feudal relict was the Banate of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, although its territory included only three counties of Croatia as a part of Hungary, until the later inclusion of Slavonia and the Military Krajina, while Dalmatia was hopelessly a part of Austria. This is why the creators of the great project first wanted the unification of Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Krajina into a single autonomous unit, in which the Catholic population would form the significant majority. In the second phase, Bosnia and Herzegovina and perhaps Bačka and Banat would be joined to this territorial unit under the slogan of “national” unity. Conforming to the realisation of the first phase was strategically unsustainable in the long-run, because the “tri-unit” took forever to form. This is why it was necessary to convince the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Roman Catholics that they were the descendants of the ancient Croats; to attempt to convince the Muslims that they directly descended from a former Croatian aristocratic line, and therefore, the “blossom” of the Croatian people; and to lull the Serbs, who were the majority there, and also those from Vojvodina, with phrases saying that the Serbs and Croats are a unique people, that they should politically act in unison and use “the Croatian historical right” as the framework for creating a state. It goes without saying that this phrase must also include the Serbs from other Serbian countries, often the Bulgarians as well; but no one ever truly believed in the possibility of forming such a broad political unit. The Croatian ideologists saw the

Austrian, or Austrian-Hungarian, borders as firm and unchangeable, so the phrase about unison only served as a means of ideological disarmament of the Serbs there. The formula was very simple and clear: we, the Serbs and Croats, are one people; originally, the Catholics are mostly called Croats, and the Orthodox Serbian; in Austria-Hungary the majority is Roman Catholic, so we should all accept a unified name: Croats; while those outside the borders of the Habsburg Empire should keep their Serbian name.

This is precisely the main content of the debates of all Croatian ideologists from Ljudevit Gaj to Ante Pavelić, and these ideologists differed from each other only in the sense that some used sweet words and a warm, friendly tone, while the others came out as arrogant, threatening and often using vulgar language. Thus, for example, Strossmayer and Starčević had the same Greater-Croatian goal and conquering pretences, even though they were in constant verbal conflict. As opposed to Gaj and Strossmayer, who wanted to mollify and win over the Serbs and perhaps even the Slovenians with the neutral historical names of Illyrianism and Yugoslavism, Starčević tried to scare them with his intolerant and forceful manner, and force them to assimilate into Croats, or to motivate them to escape from the Croatian region. Both Gaj's and Strossmayer's movements only had an Illyrian or Yugoslavian shell, while their essence was markedly Great-Croatian. Starčević rejected these shells and presented the Great-Croatianism in its bare form.

The realisation that it is not easy to win the Serbs from Croatia and Slavonia over or to force them to accept the Croatian ideology of a historical right and the creation of a state, and on that basis fit them in to the concept of a Croatian political nation, led many Croatian ideologists to deny the Serbs their very ethnic Serbian core. They declared them ethnically Vlachs and called them the most derogatory names, accusing the Serbian Orthodox Church that it convinced them to name themselves Serbs just in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is a great number of historical works by excellent scientists who wrote, using valid arguments, about the settlement of the Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia. The most prominent and most authoritative of them all are Radoslav Grujić, Jovan Radonić, Aleksa Ivić, Slavko Gavrilović and Rajko Veselinović. For the purpose of this work, I will concisely interpret the basic conclusions from a synthetic report from Slavko Gavrilović, *The Serbs as a People in Slavonia and Croatia from the Mid 16<sup>th</sup> to the Mid 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries (National Identity and Sovereignty in the South-East Europe*, Istorijski institut Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti, Belgrade, 2002).

Gavrilović writes that the biggest wave of the Serbian settlement was between 1594 and 1606, during the Long War, and under the leadership of Episcopo Vasilije. "Until the end of the Long War, the entire space between the Drava and Sava Rivers to Ivanić, Križevci, Koprivnica and Varaždin (historical Slavonia!) was filled with a Serbian population, led by its national elders and an Orthodox clergy. Since the immigration from Turkish Slavonia was still ongoing until the Great Viennese War 1683-1699, the Serbian population compactly residing in imperial Slavonia (Varaždin generalat) was a nation in the full sense of the term, especially after the imperial decrees from 1627 and 1630 that separated the territory they inhabited from the rest of the Triune Kingdom, from the Parliament, ban, counties and aristocracy, and became *corpus separatum*. In 1627, the Croatian Krajnians (Serbs) received the right to the land and, in 1630, the right to limited self-government, or to a lower degree of autonomy, under the leadership

of the generalat in Varaždin, the Imperial War Council in Gratz and, of course, the Emperor in Vienna” (p. 93-94).

A similar thing happened in Banija, Kordun, Lika and the Littoral Krajina. In some official records, these immigrant Serbs were called Vlachs or Morlachs, and religiously Schismatics or non-united Greeks. “However, the contemporaries of the Serbian settlement to the Triune, primarily those from clerical, Catholic circles – bishops, prelates and even cardinals – did not abstain from the name Serb, Rascian or people from Raška as a synonym for ‘Vlach’, not as a social group but as a people” (p. 94). Gavrilović offers a whole list of examples. The Austrian Emperor Ferdinand called them Vlachs and Rascians in 1611; the Bishop of Zagreb Benedict Vinković defined Marča “Vlachs” as “Rascian Schismatics” and, in several documents, he used the terms “Vlach” and “Rascian” as synonyms; in 1643, Roman Cardinal Capone said that the “Vlachs” or “Rascians” came from Serbia; in the same year, the Roman Curia called the Serbs by the same name; the Bishop of Zagreb Petar Petretić wrote in 1651 that in 1600, “. . . a large number of Vlachs or Rascians, that is Serbs, came from Turkey”, etc. “Bishop Petretić speaks even more specifically about the ‘Vlachs’ as Serbs in his 1662 record of the migration of the Serbs to the Austrian part of Slavonia during the Long War, claiming that they were ‘Vlachs’ or Rascians, or more precisely Serbs, since they came from the Kingdom of Serbia under Turkish rule and were located on Slavonian borders” (p. 96). This bishop expressly claimed that their language was Serbian, and that it was also called Walachian (Vlachian) in Slavonia and Croatia. Gavrilović also adds the examples of the 1667 Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Bishop of Zagreb Aleksandar Mikulić from 1688, the Bishop of Senj Sebastian Glavinić from 1696, Croatian Ban Adam Baćanj from 1696, Austrian Emperor Leopold I from 1700, Uniate Marča Prince-Bishop Rafail Marković from 1717, the Bishop of Senj Martin Brajković from 1702, etc., all of whom identify the “Vlachs” and “Rascians” as the same people, considering them Serbian. Bishop Martin Brajković, “. . . when reporting on the state of affairs in Lika, said that the Serbs were ‘the fifth and largest’ nation there, compactly inhabiting villages, mostly with their own churches and clergy” (p. 97).

In the highly difficult surroundings of the Krajina areas and under constant proselytistic attacks, the Serbian national identity was preserved mostly among the Orthodox population. The Uniate and Catholicised Serbs were intentionally forced to renounce their national name. They were named Šokci, Latins, South Slavs etc. As Gavrilović concludes, based on excessive evidence, “. . . reliable historical sources unquestionably testify that the Serbs came to old Slavonia and Croatia in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as a part of a people that had its own name, language and religion, as well as its own national spiritual and secular elders. It could be said that the Serbian national environment was a structured society, especially from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, composed of those from the Krajina (border guards) and peasants – subjects to the Chamber and spahis, a thin commercial-trade stratum, clergy and monks – and, from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, also of smaller groups of intellectuals and border officers. Still, in the official sources of the Austrian and Croatian military and civil government, the terms ‘Vlachs’ and ‘Morlachs’ were used for immigrant Serbs, and Croatian clerical-nationalist historiography and policy interpret those names only as names for a social group and therefore deny the existence of the Serbs as a people and nation inside their ‘historical’ boundaries. However, the excessively cited sources in this work, which come from the Catholic bishops and the Roman Curia, testify in favour of the claim of



Serbian, and every other, critical historiography that the Serbs in question are a people – ‘Vlachs’ (Rascians) – that use their own, Serbian language and Cyrillic script profess the, Orthodox religion and think of themselves as a separate people who created the conditions for its affirmation as a separate, Serbian nation from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 103-104).

Apart from the dominant Roman Catholic religious factor, certainly very significant is the Austrian political factor, from Juraj Križanić to Gaj and Strossmayer, who supported the Illyrian, Yugoslav and Croatian projects when they could use them to achieve a balance with the more and more extreme Hungarian sovereign requests. It is no coincidence that the Austrian-Hungarian heir to the throne Franz Ferdinand worked very seriously on a proposal for a “trialistic” restructuring of the Habsburg Monarchy several years before World War I. According to this proposal, the Croats would be the bearers of the political-territorial shaping of the South-Slavic factor whose headquarters would be in Zagreb. For this reason, Emperor Franz Joseph gave his consent in 1850, and Pope Pius IX promoted the Bishopric of Zagreb into an Archbishopric in the 1852 papal bull and appointed it the metropolitanate of the following bishoprics – Bosnian or Đakovo-Sremč Krbava or Senj-Modružac and Križevo.

### **A. The Roman Catholic Project of Illyrianism**

The Illyrian idea, as a way of parrying the Serbian national thought while attempting to Catholicise the Western Balkans, existed latently in the centre of the Roman Catholic Church and was occasionally used for familial purposes. When the Imperial Court needed an efficient lever for the restriction of growing Hungarian nationalism, this idea was reincarnated for the purpose of politically propelling the South Slavs in Hungary, with the intent of suppressing the most extreme Hungarian requests and achieving the long-term instrumentalisation of the Slavs by artificially inoculating the “Illyrian” national identity and Catholic religious spirit so that they would also become isolated from the broadly awakened Serbian nationalism.

#### **1. The Study of Illyrianism by Victor Novak**

The most comprehensive study on the realisation of this project was written by Victor Novak and was posthumously published in 1987 by “Nova knjiga” from Belgrade under the title *Magnum Tempus. Illyrianism and the Catholic Clergy; Ideas and Figures 1830-1849*. Novak, who was a Croat by his national affiliation and a true Yugoslavian in an ideological sense, was markedly anti-clerically oriented, which can be concluded from his monumental work *Magnum Crimen*; at the same time, Novak was a scrupulous scientist and persistent political fighter. He had a critical historiographical approach, and used a conscientious examination of the facts and idealistic enthusiasm for the concept of Serbian-Croatian national unity. Although Novak’s idealistic enthusiasm could not sustain any serious historical trial, his work is a precious material standpoint for the explanation of a failed Roman Catholic political experiment, the project of Illyrianism, after which ensued yet another failure – Yugoslavism – after which all the Catholic political aspirations would be focused in the ideology of clerical-fascist Croatian nationalism.

Right before the beginning of the Illyrian movement, rapid Hungarianisation raged in Croatia and Slavonia, while the feudal classes were passive observers and even supporters through the actions of parliamentary representatives. Until then, Latin was the only official language, and something that could be called the Croatian language simply did not exist in public life. Croatian national identity existed in the counties of Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevo, with rudimentary literary attempts in kajkavian, while the Slavonian Catholics from štokavian Slavonia had a certain Slavonian identity and the beginnings of literature in the ikavian dialect. Dalmatia was completely separated from the Banate and Hungary, as it was directly annexed to Austria after it was taken over by the Venetians and then the French. The few writers there that wrote in a national language were considered South Slavs and they wrote in the štokavian-ikavian dialect.

### a) The German Roots of Ljudevit Gaj

The founder of the Illyrian movement himself, Ljudevit Gaj, was of German origin both on his mother's and father's side. He was born in 1808 in Krapina, his native language was German and he gradually learned kajkavian from his environment. During his education, he was friends with some of the leading Pan-slavists of his time, like Jan Kolar, and so he also began to contemplate the issue of Slavic languages and literatures, becoming aware of the pathetic state of the Croats and their culture in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After many conversations and ideas, the Romanticist movement of Gaj and his supporters got wings when, in 1833, Ljudevit Gaj had audience with the Austrian Emperor Franz I, from whom he asked for permission to start a newspaper in the Croatian language. According to Gaj's journal notes, the Emperor replied: "Yes, yes, the Hungarians cause you a lot of trouble. They write too much and they would like it if the Croats don't write anything . . . Don't worry, I'll do what is necessary" (p. 62). As early as the following year, Gaj received imperial permission with an explanation by Count Sedlmitzky that ". . . it is not the best intentions of Your Majesty that the national language of the Croats be repressed by that of the Hungarians" (p. 63). Thus, the growth of Croatian nationalism was incited from the highest position of power to at least partially suppress Hungarian nationalism.

**Comment [125]:** Translator's note. This name could not be verified in the available sources. Suggested spelling is given here

### b) The Mobilisation of the Clergy and the Leading Role of the Zagreb Seminary in the Propagation of the Illyrian Movement

As soon as he received the permission, Gaj began the realisation of the most serious work, which during the following years represented the main pillar of the entire Illyrian movement. As Novak writes, "Gaj was a realistic opportunist who realised that his sole mediator between the leading intelligence and the broad masses would be the national clergy. Hence the unusually delicate and tactic preparations for the beginning of the campaign was the unanimous effort of gathering all the national powers for this great national assignment, among which the lower clergy was especially important. This is why Gaj carefully prepared the turf with the young clerics in Pest and, and through them and Rakovci, those in the seminary of Zagreb; and then with the younger priests in Zagreb and in the province. Thus, Gaj could expect a favourable reaction to his campaign from the clergy. All the more so since he received full approval from Bishop Alagović while visiting Emperor Franz in Vienna, and also his promise to offer any kind

of help that he, as a the head of the diocese of Zagreb could give. Bishop Alagović kept his promise when the time came” (p. 63). Gaj’s closest associates and advisors at the time were Ludwig Vukotinović, Vjekoslav Babukić and Antun Mažuranić. “Aside from Gaj’s afore mentioned first and main advisors, after they had received permission for the project, Pavle Štos also became more involved in these sessions, and his presence was important in the matters that concerned the clergy – and that was much appreciated at the very beginning. Pavle Štos had contacts not only with his young friends at the seminary, but also with his peers who already entered into the nation as young spiritual assistants” (p. 63).

Gaj issued the advertisement about the starting of the paper *Novine Horvatske* (*The Croatian Newspaper*) and the magazine *Danica Horvatska, Slavonzka i Dalmatinska*, (*The Croatian, Slavonian and Dalmatian Morning Star*) in kajkavian, and sent it to the Croats, Dalmatians, Dubrovians, Serbs, Carniolans, Styrians, Carylthians, Istrians, Bosniaks and other Slavs as a public invitation, pointing out that the articles would be published in the magazine not only in Croatian, but in other Illyrian dialects as well. “Only four days after the publication of the advertisement, the Episcopal Consistory of Zagreb . . . sent out a circular to all the clergy of the Diocese of Zagreb, in which the paper *Novine* – which was to be published by PhD Ljudevit Gaj from the beginning of 1835 – was recommended” (p. 65). The first year of publishing this paper was a time of the mobilisation of every available intellectual force and an affirmation of ideas, in order to create an atmosphere of South-Slavic national unity; and Gaj had unbelievable success, primarily because of “. . . his fearless associates among whom the seminarians and young priests were in the first lines, completely blended in with the new ideology. It was manifested for the first time how great the power of the Roman Catholic clerical organisation is for the purpose of promotion; as well as the power of the general idea that was approved, encouraged and persistently supported by supreme prelates. This meant that all the conditions were met so that Gaj could publish his *Proglas* at the end of 1835, and present all the tenets of the already mature movement. Gaj chose štokavian for all Croats, regardless of whether they spoke kajkavian, chakavian or štokavian, so that he could first spiritually unite the Croats with it, and then bring them closer to, and also unite them with, the Serbs who were born štokavian. For those Serbs, it was Vuk’s reform (Vuk Karadžić) that replaced the former artificial Slavic-Serbian language with the national štokavian, and it eventually became the only literary language that writers used. But, striving to subject all these numerous provincial and tribal names to a single, common one that would unite these tribes under one language and literature, Gaj inclined toward the Illyrian name, misguidedly believing, as many of his predecessors had, that it was ancestral to all the Slavs in the Balkans” (p. 93).

Gaj insisted on the fact that all Illyrians, or South Slavs, were one people that was divided into individual tribes by an unfortunate web of historical circumstances, and that it needed a unique name and a single literary language with consistent orthography in order to reunite. According to his words, the countries where the Illyrians live are: Carylthia, Gorica, Istra, Carniola, Styria, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Dubrovnik, Bosnia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria and Lower Hungary. But later, in the same text, when he reduced the Illyrians or South Slavs to Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (leaving out the Bulgarians as probably too distant), Gaj actually revealed where he saw the realisation of his political goals possible. However, despite the original

enthusiasm, the first problem occurred when it was clear that only certain intellectuals from Croatia, Slavonia and Styria declared themselves as Illyrian. It was obvious that the Illyrian Movement could only grow roots in a Catholic environment, because the vast majority of Roman Catholic priests understood and accepted the expansion of this ideology as their basic ecclesiastical duty. The seminary of Zagreb was literally turned into a hotbed of Illyrian ideas, and its leaders devotedly and enthusiastically applied themselves to “raising new representatives of, and fighters for, the general renascent ideals in the seminary” (p. 144).

Novak also lists a great number of the names of the priests who were prominent in Illyrian activities, and who were inspired to employing propaganda among the people – writing literary works, which were mostly poems and political pamphlets etc. The seminarians of Zagreb were in the forefront concerning this propaganda, and most of them “. . . remained faithful to the national vow they had given in the seminary; and through their apostolic actions, many were won over to the common cause, and many an opponent’s influence was lessened or completely diminished.. Christians and young priests made all kinds of efforts to make their work fruitful and successful. Successes multiplied and the idea grew stronger – in the seminary, and outside it during recess – and then also among the people, where they came into closest contact with them as spiritual assistants. And their younger fellow seminarians worthily followed their lead, proud of their predecessors” (p. 144).

Acting within the Illyrian movement, the Roman Catholic priests easily and successfully won the youth over to their cause, cunningly articulating its collective spirit and dedication. “Before the age of the Illyrian Movement, the youth was cruel, thoughtless, and greedy, caring only for entertainment and pleasure; but now there is a competition in the education of spirit and heart, and the youth is more harmonious and better” (p. 146). That is how Novak interpreted the opinion of one of the Illyrian predecessors, Count Janko Drašković, who, aside from Bishop Maksimilijan Vrhovec, was a progenitor of the basic Illyrian idea. As Novak comments, “. . . there is actually a great difference between the youth at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and that from the 1830s. A proud, integral part of the youth is comprised of young priests, chaplains and catechists, and seminarians too. The Illyrian Movement has to thank all of its deep intensity and abundant extensiveness to the zeal of priests’ hearts and their patriotic energy, will enthusiasm, dedication and persistence, so that that which was started would actually be completed” (p. 146). How great the importance of the Roman Catholic clergy actually was for the progress and spreading of the Illyrian movement is best shown in the example of Dalmatia, where the clergy had been passively regarding this issue, and therefore the movement had no chance to succeed. “While Slavonia and Bosnia delivered great enthusiasts at the very beginning, Dalmatia lacked the zeal and strength of compassion in its cooperation on this great national work – not only at the beginning, but also during the entire age of Illyrianism. The national clergy had nowhere close the activity and zealousness with which the national renaissance in Dalmatia would help this campaign when it appeared and developed there in the 1860s” (p. 163). Although there were several individuals, mostly younger intellectuals, who followed the activities of the Illyrian movement and supported it, “. . . the Illyrian idea would not take root in Dalmatia. If we wanted to find the reasons for such a state, we would discover the important fact that the clergy had still not been won over to this idea. For, when it

took matters into its own hands in the 1860s, the true mediator between the leaders and the people performed a great deal of awareness-heightening” (p. 163).

For the sake of historical curiosity, it is probably not superfluous to say that one of the founders (and the third president) of the Illyrian National Society of the Seminary of Zagreb was theologian Mavro Broz. “The national leaders joyfully observed the work of the clerics from Zagreb and proudly pointed out the secure and reliable troop of zealous fighters who would primarily suffer various struggles among the people, and gradually acquire significant successes in the general movement. Just as Broz’s predecessors were in constant contact with the leaders in Zagreb, so did Broz set out on the paved road, honourably and like a man. It was very important to Broz to introduce his members with the leader of the movement, the adored Ljudevit Gaj. Broz invited Gaj in the name of all seminarians – since most of them were members of their association. Soon, the seminarians organized a magnificent reception for him, and this reception too demonstrated how high Gaj had been elevated in the eyes of the youth” (p. 173). The triumphant reception in the seminary building that was organised for Gaj during his appearance on an arranged platform enraged the *Mađaroni* (pro-Hungarian activists) from Zagreb – especially those in the Seminary management – so much that they fiercely pressured Bishop Haulik of Zagreb, forcing him to prohibit further activities of this association of seminarians, under the accusation that it was dealing more with political issues than it with literary issues, which had been the official reason for its foundation. Apparently, the position that the management of the association had gone too far in their youthful zeal prevailed in the circles of Roman Catholic prelates. “Subconscious and even conscious opportunism toward Hungarianism, and even more, the dissatisfaction with the fact that the members of the association were becoming nearer to the Orthodox and Protestants in their Slavophile tolerance caused the threat of religious indifference against which the seminary leaders and the highest church authorities would have to step forward and carefully watch, in order to not allow anything that could lead to the fulfilment of this goal. Therefore, the stepping forward of the leaders against the society that, in their opinion, would serve such a dangerous cause – although none of this actually happened – showed that the religious sentiment and zeal for the clerical regulations had weakened” (p. 177).

### **c) The Anti-Protestant Position of Key Illyrians**

Victor Novak shows understanding for the anti-Protestant position of most leaders of the Illyrian movement, and some of them competed amongst themselves in their expression of religious intolerance toward these radical Christian reformers. He believes this was happening because, in the Hungarian efforts for the religious equality of Roman Catholics and Protestants, the Illyrians saw only a form of an attempt to make the Hungarianisation of the Croats and Slavonians easier. Concerning this, he especially points out the position of Janko Drašković from his *Dissertation*, in which the old count draws attention to the fact that the Hungarian language was being imposed as the liturgical language in Slovakian Protestant churches. “However,” as Novak points out, “while one part of the Illyrian patriots truthfully interpreted this issue, and were dedicated to only such a possible resolution, this cannot be said of the Croatian parliaments or of their individual obligates, who were thrilled to support the introduction of the Hungarian language into Croatian schools and institutions, and who protested

against the alignment of the civil rights of Protestants with those of Catholic citizens. It is quite certain that, especially among church representatives, religious sentiment was the most prominent, as well as their intentional attempts to preserve their exceptional privileges of the state religion in every area of public life. Therefore, as it was said in advance, all these determined actions against Protestantism that were performed by the Croats – laymen as well as priests – did not have exclusively religious or national motives, but were at heart expressions of religious intolerance, as subconscious genetic reflexes of feudal and church predominance that was achieved in Croatia after the victorious counter-reformation. So, Gaj and the entire Illyrian suite observe this issue and take part in it with the highest political consideration, aware of the obstacles to their main ideological aspirations in the kajkavian areas” (p. 200). By so doing, Gaj managed to not be reproached by the Roman Catholic clergy; but, based on this, “the purity of Illyrian aspirations to freedom was later questioned more and more by the *Mađaroni*” (p. 200).

As early as 1840, after a shift in the administration of the Roman Catholic Seminary of Zagreb, the Literary Society of seminarians was renewed, and it applied itself to the propagation of Illyrian ideas with even greater enthusiasm. The same year, a similar society was founded inside the seminary of the Uniate, ‘Greek-Catholic’ Bishopric of Križevo, with its headquarters in Zagreb, and whose first president became Juraj Smičiklas. For these Uniatized Serbs, who had already been denationalised, but who still preserved the Eastern Church rituals, the Illyrian name was the optimum sanctuary, since the Orthodox Serbs rejected them as misfits and the Croatian national identity was entirely foreign to them. These two associations of clerical youth, the Roman Catholic and the Uniate, established close and cordial collaboration. The *Mađaroni* were already suppressed from cultural life, so the Illyrian movement received a new momentum.

#### d) Ingratiating Russia and Orthodoxy

The cult of his person, which the Illyrians incessantly built up in their Romanticist enthusiasm lulled Ljudevit Gaj into believing that he was the authentic and unquestionable leader of the Illyrian movement, so he became more and more involved in his own ideological creations, which were dictated by his evermore excessive political ambitions. This would bring him down, as the real leaders of the movement, who pulled the strings from the shadows, could not let the organisation get out of their hands. This is why they got rid of Gaj as soon as he appeared to be too independent, using his stay in Russia in 1840 and his usual befriending of the Russian political figures as the immediate cause. “One thing is certain – Gaj never confided to anyone from his circle about his classified mission in Russia, the same as he, apparently, never told the whole truth, and this grand political action is known to us only through archives in which the famous Gaj’s memorandums are preserved. It appears that no one in Croatia actually knew about this political action of Gaj’s in Russia, which was for distant causes, especially concerning the winning over of Russian foreign policy to his Balkan plans, and primarily for his Illyria, although, in 1843, after the prohibition of the Illyrian name, specifically this action was viewed as the cause for the prohibition. It was ascertained that Gaj gave four written memorandums to Russian state officials during the period from 1838 to 1840. In the one given in 1838 in Vienna to Colonel Ozoreckovski for Count Beckendorf, in whom Emperor Nicholas I had the greatest trust,

**Comment [Z26]:** Translator’s note. The name could not be verified, therefore it was left in the original

Gaj, among other things, said that a significant part of the Croatian aristocracy and Catholic higher clergy was still under the influence of the Hungarian aristocracy, and that this was a strong barrier to Russian-Slavic interests in the Balkans. Gaj was proud to be at the head of 'patriots who act in favour of Russian-Slavic interests' and that he managed 'to awaken the aspiration for the paternal rule of the Russian-Slavic motherland in every Illyrian province'. He also gave his second memorandum to the afore mentioned Ozoreckovski (in Vienna) who immediately sent it to Nesselrode in Saint Petersburg" (p. 225).

It is interesting that this second memorandum was discovered by an American historian in 1931, in the Archive of Leningrad. In Novak's opinion, this was "also an unusually important document about Gaj as a person, about his understanding of the possible role of Russia concerning the Illyrian Movement and the Balkans in general, and about the unusually daring, actually fantastic plans for the liberation of subjugated Yugoslavism from the Turks and Hungarians. Ljudevit Ivanovič Gaj, as he signed this second, German-composed memorandum, underlined that the representatives of both Christian churches from the Turkish-Illyrian provinces offered themselves to his service for this great action of liberation, since he 'was the most active mediator between the Illyrian Slavs and Russia'. Among other things, Gaj also claimed that the Illyrian clergy saw Orthodoxy as the focus of Slavic nationalism and, in 1840, he spoke about this more specifically and thoroughly. There are two more memorandums from this time, the third and fourth. This time, Gaj made contacts in Russia only with scientific and literary figures, while he did not manage to approach the significant factors of Russian politics. Kulakovsky published these two 1840 documents in his well-known work on the Illyrian Movement (1894), and the first one is especially interesting (named *Secreta Arcana*), because it reveals Gaj's opinion of the younger Illyrian clergy, and of the possibilities that thereby arise for the general policy of Russia in the Balkans" (p. 225).

Having found out that Russian Emperor Nicholas I was to visit Warsaw, Gaj immediately went there and managed to meet with Count Beckendorf, explaining the political goals of his intended trip to Russia. "Gaj comprehensively elaborated the position of the Illyrian Slavs to Beckendorf, especially of Croatia and Slavonia, which were exposed to the violent penetration of arrogant Hungarianism. However, it was by his merit that the Illyrian Slavs came to their senses and decided to unite in order to revive common national interests. In his historical review, Gaj ascertained that "most Roman Catholic" patriots in Illyria, namely the numerous younger clergy in the seminaries, gained the conviction that the independent Eastern Church should be seen as the true Slavic national church, from which a major part of the Illyrians once separated – either because they were misguided, or because they were forced by the enemies of Slavic unity. Only with its help can and will a complete balancing of all opposites and a spiritual reunion happen in the Illyrian provinces. Consequently, as the expanded pontificate doctrine would have to cautiously back down before pure Slavic nationalism, all patriotic eyes would be religiously pointed at the part of Slavism where the Slavic national Christianity was sustained in its entirety" (p. 225-226).

Thus ingratiating the great Slavic power and the bastion of Orthodoxy, Gaj presented himself as a man who would wholeheartedly serve its interests and enforce its political and cultural propaganda, strengthening and expanding its existing influence. "Of course, in this sense, first in question is the Slavic-Russian alphabet that every patriot knew. What is more, although Cyrillic was labelled as pagan in the Roman

Catholic seminaries before Gaj, now it was 'studied and cherished as a palladium of pure nationality'. The new orthography and the new literary dialect mostly spoken by the Orthodox would be the link between the Latin Illyrians and Orthodox (the Serbs), the bridge between Latinism and pure Slavism. This was the mood among the Illyrian Slavs at the time, as Gaj presented it to Beckendorf, taking pride in the fact that he was the first in centuries to gain the unconditional trust of all Illyrians from both churches. One so that he would lead them on the right path and the others so that he would bring them their brethren, and all together because they saw that he turned mutual hatred into love. All this, of course, required funding. This was why he turned to Russian patriots for help, 'as an unfortunate brother rightfully seeking help from his brother who is blessed with abundance'" (p. 226).

It is obvious that Gaj was primarily driven by financial motives. After arriving in Moscow, he passed his memorandum to the Russian Emperor through Beckendorf, repeating everything that he had stated before and complaining that he had not had any success until that time. "Now he addressed them, he says, for the fourth and last time. For, if he did not succeed, he would have to cease the publication of both his papers that had so far acted in favour of Russian interests. Having explained every possible detrimental consequence that could stem from this concerning the weakening of the Slavic interest in Russia and the strengthening of the enemy West, Gaj also warned in this memorandum that the love that both the young Catholic clergy and the Illyrian youth in high schools had for the Russian language and Cyrillic, and also for the Slavic church was great and therefore deserved attention" (p. 226).

The Russian Slavophiles collected between 17,000 and 20,000 roubles for Gaj on their private initiative, and Novak has no records about whether the Russian Minister of Education made a state donation to the Illyrian leader. It is, however, obvious that Russian officials recognised a boastful fraud in Gaj, whose main goal was to get a large sum of money at any cost. "The decision of Count Beckendorf and his report to the merciful Sovereign Prince Ivan Fedorovich . . . about the arrival of Gaj in Warsaw and Saint Petersburg and his declaration of loyalty (and his Illyrian natives, the Illyrian Slavs), and also about his propositions to culturally and literary connect Russia and Illyria, was devastating for Gaj and his plans. Beckendorf decided that it was impossible to enter into any kind of relations with Gaj, so he refused his every suggestion" (p. 227).

Stating that this trip was ". . . the beginning of tragedy for Gaj himself, that would end with a series of events in 1848" and that, "everything that happened later would only be its epilogue" (p. 227), Victor Novak still tried to find some understanding for Gaj's position at the time, since he needed this for the continuation of his apologetic treatment of the Illyrian Movement and its main leaders, so he scolds Russia: "In his elevated optimism constantly followed by fanciful fantasy, Gaj unmistakably overestimated the idealistic Slavophilism of the rebelled Croatian spirit that had led the youth toward yet unimagined ideals, and he especially over-exaggerated the possibilities that were a result of the truthful enthusiasm of young seminarians for Russian and Slavism in general, a result of their understandably youthful love of freedom and honest tolerance. All this was actually far from the true reality of that which Gaj spoke in Warsaw and Saint Petersburg, with vividness that was more a product of his imaginative fantasy, personal goals and desires than of a true expression of the aspiration of nascent thought. However, it did not spread broadly, even with all its spatial and dynamic momentum" (p. 226).



Meanwhile, Novak lost from sight the fact that Gaj's proverbial love of money, greed and dishonesty were even more drastically shown during the robbing of Prince Miloš Obrenović, who was so unfortunate as to come across the "brotherly" Zagreb, and by Gaj's intrigue be incarcerated there and blackmailed for a substantial sum of money. Novak tried to erase the prosaic traits of Gaj's lack of principle with a more general political story of his failure to adapt to the concrete historical circumstances of his time. In this regard, he writes, "Apart from this, the lack of knowledge about the forces that formed world policy at the time – which, using their power, also seized the Russia of Emperor Nicholas, who did not want to disturb its relations with Metternich nor the Sultan – had to lead to a complete disillusion and crash of the misconception with which Gaj consciously and subconsciously identified. Apparently, on the one hand, not only the miscomprehension of the Russian main factors, but even more, of the Russian foreign policy that could not abandon, for certain tertiary reasons, its great objectives in the friendship with Austria and Turkey, and could in no way be inclined to Gaj's 1838 political endeavours, nor to the cultural-political ones" (p. 226).

Novak went so far defending Gaj's intentions, knowingly ignoring the fact that he was still a greedy and dishonest hypocrite, a phoney of a lesser intelligence and naïve world view, that he was even willing to claim – although he did not state where he got this record from – that, "at the time of egotistical political compromises, imperial envoy Tatischev, in front of Metternich in Vienna, went so far as to indicate Gaj as the 'soul of conspiracy' in the Slavic parts of the Turkish Empire. Naïveté and enthusiasm, misconception and fantasy were severely punished. Two treasons occurred: not only the treason of Bishop Barišić, who was joined in Vienna by the papal nuncio; but also the unworthy denunciation of Orthodox Russian diplomacy, causing the most serious and most dangerous of doubts in Vienna, which were so loudly pointed out to by the opponents of the Illyrian Movement in the Hungarian Parliament. The Pan-slavist bogey, obviously denounced and denied by Saint Petersburg, still remained active throughout the entire Illyrian Movement, because the idealism of the Illyrians knew no obstacle that could stop its enthusiasm for great Slavism and its power in the world. The diplomacy of Russian imperial policy never understood how to use this properly, not even when it would obviously go to its favour. But, it should be said, who knows how the Illyrian Movement would have developed if Gaj had had full understanding and financial help for the cultural and political plans presented in his memorandums" (p. 226-227).

### **e) The Complete Crash of the Illyrian Movement**

The aristocrats from Turopolje proved to be the most severe opponents of the Illyrian Movement among the *Mađaroni*. They were for the kajkavian literary language, attacking štokavian as "dirty Walachian (Vlachian)". Instead of an Illyrian national name, they insisted on a Croatian one, ignoring the fact that Croatianhood was completely foreign as a national sentiment among the štokavian Catholics in Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Dubrovnik and Herzegovina. Prominent Illyrian Mato Topalović in his book *The Response of a Patriotic Heart*, published in Požega in 1842, warned the promoters of Croatian exclusionism: "Hey! You highbrow Croatians who do not want to hear of the Illyrian name! What gives you the right to think that our southern people, our language, our literature should be named Croatian? Tell me, please, since when is your

capital Zagreb a part of Croatia? I only find a Slavonian name there in ancient times. *'Bani tocius Slavoniae'* had the territory from Horti to the Danube River. Where was Croatia then? In the ancient times I find three Slavonias. One on the Baltic sea with a dragon surrounded by fire on their coat of arms; the other on the Danube River with three hearts on their coat of arms; and Slavonia on the Sava River, or the present-day one, with a marten and a star as the symbol. This Slavonia is said to have an old currency with the inscription *'Moneta Regis Slavonie'*, which on one side has the said marten between two rivers and thorny roses, and on the other, the emperor and empress with crowns looking at a double cross, and above it the Luna and a star, or the new moon and the Northern Star. It is further said that the successors of King Vladislav took this double cross as a symbol from Hungary. That the patriarchal cross was once on the Slavonian coat of arms it is not hard to believe, since, as our virtuous Jukić from Bosnia told us in Danica the other day, he found the symbol of the Slovenian Kingdom amongst other pictures. And it was a hat, or the patriarchal cap; and where there is one symbol, there is usually another. But, be that as he please, all I know is that the mentioned currency actually looked as I described. I dare you to show the currency or money of the Croatian Kingdom. Yell out if you want to try; we also have evidence for our name, and the more some of our un-destined relatives and marvellous friends try to deprive us of it, the more precious it becomes to us; and who could hold it against a zealous poet if he extends this name a little bit?" (p. 297-298).

Although he was ready to lightly ignore various outstanding manifestations of Gaj's bad character and corruption, Victor Novak could not avoid mentioning at least the most striking examples of Ljudevit Gaj's dishonesty, ". . . whose hidden business was tied to material interests and rewards for commissary work in Vienna, Saint Petersburg and Belgrade are well-known and clarified today" (p. 407). However, Gaj's espionage work could not be omitted. "Ljudevit Gaj was in Serbia in May (1846 – V. Š.), where he came in contact with Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević and with leading figures in Serbia. Not even the most intimate of Gaj's associates were familiar with the objectives of this trip through Serbia. No one could even surmise, aside from the Imperial Court and Metternich's camarilla, that Gaj went to Serbia to gather information about the state of affairs there, and then report about everything he had seen and learned from the most trusted sources to the all-powerful Austrian – Prince Metternich. Not even Croatians dared to surmise such a character of Ljudevit Gaj's commissary mission. No one doubted this even in Serbia – because the Croatian emigration, especially certain priests and seminarians, were completely devoted to the Serbian and Yugoslav campaign that had been organised in Belgrade inside the closest circle of a great statesmen, Garašanin" (p. 407). Ljudevit Gaj ". . . returned from Serbia with the information Metternich needed, for which Gaj received financial award from this enemy of Slavism and which was completely unknown to the Illyrian circle – especially its intent and purpose" (p. 410). Especially the Illyrian idealists that were certainly present among the priests, despite the inherent manipulative nature of the whole movement, were not aware of ". . . Gaj's selfishness put at the service of foreign interests in that moment" (p. 410).

The Imperial Court and the Roman Catholic Church released a dangerous genie from the bottle by promoting the Illyrian Movement, so they were often – and not without reason – frightened that this genie might get out of control. They tried to constantly dose the intensity of its affect. The state authority instrumentalised it as long as it was useful as an obstacle to the aspirations of the bulging Hungarian nationalism,

and the Roman Catholic Church saw in this movement the means for the relaxation of the traditional cautiousness of Serbian Orthodox Christians, when it came to the proselytizing tendencies of the centre of Western Christianity. The leaders of the Illyrian Movement, regardless of their education, competence or the honesty of their idealistic zeal, were mere puppets, mostly unaware of the manipulations for which they were used. Whenever too large of a pan-slavistic or Russophile charge appeared, or there was an exaggeration in the tolerant treatment of Orthodoxy as an equal variant of the Christian religion, both state and church tightened the reins. In 1843, Vienna entirely prohibited the use of the Illyrian name when it was necessary as a concession to the Hungarians, or when it appeared that the Illyrian Movement could get out of control. Not long after came the permission allowing the Illyrian to be used in literature and culture in general, but not in political life. The Illyrian Movement also brought some prominent political figures to surface, such as Ban Josip Jelačić, but again only as an instrument of the centralist tendencies of Vienna, regardless of what Jelačić and his followers thought of himself and his actual role. “It is as if the crash of Illyrian illusions happened on that historical date, 11 September 1848, when Jelačić crossed the Drava River with his troops. While the Croatian warriors were gathering under the Croatian tricolour flags and singing, . . . on the other side of the Drava River, after the declaration of Međumurje as a part of the Kingdom, the ban unfolded the Austrian black and yellow flag, hoping that, as the disappointed Illyrians excused him, he would attract the hesitating parts of the Austrian and Hungarian troops. After this, more and more severe blows to the remaining hopes ensued: the octroi and the dictatorial enactment of the new law on press. Jelačić was already being publicly and decisively criticised” (p. 601).

There is no doubt that neither Ban Jelačić, “. . . nor the Croatians were rewarded for their bloody favours to Vienna, the throne and the entire dynasty. What is more, they were punished for all this” (p. 603). The Metternich regime replaced the Bach regime, and the Croatians, Slavonians and other Slavs were again just small change in the overall Austrian-Hungarian relations. Novak’s position is also unquestionable, according to which “. . . the clergy was actually the best and biggest part of the Illyrian Movement, the true *maxima pars*” (p. 638). But, was this perhaps the main reason for the overall crash of the Illyrian Movement in 1849, when the highest Roman Catholic hierarchy rejected it as a used and failed concept?

## B. The Papal Fraud Called Yugoslavism

The beguiling of the Orthodox Serbs with the Illyrian ideology and demagogy failed, so a new concept was resorted to: Yugoslavism, and even the Serbs swallowed this hook. It has been shown that it was not at all coincidental that the Austrian Emperor appointed Joseph Georg Strossmayer as the bishop of Đakovo precisely in 1849. He was the real author of the concept of Yugoslavism, who had developed his fervent Pan-Slavism and Russophilia with the hope that it would facilitate the conversion of the Orthodox schismatics to Uniatism and Catholicism. Strossmayer wrote about this in his first political text, published in the *National Paper* in 1849: “I believe that the Russians would be the first, even religiously, to convert from heresy to the arms of the Holy Mother Church; certainly sooner than our Eastern Serbs. When the present fierceness and violence of the government stops, the greatest obstacle to this greatly important step for Slavism will be gone” (p. 624). So, the Russian empire just needs to be torn down,

and then the Orthodox, as a mindless flock, would run to the arms of the greedy Roman Catholic shepherd.

## **2. Strossmayer's Project of Yugoslavism**

The fact that Joseph Georg Strossmayer was appointed the Bosnian-Đakovo and Srem bishop, as one of the most competent Roman Catholic prelates at the time, reveals the intentions of the top echelon of the Roman Catholic Church regarding the winning over of the Serbian Orthodox population of these areas to the Uniate. This project was corroborated with a fresh national concept in which Slavism served as a means for the suppression or absorption of Serbdom. Strossmayer (1815-1905) dedicated his long life and intellect to the idea of converting all Orthodox Slavs to Catholicism, its culture, and to the civilisation of the western variant of Christianity, continuing the proselytizing activity of Juraj Križanić started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It probably was not just a coincidence that Strossmayer was also of German origin, like Ljudevit Gaj – except his great grandfather was a German who had come from upper Austria to Slavonia and married a local Catholic woman in Osijek. In his first political article from 1849, he advocated the unification of the “Triune Kingdom” of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia with the newly formed Serbian Vojvodina. Anyway, Strossmayer had acquired great authority among liberal secular circles by opposing the dogma of the Pope's infallibility at the Twentieth Vatican General Church Council, being especially motivated by the idea that this dogma could hinder further Uniatism (the bringing in of the Orthodoxy under the shelter of the Roman Catholic Church), and possible reconciliation with the Protestants.

### **a) Personal Admission of Proselytizing Intentions**

However, in 1873, Strossmayer too accepted the dogma of the Pope's infallibility, as did the other bishops who had shown resistance at the Council. But it was very significant that he revealed his true proselytizing intentions on 14 May 1870, in an article in the English Catholic magazine *The Tablet*, when he petulantly reacted to the speculations of some tabloids that the dissatisfied Bishop of Đakovo could convert to Orthodoxy. Concerning this, he wrote: “My entire life and my entire political and clerical work during the past 20 years are enough to deny this claim. I have always had a firm belief that the Catholic part of my people would further spread the principles of overall progress and return the part of our lands that is now separated from us to Catholic unity. Only for the purpose of achieving this goal did I found public institutions such as the Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Catholic University in Zagreb the capital of Catholic Croatia; and the monastery in Đakovo, the centre of my Bishopric, intended for the education of the Franciscan priests who are to spread the gospel and civilisation to Turkish Bosnia. I renewed the old demolished institute of St Jerome in Rome, which had been by the founded Illyrians, so that I could make a connection between the Holy See and the South Slavs. I built a great cathedral in the area where most of the population belongs to the Orthodox Church. With the help of God, this cathedral would soon be dedicated to St Peter, the centre of Catholic unity. All these facts clearly demonstrate that everything that was said about me was only malicious slander” (quotation – Kosta Milutinović: *Strossmayer and the Yugoslav Issue*, Institute for the

Study of History in Vojvodina, Novi Sad, 1976, p. 35). When the Zagreb papers published the translation of this statement, originally printed in the French language, Strossmayer's closest friend and associate Franjo Rački could not believe his eyes. He believed this was a forgery with the purpose of presenting to the public that this great propagator of Serbo-Croatian national unity actually only wanted to "turn the Serbs into Šokci". Strossmayer later justified himself to Rački in letters, saying that he had to publish such a statement. In other words, its content was not the issue, but rather the fact that the secret plans behind the fervently propagated Yugoslav idea, which was being used as a valuable instrument, were published and therefore revealed in advance.

Although Strossmayer kept good relations with Jovan Ristić and Stojan Novaković, the majority of Serbian politicians were against him, and his appointment as the vicar bishop of the Dioceses of Belgrade and Smederevo, with the rights of the administrator of the Catholic Church and canonical visitor had an unfavourable impact in Serbia. It was already principally questionable that he was an Austrian bishop, as the Serbian authorities had been persistent in their efforts to remove the guardianship of Austrian authorities over the Roman Catholic Church in Serbia. After a just few of Strossmayer's public appearances, the Serbian intelligence realised that this bishop wanted to "return all Orthodox Slavs into the arms of the Holy Catholic Church" at any cost. Slobodan Jovanović summarises Strossmayer's opinions on this issue: "The reconciliation of the two churches was, after all, Strossmayer's personal need. He was in no other way capable of reconciling his nationality, which pulled him East, with his religion, which pulled him West. Strossmayer aspired for something much greater than the simple Catholicisation of Orthodox Slavs. However, as a good Catholic, he was convinced that the Western Church was closer to Christ's truth than the Eastern one, and that the merging of the two churches would, therefore, end sooner or later in Catholic victory" (p. 63).

### **b) Doubts About Strossmayer's Russophilia and Pan-Slavism**

The first concrete problem that Rački and Strossmayer managed to solve – after the acceptance of the Serbian literary language as their own, and the renunciation of kajkavian; and after the Vienna Agreement between the Serbian and Croatian intellectuals – was the question how this language would officially be called in Croatia and Slavonia. In 1861, the Croatian Parliament had a discussion on this matter, and, considering the Slavonians' firm refusal to call the literary štokavian language Croatian, accepted the official proposal by Adolfo Veber Tkalčević, a linguist, and the dean of the Zagreb Kaptol, who had been inspired by the positions of Strossmayer and Rački. Tkalčević's basic position is essentially the following: "True, it is strange and unusual that we don't have a name for our national language. But this is not our fault, but rather the fault of those enemies of ours who divided us, and who knew how to inspire hate. Now we won't let go of the Croatian name, and the Slavonians don't want to call it the Croatian language . . . The Croatians would not like it to be called Slavonian; the Serbs also don't like these terms... I think a more intermediary term should be found, and I think that the word Yugoslavian (meaning South Slavic) could be used" (p. 64).

Therefore, due to the fact that there was absolutely no Croatian national identity in Slavonia, the accepted Serbian literary language was named Yugoslavian in the Parliament, with full liberty regarding the use of the Latin or Cyrillic scripts. Six years later, also based on Strossmayer's political beliefs, the Parliament decided that the

Serbian people was completely equal to the Croatian. There is no doubt that Strossmayer had a key role in the sowing of Croatianhood in Slavonia, and the bringing of the Slavonian Catholics into the Croatian national corpus. The idea of Yugoslavism also served him as an instrument for political requests to administratively include Dalmatia into Croatia and Slavonia, given that there was an even greater aversion toward the Croatian name among the Dalmatians than there was among the Slavonians. Although almost every other Croatian politician from the 1860s and 1870s was energetically in favour of the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we must give credit to Strossmayer and Rački for stating that Bosnia should be joined to Serbia, and Herzegovina to Montenegro. However, to this day, the motivation for this attitude has not been clarified in historiographical literature.

Like Ljudevit Gaj, Joseph Georg Strossmayer also tried to form an alliance with the official Russia. His first conspiring contact was made with Shishkin, the Russian Consul in Belgrade, during the canonical visitation he performed in Serbia in 1869. After this meeting and the consul's report, the assessment of Strossmayer in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was negative. Strossmayer had hoped that the Russian authorities could help him financially, after complaining that his resources had dried up because of his constant financing of the national work. He tried to give a maximum contribution to the conclusion of the Russian-Vatican concordat, hoping that a more serious work on the Uniate was a possible perspective. The Russian diplomats persistently doubted both Strossmayer's Russophilia and his Pan-Slavism. The Russian ambassador in Vienna reported to his superiors in 1867 that, "The word about Strossmayer being won over, I don't believe it. This prelate is a dreamer, a restless spirit who seeks to play a part by accepting national ideas, but I see him as a Jesuit and an agent provocateur, secretly loyal to Emperor Franz Joseph, to whom he was chaplain" (p. 180).

Strossmayer's poetically inspired greeting telegram to the head of the University in Kiev, where the central ceremony for the celebration of nine centuries since the Christianisation of Russia was staged in 1888, created a lot of problems for him in the Austrian-Hungarian public. One accusation after another, threat after threat, and then the paper *Kölnische Zeitung* published Strossmayer's letter to the Pope, which said: "Holy Father, I want to justify myself for my unpatriotic, non-Christian actions, which brought about one of the most grievous moments of my life. I have truly concerned myself with the religion of millions of my non-Catholic, Slavic brethren for years, but – I joyfully admit this today – only with the purpose of converting them to the arms of the Holy Catholic Church. I find this the reason of my existence, my apostolic mission, and if I could ever, with your apostolic blessing, thanks be to God's mercy, achieve this ideal, then the most humble son of Your Excellency would lay his weary head to rest. The Catholicisation of the Russians, thanks to the intelligence and culture of this most powerful people in Europe, is easier than the Catholicisation of the Bulgarians and Serbs. In this regard, Russia has a conquering civilising mission to fulfil, more bright and sublime than any bloody battle on the battlefield of this world" (p. 185-186). *Obzor* from Zagreb reacted with a claim that this letter was a forgery, while Strossmayer himself was mysteriously silent. As Milutinović states, "Strossmayer's friends, feeling the entire weight of this forgery, and surmising the possible unfavourable consequences from the further expansion, reprinting and retelling of this mystification, requested from Strossmayer that he himself deny the authenticity of this notorious letter in question, which had been published in the newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung*" (p. 186).

Strossmayer hesitated at first, and then shyly and unconvincingly spoke out exclusively in *Obzor*, writing only two sentences: “The paper, or my alleged justification, which went from ‘the newspaper of Köln’ to Austrian newspapers, is a malicious fabrication that obviously intends to deceive and slander. I ask of you to include this in your esteemed paper” (p. 187). However, in a conversation with Emperor Franz Joseph the same year, after the Emperor reproached him for sending a greeting telegram in Kiev and the Sovereign’s conclusion that: “The work of the Kiev group was the work of the worst revolutionaries; a fine choice of revolutionary elements was found there. They conspired against the Catholic Church and the Pope” (p. 187) – Strossmayer answered: “I repeat, Your Majesty, my conscience is absolutely clear and I have already spoken to the Holy Father. And if I may speak calmly about this matter with Your Majesty, I hope I could completely appease Your Majesty” (p. 187). Given that Strossmayer certainly did not go to Rome that year to excuse himself personally, he did send a letter to the Pope. Therefore, there was a letter. But, there is no other version of this letter in the historical documentation except the one published in *Kölnische Zeitung*.

### **c) The Attempt of a Vatican Fraud with the Help of the Cult of Slavic Saints**

The influence of Joseph Strossmayer and Franjo Rački on Serbian political leaders in 1861 was great enough to convince them to accept the inclusion of Srem into the Croatian-Slavonian banate, on which all Croatian political circles insisted, some even explaining that this was only temporary, until the renewal of Serbian Vojvodina. The Serbs were so enchanted with the idea of Serbo-Croatian unity that they could not be brought to their senses by the few rational voices, such as that of Patriarch Rajačić, who once told Jovan Subotić –as Subotić himself testified – that: “We cannot connect with the Croats; you don’t know them, but I know them well. They are greater enemies to us than the Germans and Hungarians” (p. 194). However, when the Roman Catholic Church promoted the cult of Cyril and Methodius through an 1880 encyclical by Pope Leo XIII, offering “the heretics” benevolence for the purpose of reunion, the Serbs had already sobered up considerably. A true propaganda attack of the West-Balkan Catholic Church branches ensued, so, for example, the paper *Katolička Dalmacija (Catholic Dalmatia)*, published in Zadar, called on the Serbs: “Serbian brethren, who were also Christened by Cyril and Methodius, and whose kings received the holy crowns from Rome, be with us on that day on Cyril’s grave. The Father of all Christian nations beckons you, the holy dust of our and your Apostle beckons you, be with us on that day. You are our brethren by blood and language, you are misguided, but are still the sons of the Holy Catholic Church. Remember that Cyril and Methodius were the disciples of Photios, but they did not listen to him, and deserted as soon as he separated from the Roman Church. With the help of God, we will again sing along: ‘I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son’, etc. ‘I believe in one Holy Catholic (Universal) and Apostolic Church’” (p. 232-233). Concerning these renewed proselytizing tendencies, Don Pietro Balan, archivist of the Vatican archive, wrote a book in Latin, *The Catholic Church and the Slavs in Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Josip Štadler, professor at the Faculty of Theology in Zagreb, and later Archbishop of Vrhbosna, translated the book into somewhat corrupted Serbian and published it in Zagreb in 1881.

Balan's book was entirely dedicated to persuading the Orthodox Slavs to convert to Catholicism, and his basic theses are contained in the following fragment: "The Slavic kingdoms that remained faithful to the Roman Church, which could not be misguided by Byzantine tricks or corrupted by heresy or schism, sustained every attack, either from the outside from within; not even the whole Turkish power could break their vigour; while the kingdoms of the South Slavs that gave in to the schism, and who were inclined to heresy, easily became the prey of the heretics; even their own princes betrayed them and they fell almost without a fight . . . The life of the people is in Rome, where the centre of faith is, where the representative of Jesus Christ is, the eternal guardian of the pure and whole religious truth; when people are allowed to go to Rome, they immediately feel that in that place is the life-saving water that can quench their thirst, so they follow their instinct that tells them to throw themselves into the arms of the common father of all believers . . . One should hope that the Bulgarians, Bosniaks and Serbs would understand this instinct toward Rome and follow it. Rome blessed and crowned their kings, their emperors; it defended their rights, consecrated their authority, consoled them in their exile; Rome today worriedly hastens to give its hand to their people . . . The old harmony of feelings between Rome and the Slavs that could not be harmed by misfortunes, time, or people's wickedness, would now become stronger than ever under the protection of Slavic apostles and martyrs, who, blessed by Rome, either sweated to convert and Catholicise the nations dear to the Church, or sealed the faith of Cyril and Methodius in blood. And Cyril and Methodius . . . would also bring the rebels to the faith that was the glory of their kings, the comfort of the Slavic peoples, the hope of their saddened homeland, and that will be the life of the resurrected homeland" (p. 233-234).

Kosta Milutinović gave the following commentary concerning the work of the author and translator: "It is characteristic that the translator of Balan's book, Josip Štadler, never warned the readers that many statements in this book are not corroborated with historical facts. Severe ignorance and the possibility that he did not see that the book abounds in mistakes are excluded. Štadler never distanced himself from the harsh forgeries and obvious mystifications in Balan's book – neither in the preface nor in his remarks. When he decided to translate and publish this worthless and unscientifically written book, Štadler obviously cared only about its tendency and Uniate propaganda. The assumption that Štadler translated Balan's book following an order is not excluded. Its tendentiousness is obvious, and its content beyond any criticism" (p. 234).

Regarding this Pope's encyclical, the bishops wrote special circulars to their dioceses with an additional explanation of the expediency of the Slavic apostles' cult. Thereat, the greatest attention and publicity was caused by Strossmayer's circular, which expressly advocated ecclesiastical unity by the Eastern Church's deference to the Roman one, scornfully speaking about the Byzantine culture and civilization. Strossmayer, *inter alia*, wrote: "With regard to the question of where and whereto our apostles strive in order to find peace and relief in their distress, all the events of that time clearly respond to us: they do not address the East, where in days of yore they were witnesses to the unrest and disorder, to that passion and greediness, which were to separate the East from the West, to the regret and disadvantage of the whole world . . . Our saints do not address the Byzantine Church, which everyone alive indeed pities, but at the same time condemns, because it itself most hammered its own shackles and chains, in which it still languishes and whimpers. Our saints do not address the new Rome but the old one, well knowing



that it is Peter's throne. . . They address St Peter's successors . . . with a calm soul and complete trust, because they are taking many of their pupils to Rome to have them consecrated for the service of God among the Slavs. . . Thank God, the Eastern Church has not diverged far from the Western one. . . It is easy to bridge the gap that separates both of these churches; only if there is wisdom, temperance, true piety and honesty” (p. 234-235).

#### **d) Svetozar Miletić's Reaction to Strossmayer's Proselytization**

From the Serbian side, Svetozar Miletić reacted most adversely to Strossmayer's proselytistic viewpoints in his articles in the paper *Zastava* from Novi Sad. Miletić openly warned: “The Pope's circular surprised, and Strossmayer's one stunned the Slavic people of the Orthodox creed. . . The Roman Curia is increasingly losing its prevalence over the Catholic countries and peoples, and since Viennese politics interfered in Bosnia and Herzegovina and started to dream of both Thessalonica and a conquest of the East in general, it is as if the Roman Curia is thinking of using the Viennese politics regarding the East, in order to expand its entry into the East. Thus, the most convenient lever seemed to be canonizing Cyril and Methodius in their Catholic Church, to present them as if they had attended the unification of Eastern and Western Churches under the Roman Pope, and to recommend that the Slavs unify with the Catholic Church in the name of Cyril and Methodius. . . We do not know with what right Strossmayer – who originally was not in favour of the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope, and who now praises it to the high heavens – can preach to the Orthodox Slavic world about Roman primacy. He should keep that for himself and his fellows. . . You can approach the Roman See without any qualms, and ever search for advice, defence and comfort in it – but leave us, the Orthodox, alone! . . . We can see your desire: you want the church unity by way of the Uniate to be a bridge of the national alienation of the Serbs who betrayed their religion – of the Catholicisation and, therefore, the Croatianisation of the Serbian people. But nothing will come of that. . . Strossmayer's circular is not a bridge to harmony, and it can only bring misfortune. . . Croatianhood comes to Vienna – through Strossmayer church politics – at a price. Thus, the Croats are the most ardent supporters of the Roman Pope's politics towards the East. Strossmayer was the first to issue a circular. He is the head of pilgrimage in Rome. He presented not only the Croats to the Pope, but the Poles and Czechs as well. . . Catholic Slavhood towards Russia, Croatian Catholicism towards Serbdom” (p. 235-236).

Emphasising how “. . . Miletić pronounces Strossmayer as an instrument of Vatican imperialistic politics towards the Slavs” (p. 236), Milutinović believed that, “in Strossmayer's circular, he felt that there was something incomplete and unsaid, something that leaves the door open for various assumptions and speculations” (p. 237). It can be seen from all this that “. . . taught by past experiences, Miletić supposed that what was hidden behind the cult of Cyril and Methodius was the decision of the Congress of Berlin to clear the way for Austrian penetration to the East, and, behind Austrian imperialism, he discerned the danger of Vatican imperialism, aspiring to pave the way for the further expansion of Catholicism among the Orthodox nations in the Balkans. Miletić did not regard the Pope's encyclical *Grande Munus* as a harmless event, limited only to the marking of a millennium, but rather he sensed a bogeyman of Uniatism behind it. Behind the cult of Cyril and Methodius, Strossmayer discerned a bridge of reconciliation between

the East and the West. Miletić thought that it was no longer a matter of the struggle between Rome and Constantinople, as in the Middle Ages, that Constantinople had lost primacy during its further historic development, but that it was about the relationship between Rome and the national Christian churches, whose ideology with time became a component of the national consciousness of the Orthodox nations in their fight against denationalization” (p. 237).

The Dalmatian Serbs reacted in a similar way. Their leader, Sava Bjelanović, wrote in the paper *Srpski list* from Zadar: “We already knew everything Bishop Strossmayer told us. We knew that the Orthodox religion was evil and that the Catholic one was holy, that Rome was on the right path and Constantinople on the wrong one. Canon Pavlinović had told us so several years ago, therefore, the circular does not reveal anything new to us today in religious terms. However, in terms of people, the circular reveals a significant fact for us: namely, the fact that the prophet Pavlinović was St John, the forerunner of the messiah Strossmayer. . . Furthermore, they wanted to assure us that Bishop Strossmayer did not approve of the actions of Canon Pavlinović” (p. 238). *Srpski list* decidedly defended the viewpoint of Svetozar Miletić, who *Obzor* from Zagreb particularly sharply came down on. So, in an article by an anonymous Catholic Serb, the following was written: “I ask this: if the Czech Catholic paper *Narodni listi* writes this way in the current religious movement, if *Narodni listi* says this movement is targeted against the Serbs; are we to wonder at *Zastava* if it thinks the same, if it sees the Croatianisation in the Catholicisation of the Orthodox, and for this sake rejects Strossmayer's offers?. . . No intelligent person can deny this conclusion of *Zastava*'s: ‘Strossmayer's circular is not a bridge to harmony, and can only bring misfortune’. *Obzor* does not think so; *Obzor* tells *Zastava* that it is blind. over the over-respected gentlemen in the Zagreb Kaptol see the mote in Miletić's eye, but not a beam in their own” (p. 238). Eminent literary writer and ardent Serbian nationalist, otherwise a Catholic Serb, Ljudevit Vuličević, embittered by the behaviour of the bishop of Đakovo, sent a special epistle to Strossmayer, which read as follows: “Most holy bishop, let us not stir up souls that are already stirred up. The Serbs are regenerating: these are the difficult times, very arduous ones; leave us alone! You are the leader of the Croats, not of us; your purpose is in Rome, ours is elsewhere; you do not understand us, you do not understand Serbdom, you do not understand Slavhood, and we do not understand you either; but we have doubts about you, you should know. . . You are a bishop, but you are neither a miracle worker nor leader of Slavhood; heaven has not conferred such power and fortune on you” (p. 238).

The Serbian Orthodox *vladika* of Upper Karlovac, Teofan Živković, while holding a archpriest speech on 31 May 1881, drew the attention of his believers to Strossmayer's viewpoints, saying that “. . . this is the way an enraptured turncoat thought with his impure spirit, the one that appeared among us as some prophet of a great Slavic future, if only we united with his Roman chairman, and thus helped him bridge the gap, which has separated the East and the West for centuries” (p. 339). With regard to this, Dalmatian episcope Ogefan Knežević, referring to Strossmayer, warned that “. . . many fake prophets went out into the world” (p. 339), and episcope of Boka Kotorska, Dubrovnik and Spicane, Gerasim Petranović, ascribed “malicious suspicions, pretence and immoral means of proselytization” (p. 240) to Strossmayer. Petranović's priests responded to their *vladika*'s epistle with special address, putting at the forefront the insistence of the Catholic bishops that the Orthodox too go to Rome for worship regarding the proclaimed cult: “We have read the invitation to go to Rome for worship, to find the true religion

there. Though, who can be so crazy to be misled and accept the religion of those who invited Hus to religion and then burned him; who forced Luther through trade to make a new law; we listened to them as they bent from their church pulpits against our religion; however, despite all this, our Orthodoxy stands firm, not even the doors of the underworld would resist it” (p. 240).

### e) Jaša Tomić and Franko Potočnjak on Strossmayer’s Hypocrisy

Presenting Strossmayer “. . . as the main exponent of Vatican politics in the Balkans, and as the initiator, organiser and leader of the ‘Slavic pilgrims’ to Rome” (p. 240), the then proto-presbyter Nikodim Milaš from Knin wrote the following in his brochure *The Slavic Apostles Cyril and Methodius*, published that year in Zadar: “According to the established draft, since the Pope had announced his notice and gave the first move, the rest of the work had to be undertaken by the bishops, who depended on Rome. For the purpose of greater brilliance, the bishops composed and organised a Slavic ‘pilgrimage’ to Rome; and they started to preach ‘pilgrimages’ to the people from their pulpits. . . The main idea of the Pope’s encyclical was that the ‘schismatics’ should convert to the Pope; this idea had to be developed by the Roman bishops, and this was their purpose of setting themselves to arrange the ‘pilgrimage’. Now, those ‘schismatics’ should be invited to the ‘pilgrimage’ to Rome, and the bishops started inviting them. . . The heart of the whole movement was the bishop of Đakovo, Mr Joseph Georg Strossmayer” (p. 240).

Serbian and Croatian publicist writing was full of eulogy and panegyrics to Strossmayer and his political role, and Milutinović ended his book by quoting viewpoints of some of the most significant intellectuals. However, my attention was attracted, above all, by two expressly critical viewpoints, one of a Croat and another of a Serb. Thus, a prominent Croatian politician, Franko Potočnjak, a noncontroversial democrat and influential Mason, wrote the following in 1905: “Unification, Strossmayer strived for, followed the idea that Slavhood be gathered under the supreme rule of the Roman Pope and be covered with Catholicism, for he saw the true life, salvation and future of the people in Roman See, and in Catholicism the only true and lifesaving religion. . . With Strossmayer’s such decided, “strictly Catholic” opinions, it is no wonder that he incited some sensation in the world with his telegram, when he greeted the Russian people during the celebration of 900-year anniversary of the baptism of St. Vladimir. . . Thus, certainly an interesting question emerges – what were the motives and intents in doing so? The King’s obvious rebuke in Belovar showed that this greeting was not approved “up there”, and if the sharpness of the given rebuke and Strossmayer’s demonstrative departure from Belovar right before the very day when he was supposed to go are considered, so that this whole incident ended without any consequences for him; then certainly the logical conclusion is that, on this occasion, he must have been protected by someone who was able and had to protect him, because his stepping forward was to their benefit. . .

“Being a Catholic bishop, Strossmayer could have been called to duty either by the Roman See or by the King. Knowing that the Roman See did not even look at him askance regarding this, the idea that solves this puzzle arises on its own. It would not hurt to notice the fact that, at that time, the Roman See, with who one of the wisest cardinals of the last century, Rampolla, had the first say, endeavoured to establish the best possible relationships with Russia – of course, not for anyone else’s benefit, but simply to look out for its own interests. . . The standing point from which Strossmayer’s political activity

came from was not the standing point of the national thought. . . His love was divided into his love for the nation, his devotion to Catholicism and the Roman See, and his loyalty to the dynasty; and neither time nor relations provided him with the possibility to foster all three of them with the same degree and strength. This was the cause of Strossmayer's inner conflict; because, since he lacked the boldness and audacity to make the pure national thought the starting point of his work, he did not fulfil his position as a politician with such work as he could have had he done so. The truth is, he would have unconditionally become a martyr, but that martyrdom would have crowned him with the aureole of heroism. Instead – for all his brilliant gifts nature plentifully endowed him with, his great mind, broad education and personal virtues, that, besides all his flaws, not even his opponents could deny – Strossmayer's political work exhibits itself not only as an indigenous national action in a national sense, but as a work, although this was not his intention, which still presented itself as the means used by the elements opposed to us and our national progress. Therefore, it is no wonder that the opponents of Austrian pretensions are grouped as Strossmayer's opponents, some of whom utterly correctly understand the sad role Croatian politics play as a tool of Vienna" (p. 250-251).

Potočnjak's treatise was published in *Srpski Književni Glasnik (Serbian Literary Herald)*, and its author was an affirmed advocate of the politics of Yugoslav national unity, a member of the Yugoslav Committee in London and a participant of the Corfu conference. As a *podban* (deputy viceroy) and a superior of internal affairs of the state government in Zagreb, he ordered the apprehension of Stjepan Radić in 1920. Otherwise, he was a member of Pašić's Radical Party in the period between the two wars. Another author who severely criticised Strossmayer was the chief Serbian Radical leader from Vojvodina, Jaša Tomić, who published several articles, also in 1905, in the paper *Zastava* from Novi Sad, a newspaper of the Serbian Radical Party in Vojvodina, Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. Among other things, he writes: "Had he sincerely invested his rich knowledge, even his genius, in his gigantic undertaking, he would have created himself a great name, so that the centuries would mention him with gratitude . . . but: he worked as a soldier of Rome, a proselyte of the Catholic religion, in the service of the German 'penetration to the East' – he was one of the firmest pillars among the Croats, who held in himself 'a bridge of the Western culture to the East, which should have been created out of Croatianhood.' . . Above all, he sought to distinguish his person: his personal ambition was the main drive in all his activities. . . But insincerity, inherent to all Jesuits, soon emerged from him as well: he was able to use the clerical movement in this part of Serbdom to our disadvantage. At that time, he allowed all Catholic priests in Srem to be called Serbs: Miler, Okrugić, Odžić, Lobmajer, Turmajer, Dr. Babić, Radonjić, etc. – they were all Catholic Serbs with his blessing, and he, however, did the following: he reinforced the concordat in Croatia and Slavonia, and the seminary in Đakovo created future soldiers from the young people, who would enter the fight against Serbdom and Orthodoxy with their youthful zeal. . .

"The very thing his Catholic Croats praise him for is the very reason why we Serbs cannot reconcile with his work: spreading Catholicism was the only prominent aim of his life, a concordat with Rome, which still suppresses our Orthodox Church in Croatia and Slavonia; the spread of Croatianhood in those areas, in Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, was his doing, and this is the very reason why his work tugged at our heartstrings. . . Success was achieved to an extent: all the Catholics in the country, both natives and settlers, Uniates, even the Jews, started calling themselves Croats, and all

these engaged into an open enmity with Serbdom. Derangement was present among the people in the country, which was the result of such politics which strived to create a 'Croatian political nation' by force! . . . He played a great role in the political life among the Croats as an active and very agile politician: in county meetings (he was even a grand zhupan of Virovitica county), in the national parliament, and he otherwise had the main say in his time; he appointed and deposed governments and *bans*, arranged the educational curriculum in Croatia and Slavonia – and then, when he and his fellows ruled the roost – Serbian national schools were suppressed!" (p. 254-255).

The viewpoints of significant, foreign authors do not stand out from such an evaluation. German historian Joachim Kiov noted: "Strossmayer assigned the South Slavs a prominent role within the Slavic cultural circle, but he saw the solution to their political problems only within the framework of the Hapsburg monarchy. He was certainly driven by church-political reasons to come to this solution. If he wanted to master the religious contrasts among Slavic nations, then pinning his hopes on one union made sense only if it was realised within a mostly Catholic Danubian monarchy" (p. 259). According to an Austrian historian Hugo Hans, Strossmayer was a ". . . loyal supporter of the dynasty and, despite all the disappointments, an adamant defender of the Austrian mission," and the British historian, Seton-Watson, pointed out that he "believed in the Austrian mission and that he wanted to see it huge and booming" (p. 259).

#### **f) Ferdo Šišić on Strossmayer's Merits for Creating the Croatian nation**

Ferdo Šišić was certainly aware of Strossmayer's huge merits for the artificial creation of the Croatian nation from the real Croats – chakavian speakers, Croatianised Slovenes – kajkavian speakers, and Catholicised Serbs – shtokavian speakers; as well as for the projected imposition of a Croatian national consciousness on the Dalmatians and Slavonians. In the very first part of his book, *Joseph Strossmayer and the South Slav Thought* (Serbian Literary Society, Belgrade, Book no. 162), he envisages the situation the Croats found themselves in before the historical appearance of Ljudevit Gaj and Strossmayer, and the reason why they needed the Illyrian or Yugoslav veil at first. Šišić had a sufficient amount of historical facts in his possession to be able to state without dilemma that, during the first centuries upon the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans, ". . . the name 'Croats' for the land and people simultaneously" referred exclusively "to the territory between the confluence of the Dalmatian Cetina and the Istrian Raša" (p. 113). At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, only the inhabitants of the counties of Zagreb, Križevci and Varaždin regarded themselves as Croats, and other peoples used this name only to refer to them. Šišić writes that ". . . at that time, local provincial names prevailed among our people, i.e. the Croats were exclusively the inhabitants of narrower geographic Croatia, Slavonians of Slavonia (this viewpoint was particularly represented in two *Grammars* of the "Slavonian language", written by the Slavonians Reljković (1767) and Lanosović (1778) – note by V. Š.), and so forth with Dalmatians (Faustin Vrančić from Šibenik referred to our language as "Dalmatian" in his dictionary published in Luca, Italy, in 1595), Bosniaks (various Bosnian authors in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century called this language "Bosnian"), Serbs, Carniolans, Styrians, Carinthians, etc. There was neither national Croatianhood nor national Slavhood – as we encounter them after 1850 – at that

time, and thus also did the name ‘Serb’ at the time mean – outside the borders of Serbia – first of all, a man of the Orthodox law” (p. 122).

Aware that he had quite rushed the ultimate formulation and that it was unsustainable, Šišić stated in a special note that the largest part of the Serbian people thought that he had equated Serbdom with Orthodoxy, “. . . and not just individual geniuses thought that, such as Dositej and Vuk. The Serbian consciousness was strongly and deeply developed with our Orthodox people, while regarding Catholics, a small number of them – except in Croatia – knew they were national Croats” (p. 122). Šišić there consciously neglects the fact that the Serbian national consciousness of Catholicised and Islamized Serbs had been artificially suppressed, similar to the way in which the Croatian one was imposed on them afterwards. All in all, due to such a situation, according to Šišić’s opinion, “. . . the Illyrian name, as a common designation of our entire people, regardless of religion, could have easily encountered not only understanding in the Croatian intelligentsia, but sympathies as well; but as far as the large masses of people, within which only a local, provincial, or even regional name lived, since they did not have any political rights or influence on the political life of the country, it was out of the question. However, the awakening of the Croatian national consciousness and the beginning of Croatian literature and the love towards the native word were highly influenced by the work of German authors of that time, the followers of the so-called Romantic school” (p. 122-123).

Šišić did not neglect the eminent Slavists of that time either. “Abbot Dobrovski was the first one to start building an ethnographic system of the Slavic people according to language affinity, in which system he divided the South Slavs into these groups: 1) Wends (the Slavs from Carinthia, Carniola, Primorje, Styria, *Prekomurje*<sup>12</sup>), and the provincial Croats (i.e. all kajkavian speakers); 2) Serbs, Boshniaks, Slavonians, Dalmatians, Montenegrins and the Croatian Krajina, or, to use a single name, Illyrians (i.e. all shtokavian speakers), and 3) Bulgarians. This division remained mainly relevant for Slavic science until the time of Miklošić (in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Only with Jagić and Daničić’s work in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Serbian-Croatian group observed. Accordingly, in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatian name was exclusively limited to the kajkavian speakers, i.e. to the northern part of Zagreb County up to the Kupa River, the entire county of Varaždin (together with *Međumurje*), the western part of Križevci County; namely, this was quite nondescript in comparison with the widespread Illyrian name, by which the shtokavian speakers were then known. All the older authors from Dalmatia and Dubrovnik were excessively attached to the Illyrian Movement” (p. 124).

### **g) Starčević and Strossmayer, Two Sides of the Same Coin**

In his essay *Strossmayer Behind the Scenes (Hrvatska revija (Croatian Review) no. 3/1929)*, Blaž Jurišić drew a very interesting parallel between Strossmayer and Starčević. Writing about the bishop of Đakovo, who was not always consistent, who often submitted to faintheartedness, compromising himself, etc, Jurišić wrote: “Owing to this, Strossmayer

<sup>12</sup> Prekmurje is the easternmost region of Slovenia. It borders Hungary to the north-east, Austria to the north-west, Croatia to the south and the Slovenian region of Styria to the south-west. It is named after the Mura River, which separates it from the rest of Slovenia (a literal translation from Slovene would be *Over-Mura* or *Transmurania*).

was very conspicuous compared to the other great national leader of that time, Dr. Ante Starčević. Yet – what programmatic and principle affinity there was between these two outstanding Croatian men! Let me just briefly mention a few common grounds. Strossmayer included the Serbs in our people, just as Starčević regarded them as Croats; for instance, when he talked about ‘the very obvious Croatian dynasty of the Nemanjić’s’, who ‘ruled the east-northern parts of Croatia as kings’, or when he stated that Arsenije Crnojević ‘originated from a notable Croatian family’, or when he said that ‘St. Sava Nemanjić seceded the Eastern Croatian Church from the Constantinople patriarch’, etc. Strossmayer’s Yugoslavhood and Starčević’s Greater Croatianhood coincided with each other indeed. Both of them, Strossmayer and Starčević, were in favour of a federative state in the Slavic South, i.e. in the Balkans. They both maintained the political viewpoint of the Croatian state right. Both of them set the motto: neither Vienna nor Pest! Both of them were against a Croatian-Hungarian agreement and a revision of it. Finally, both of them expected the salvation of the Croatian people from external events. Both of them even chose the same means in their political tactics: passivity – Strossmayer did not attend the Croatian agreement Parliament, as Starčević did not attend the “joint” Pest Parliament established by the agreement. Therefore, the differentiation and enmity between Strossmayer and Starčević did not emerge so much from their ideologies as it did from their contrasting tempers. Strossmayer was naturally a great gentleman, a member of high society, always among the aristocracy by birth, position and spirit; elegant and elastic, a saloon man, of vivid spirit, fast movements and an agile mind; while Starčević was a tough peasant from Lika, smart and simple, with peasant stubbornness which gave a canton feature to his character. Strossmayer travelled a lot in the world, where one had to smile and shake hands even with the enemy; whereas Starčević angrily and unsmilingly snarled at every enemy of the Croatian people from his room. If their political fight was compared with a fight on the battle field, then Strossmayer would appear as a man adequate to play the role of a parliament member, and Starčević would be like a fighter behind the moats, who does not and would not hear of an armistice and suspension of hostilities, and would instead fight for life or death" (p. 157-158).

Jurišić considered Stjepan Radić the ideological and political successor of Strossmayer and Starčević. „After Starčević and Strossmayer, neither our political ideology nor our phraseology changed until 1918. Then, influenced by outside events, a complete turnaround occurred – as both outstanding men had anticipated. Did a complete turnaround of the ideology occur as well? Was the Croatian political line moved into another direction? We can find the answer to this question in the politics of the greatest national tribune of Croatia, Stjepan Radić, who has been endowed with trust by the broadest range of people during the last ten years. In the pre-war programme of his party, Radić maintained his position against the agreement, like Starčević and Strossmayer had. Immediately at the beginning of his political work, Radić stressed Slavic symbiosis and emphasised friendship with the Serbs, but at the same time, he most ardently advocated the demand for Croatian national and state individualism, which made him akin to Strossmayer.

Radić took the principle of the Croatian state right like Starčević had, therefore, he consistently started his parliament speeches, before and during the entire war, with the invocation: high state Parliament! Radić maintained his position on this line of the Croatian state right, i.e. Croatian national and state individualism, to the end – at least in its essence – despite the various ups and downs. Strossmayer was said to have left the

solution of our fate to external events, as well as had Starčević, who, being against reliance on the Austro-Hungarian people, set the motto: God and the Croats! Radić adopted this motto with a small variation: Faith in God and peasant accord! This even more strongly reminds us of Starčević's saying in his parliament speech in 1861: Faith in God and in your shares! Thus we see that Radić ideologically remained in tradition. Radić's tactics also remained the traditional Croatian tactics. Like Starčević and Strossmayer, Radić looked to the outside world, tried his hand, like Kvaternik, at foreign diplomatic action, which had so little success, like Kvaternik's. Eventually, Radić, like Starčević and Strossmayer, used the tactics of abstinence. In that sense, Radić was completely akin to Starčević and Strossmayer regarding his ideology and tactics. However, regarding his character, which was most sharply marked with excellent agility, from which his principal viewpoints were often retreated, Radić was more akin to Strossmayer than Starčević, although Strossmayer was a gentleman by his nature, and Starčević a peasant like Radić. This common ground and affinity in political ideology and tactics among the three Croatian political leaders of the last century were so conspicuous and enormous that it would be very wrong to try to reduce them to mere imitation. The cause of this affinity must lie much deeper. It has to have its root in the Croatian national psyche. Since a psychiatric structure does not significantly change while its subject lives, it is obvious that those basic contours, which were so strikingly evident in the public works of these three national leaders, will stay and live further on in the consciousness of the Croatian people, as long as they exist" (p. 158-159).

What is common for Strossmayer and Starčević is certainly their unlimited fanaticism; for the former, regarding the Catholic unifying variant of Slavhood, in which the Croats would play a very important driving role; and for the latter, regarding the Croatian exclusiveness and expansion in order to assimilate the neighbouring Serbs.

#### **h) Slobodan Jovanović's Analysis**

We can see how one of the greatest Serbian intellectuals of all time, Slobodan Jovanović, judged Strossmayer in his book *Political and Legal Discussions* ("Geca Kon", Belgrade 1932), in which Jovanović says, "Strossmayer strived for something much higher than the Catholicisation of the Orthodox Slavs. Yet, as a good Catholic, he was convinced that the Western Church was closer to Christ's truth than the Eastern one, and hence, the unification of these two churches would eventually end with the victory of Catholicism. In a letter to Cardinal Rampolla in 1888, he implied his final wish about the return of the Russian people into the bosom of the Holy Catholic Church" (p. 272). This was actually the basic marker for all Strossmayer's activities, and Jovanović summarized their ideological substratum as follows: "Why would the Catholic Church not – having already established its roots with the Poles, Czechs and Croats – express stronger interest in the South Slavs? Besides that, it must not have forgotten that their language and nationality grew together with the church's being; the church to them is a shield of their nationality, and what most repulses them from Catholicism is the Latin service, which already seems to them like the beginning of denationalisation. If the Catholic Church were to adopt the Slavic language for services in the Slavic South, it would not, undoubtedly, attract all South Slavs immediately; but it would at least lessen their fear of Catholicism, which has hindered the reconciliation between the two churches so much" (p. 270-271).



The problem of the differences in rites takes second place. "Tolerance towards the Slavs should have been the first step towards reconciliation between the Western and Eastern Church. Strossmayer believed that these two churches could be united in 'one moral and juridical body'. The main disturbances were the rites, and each church had its own rites, which it had preserved as sanctity since time immemorial, and would not sacrifice them for any price. However, if rites were left intact in both churches, Strossmayer reckoned that unification of the two churches would not be so difficult. . . The reconciliation of the two churches was, after all, a personal need of Strossmayer himself. He was not otherwise able to reconcile his nationality, which pulled him to the East, and his religion, which pulled him to the West" (p. 271-272). The unity of the Slavs in Catholicism became his fundamental motto.

### **i) Subordination to Vatican, a Precondition for Slavic Unity**

What measures Joseph Georg Strossmayer took in order to bring the Orthodox Slavs under the papacy's patronage is testified by his secret memorandum to the Russian government in 1876, asking that his name, as the author of the text in which he explained to the Russians all the political benefits they would gain by signing a convention with the Holy See, remained undisclosed forever. He interpreted the Roman Catholic proselytistic motives with the following words: "The Church, which calls itself the mother of all people, cannot exclude a nation, that was obviously called for higher and more divine purposes in the world, from its maternal care and love. The Holy Father, who calls himself the common father of all nations, must want to crown the end of his life with a solemn deed, by which he would deserve glory, and also the title of the Father of Slavhood" (Strossmayer-Rački, *Political Documents, Znanje*, Zagreb 1971, p. 222). As the main argument by which he would persuade the Russian power-holders to submit to Rome, Strossmayer calls the behaviour of the Poles the key problem of the European mission to the Russian country. "The Poles are irreconcilable Russian-haters. The Poles, blinded by their hatred for Russians . . . harmoniously work with their most detestable enemies and enemies of the whole human race, and therefore would unite, if possible, with hell itself just to harm the Russians and frustrate their efforts. The Poles are sometimes so crazy in their hatred towards the Russians that they even deny the Slavic existence in Europe, saying that the Bulgarians in the south are descendants of the Tatars, and that the Russians in the north are descendants of the Mongols. The Poles seem to continuously chivvy the entire Europe along, and present every Russian undertaking as an assassination of common freedom and culture. The Poles, first of all, hand around the Vatican doors, presenting the soul of the Russians as being so wild and cruel that, by various tortures and violence, they force the Ruthenians to be rubbish. It seems that they have established a special brotherhood of Resurrectionists in Rome for this purpose. Great misfortunes have so spoiled the consciousness of the Poles, that they feed more on illusions than truths, and always rather accept illusory reasons than truthful and practical ones. Therefore, very often, they serve for mockery to their friends, as well as to their enemies, which is to their great destruction" (p. 210-211).

In a short digression, Strossmayer testified about his own experience with the Poles, accusing them of being the main culprits for the fact that the federalist concept of the Habsburg monarchy reorganisation did not prevail on the eve of concluding the Austro-Hungarian agreement and the introduction of dualism. "This was first almost gladly

admitted by their people, and yet, they agreed to the dualist constitution because they let the enemies of the Slavs persuade them that a dualist Austria would be the main tool for conquering the Russians and, if possible, exterminating them out of the European borders. Such was the Polish disgust towards Russians that they, as if by some necessity of fate, always and everywhere turned into enemies of the Russians; that can be called Polonism. This Polonism cannot be suppressed by benefactions or defeats. Not with the former, because it repulses benefactions, or if it accepts them, it turns them into a weapon. Not with the latter, for it grows in the very misfortunes and continually obtains new powers to harm. There is still, at least in my opinion, one unmistakable means to conquer that Polonism, and that is the convention which should be concluded with the Holy See. Such a convention would cut down the judgment that it is inherent to the Russian disposition to have violence on its conscience and to plot against the Catholic religion. Such a convention would be a public and great testimony to the whole of Europe that the Russians respect and appreciate freedom of religion and conscience to such an extent that they are completely deserving of the love and friendship of all of Europe and the most cultured people. With this convention, the ears of all of Europe would be closed shut once and for all to the Polish shouts, accusations and laments, as if they were fighting *pro aris et focis* when fighting against the Russians” (p. 211-212).

In Strossmayer’s opinion, Russia would significantly strengthen its geopolitical position and realise its strategic interests easier with the treaty about its subordination to the Vatican. There is no doubt that Strossmayer was a sincere follower of common Slavic unity, but in Roman Catholic terms. In this sense, he further suggests: “By this convention, the glorious Russian empire would gain the highest moral authority in Europe – the Holy Father –,as the creditor of its innocence and its best intents. Apart from this, such a convention would prepare the way for reconciliation of spirits among the Russians and Poles, which would again be to the general bliss and exaltation of all Slavs. There is a healthier part of the Poles who seek their better happiness in a reconciliation with the Russians. It is clear that, under this convention, the power and influence of that healthier part of the Poles would have to be increased. It is quite worthy of the noble Russian nation to feel compassion for the unhappy fate of their brothers, the Poles, so that, obliging their actual and real needs and lawful wishes, and through feelings of brother-like benevolence and plenty of gifts, they would surpass them and bring them to mutual harmony. By such a wise and generous approach, the mentioned convention would have a sure success in the souls of the Polish. If there were no other reasons to justify the mentioned convention, this one would seem to me so important and so useful that I would, without further ado or hesitation, start on the job” (p. 212).

The famous Bishop Strossmayer publicly admitted by this that the heart of the Polish anti-Russian animosity was actually a hatred of Roman Catholics towards the Orthodox, as slandered “schismatics”. Anyhow, the text of the memorandum was preserved by chance. Strossmayer entrusted the original to his friend Rački, to organize its transcribing into the then standard “calligraphy”, and then send it. Rački preserved the manuscript in his papers, and, upon his death, all of his documents were packed and sent to the Episcopal residence in Đakovo. No one seriously examined them until Strossmayer’s death, and when the bishop died, they were sent to the Academy in Zagreb, where the text of the memorandum was eventually found.

## **j) Opposition to Papal Dogma as a Product of a Mistaken Estimation of Political Powers**

The thing Strossmayer became famous for throughout Europe was his strong opposition to introducing the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope in the Vatican Council of 1870, by which Pope Pius IX tried to compensate for the loss of the Vatican secular state by imposing powerful moral authority of the papal function, which would strengthen Church centralism on the principles of monarchist absolutism and, in a certain form, renew the political dominance of the Pope over Catholic countries. Strossmayer's speech was published for the first time in the paper *Obzor*, and then in the form of a special brochure in 1926 in Zagreb, under the title *Bishop Strossmayer's Speech in the Vatican Council Against the Magistracy and Infallibility of the Pope, Given on 02/06/1870*. Strossmayer began his speech by disputing the founding of the thesis that the Pope was the successor to St. Peter, a regent of Christ and infallible in ecclesiastical teaching in the Scriptures, stating there was not a single trace of this in them. The New Testament does not contain a single verse from which it could be at all derived that Christ endowed St. Peter with the rule over the apostles, or that He appointed him His regent. All the apostles were equal, with equal power, and Christ forbade them to exercise lordship, use force and dispose of power like the pagan rulers. "We cannot and must not say that the church of the apostles was heretical, but we are obliged to confess that the Church has never been more beautiful, more pure, or more holy, than in the days when there was no pope" (p. 6).

St. Peter had never been a pope, and that the information that he was ever a Roman bishop is very unreliable. "The silence of St. Peter is reliable evidence. If this apostle had been the successor to Jesus Christ on earth, which we proclaim him to be, he surely would have known it; if he had known it, how is it that not once did he act like a pope? He could have acted so on the day of Pentecost, pronouncing his first sermon, but did not do it; he could have acted so at the Church council in Jerusalem or Antiochia, but he did not do it; neither did he do it in the two letters which directed to the church. Can you imagine such a pope, my venerable brethren, if Peter had been Pope? If you wish to maintain that he was the Pope, then you must certainly maintain that he was ignorant of the fact. Now I ask all those who can use their head, are these suppositions possible? I say that the Church did not have a pope in the times of the apostles; to maintain the contrary, all the Scriptures must be either burnt or entirely ignored.

"It is said on all sides: was Peter not in Rome? Was he not crucified with his head down? Are not the pulpits from which he taught, the altars at which he held mass, in this eternal city? Peter having been at Rome, my venerable brethren, is founded only on tradition; even if he had been Bishop of Rome, how can you prove his supremacy from that episcopate? Scaliger, one of the most learned of men, did not hesitate to say that Peter's episcopate and residence in Rome ought to be counted among ridiculous legends" (p. 6-7).

Historical facts particularly cannot be ignored or forged permanently, so Strossmayer continued despite offensive shouts and protests from all sides: "Finding no trace of the papacy in the days of the apostles, I said to myself, 'I shall find it perhaps in the history of the Church.' I say it frankly, I have sought for a pope in the first four centuries, and, why, I have not found him anywhere" (p. 7). There is no doubt that the Roman bishop concentrated all reputation and power in his hands immediately upon the legalisation of Christianity, and that Justinian officially recognized him as the first bishop,

and the one from Constantinople as the second. “Only precedence was established here, but the power of supreme administration was not given at the same time. . . The importance of the Roman bishops proceeded not from divine proxy, but from the importance of the city in which they had their seat” (p. 7). Later on, these things changed as well. “I have said that from the very first century, the Patriarch of Rome aspired to the supreme administration of the Church. Unfortunately, he very nearly reached it – but his requests met with the resistance in a law issued by Emperor Theodosius II, by which the Patriarch of Constantinople should have the same authority as he of Rome. The Church Council of Chalcedon made the bishops of the new and the old Rome equal in all things ecclesiastical. The sixth Church Council, held in Carthage, forbade all bishops to take the title of the prime or supreme ruler” (p. 8-9). St. Gregory, criticizing the aspiration of the Patriarch of Constantinople to call himself the universal bishop, warned his successors to the papal chair that they never dare express such an aspiration. Precisely due to the aspiration of John, the Bishop of Constantinople, to pronounce himself as the high priest, Pope Pelagius II called him impious.

The theological explanation given by Strossmayer, referring to indisputable universal church authorities such as St. Augustine, conformed to historical facts. “Bringing it all together, I claim that: 1) Jesus gave His apostles the same power that He had given to St. Peter. 2) The apostles never recognized Peter as the regent of Jesus Christ and the infallible teacher of the church. 3) Peter never thought of being a pope, and never acted as if he were a pope. 4) The Councils of the first four centuries, while they recognized the high position which the Bishop of Rome occupied in the Church on account of the significance of the city Rome, only accorded to him a pre-eminence of honour, never supreme administration. 5) The holy fathers in the famous passage: 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church,' never understood that as the church being built on Peter (*super Petrum*) but on the rock (*super petram*), that is, on the confession of the faith of the apostle. With every good intention and with a Christian conscience, I make this undisputable conclusion on grounds of history and reason – that Jesus Christ did not confer supremacy upon Peter, and that the Roman bishops were not to be the rulers of the Church, but that they became such by gradually usurping all the rights of the episcopate” (p. 10-11).

After all, if the pope of the time, Pope Pius IX, was declared infallible, it would mean, by consistent interpretation, that all his forerunners had been infallible as well. However, mere history, with its implacable facts, does not allow this, “assuring us”, as Strossmayer continues, “that some popes have awfully erred. You may protest against it or deny it as you please, but I will prove it. Pope Victor (192) first approved of Montanism, and then condemned it. Marcellinus (296-303) was an idolater; he attended the temple of Vesta, worshipping that goddess. You will say that it was an act of weakness; but I answer, a regent of Jesus Christ would rather die than become an apostate. Liberius (385) consented to the condemnation of Athanasius, and made a profession of Arianism, that he might be recalled from his exile and reinstated in his calling. Gregory I (578-590) called any one who took on the name of Universal Bishop a heretic, and contrariwise Boniface III, (607-608) made the patricide, Emperor Phocas, confer that title upon him. Eugenius IV (1431-1439) approved of the Council of Basle and the sharing of the chalice with the church of Bohemia, while Pius I (1458) revoked that permission. Hadrian (867-872) declared civil marriages to be valid, which Pius VII condemned. Sixtus V (1585-1590) published an edition of the Bible, and by a papal bull

recommended it to be read, which Pius VII condemned. Clement XIV (1700-1721) abolished the order of the Jesuits, which Paul III (1540) had allowed, and Pius VII re-established it. But why look for such remote proofs? Has not our holy Pope here present, in his bull (papal document) which set the rules for this Council, in the event of his death while the assembly is still in session, revoked all that in past times may be contrary to it, even when that proceeds from the decisions of his predecessors? And certainly, this would not be so important, if Pius IX had declared this order from the pulpit; but this is a wonder when, from the depths of his sepulchre, he imposes his will on the heads of the church. I should never finish, my venerable brethren, if I were to put before your eyes the contradictions of the popes and their teaching. If then you proclaim the infallibility of the current pope, you must either prove, (which is certainly impossible) that the popes never contradicted each other; or else, you must declare that the Holy Spirit has revealed to you that the infallibility of the papacy only dates from 1870. Are you bold enough to do either one? (p. 11-12).

Although common believers, as well as entire nations, do not really understand all the theological matters, especially the most difficult ones, they cannot miss the practical behaviour of the highest church dignitaries, and they are completely aware of its repercussions. "Do not deceive yourselves. If you confirm the dogma of papal infallibility, the Protestants, our adversaries, will clime atop the ruins, of which we are the cause, all the more emboldened since they have history on their side, whilst we have only our own denial against them. What can we say to them when they list all the bishops of Rome from the beginning to his holiness Pius IX?. . . Gentlemen, do not cry out at me. If you fear history, you are admitting that you are conquered; and besides, if you made all the waters of the Tiber pass over it, you would not cancel a single page. . . Pope Vigilius (538) purchased the papacy from Belisarius, regent of the Emperor Justinian. It is true that he broke his promise and never paid for it. Is this the canonical way of obtaining the three-pronged crown? The second Council of Chalcedon formally condemned that action as follows: Every bishop who obtains his episcopate by money shall be cast out. Pope Eugenius III (1145) followed the lead of Vigilius. St. Bernard, a bright star of his era, reproved the pope, saying to him: "Can you show me in this great city of Rome anyone who would receive you as pope if they had not received money for it?" My venerable brethren, is a pope who establishes monetary institutions at the gates of a temple inspired by the Holy Spirit? Will he have any right to teach that the Church is infallible? What happened to Formosus is certainly known to everyone. Stephen XI caused his body, dressed in the papal robes, to be exhumed; he had the fingers with which he had blessed cut off, and then had him thrown into the Tiber, declaring that he had been treacherous and was a bastard. He was later imprisoned, poisoned, and strangled by the people. Let's see how matters were re-adjusted! Romanus, the successor of Stephen, and, after him, John X, approved of the deeds of Formosus. But you will tell me these are fables, not history. Go to the Vatican Library and read Platina, the historian of the papacy, and the writings of Baronius (898). These are events which, for the sake of the honour of the Holy See, we should wish to ignore; but when we are dealing with the setting forth a dogma which may provoke a great schism in our midst, ought the love which we bear to our venerable mother Church impose silence on us?" (p. 13-14).

The famous period of Vatican "pornocracy" is a special story. "The learned Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the papal court, says, 'What did the Roman Church look like in those days? What infamous, yet powerful courtesans, governed in Rome? It was they

who gave, exchanged, and took bishoprics; and sadly, they got their lovers, the false popes, put on the Peter's throne.' You will reply that these were false popes; let it be so; but in that case, if for fifty years the See of Rome was occupied by non-popes, where will you resume pontifical succession? How could the Church survive for one hundred fifty years without a head? Oddly, the greatest number of these non-popes appears in a genealogical tree of the papacy; and it must have been those that Baronius described. Genebrardo himself, the great flatterer of the popes, dared to say in his chronicles (901): 'This century is quite unfortunate, as for nearly 150 years the popes have fallen from all the virtues of their predecessors, and have become apostates rather than apostles.' I can imagine how the illustrious Baronius must have blushed when he narrated the acts of these Roman bishops. Speaking of John XI (931), son of Pope Sergius and of Marozia, he wrote these words: 'The Holy Church, that is, the Roman Church, has been vilely trampled on by such a monster.' John XII (966), elected Pope at the age of eighteen through the influence of his courtesans, was not one whit better than his predecessors. I grieve, my venerable brethren, to reveal so much filth, so I shall be silent on Alexander VI, father and lover of Lucretia; I turn away from John XXII (1316), who denied the immortality of the soul, and was deprived of dignity by the holy Ecumenical Council of Constance. Some will maintain that this Council was not public; if so, it emerges that the nomination of Martin V (1417) must be regarded illegal. What, then, becomes of the papal succession? Can you find the thread of it?

I shall not speak of the schisms which have dishonoured the Church. In those days, the See of Rome was occupied by two competitors, and sometimes even by three. Which of these was the true Pope? Again I say: if you decree the infallibility of the present Bishop of Rome, you must establish the infallibility of all the preceding ones, without difference. But can you do that, when history is there establishing with a clearness equal to that of the sun, that the popes have erred in their teaching? Could you do it and maintain that avaricious, incestuous, murdering, simoniacal popes have been the regents of Jesus Christ? Oh, venerable brethren! To maintain such a monstrosity would be to betray Christ. It would be a sin against Christ worse than Judas': it would be throwing dirt in His face" (p. 14-15).

Although the Croatian Old-Catholic Church, until Pavelić abolished it, regarded Strossmayer as its ideological founding father due to this speech in the Vatican Council, the Bishop of Đakovo did not remain consistent with his stated viewpoints. Afraid that he might be removed from the bishop throne, Strossmayer gradually revised his viewpoints and accepted the dogma of papal infallibility. Thus, on 28 April 1877, on the occasion of the fifty-year episcopate of Pope Pius IX, Strossmayer directed an encyclical to his people, in which he, *inter alia*, wrote: "The Pope of Rome is the regent of Jesus, the foundation of Church unity, the supreme shepherd and teacher in God's Church . This is Pius IX, who celebrates fifty years of his episcopate on April 3, and to whom we all owe love, respect, loyalty and obedience – this is what it means to be a Catholic – and to foster the Catholic feeling, not to the detriment of love and kindness, which we owe to the whole world. Regarding satisfying that duty by us . . . and our people, under our government, as consciously and exquisitely as possible, I have yet to expound: the way the head of our Church, Pius IX, performs the holy title of his supreme authority and field. . . Here is the special title of that supreme authority, which originates from Jesus Himself and St. Peter, to continuously live and act in Peter's successors from generation to generation until the end of the world. Here is the holy profession, which current Holy Father Pius IX performs with such

consistency as that of St. Peter's; he performs it with the same destiny as that of St. Peter's" (Quote according to Andrija Stiletak: *Strossmayer and the Popes*, Part Three, "Glasnik Biskupije Đakovačke", Đakovo 1929, p. 43-44).

In the following years, Strossmayer referred to both Pius IX and his successors as the regents of Christ on earth. In 1884, Strossmayer wrote that "... our Lord and Saviour gave us a divine head and permanent foundation, as well as the main crux of unity and a non-deceivable oracle in the Roman Pope, the successor to St. Peter. Therefore, his permanent right and untouchable duty are in the first line, that he not only keeps and defends the unity of Church and people, but always strives for its expansion and spreading with all his might, until finally that glorious day, which the Lord himself foretold in advance, comes: when all humankind shall be in one flock of sheep, gathered and united under one supreme shepherd. It is completely clear that Christ God and our Saviour permanently removed this important right and feature of the Church and Holy Apostle See, as well as everything else and the fatherhood of our salvation, from the power, judgment and decision of all human authority and every nation" (p. 111-112). Obviously, in 1870, Bishop Strossmayer had made a miscalculation in his estimate of the relationship of political powers among the other bishops, thus he spent the rest of his life refuting his viewpoints.

### 3. The Political Role of Franjo Rački

Franjo Rački (1828-1894), an inseparable friend and most important associate of Strossmayer, was born in Fužine, in Gorski Kotar (the Mountain District). Having finished national school and secondary school, he found himself in a Roman-Catholic seminary in Senj. Regarding the first religious poems of Rački, Tode Smičiklas, as his first serious biographer (*The Life and Work of Dr. Franjo Rački*, The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, 1895), wrote, "... a child from a purely Christian Croatian family, he eagerly devoted himself to his mother church, the servant of Jesus" (p.4). In 1849, Bishop Ožegović sent him to Vienna for further education with a recommendation to the then court chaplain and "principal of the clerical house", Strossmayer. In addition to theology, Rački in Vienna engaged in studying history, especially Slavic history, with a basic orientation – which was thoroughly founded in him – according to which religion and church are the centre of "all the most noble and sublime endeavours of the nation and state" (p. 5). He was ordained a priest in 1852 in Senj, where he immediately became a teacher in a secondary school. Soon afterwards, he again went to Vienna, to study philosophy, mathematics and physics. In 1855, he obtained his PhD in theology, and upon his return to Senj, he started researching monuments of old Croatian writing, the Glagolitic script and Cyrillic alphabet, simultaneously writing studies and treatises on ecclesiastical history. Already a canon, he went to Rome in 1857 and stayed a long time in the College of St. Jerome. There, he finally learned to consistently put his native pan-Slavistic sentiments at the service of the strategic interests of the Roman Catholic Church. As an already respectable scientist, Rački returned to Zagreb in 1860 and involved himself in political activity, very quickly winning a reputation as Strossmayer's right hand.

Simultaneously, he advocated for the unification and governmental autonomy of the "Croatian" lands and Serbian-Croatian unity through the idea of Yugoslavhood. With special zeal, he would prove that Rijeka was an integral part – in a historical, geographical, ethnical and economic sense – of Croatia and not of Hungary, whilst

fighting for the annexation of Dalmatia to Croatia, believing that Dalmatia belonged to it historically. “Thus, he strongly maintained, under the title *Sriem and the Croats*, that Sriem (Srem) had always been a part of Croatia, from the time of our national dynasty and ever after. He engaged very meticulously in the foundation of mostly diplomatic sources, and his work is of value even today” (p. 37). The Croatian Parliament was his main stage for pro-Yugoslav speeches and advocating for partner-like Croatian-Austrian relationships instead of Croatian subordination. As Smičiklas points out, “. . . he proved the continuity of the historical right of the kingdom of Croatia in such a way that even the more serious opponents objected less to it” (p. 40). Rački enthusiastically got involved in the political activities of the National Party, criticising the works of Constantine Porphyrogenitus in publicist and scientific papers, and refuting every credibility and relevance of Priest Dukljanin with arguments. In 1867, he became the first president of the newly founded Yugoslavian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Together with Strossmayer, he daydreamt of the unification of the Christian churches. Vladimir Solovyov was his dearest of all Russian scientists. As Smičiklas states, “Solovyov’s holy conviction that Russia would in decades unify with the Western Church did not assure Rački. He greatly appreciated, though, his pure belief that the integration of Slavhood into one church would be one of the most momentous events for the entire humankind” (p. 88).

Still, this issue was the basic preoccupation of Franjo Rački. “He believed in the unity of the churches, perceiving its future form. Eastern patriarchs would gain concessions the churches in the West did not have. Today’s generations are not ready for it. He looked across the Slavic world, where he saw so much immaturity that he had to conclude: “. . . let us leave this issue to the providence of God.” According to him, the Church should not just look after the able ones in the world; it would deal less with diplomacy, and would care more for the people in need of its help. Of course, his Slavic heart thought of his people above all, to have them warmed by the pure light of Jesus, according to justice and need” (p. 120-121). In line with that, Rački especially dealt with Dubrovnik, systematically appropriating and subsequently Croatianising its traditions of building a nation and its cultural inheritance.

### **a) Lamentations over Croatia’s Destiny**

As a special appendix to his monograph, Smičiklas published the letters of Franjo Rački to Ivan Kukuljević, sent from Rome on various occasions, which testify to the initial intellectual efforts of the author. In one of them, written on 16 February 1859, Rački elaborated on his treatise on the works of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in which he claimed that, “Constantine mixes political Croatia and Serbia of his time with the area both nations had settled after having arrived at Illyricum. The same Constantine gave me reason to investigate whether the Croatian people had once possessed Bosnia, and whether they had settled it initially. As I did not want to depart from Constantine in this treatise, neither did I want to tackle the question: Did the Croatian people possess Dalmatia beneath the Cetinje River, which in Constantine’s time had been divided into counties, some of them autonomous and some subordinated to Serbia? For a long time, I have been of the opinion that our people settled that place as well; but, I shall engage in solving this while researching on the critical value of a Croatian chronicler and priest, Dukljanin. These writers, living in those lower areas, would know to tell us what the same people had said about what tribe it was from. Thus, I wanted to just pass by that question in



Constantine's work; for I realised that it was too soon to answer it until we hear from some old countryman" (p. 197-198).

The same letter contains a very interesting lamentation on the current state and long-term fate of the "Croatian" people. Rački said: "We are broken into two alphabets, which is our greatest sorrow and misfortune. We "pro-latins" are in small number, and we have not all awoken. Dalmatia is asleep; it relishes *Talijanština* (a Croatian-Italian creole) more than our own language; therefore, Dubrovnik too will soon fall away. Not to mention Bosnia; the Croatian and Slavonian Krajinas are like some other world to us; so what can we poor provincial devils do? We shall fight while we can, and vaguely hope for victory – so if we are destined to vanish as a nation, let us at least leave a remembrance of us, so that more is known about us than we knew about ourselves: who the old Illyrians were. I do not promise a lot about Serbia's future either. The Serbian nation is, however, more elastic than the Croatian one, but the more it allegedly civilises itself, the more it loses its originality – we Yugoslavs usually jump from our natural state to philistinism. We have never been able to constitute ourselves as the Slavic people" (p. 198-199).

### **b) The Emotional Approach of Viktor Novak**

Writing about Rački in superlative eulogies and praising his sincere unity, Viktor Novak noted that precisely Franjo Rački ". . . definitely destroyed the barrier to Croatian, Slavonian and Dalmatian provincialism and brought regionalism under the general common ideal of united Croatianhood, and afterwards, of Yugoslavhood" (Viktor Novak: Franjo Rački, *Bratstvo* (Brotherhood), Belgrade 1929, p. 27). Novak said about Rački that he was "the most dignified, intelligent, sincere and persevering ideologist of Yugoslavian unity," and "the most intimate associate and the second *vladika* Joseph Georg Strossmayer. For, on the developmental line from the Illyrian Movement to pure Yugoslavhood, everything that was most intelligent and ideal in Croatianhood, in its perspectives and tasks for its future as the work of our entire people, can be found synthesised in the heart and soul, as well as in the work, of Franjo Rački" (p. 4). In Novak's opinion, Strossmayer and Rački ". . . supported the holy fire which warmed the hearts and the hope in the mutual future of the Yugoslavs. They predicted events with deep conviction, and uplifted faith in the biological laws of our race. They preached this faith with apostolic devotion, certain that these laws would at some time unite our people, who have been broken and divided into various states and under various influences – political, educational and religious" (p. 4).

Just when the Croats stomached, to some extent, the acceptance of the Serbian language as the literary one; Rački, having definitely abandoned chakavian and kajkavian, and following his own pan-Slavist aspirations which were created and designed in a proselytistic way, wanted to impose the "Serbo-Croatian" literary language on the Slovenes and Bulgarians. Novak singled out one fragment from Rački's articles published at the end of 1860 in *Pozor*, which shows that such the idea was thoroughly explicated. Rački wrote: "If Yugoslavhood wants to become one nation in a spiritual sense, it will have to strive for unification in the literary language. Whoever of the Yugoslavs does not want his people to scrape a living alone, or be ruined in some place, spilling into neighbouring foreign places, whose people are much stronger and livelier; he has to strive to bring this only lifesaving literary unity to life as soon as possible. . . One should not be blinded by the fighter of this or that dialect of those three Yugoslav dialects

– every unbiased judge will conclude that Serbo-Croatian is determined to be the literary language. And what makes it worthy of this right is the past, in which it and its political value were named; the area it rules over; and also the future which is opening up before it, if the future finds those who are worthy of it. The Slavic dialect has to be merged with it first. Either way, the effort of Slavic authors worthy of praise and recognition has approached closer to Serbo-Croatian in recent times, so that the sophisticated Slovenes, having embraced and appropriated this, did not keep silent about any of their greater difficulties, but the provincials, loosely kajkavian Croats sticking to our literary language, did” (p. 23).

Unity, complete unity, and only unity are slogans Rački stood by until he felt that something regarded as already largely adopted from Croatianhood, i.e. Croatianised, was brought into question. The problem of Srem is one of them, causing the appearance of Rački’s original belief and political aspiration, which can be seen in the following excerpt from a quotation (originally broader) Viktor Novak selected: “Why do the Serbs in Srem ask for separation from the Triune Kingdom? Is their religion or nation in peril? Why, they manage their church affairs as freely as they want. The Serbian and Croatian nations are one; this, hopefully, no one will conceal. Therefore, if the Serbs in Bačka or Banat ask for security for their nation from the Hungarians, this request has its reason; but it would be silly if the Serbs sought this security from the Croats, who are of the same nationality. As for political freedom, it is equal for Srem as for any other area of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia; and it will be for the Serbs towards Croats and Slovenes all the greater and firmer, if they ask for and defend it. On a national, not historical foundation did the assembly of the Triune Kingdom take Srem away from the Serbs in 1848, as an integral part of the new Serbian Vojvodina, article 7; but, this was under the condition that Vojvodina should enter a narrow national and legal alliance with the Triune Kingdom. On the same national basis, we Croats and the Serbs can agree on everything, because, in our opinion, the Croats and the Serbs have the same future. If our brothers in Srem experience difficulties – here they have the assembly of the Triune Kingdom. We are all equal in it – everyone in it has equal rights” (p. 41).

Persistently idealising the personality, intellectual work and political activity of Franjo Rački, Viktor Novak himself in his treatises was not able to avoid the fragments which portrayed Rački and his ideology in a true light. Such are the excerpts from the articles written by Franjo Rački, published in *Obzor* in 1886, under the common title *Zablude Srpske Politike* (Misconceptions of Serbian Politics), which, *inter alia*, read: “Extraordinary self-awareness and national exclusivity have been developed in Serbdom. Many occurrences in the public life, and in the recent past and present of the Serbs and Croats, can be interpreted through this. . . The Serbs foster and greatly emphasize their national and tribal distinctiveness, and are not willing to sacrifice any of it for the community; they have even enclosed this tribal distinctiveness with a feature that makes no sense regarding national issues and making political decisions, not to mention that it is not justified by science. Such a feature is religion. . . After 1835, the Croats have already twice offered a general name which would not significantly delete the Croatian nor the Serbian name, but would give a more definite expression to the community. However, the Serbs refused this offer each time, maintaining their name exclusively. This gave cause to the fact that the name ‘Croatian’ started to be fostered more attentively, and that memories related to it started to be more emphasised. . . But separate names would not disturb a mutual work with a mutual purpose, if those distinctions were subjected to the community.

The Croats and Slovenes, the Serbs and Bulgarians, have lived on the Balkan Peninsula from time immemorial, each of them with distinctive historical traditions. This distinction is neither fortune nor misfortune, so it would not prevent the development of distinctiveness or the fortification of the community, if each of these members collaborated agreeably with each other. The Serbs, being in the middle, would be invited to mediate; possessing their own state, they could be of great use both to themselves and the community. Such unity was to be represented by Serbia, but two things were necessary for this purpose: first, to be the model – a state; second, not to foster conquering aspirations towards its brother” (Quote according to Viktor Novak: *Najveći Jugosloven XIX Stoleća (The Greatest Yugoslav of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century) O Tridesetoj Obljetnici Smrti Franje Račkoga* (On the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Franjo Rački) , *Nova Evropa* Book IX, no. 6, Zagreb 1924, p. 173-174).

### c) The Inconsistency of Koščak’s Analysis

In the foreword to selected texts of Strossmayer and Rački (Joseph G. Strossmayer - Franjo Rački: *Politički Spisi. Rasprave - Članci - Govori - Memorandumi, Znanje*, Zagreb 1971), the editor Vladimir Koščak pointing out that these two names went together, comparing them to Goethe and Schiller, as he also could have to Marx and Engels. Essentially, Strossmayer was the creator of a political programme on a Roman Catholic religious basis, and Rački built him a historical basis with his research. “As the leaders of the National Party, which was renewed in 1861, they fought tirelessly and stubbornly for the federalist establishment of the Habsburg monarchy, and for the unification of all South Slavs, whose cultural centre was to be Zagreb. The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, established by Strossmayer, with Rački as its president for many years: as well as the University and other foundations, which they implemented and designed themselves, were to serve this purpose” (p. 7). Since neither Serbia, nor the Serbs from Croatia and Slavonia, especially those from the demilitarised Krajina, fit into their programmatic goals, political projection and idea of the union, Rački and Strossmayer gradually abandoned, during the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the comprehensive Yugoslav idea and advocated for a triune system of Austria, with Zagreb as the counterpart of Vienna and Budapest. “There only remained the old fight for gathering the Croatian lands together on the basis of the Croatian state right. In his context, it even led to reconciliation with the *pravaši* (which leads to the meeting with Starčević in 1893) and aspirations to form a united opposition against Khuen’s regime” (p. 12). Koščak here expressly confirmed that, parallel with Strossmayer’s advocacy for South Slavic unity “there surges a fight for the formation of the Croatian nation” (p. 15).

The Croatian nation did not exist in a true sense up until the time of Strossmayer and Rački, and afterwards, of Ante Starčević. Aware of this fact, and not ready to explicate it openly, Koščak tended to blur it with the standard Marxist phraseology of that time, saying, “It appears that in the phenomenon of a nation, the way it emerges on the historical stage, we can discern two main components: the objective one, i.e. a group of factors which give the character of a nation to a certain community of people, and the subjective one, i.e. the awareness of that community of its national affiliation, the main element of which is will directed at the future, a will not only for continuity, but development, as well. Or, to paraphrase Hegel, there is a nation of itself and a nation for itself” (p. 23). The hype over the Croatian state right was marketed in 1832 by Janko

Drašković, but for a long time it could not reach the consciousness of the people who were planned to be subjected to it, because the concept of the new-century Croatia entailed only three counties. The Illyrian idea was launched in order for the area to be expanded. “The Croats emphasized their state right even after the Illyrian Movement, and, in this sense, the members of the National Party, with its leaders Strossmayer and Rački, did not differentiate much from Starčević and Kvaternik. Even the unionists implemented an agreement based on these basic principles, according to which the Croats, as a historical people, had the most favourable state and legal status in the Monarchy, after the Germans and Hungarians” (p. 30).

Following the Romantic zeal of Croatian pamphleteer historiography, Koščak keenly moved the borders of the medieval Croatian state to the Drina and Neretva rivers, without having any real base in facts and documents, shortly presenting the ominous fate of the Croatian people on cultural boundaries and scenes of civilisation clashes. “The political crumble of the Croatian people among three empires – Venetian, Austrian and Ottoman – is joined by . . . ethnic non-compactness. Namely, Ottoman invasions threw a mass of immigrants on the Croatian land, immigrants who did not want to and could not be assimilated, because they already had a developed national consciousness. Thus, the coexistence of the Croats and Serbs appeared on a large part of Croatia, and this fact became one of the important factors of Croatian political orientation” (p. 33). The Croats had been crumbled, as people, politically, culturally and ethnically for centuries, which destroyed their national consciousness. Comprehensive de-Croatianisation was bound to leave profound consequences in the sphere of political thought and ideas. “Various conceptions emerged, conceptions which were broader and more comprehensive as the position of the Croatian people became more difficult, while they became narrower with the liberation and gathering of the Croatian people. The breadth of political conceptions was in a reversed proportion with the unity of Croatian people. This phenomenon could be graphically presented in the form of two mutually penetrated cones, with the peak of each cone being in the centre of the other cone's base. That is, when the entirety of the Croatian people was reduced to the very peak of the cone, then the base of the Slavic idea was the broadest” (p. 34).

Precisely in such a historical context, Koščak envisaged the political activities of Strossmayer and Rački, regarding Juraj Križanić, Pavao Ritter Vitezović and Ljudevit Gaj as their ideological predecessors. Juraj Križanić (1618-1683) believed that “. . . all Slavs were one people which should be united under the secular authority of the Moscow Emperor, and the spiritual authority of the Roman Pope, on the foundation of a common Slavic Esperanto contrived by Križanić himself. The problem of Croats and Serbs found, indeed, its simplest solution in this global conception. Thus, the clearest expression of rejection of their own national entity and language, which would characterize many Croats and movements in Croatia, was found in Križanić. Here was the division of the Croatian consciousness in its full, the division which saw the affirmation of Croatianhood in its negation. In his viewpoint, Križanić actually united two streams, which had already had a nice tradition up to then: Dalmatian Slavhood and anti-reformist interest for Orthodox countries and nations” (p. 34).

What Croatian historians regularly ignored is the fact that, with the Ottoman invasion, the ethnic structure of the population radically changed, not only in Dalmatia, but in Slavonia as well. The Latin people and the Croats of Primorje were leaving on a massive scale, and the empty area was inhabited by the Serbs. Catholicised Serbs were

gradually denied their national consciousness by the perfidious imposition of the attitude that only the Orthodox can have such national name, so a common Slavic name was introduced for the Catholics. Afterwards, the Council of Trent, held between 1545 and 1563, intensified its anti-Protestant politics, and, as Koščak further states, “. . . within the Catholic anti-reformation, several Croats (Temporica, Budinić, Komulović, Kašić, Glavinić, Alberti, Levaković) engaged in linguistically, culturally and religiously gathering and winning the Slavic people over, especially the Orthodox ones, by which the Roman Curia tried to compensate for the abandoning of Catholicism by the Germanic peoples. This Catholic line is visible in Križanić. Such a line would cause suspicion in Strossmayer’s Yugoslavhood much later. . . A fatal duplicity obviously existed there, as well with Križanić, who paid for his Slavic zeal with long imprisonment in Siberia, and Supilo with madness, which sometimes seemed to be the two-sidedness of Croatian fate. The West regarded Croats as Slavs, Russian agents, while Russia and Orthodox Slavhood regarded them as agents of Rome and Vienna” (p. 34-35).

Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652-1713) reduced Križanić’s common Slavic idea to the Yugoslav one, some time later. “What is significant for Vitezović is that he wanted to gather all South Slavs – as he constantly suggested to Emperor Leopold – on the basis of the Croatian state right, and this thought would be adopted by many other Croatian politics after his time. Unlike Križanić, who was of a strict anti-German orientation, and in accordance with his generation of the Zrinski-Frankopan revolt, Vitezović placed his plans under the wing of Habsburg absolutism” (p. 35). Ljudevit Gaj narrowed this concept even more, reducing it to Croats, Slovenes and Serbs, excluding the Bulgarians. According to him, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes form one nation “. . . which is, precisely for this reason, possible to unite on the basis of the Croatian state right, and within one wider trans-Danubian structure. . . Gaj’s historical merit consists of the fact that in Croatia Proper, which was the only one that possessed the attributes of statehood, in better words, in its kajkavian centre, comprising three counties: Zagreb, Varaždin and Križevci; he introduced the shtokavian dialect, which he did not take, and did not have to take, from Vuk Karadžić, because, even before his reform, the Croatian standard language outside the kajkavian area was shtokavian, which was based on the Dubrovnik literature and the written linguistic Dalmatian-Bosnian-Slavonian practice of firstly the Franciscans, with Friar Andrija Kačić at their head. Adopting the shtokavian dialect, Gaj laid a foundation for the cultural and political unity of the Croatian people” (p. 36). As Koščak notes, “. . . not even sober Starčević himself could, at times, escape this Romantic megalomania, shoving the entire Slavic South under the Croatian name, as Vitezović once had” (p. 37).

Disappointment with Serbian refusal to sacrifice their own national consciousness and nation-building ambitions for the love of Yugoslavhood, as well as the political orientation of official Belgrade, incited Strossmayer, in Koščak’s opinion, to make a huge turnaround in his political conception “. . . from Yugoslavhood to Croatianhood, from Balkan unity to a federative one, possibly to a triune Austria. An attempt to unite the Independent National Party and the Justice Party emerged on this line” (p. 38). An identical turnaround was made by Franjo Rački, as well. “Since the 1880s, their sole care was Croatia. Indeed, the unification of all South Slavs remained as some distant ideal both of them, and of those already rare Yugoslav-oriented individuals from within the Croatian intelligentsia; however, such Yugoslavhood was practically narrowed down to the region of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, inhabited by Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, and the region which was to gather and become independent on the basis of the Croatian

state right" (p. 39). In this sense, Rački did not hesitate to falsify some historical facts referring to their earlier activities and public opinions, ". . . correcting the past for the sake of the new political situation" (p. 39). Giving a very positive assessment, though, of the effects of previous, broader Slavic conceptions, conclusively with their developmental peak in the previous viewpoints of Strossmayer and Rački, Koščak concludes, "At that time, the Illyrian-Yugoslav idea had already performed most of its historical role in prevailing over the Croatian diaspora, and in the formation of the modern Croatian nation, having repressed provincial particularism and – thanks to the assistance provided by the Croatian historical right – opened a clear road towards the cultural and political unification of Croatia" (p. 39).

However, most Croatian politicians returned to the Yugoslav idea at the very end of the First World War, out of completely pragmatic reasons. At that time, according to their view, a new threat had appeared over the recently formed Croatian nation. "Danger then hung over a century-long, tiresome work, the danger that, with the dismemberment of the Monarchy, the Croatian nation would be dismembered among various countries. In opposition to that danger, the Yugoslav idea was revived again, whose main task was already quite concrete, i.e. to compose a political programme for the realisation of a Yugoslav community. It was obvious, in fact, that the Serbian state, governed by its Greater Serbian programme, already established in the *Načertanije*<sup>13</sup>, would extend to those lands which the Croatian state was claiming a right to. A plausible answer then could have been given only within the Yugoslav conception" (p. 39). Koščak considered Franjo Supilo, Stjepan Radić and Svetozar Pribićević the main protagonists of a renewed Yugoslav idea and the national-building project. "All three of them were experiencing personal dramas and turnarounds in the basic question: whether the Serbs and Croats are one people with two names, or were they two, though akin and brotherly, but still different peoples; in other words, in the question of an integral or federal, i.e. confederate Yugoslavhood. Yugoslavhood had been integral with the Croats in previous phases. But the generation which was to realise this long-dreamt of and prepared unity started to hesitate before the very goal, which is understandable, because only it could feel the full responsibility to the ideology which was to be implemented" (p. 40).

Košćak believed that Radić ". . . gave a democratic and national dimension to the process of forming the Croatian nation. He instilled the Croatian national consciousness, i.e. the will for their own national state – in accordance with the peasant ideology – grafted deeply into Croatian peasantry, in which only the *pravaši* had succeeded up to that point, but with a limited scope. Whereas the Croatian people of that time was comprised of eighty percent peasants, a large part of its final growing into a nation was the work of Radić. Thus, during the last four centuries, Slavhood – the Illyrian Movement – Yugoslavhood completed its task of taking prevalence in the inner Croatian diaspora, and the formation of a modern Croatian nation. Someone might argue that we needed such a prosthesis in order to stand on our feet again. It might be, but the historian is not there to regret, but to state the facts and, if possible, explain them. The Slavic idea, for the Croats, was an expression of their geopolitical position between victorious imperialistic powers, and likewise a severe dismemberment of their national entity in cultural, political and ethnical terms. It emerged as the consequence of losing national consciousness in entire regions of a once Croatian state, and mutual alienation. This conception was the expression of

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<sup>13</sup> *Draft Plan* – the foreign policy plan of Serbia in 1844

weakness and a remedy, which was sometimes worse than the illness itself, because it threatened to completely negate Croatian self-importance, and to turn into some “wider” and “more universal” framework. Yet, the continuity of Croatian sovereignty, which was preserved despite everything during all the historical storms, and the healthy strength of the Croatian people managed to overcome all the dangers that such a conception carried with itself. In a dialectical fight with it, the Croatian people formed the Croatian nation” (p. 42).

#### **d) Mirjana Gross on Rački’s Basic Motivation**

Mirjana Gross agreed that the Illyrian Movement and Yugoslavhood considerably contributed to the formation of the Croatian nation, and formulated this in the following way: “The ideologies of national integration for the Croats have been an important historical strength for the constitution of the Croatian nation, from the time and ideology of the Illyrian Movement until the time between the Wars and the ideology of the peasant movement. The specific characteristic of the integration of the Croatian nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is that Yugoslavhood (with exclusive Croatian nationalism) appeared as a nationally integrating ideology in various forms, in accordance with the levels of historical and social development, social environment, possibilities and achievements of political, cultural and economic action, and the role of foreign influences” (Mirjana Gross: *O Ideološkom Sustavu Franje Račkoga (On the Ideological System of Franjo Rački – Papers and Proceedings of the Department of Historical Sciences of the Institute of Research, The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, Book 9, Zagreb 1979, p. 5)*. For Gross, there is no question that Rački, ideologically like-minded to Strossmayer, was honestly devoted to the idea of complete Slavic unity and integral Yugoslavhood, but it was implied that this would be achieved, above all, by the unification of the Western and Eastern churches, i.e. the subordination of the Eastern to the Western one through the so-called “Uniate”, which implied the supremacy of the Pope and preservation of the traditional Orthodox rite. “Aspirations for the unification of the Eastern and Western churches, in the ideological system of Rački, have the function of connecting his basic religious beliefs with the actual situation, above all, in Croatian and Serbian regions. The unification of the churches, he thought, would eliminate the grounds for the existing antagonism between Croats and Serbs, and would create the conditions for bringing his vision to life” (p. 10).

The problem mainly appeared when the Serbs decidedly refused the Uniate, jealously keeping complete autonomy and independence of their national church, even if it was divided into several organisational units at the time. Furthermore, they did not accept abandoning their national name for the sake of the Illyrian or Yugoslav one. Regarding this, Gross says, “Like the former Illyrians, who did not emphasize the Croatian ‘tribal’ name during the Movement, Rački was certain that the Serbians’ refusal of the Illyrian name, i.e. the Yugoslav name, which would not erase the special name and distinctiveness of the Croats and Serbs, but would represent their ‘spiritual’ community, was the reason for the greater emphasis of the Croatian name with the Croats. The new quality of Rački’s ideology, with regard to the Illyrian Movement, lies in the emphasis of Croatianhood and the definition of its relation towards Yugoslavhood” (p. 18).

In several of his individual, written and oral expressions, Rački let it be known that “. . . the spiritual and literary unity of the Croats was his ‘categorical imperative’. He often pointed out that the Yugoslav ‘idea’ had resurrected the Croatian people, that the

Yugoslav Academy, though, had the task to foster science in the entire Yugoslav south, but that it served, above all, the Croatian people and the Croatian country” (p. 18). The great idea of unification had its basic goal of achieving the unification of the small – to bring Slavonians and Dalmatians to the Croats, and whatever might be achieved afterwards. “From the logic of their estimates of the fundamental courses of history, justification for Rački’s belief and actual activity clearly emerges – this being to first conquer Croatian ‘dualism’, i.e. to create the ‘spiritual unity’ of the Croatian people and renew its statehood by uniting northern Croatia and Dalmatia. Therefore, the Yugoslav ideology of Rački is the Croatian ideology of national integration” (p. 21). Based on the animosity Rački showed towards the reservations that the Dalmatian members of the National Party had towards the Croatian national name, Gross reached a conclusion concerning his basic ideological motivation. This motivation “. . . was comprised of encouraging cultural and political action for the ‘spiritual unity’ of Croatian nation, and its state framework, which was necessary for achieving this goal” (p. 24).

### e) Croatian Interests Under the Veneer of Yugoslavhood

Rački’s words were regularly full of Yugoslavhood, Serbian-Croatian harmony and unity, but, gradually, Croatian megalomaniacal pretensions began emerging from him. They were continually directed at the Slavonians and Dalmatians, but often at Bosnia, too. Thus, in his essay *The Territorial Scope of the Croatian State for Future Dynasties*, he writes, “The Croats and Serbs, one people according to their blood and language, established two different states, later joined by Bosnia, which was once Croatian” (Strossmayer and Rački: *Political Documents*, Znanje, Zagreb, 1971, p. 292). Never mind not having a single piece of evidence that Bosnia indeed used to be Croatian, ignoring Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who explicitly called it Serbian; or even the earlier Einhard, from whose documents we can implicitly make conclusions about its Serbian character, with regard to the fact that Ljudevit Posavski defected to the Serbs facing the Frankish invasion. He directly forged Porphyrogenitus, while paraphrasing his words that the Croats occupied “. . . Dalmatia, Illyricum, and Pannonia, or, as he would sometimes say, the entire Dalmatia in the broadest sense of the word, at the time of Iraclios” (p. 294). Porphyrogenitus neither said “entire Dalmatia”, nor mentioned that Dalmatia in the broadest sense of the word was in question, but it is obvious that he spoke of Byzantine Dalmatia of that time, reduced to urban coastal areas between the rivers Krka and Cetina. Liburnia was northward, Nerenta principedom southward, and Croatia eastward.

Additionally attributing to Porphyrogenitus of having marked Dalmatia, Illyricum and Pannonia as the habitat of newly settled Croats, Rački searched for the broadest scope of these geographic terms, and, therefore, reached a conclusion which stated that “. . . in geographic science, Dalmatia or Illyricum and Transsavian Pannonia would encompass the land between the Adriatic Sea, the Julian Alps and the rivers Danube, Drava, Drim and Bojana” (p. 295). With a highly loose interpretation of Porphyrogenitus’s description, Rački concluded: “The newly established Croatia spread from Bar or the river of Bojana, where it relied on the authority of Drač, up to the Danube and Julian Alps on one side, and the Adriatic Sea and the river Drina, on the other” (p. 298). He was not concerned at all about thereby encompassing literally all the countries which Porphyrogenitus had considered explicitly Serbian. He could easily repeat his thesis here that the Serbs and Croats are one people, therefore everything originally



Serbian is also Croatian. Rački leisurely called the Pannonian Slavs Croats, although they spoke a totally different language from the Croats, allowing for a mixture of Croats and Slovenes there. “We deem that the Slovene people mixed with Croats in Transsavian Croatia deeper eastward than now. In these areas of the Croatian country, in the eastern part of Carinthia of that time, the Croatian people intertwined with the Slovene people. Thus, Croats, whose settlements among the related Slovenes were often mentioned in documents of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century, settled next to the Mura River, around Luban (Leoben in Styria). Conversely, the inhabitants of the areas of today’s Carniola (Kranjska) below the Krka River, near Metlika on the border of the Kingdom of Croatia, who the new philology named Slovenes, are called White Croats, thus indicating their centuries-long connection with their related brothers across the Kupa River, from whom they were separated by an impending foreign hand” (p. 301).

Even if we accept Rački’s statement that chakavians and kajkavians were native Croats, how could be it at all possible to place the shtokavians there, if the philology had long since been quite clear about the matter that shtokavian belonged to the East Slavic language group and that chakavian and kajkavian belonged to the West Slavic one? Rački considered the Serbian problem in the following manner based on Porphyrogenitus’s data: “He especially claimed that the inhabitants of Nerenta, Zachlunia (Zahumlje), Travunia (Travunija) and Doclea (Duklja) were Serbs. In the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, these four counties were set, according to Constantine, between the Cetina River and Bar, because Nerenta lay between the Cetina and Neretva River, and the lowest of them, Doclea (Duklja), bordered the Greek area of Drač near Bar. Their inner borders were less known to Constantine; he only noted that Doclea, Travunia and the eastern part of Zachlunia in the mountains referred to a large Serbian county. These four counties, which used to be inhabited by Serbian people, encompassed the south part of old Dalmatia; therefore, the entire Dalmatia, as we gathered here above, was not inhabited by Croatian people, but only its northern part between the rivers Raša and Cetina; and the southern part, i.e. between the rivers Cetina and Bojana, was inhabited by Serbian people immediately at the beginning. Was not Constantine inconsistent here? The Croatian and Serbian peoples originate from one original Subcarpathian homeland; they settled in the Thrace-Illyrian peninsula next to each other, they speak the same language, have the same customs and the same nature. This similarity in everything characteristic of a people is excessively great now, and once used to be even greater. Therefore, it is no wonder that these two peoples were confused and regarded as one by ancient writers. However, since the Croats and Serbs appeared on the historical stage under these two different names, and had separate and different pasts as two politically different peoples, no one objected to our efforts to differentiate them geographically too” (p. 303-304).

Rački advances new speculations here, which would not solve the problem, but would additionally disguise it. “He who has at all studied Constantine would not be of two minds about the fact that the migration of the Croatian people was far better known to him than the migration of the Serbian people. According to his report, the Croatian people first came to the south, defeated the powerful Eurasian Avars in battle and inhabited Dalmatia with Illyricum and Pannonia. The Serbian people came after the Croatians, and first obtained the region of Thessalonica from Emperor Iraclios. . . However, within a short time, the Serbs wanted to return to their Subcarpathian homeland. But, having passed over the Danube, they felt regret, and through the

Belgrade praetor, they went unto Iraclios again so that he would give them their land, and he indeed gave them Serbia, Nerenta, Zachlunia (Zahumlje), Travunia (Travunija) and Doclea (Duklja). What is true in this tale of Constantine's is that the Croats were divided in ancient Illyricum, as their geographical position testifies. However, obviously, what reeks of fable is that Constantine stated that the Serbian people first settled in the region of Thessalonica, from where they afterwards travelled to the Danube, then settled amid the river of Cetina and Bar, and in Serbia. Such a migration befits a bunch of shepherd, but not such a people as the Serbians. So how can we present it crammed in a small province of Thessalonica; how could that small nation have left those vast provinces Constantine subjected to them somewhere else?! It can be seen from all this that the geographic ratio of the Croatian people to the Serbian people was not clearly known to Constantine, just like he was generally a mediocre geographer and thus needs to be checked in this field. He often confused periods of time. Could he not wrench that part of Dalmatia from the Croats – the part lying between the river of Neretva and Bar, which, according to the reports from which he drew his information on the Serbian state, depended politically on Serbia – in an ethnographic sense as well? Having heard that the mentioned southern part of Dalmatia was once (or for him) dependent on the authority of the great Serbian *zhupans*, was not he misled by it, and did he not think that its people were of Serbian origin having settled there in the time of Iroclius? These doubts that arise in us are not unfounded, but emerge from the above mentioned contradictions” (p. 304-305).

Underrating Einhard and unfoundedly construing a claim that the principedom of Hum under Mihailo Višević represented Croatian land, putting forth the fact that Mihailo attended the Assembly in Split in 924 as proof, Rački thus continues, “It is present in the consciousness of the entire population between the rivers of Cetina and Bojana , from an earlier time up to today, that they were the flesh and blood of the Croatian people and that the language they spoke was Croatian; this consciousness was closely related to the ancient history of Croatian people” (p. 307-308). He is referring here to things said by Priest Dukljanin and his phantasmagoria about Red Croatia in order to confirm that the original southern Croatian state borders were on the river of Bojana, not Cetina. However, in the brochure *Scriptores Rerum Croaticarum Facing the 12<sup>th</sup> Century* (Zagreb, 1880), Rački himself absolutely denies any credibility of Priest Dukljanin's document regarding Croatian history. Mentioning the Dukljanin's chronicle and its Croatian edition, Rački says, “I have already explained elsewhere the value this document has for our history. The document has only historical-literary value as long as both copies match; what the Croatian edition added to Zvonimir is interesting only as far it concerns the tradition among the people. As Priest Dukljanin gets to the end, it has some value for the geography and history of Duklja or Zeta and their neighbouring areas, but none for Croatian history” (p. 70).

Quoting the charter of Prince Trpimir dated 852 and the information from it that almost the entire Croatia belonged to the Metropolitanate of Salona, Rački concluded that Croatia encompassed the entire Metropolitanate of Salona using an alternate thesis. “Hence it follows that some part of the Croatian land was outside of the Metropolitanate of Salona at the time, which thus certainly lay within the political borders of Croatia; however, these borders were wider than the borders of the Metropolitanate of Salona, although it encompassed almost the entire Croatia. This other church, to which one part, though smaller, of the Croatian country was also subordinated to, was undoubtedly the Patriarchate of Aquileia, which possessed, in its spiritual authority, Istria, Noricum and a

part of Pannonia up to the upper part of the Drava River. Yet, what also emerges from the above mentioned statement is that the Metropolitanate of Salona, as we noticed, lay within the Croatian country; and, since all of Bosnia belonged to the Metropolitanate of Salona, it was also an integral part of Croatia, which thus spread eastward up to the Drina River. This river, which represented the eastern border of ancient Dalmatia, was the eastern border of Croatia, as well. The conclusion that Bosnia was an integral part of Croatia can be drawn from the fact that Einhard, as we have seen, talked of the Serbs as of a people with whom his countrymen did not have any contact and who he knew very little about from narratives; then, from the fact that the Croats and Bulgarians, who ruled the areas of the rivers Timok, Morava and Lower Danube, waged a war, without mentioning the Serbs as a people who inhabited the area between Croatia and Bulgaria” (p. 309-310; *Political Documents*).

The only conclusion which can be drawn from these processed data is that the borders of the Metropolitanate of Salona in the 9<sup>th</sup> century were not identical with any state borders, and that, during the war clash of the Croatian King Tomislav, Serbia simply was not free, but under Bulgarian rule. Placing the Serbs to the east and south of the Drina River, and unfoundedly claiming that Ras was the core of the ancient Serbian state up to the Nemanjić's, Rački displays that his pseudo-historiographical engineering had no concerns about the truth and academic ethics. Referring to the Archdeacon Toma, for who there is indeed no foundation for such a claim, Rački repeated the assertion that Croatian kings ruled “. . . from the Adriatic sea to the rivers Drina and Danube, from the Neretva River to the rivers of Drava and Mura and Carinthia on one side, and up to inner Istria on the other. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Kingdom of Croatia covered – apart from today's Croatia and Slavonia – Dalmatia too, at least up to the Neretva River; the southern, Slavic part of Styria; southern Carniola; a village of White Croats; and a greater part of Istria. In its prime, the Kingdom of Croatia embraced virtually the entire Croatian nation; just a small part of it in the south started to crystallise politically around Dubrovnik and Duklja, thus inciting the Republic of Dubrovnik and Princedom of Zeta. The Croatian nation lays claim before Europe to all these countries that we have described in that chapter, such as any people do to their own: a claim according to history, nationality, ancient annals and brotherly blood” (p. 326).

To avoid any possible confusion with what Rački was implying by that, he expressed his crucial idea even more resolutely afterwards: “The Croatian nation has the same conditions of territorial acquisition – which other European nations possessed having conquered countries through battle and heroism during the migrations of nations – for the legal and unexpired claim of ownership to the whole region from the Bojana River to the rivers of Drina and Danube” (p. 327). Furthermore, Rački claimed that the Vatican had guaranteed such a right of territorial ownership to the Croatian people. “In Christian Europe, only a nation who becomes a member of the Church through the cross can become a member of state family. This Church, however, has not only embraced the Croatian nation, but it has been taken it under its wing and special protection by St. Peter and St. Paul, i.e. the Holy Apostolic See, concluding a bilateral mutual agreement with the Croatian people, by which the Croats were obliged not to attack its neighbours with weapon, but only to defend their country; the Holy See, though, committed to be the enemy to the enemies of the Croatian nation, or in other words, it guaranteed the Croatian nation, by its apostolic authority, the entirety of its state. Through this right of ownership of the above mentioned lands, based on the just and legal condition of possession, the

Croatian nation has gained some greater guarantee and holy anointment in the eyes of Europe” (p. 327-328).

### **f) Jovan Radonić’s Criticism of the Historiographical Works of Franjo Rački**

Although most Serbian intellectuals, preoccupied with Yugoslav idealism and romantically ready to make constant concessions to the Croatian intellectuals, avoided dealing with the work of Strossmayer and Rački in accordance with the basic principles of scientific criticism, there were those with a more sober approach. Jovan Radonić, a prominent historian, was one of them, and in the introduction to Rački’s book, *The Struggle of the South Slavs for National Independence – The Bogomils and Patarenes* (Serbian Royal Academy, Belgrade, 1931), he dealt with the methodological flaws of the work of the undoubtedly leading Croatian historiographer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Noting that Rački’s studies had been written “in difficult style and indigestible language, thus making a difficult read”, Radonić said for the book *Struggle of South Slavs* that “its author wanted to interpret and explain everything.” Very often, he tended to reconstruct events, even without any historical data; and even if there were some, they were completely unreliable and sometimes tendentious. Hence, in this study of Rački, the work of certain figures from the remote past are often ascribed with such motives, that could not at all have been the guiding ones at that time (p. iv-v).

Rački transcended the present, his contemporariness, into the remote past, giving completely a different sense to historical events and instrumentalising history with his tendentious approach and interpretation for the purposes and goals of current politics. “Modern ideas and feelings of nationalism could not have governed the work of King Tomislav, King Petar Krešimir, Emperor Samuel, Stefan Vojislav, King Mihailo and his son Bodin. Drawing up the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century, Rački, furthermore, was not able to escape the political circumstances of the time he lived in. Echoes of the political argument between the Croats and Hungarians of the time regarding the national and legal position of Croatia towards Hungary can be discerned, here and there, in the illustration of Croatian-Hungarian relationship at the break of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, when Croatia came into close connection with the kingdom of Hungary, and in the representation of the relationship between Transsavian and Coastal Croatia. Although, after fourteen years, Rački, as a historian, had left behind the writer of *Excerpts from the Croatian State Right at the Time of the National Dynasty* (Vienna, 1861), there was a political tone present more often, though more discreet, in Rački’s *Borba*” (p. v-vi).

Radonić in detail refuted Rački’s opinion that Samuel was a Bulgarian emperor, and that Macedonia was Western Bulgaria; he presented an array of inaccuracies that the Croatian historiographer had used. With regard to early Croatian history, Radonić criticized an unproved viewpoint of Franjo Rački and Ferdo Šišić about the rule of King Tomislav. “Their deduction about the rule of King Tomislav and the scope of his country can be correct only if the documents of Church assemblies in Split from 925 to 928 are authentic and not forged or planted, as was believed by the critical writers Lučić and Jireček, among others. An excellent historian of law, Dr. Marko Kostrančić, appeared to share their suspicion (*History of the Croatian Right*, 128-130). Rački’s opinion that Zadar with Byzantine Dalmatia came under the authority of Croatian King Krešimir I is obsolete. According to Rački’s inventiveness, this Krešimir took advantage of the fight of

Emperor Samuel of Macedonia with the Byzantine Empire, occupying Dalmatia. There is really no confirmation for this, said Rački, but this fact was allegedly confirmed by later events. However, in his *History of the Croats*, on pages 446-7, Šišić said that Mihailo Krešimir II (Krešimir I ruled from 935 to 945), who died in 969, only succeeded to annex Bosnia to Croatia, and managed just to renew good relations with the Dalmatian towns. Regarding Bosnia, Šišić's opinion was not very possible either. He referred to the much later Priest Dukljanin. . . who was 'undoubtedly a reliable source at times' for this period of time" (p. viii-ix).

Stating that not even Rački's genealogy of Croatian rulers was true, that Rački regarded two charters of a Bulgarian fugitive Pinci dated 994 and 1000 as correct, although it was proved without a doubt that these were clumsy forgeries from the 15<sup>th</sup> century; Radonić particularly insisted on the fact that Rački completely untruthfully claimed that Cedrenus ". . . was a Croatian aristocrat in Srem in the first quarter of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, having concluding that the area between the Sava and Danube River was in the hands of the Croatian king until 1019. Later Croatian historians, Smičiklas and Klaić, also believed that this Sermo was a ban in Srem and a subject of the Croatian king. In his later study *Croatia Before the 12<sup>th</sup> Century*. . . Rački abandoned this opinion of his, pronouncing this Sermo a Bulgarian aristocrat in Srem. This was the opinion of Šišić, as well, who collected all the data and scientific literature on Sermo in his *History* on page 482, reference 36" (p. ix).

Using a document of Priest Dukljanin, and being aware if its utter unreliability, Rački regarded even Vojislav, the ruler of Duklja, as Stjepan Dobroslav Vojislav, although Dobroslav was a son of Dragomir. "Prone to thinking and reconstruction of events even when there was no data at all, Rački claimed that there was a connection between the uprising of Peter Delyan and the uprising of Stefan Vojislav. He even believed that they had personally known each other in Constantinople" (p. x). What is extremely problematic is that Rački based his documents on the highly unreliable data of Deacon Ivan from Gorica, who was ". . . not only a later writer of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but one who willingly inverted events, as was proved by Klaić in 1874 in his study on Deacon Ivan. . . The attempt by a Croatian historian Milan Šufraj to rehabilitate Ivan from Gorica was not successful, according to Šišić. . . But Rački . . . still remained of the opinion that Deacon Ivan was a reliable source even for earlier periods than that in which he lived. It is no wonder that, on page 142, Rački said that Croatian King Krešimir II, or even better III, obtained Slavonia between the Sava River and the Danube River from the Hungarian King St. Stephen in 1030 as a reward for assisting the Hungarian king in his fight with the German ruler, Conrad II. He took this information from Ivan from Gorica, who was the first to try to elucidate the relation of Slavonia towards Hungary during the time of the Croatian national dynasty" (p. x-xi).

Rački regarded this fabricated data as truthful and reliable in order to support a constructed thesis on the closeness of Slavonia – which he called Transsavian Croatia – and Croatia, without any foundation in facts. "Rački cared a lot about proving that the Croatian kings had been the governors of the Dalmatian coastal towns for a long time" (p. xi). He referred to a document of a Venetian chronicler from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Andrea Dandolo, who wrote that at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a Croatian king Krešimir II or III had agitated Dalmatian towns, above all Zadar. "Apart from the indefinite record of the later Dandolo, there is no other proof for such a claim. However, the careful and critical Šišić did not have the heart to leave this information from Dandolo from the first

**Comment [Z27]:** Translator's note. The name and the spelling could not be confirmed.

half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century unused, but, therefore, he did not maintain categorically, as Rački had, that Krešimir III conquered Dalmatia at the beginning of the second decade. . . . However, Šišić, like Rački, on the basis of the vague and deformed records by Lupo Protospatar and the Bari annals on the deportation of a patrician Cismiga or Kosmica (allegedly corrupted by Krešimir) to Constantinople, believed that Krešimir III had attacked the Dalmatian coastal towns after 1024, which caused the campaign of a Byzantine fleet under the command of the strategist Longobardije Bugijjan – or better Bojoan. But, after all, Šišić too (*History*, 490) said that Krešimir III never managed to have the Dalmatian towns permanently subordinated to his power” (p. xii).

On the basis of mere speculations, Rački analyzes the rule of Croatian King Stjepan, son of Krešimir III Suronja, for whom he claimed to have attacked Zadar together with Hungarian King Petar Mlečić. Šišić agreed with this, claiming that on that occasion, Zadar fell, but that it was soon returned to Byzantine rule. “But, for all our will, we cannot agree with Šišić that the joint campaign of Croatian King Stjepan I and Hungarian King Petar Mlečić undoubtedly testifies that the Croatian kingdom bordered with Hungary, and that, therefore, the vast territory between the Sava River and the Drava River was under the control of Croatian King Stjepan I” (p. xiii). Due to the claims of Franjo Rački that Petar Krešimir IV had managed to strengthen his power in Dalmatia because of Byzantine weakness, Radonić refers to his own study in which it was proven that the Dalmatian towns remained under Byzantine control up to the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. “I remain of that opinion today, and, regarding the 11<sup>th</sup> century, I believe that Byzantine emperors could have, perhaps, factually ceded the Dalmatian towns to Petar Krešimir IV, but that they formally remained governors of those towns. What speaks in favour of this is the fact that the Byzantine emperor, apart from the Croatian king, was mentioned in the documents of the Dalmatian coastal towns, and even in a charter from 1070 in the Croatian town Nin!” (p. xiii-xiv). Petar’s predecessors certainly had less influence in those towns, but his power was also more symbolic than effective. This issue is still insufficiently researched, but Radonić also notes here “. . . that Rački ascribed such ideas to Petar Krešimir IV, which he could not have had, like the other poorly educated rulers of that time” (p. xiv).

Analyzing the period of rule of King Zvonimir, Rački, as Radonić correctly notes, “did not state any direct evidence” for his claim that Pope Gregory VII had influenced “. . . the election of Zvonimir as king through the legate Gerard, in order to have Croatia among his allies against the German emperor Heinrich IV” (p. xv). Since Šišić engaged in these problems even more intensively, Radonić again criticizes his viewpoint, saying that “. . . it was not sufficient to refer to Vienna Illuminated Chronicle from the second part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century as evidence for the fact that Zvonimir, still a ban in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century during the rule of Petar Krešimir IV, governed the land between the Sava River and the Drava River. Furthermore, I would say that Šišić’s assumption is too bold – that Zvonimir, as a ban, went from Slavonia against King Slavac, intending to help the campaign of the Norman Prince Amiko from the land. We think that more powerful pieces of evidence are needed for the claim that Pope Gregory VII mediated in Constantinople with Emperor Mihailo VII for Dalmatia to be annexed to Croatia. The claim that King Zvonimir entered into a political alliance with Pope Gregory VII, which did not make Croatia subordinate to the Pope, should be supported more strongly” (p. xv).

Jovan Radonić made more serious critical remarks with regard to a study of Franjo Rački's on the Bogomils. Historical documents, particularly papal letters and other documents in the Latin language, which Rački used plentifully, “. . . originated from religious opponents – from the Roman Catholics; therefore, their statements have to be regarded with the greatest attention and criticism all the more, for the conclusions that Rački made as an ardent and learned Roman Catholic could not have originated from domestic sources. Rački, though, endeavoured to justify the Roman Catholic Church for using all available means to suppress heresy, but yet, despite his best will, he was not able to always remain objective in the evaluation of the sources and in the interpretation of the attitudes of the so-called Bosnian Patarenes towards the Roman Curia” (p. xxiv). Rački, for instance, completely made up the claim that the Patarenes spread across Slavonia, “. . . which had allegedly come under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nin at one point, during the rule of the national dynasty” (p. xxiv-xxv). In historical science, the problem of the Bosnian Bogomils has not been completely solved, but Rački's contribution is certainly not to be underestimated. Radonić especially drew attention to the fact that Rački persistently advocated for the thesis that the Bogomils were not a sect “. . . that was created by the separation of the Orthodox Church from the Roman Catholic one. This was a sect whose roots were in dualism and pagan theosophy. Namely, it was outside of Christianity, but it accepted Christian dogma as long as it did not openly oppose the dualistic view” (p. xxix).

### **g) Franjo Rački's Treatises Under a Thorough Investigation by Vaso Glušac**

Of the ample literature on this subject, Radonić singled out the book *The Medieval Bosnian Church* by Vaso Glušac, an author who maintained a completely opposite opinion from that of Rački's. „Dr. Glušac subjected Rački's treatise on the Bogomils to a detailed criticism. He pointed out that, first of all, Rački was a Roman Catholic priest who could not be objective towards Latin sources, written by Catholic preachers and prosecutors of heresy. In the opinion of Dr. Glušac, papal inquisitors planted dogmatic beliefs of true heretics into the 'Bosnian Church'; therefore, their documents regarding the 'Bosnian Church' were completely untrue. Based on domestic sources, Dr. Glušac concluded that all Bosnian rulers, all land owners, big and small, and the entire people were supporters of the so-called 'Bosnian Church' during the entire Middle Ages, but that the Bosnian Church was Orthodox in its dogmatic belief” (p. xxxiii).

A particularly great dispute on this subject arose due to the discovery of an original document, the last will of a guest of Radin, which was published by Ćiro Truhelka with his own comments and tendentious interpretation. Opposing Truhelka, who maintained that this will was also proof that “Bosnian Church” was patarian, Dr. Glušac claimed that the will of Radin's guest was written in a purely Orthodox tenor. Tombstones and churches, according to Glušac, also told that the Bosnian Church was Orthodox, and, after the collapse of the state, it blended with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Furthermore, Glušac denies that the followers of the Bosnian Church converted to Islam. Such a conversion had never been recorded, and if it existed, both Orthodox and Catholics converted to Islam, and in a small number. As for the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they were not indigenous inhabitants, but largely settlers from other provinces: mostly officers from Turkey and muhajirs from Hungary, Slavonia, Dalmatia,

Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. Migrations of Bosnians and Herzegovinians to Dalmatia and Croatia from the 15<sup>th</sup> century on speak, in the opinion of Glušac, in support of his opinion that the so-called Bosnian Patarenes were Orthodox. . . Glušac's opinion cannot be easily rejected. There are details which speak in favour of his thesis, but there are those which refute it. If the Bosnian Patarenes were Orthodox, how can it be explained that Serbian sources cursed them and spoke of their conversion to Orthodoxy...? The entire Bogomilism in Bosnia has not yet been elucidated. Further and more thorough studies, perhaps new possible discoveries, shall illuminate this complex but very significant issue" (p. xxxiv).

### **h) The Pattern of Franjo Rački's Methodological Procedure**

Franjo Rački was not such an unscrupulous forger of historical facts as was, for example, Dominik Mandić. Where the facts were doubtless and documented, he did not refute them violently; but in all cases lacking credible and verified historical evidence on certain facts, he indulged in fantasy and tirelessly concocted things. We can see this in the book on the South Slavs and their struggle for state independence. Rački was not able to publicly deny the Serbian character of Zachlunia (Zahumlje), Travunia (Travunija), Doclea (Duklja) and the principedom of Nerenta, but he tried to neutralize it by stating that the first three of them were under the supreme authority of a Serbian grand zhupan, not mentioning the fourth one. He found a completely unfounded formulation for Bosnia, stating that it alternated between being Serbian and Croatian. All this can be clearly seen in the next excerpt: "Already by the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, there were four counties or principedoms, named Serbia, Zachlunia, Travunia and Doclea<sup>14</sup>, being in a very loose alliance, and the zhupans of the three last mentioned recognized the supreme authority of the Serbian grand zhupan. These counties mainly covered the area between the Ibar River and the Adriatic Sea, whose shores above Bar up to the Cetina River were in their possession. Northward, this alliance of counties spread to the Sava River, but in such a way that the province around the Bosnia River was sometimes Serbian and sometimes Croatian. But this alliance already started to weaken by the first half of the 10th century: Zachlunia separated first, being that its Zhupan Mihailo was an enemy of Byzantine politics; he kept company with Croatian King Tomislav, he was close with Bulgarian Emperor Simeon, and had already turned his back to the Serbian Grand Zhupan Petar, who was a loyal vassal of the Constantinople court" (p. 7).

Rački did not try anywhere in his writings to explain how Zachlumian Prince Mihailo Višević and Croatian King Tomislav "kept company", but he brought out this phrase for whoever would swallow it. The message is clear: "two Croats" kept company, and the fact that Zachlunia was under the control of the central Serbian ruler was just a matter of current political circumstances. This is precisely the pattern of Franjo Rački's methodological procedure and his authoritative contribution to Croatian pamphleteer historiography. On the one hand, he doubtlessly invested huge intellectual efforts and engaged in difficult, toilsome and exhaustive scientific-historiographical work; on the other hand, he used every occasion to give vent to his fundamental political goal, not stopping at ultimate pretentiousness and tendentiousness of intellectual statements.

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<sup>14</sup> Srbska, Zahumska, Trebinjska and Dukljanska – these are older versions of the names of these regions, which differ from the modern Serbian versions.



Although he was aware of the complete unreliability of Priest Dukljanin's documents, he constantly referred to them, disguising them with the indefinite title of "domestic chronicles" or "by a domestic chronicler", which can be realized in the continuing part of this excerpt: "This alliance broke up when Serbia came into power of the Eastern Greek empire with Bulgaria in 971. The Serbian grand zhupan took refuge with the Travunian zhupan; a part of the Raša River was liberated with his help, but neither that nor the future circumstances were favourable for the resurrection of that alliance and for the Serbian grand zhupan to be in the leading position. This was because the second Bulgarian empire encompassed all eastern and south-western parts of the Serbian county. Only the area around the Raša River remained under the control of its zhupan, which, being pressed between the powerful Bulgaria and the greater counties of Doclea, Zachlunia and Travunia, did not have much influence on the destiny of the Serbian people. A domestic chronicler placed Raška under the supreme rule of the Travunian county" (p. 7).

Although the abundance of historical evidence prevented Rački from denying the Serbian ethnical character of Doclea, he gave vent to his wishes with parallel treatment of the terms "Serbian" and "Doclean". In this sense, he formulated the following: "Now, instead of a darkened Serbian County, Doclea County gained repute... or Zeta with Podgorje. It mainly encompassed the area of the Zeta River and the Morača River: its centre was on Lake Skadar, and it bordered in the south with the Byzantine province of Drač, where the neighbouring towns Bar, Lješ and Olgun were settled, and with the Bulgarian state at the middle Drin on the other side. The coastal area from the Bay of Kotor to Bar, and possibly to the Bojana River apart from this town, also belonged to Duklja or Zeta. What was referred to in domestic annals as Zeta in the north-west direction were the ancient Travunia and Zachlunia counties, which reached to the other side of the Neretva, along the sea from the Bay of Kotor to the Pelješac Peninsula, and thence eastward to the inner land. This can be concluded even stronger; according to *zhupas* (parishes) which are listed there, we would say it stretched to the upper Drina. These two counties, Travunia and Zachlunia, were then often allied under one state authority, as it was under Zhupan Dragomir at the end of the 10th century" (p. 7-8.).

As much as he was careful here regarding the issue of Neretva, Bosnia, Slavonia and Srem, Rački became unscrupulous. "Everything which was left behind these Serbian counties in the north-western part of the Balkan Peninsula," he continues in his presentation, "was an integral part of the Croatian state. The core of the Croatian kingdom now also represented the *zhupas* (parishes), which were mentioned in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and which spread from the Cetina River to the Kupa River on one side, and from Vrbas to the sea on the other. This ancient core of the Croatian state with time attracted other neighbouring areas, among which a distinct life had been developed earlier. Already by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, we come across the parish of Neretva, which spread below the Cetina River to the Neretva River, along the sea and to the inner land toward the Danube, in close relation with the Croatian country; and some time later, the Croatian *zhupa* (parish) 'Morska' appeared there. Thus, the Croatian kingdom became an immediate neighbour to the Travunian and Zachlumian counties in the south. In the east, next to the Vrbas, the Croatian state annexed Bosnia from Krešimir, a predecessor of Držislav. This information from a domestic chronicler coincides with the historical information of that time, known from other circumstances; for, Bosnia, which was mentioned in close relation with Serbia, did not come into any contact with Serbia, since it

submitted, first in 971, to Byzantine control and was then weakened by Bulgaria. The Croatian state used this favourable circumstance to extend its borders over the Vrbas into the area of the Bosnia River, and thus became a neighbour to the Bulgarian state. Croatia bordered with Bulgaria also at the confluence of the Sava River, while Belgrade was Bulgarian, as mentioned before, and Srem was Croatian. The land between the Drava River and the Sava River was under Croatian control at least from the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, although Croatian national interests and Croatian state interests often clashed there in the first half of the next century. The north-western borders of the Croatian state, in Upper Podravina and Posavina, shall become clear to us when we engage in the relation of the Croatian state towards Germany. These were the features of the states of these three South Slavic tribes at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and these were their approximate borders. The Croatian kingdom had already merged these two autonomous states, Dalmatia and Pannonia, into a whole, with the latter being under German control a century before; and, making use of the break-up of the Serbian alliance, it expanded its borders further eastward. The Serbian people did not manage to create such a country at that time; thus, breaking up the already fragile connections between once autonomous counties, they exposed themselves to death, and their land was adopted here and there by the Bulgarian or Croatian countries” (p. 8-9).

On top of all his tendentiousness, Rački uses the term “Serbian lands” in several places, including Raška, Zeta, Hum and Travunia by that term, but treating Bosnia as a territory where Serbian-Croatian interest were intertwined, while not mentioning the ethnical character of the principedom of Neretna, insisting that it had become a part of Croatia very early in time. In his study *The Bogomils and Patarenes*, Rački thoroughly describes the origin of the Bogomil heresy, stating the fact that it spread over Serbia until Stefan Nemanja eradicated it. “Bogomil books were burnt, the tongue of the head of the Church was cut out and he was then sentenced to prison; some of the Bogomils were burned at the stake, others were outcast from the country, and their property was taken from all of them and divided among the true believers. . . Neighbouring Bosnia and Hum were the closest refuges for the Bogomils cast out of Serbia. The shortest road leads to this country from Raša; indeed, this sect appeared there at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 377-378). This acknowledgement that the Bogomils came to Bosnia from the Nemanjićs’ Serbia is very significant, for it refutes flagrant Croatian historiographical forgers. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, “. . . the Hungarian-Croatian crown regarded Bosnia as a country subordinate to their supreme power; therefore, the Croatian Ban Pavao Šubić, the count of Bribir, was mentioned in all the documents of the Croatian rulers as the ban of Bosnia, although the Serbian King Stefan Uroš actually governed this country for many years” (p. 422). He tolerated the Bogomils.

#### **4. The Correspondences between Strossmayer and Rački**

Whereas Strossmayer did not seriously engage in writing political texts, and the works of Rački were quite toned down and deliberately shaped so that it is not always possible to perceive the author’s original viewpoint of an issue in its entirety, their preserved private correspondence is very precious material which is necessary for a reliable study of the ideological viewpoints of the most important Croatian intellectuals of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ferdo Šišić prepared their correspondences in five extensive volumes, noting that he edited and removed less important parts of the letters which

exclusively regard private and family matters. The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts published the books in the period from 1928 to 1933. Of course, what we are interested in, in this enormous material, are just those fragments which deal with the issue of Serbian-Croatian relations and the viewpoints of Rački and Strossmayer concerning the Serbian people as a nation.

### **a) The Jesuit Overture of Catholicisation**

We can already see from a Strossmayer's letter to Rački, sent on 15 December 1861 from Đakovo, that the bishop complained and blamed the Serbs for the regency having cancelled some significant financial income and likewise held back certain pecuniary liabilities, which he considered a terrible blow to his seminary and to him personally. He actually did not know whether this occurred at the presidency or a plenary meeting. "If the first one is true, then it is nothing other than angry revenge. If the second one is true, then I have noticed that some issues are solved by Serbs in a Serbian manner, or more precisely, in a Turkish manner. There are Serbs in the regency who seek revenge on me and the Catholic Church for refusing to be Serbianised" (Book I, p. 7). This Regency Council was the Croatian-Slavonian government at the time, controlled by a ban, and it is sometimes referred to as "the Council", as it was in a Strossmayer's letter dated 29 February 1864, in which he complained about legal regulations in the field of education. "Each time such decisions were made regarding the school issues, one would think that the whole Council was 'Serbian'. The grand župan of Srem must have great friends in our Regency Council. And believe me, one does not have energy here and our Serbs in Srem are not afraid – what a hard time for the Catholics! I think that the Serbs should not be forgiven if they are not right, for that is how they become bolder and more impudent" (p. 21). On 24 June 1865, Strossmayer mentioned the upcoming elections in Srem: "Indeed, we have often had conversation on the elections in Srem, where the Serbs want to elect their people who are actually surrounded by Catholics. Indeed, I have said that it would be shameful for the Catholics" (p. 31).

Again, on 24 January 1869, the bishop told Franjo Rački, "The Serbian government prefers Hungarians and Turkey over themselves and us. . . It is believed in Serbia that we being dejected and powerless is to the benefit of Serbia. What blindness, what precise Byzantine wickedness and envy!" (p. 72). On the other hand, in their internal communication, Strossmayer and Rački did not hesitate at all in their severe criticism of the Roman Curia and the behaviour of Pope Pius IX whenever they believed that their actions regarding the Slavic people were not in conformity with the long-term and strategic interests of the Roman Catholic Church. Particularly, their indignation was caused by the following words of the Pope, targeted at Russian liberating and anti-Turkish war campaigns in the Balkans, which were spoken at the reception of the Savoy pilgrims on 30 April 1877: "These days, actually at this very moment in which I am speaking, a great heterodox power is placing innumerable troops, lead by terrible cannons, in the battle field with the purpose of punishing pagan forces, which it blames for unfair behaviour, having oppressed many of its subjects of the same heterodox faith. The fight has already begun, but I do not know which one of them can win. The only thing I know well is that the hand of divine justice will come down hard on one of those powers, which calls itself Orthodox, which is actually schismatic, due to the terrible

persecution of the Catholics which began a long time ago, and has not stopped yet” (Book II, p. 105).

Both Strossmayer and Rački considered it very important that the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Orthodox Slavic people be friendly and smooth-spoken, so that they would soon embrace the Uniate and, afterwards, thorough Catholicisation. In that regard, on 28 March 1878, Strossmayer wrote to Rački that, in a special memorandum, he had advised “. . . the Holy See to take care, that if any influence was possible in the current circumstances, the Bulgarian prince be Catholic” (p. 155). Regarding this issue, the new Pope Leo XIII positioned himself as more prudent than his predecessor; therefore, Rački wrote to Strossmayer in his letter dated 5 April 1878: “The allocution of the Pope left a great impression on me, particularly by what it encompassed. The tone was also different from what it was like in past years. I was particularly glad while reading a letter from the Pope to the Russian emperor, and his response. Russian papers welcomed the Pope's letter as well. As soon as the Eastern entanglements die away, there will be a choir, so the Papacy and Eastern Slavhood, now represented by Russia can become closer. And you could help the Roman See a lot with it. Thus, it will be necessary – if God grants us health – that you spend a few months next winter in Rome” (p. 165). As the Serbs still showed, from time to time, that they were not willing to submit to the Roman Pope, Rački, otherwise calm, gave vent to amassed anger, sending his word from Zagreb to the bishop of Đakovo on 8 October 1878: “Here, the order of the day is serbophagia. The most dangerous factor of our future can be discerned in the Serbs. And that spirit is already beginning to get into literature” (p. 185).

### **b) The Selection of Methods for Destroying Orthodoxy**

Franjo Rački presented his attitude towards the Eastern proselytistic campaign of the Roman Catholic Church, and the most adequate methods for its realization, in his article *Considerations Concerning the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII from September 30*, published in *Obzor* in 1880. He ascribed the exclusive responsibility for the deep Christian schism to the Greeks, and he deemed the fact that the Eastern Slavic nations had their national churches as a favourable circumstance for the approaching and union with the Vatican. “The great majority of Slavhood belongs to the Eastern Church: the Russians, Bulgarians and Serbs almost exclusively; while only the Poles, Czechs, Croats and Slovenes belong to the Western Roman Catholic Church. And the Roman See has never abandoned its hopes, has never renounced its initiative in endeavouring to unite both parts of the one Christian Church. Until the capture of Constantinople, the Greek nation was the representative of the Eastern Church – it was nearly the only representative, but certainly the main one. Greek emperors and Constantinople patriarchs had the main say in the name of the entire Eastern Church. Since the schism in the Church originated there, being rooted more in national and state disagreements than in religious ones, the popes – whenever they felt it favourable to try to establish unity – addressed only Constantinople. Orthodox Slavhood played almost no role, or a very subordinate one, in this huge matter, in which the Christian world engaged and was interested in for many centuries. Neither Rome nor Constantinople asked for the opinion of Kiev, Ohrid or Skopje, since they were assured there that the latter ones would accept anything which is agreed by the main representatives of Greekhood and Latinhood” (p. 319).

Meanwhile, the historical situation significantly changed. As Rački concludes, “. . . the tables have been turned. Now, Slavhood, i.e. Russia, is the main representative of the Eastern Church – that Slavhood, which did not cause the schism in the Church but inherited it from its spiritual mother, Greece. Although the Turks, having captured Constantinople, gradually handed over the former autonomous churches of the empire to the Greek patriarch in order to manage easily thwarting every national movement through the patriarch; precisely that influence of the Porte easily dissolved the Constantinople patriarchate, from which the individual parts gradually separated, and therefore, the authority of the Constantinople patriarch remained limited almost to the Greek people of the Ottoman country. The new Rome (Constantinople) was no longer a rival to old Rome. This complete and radical change of the situation in the Eastern Church was well known in Rome, which, realizing the importance of Slavhood in this religious, even cultural, matter in general, then started paying its attention to that side” (p. 319). Precisely because of that, i.e. by the Pope’s encyclical, the cult of St. Cyril and Methodius was renewed, pronouncing them as Catholic saints, and the introduction of the liturgy in the Slavic language was affirmed in time. Rački believed that the national language should be broadly introduced into the Western Church, through constant advocacy of the idea of complete Christian unity, without tugging at the autonomous character of the Eastern Orthodox churches, for it coalesced with their national being.

Presenting examples of religious tolerance in the Balkans at the time of the Nemanjić’s, Rački claimed that there had been no trace of religious hatred between the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox people until the Ottoman period. “The most prominent dignitary of the falling Greek empire, the great admiral Loukas Notaras, facing the Ottoman army before Constantinople, exclaimed the following concerning an agreement with the West: he preferred to see an Ottoman turban in the capital than a Latin hat. Most of the Greek intelligentsia, particularly the clergy, agreed with the Greek patriot on this subject. The Fanariot bishops, who occupied the Balkan lands under the Turks, first transferred the almost unknown religious discord to them, while they were still autonomous. Innocent Slavic people had to take on the burden of centuries-long disagreements between Greekhood and Latinhood. Mistrust on one side could not breed anything but mistrust on the other; thus, mistakes were made on both sides. The Turks had their contribution as well, causing greater hatred of members of one people due to their religion, because their domination was secured then. There is no slavery in the shadow of love” (p. 322).

Since Rački completely kept silent about all the criminal attacks of Roman Catholic missionaries towards Orthodox Slavs – the Serbs above all – and refrained from mentioning the Slavic animosities towards the Vatican, only the Greeks bore the brunt of his blows; and he did not mention a single word about the Byzantine Empire, which represented the Eastern Roman Empire. Actually, he blamed the Fanariots and their scheming with the Turks for everything. “The Pope’s circular letter passes over this woeful period. It praises only the memory of that time when there was no border in religious sentiments between the West, i.e. the Roman See, and the South Slavic tribes, a border which was later erected by a foreign hand. And he is right to remember that bygone time and not to mention the new one. If only we could erase this from our history! . . . It would mean to disguise the illness, to hide the wound, if it were not admitted that the difference between the religions and churches is used today against the very people. This weapon is often used by those who do not practice any religion

whatsoever. This weapon is also sharpened when religious issues should be left aside. A Hungarian Calvinist, Lutheran and Catholic may harmoniously discuss and work on the improvement of their country; but when a Catholic Croat and an Orthodox Serb prepare to do the same, the danger that the first one might become a Vlach and the other might become a Shokci is pointed out. But, could anyone use this weapon if there was no religious jealousy in us, if they saw the way a Catholic and an Orthodox, particularly the clergy of both churches, take care of each other in the tenor of true Christian tolerance, and how they pave the road for the elimination of that misunderstanding in time, which was not planted by our fathers but imposed by a foreign hand?" (p. 322-323).

With their thesis that the Serbs and Croats were one uniform people – the Illyrians or the Yugoslavs – Gaj, Rački and Strossmayer first succeeding in fitting the multitude of Slavonian, and then Bosnian, Herzegovinian and Dalmatian Serbs into the Croatian national corpus, which had for that purpose abandoned the chakavian and kajkavian dialects. Then, it was insisted on overcoming the religious differences seen in the gradual inclination of the Orthodox towards the Uniate, for the sake of Christian unity. "And the Pope believes that he would pay his dues to the Slavs if they bestowed their first teacher with the greatest honour the Church can bestow, by them transferring all their former respect in the lap of narrow Slavhood to the entire Catholic Church, if he guaranteed them his particular love in the time when the Slavic issue is being solved in its complete scope, when the Eastern Slavic tribes enter the European community as free members" (p. 323).

Regarding the same encyclical of the Pope, Strossmayer wrote the following to Rački on 24 October 1880: "You wrote quite well about the encyclical. Well, that is all worth very little. Austria and the dynasty should go another way altogether. The dynasty and the country have thousands of reasons to merge us South Slavs all into one, together with Bosnia and Herzegovina. That would be the only way, at least here in the south, to raise up the Croatian Catholic people; everything else is just patchwork. This however, due to the presumption of the Hungarians and the rottenness, lethargy and utter depravation of the Croatian people, can never be, at least in a regular way, and God would not be fair if He gave a royal meal to rascals" (p. 324).

### **c) Invitations to Uniatism and Lobbying for a Concordat**

Furthermore, in his bishop encyclical letter dated 4 February 1881, Strossmayer explicitly invited the Orthodox Serbs to the union of faith and church with the Catholics, i.e. to the Uniate. A protopope from Karlovac, Nikola Begović, rebuked him sharply because of this; Strossmayer presented this protopope's published letter to Rački as ". . . haughtiness, arrogance and frivolity!. . . A fool! His head is certainly empty. Regarding his heart, it is vicious" (p. 392). Simultaneously, after all the huge efforts he put in interceding with Stojan Novaković, some other respectable Serbs and the Serbian government for Serbia to enter into a concordat with the Vatican, Strossmayer complained to Rački particularly about Čedomilj Mijatović on 26 November 1881: "Our professors in Biograd are truly blind. I cannot make enough complaints about Mijatović. This summer in Vienna and while travelling, he was most pleasant to me. He asked me to explain to him the way the Catholic cause would be arranged. I did it in the most polite manner possible; but, I have never received a response, and he needs to send me back one of my original documents. I again asked him to respond upon my return from Rome. Silence again. I am going to write him for the third time, of course in a polite manner, but

very definitively as well, so that it will hurt him for a long time if he has a temper. Poor wretches! When one thinks of it, one loses hope; particularly if my foreboding is true, and it seems to be. And even our better people hide their faults” (p. 424).

A letter from Rački, dated 14 May 1882, radiated with scepticism and resignation with regard to the possibility of a church union soon. “It is understandable that the endeavour of Pope Leo XIII drew no response, but rather resistance in Russia. Both parties, which are fighting in Russia for power, are not keen on church unity: the Slavophiles are not, in accordance with their programme in which Orthodoxy takes first place; the Westerners are not, because they are indifferent to the Church. All endeavours will remain without success, unless divine mercy provides help and returns the former events. We, the remaining Slavs, are a weak weapon in the hand of Providence. The Poles and Czechs should be excluded from the combination. The Croatian people are in such a lousy situation, corruption prevails so much that they cannot be counted on for such a huge matter. Our power seems to be overestimated in Rome. Another circumstance that adds to the other unfavourable ones is that terrible corruption is creeping into our clergy (at least here) and is supported from all sides for political purposes. Our clergy, with small exceptions, opposes the Slavic liturgy because it knows that the power-holders do so as well, or care little about it. Conversely, the hatred the Serbs have towards us is increasing. In these circumstances, the handful of people who understand the sublime nature of the idea of church unity are without an army and powerless; therefore, they have to look for their narrow sphere of action, and leave the idea, which our nation is not ready for, to Providence” (Book III, p. 20). A new problem arose, Rački noted on 17 July, with the great agitation against the Slavic liturgy in Zagreb. “The archbishop wrote to Rome as well, gaining supporters of the Slavic liturgy from the inclination towards schism, frightening them that domestic Catholics would convert to the Eastern Church, and not the Orthodox to Catholicism” (p. 28).

Since rejections became the frequent reactions of the Serbian and Russian Church and intellectual circles to the Roman Catholic invitation to accept the Uniate, Strossmayer wrote the following to his closest friend on 20 March 1883: “Of course, I claim that it is fanaticism to judge the true religion as the only true rite. Both rites are sacred, as I maintained in my circular letter; but since the Russians, Ruthenians, Bulgarians, etc, shall never abandon their rite – and they have the right not to do so – and on the other hand, since the Czechs, Poles, Croats, etc. shall never abandon their rite; then is it dishonourable to speak and work on each one remaining in its own, that they at once strive to unite thus in one ethnical and juridical body, to not ever lose anything of that which lies in our hearts, but to nurture and use what we have, and what we have preserved since time immemorial, for the right purposes for both of this and that world? The Russians, and particularly our Serbs, are madly rejecting their greatest friends. Perhaps the time will come when that will be proved publicly and doubtlessly” (p. 60). On 24 March, Rački answered back: “Almost every effort for reconciliation with the Serbs is now useless. I regard the current disagreement as an illness, which has to overcome its own crisis. The main culprits on one side are the citizens of Novi Sad with Miletić as their leader, and on the other, our supporters of Starčević. The citizens of Novi Sad, being under the pressure of Hungarians at home, seek vent from us; they have transferred their agitation here. They alone, faithless (Miletić said once that he was an Orthodox atheist), seek their political purposes under the veil of the Orthodox religion. And this rift has deepened since the occupation of Bosnia, which disrupted the thoughts of Serbian politics. In Russia,

Slavophiles again, particularly Aksakov, identify national Russian politics with Orthodoxy, in which improvement can be noticed” (p. 61).

Strossmayer was aware of the difficult circumstances which made it impossible at that time to realize a union; but he in no way gave up this intention, because he was aware that Catholicism did not otherwise stand a chance to penetrate more significantly to the Orthodox Slavic areas. “Catholicism in the Western-Latin form shall remain forever an exotic plant in the East,” Rački too was aware, believing that, “Rome needed to be completely fathom this truth” (p. 68). Apart from this, the bishop added that “. . . the Russians were not right for letting themselves be deceived by Serbian barbarism. Both of them slander their greatest friend” (p. 69). Since Strossmayer had since 1851 been in charge as a bishop over all the Catholics in Serbia, he sent Friar Tondini as his missionary in 1883, but his stay in Serbia was received very badly by the government and people. Soon, he had to return, and the bishop wrote the following regarding that on 25 June: “Tondini is alive. I had to send him because I had to enable the confession and communion of foreign Catholics, of which there are thousands in Serbia. I have to note their utter barbarism and brutal intolerance” (p. 69). In any case, this problem of great Orthodox distrust towards the Roman Catholic Church was explained here by Serbian “barbarism”, while in the case of the Russians, the responsible ones were the Poles and their anti-Russian chauvinism. Rački concluded so as well, on 16 March 1884: “The reason why the Russians breed so many prejudices – not so much towards Catholicism as towards the Holy See – are the Poles, the only ones through whom the Russians know about the Catholic Church. This endless struggle between both of these tribes is to be blamed” (p. 114). Everyone can be blamed for the Christian schism and mistrust, except the Roman Catholic Church, which caused them by its unbridled aspirations to dominate the entire Christian world.

#### **d) Joy at Serbian Defeat**

Things gradually progressed in the field of Serbian-Croatian antagonism, bearing in mind that the Serbs quite easily discerned the veneer of Illyrian and Yugoslav slogans, which were fundamentally proselytistic. The bishop from Đakovo was getting increasingly anxious, thus writing to his friend on 10 April 1884: “Our people find themselves in a very dangerous position. The Serbs are our deadly enemies. It was well said by – I believe it was Markoviće – that while we were fighting against the Hungarians, our brothers the Serbs attacked us from our backs. If it were at least to their benefit – but, that grave which the Serbs are digging for us could bury them as well” (p. 118-119). Although he used every opportunity to praise the Russian intellectuals, who showed their inclination towards the union, Strossmayer could not suppress his anger when the Moscow papers publicly attacked him, and therefore, on 29 June 1885, he wrote that “. . . it was quite unnatural and a sign of utter foolishness for the newspapers to rehash those words, that vomit, which the Jews and Serbs, who can't see beyond the end of their noses, collect from the most stinking dumps and throw in the face of a Catholic Croat” (p. 183).

Otherwise, both Rački and Strossmayer hated only Jews more than they hated Serbs, and belaboured them with even uglier words, which can be seen from many of their letters. Full of joy at the Serbian defeat in the war with Bulgaria, Strossmayer wrote to Rački on 29 November 1885: “I don't have enough words to tell you how glad I am that the righteous matter of the Bulgarians, under the protection of divine Providence, won. It



is the hand of God! Thus, the foreign idea, which is completely opposite to Slavhood, is defeated. Thereby our intentions have won! The crazy Serbs thought that once they smashed the Croatian state idea with the help of the perpetual enemies of Slavhood, where they found brother's shelter and enjoyed it for centuries, and once they smashed the kind Bulgarian people – then they would have Dušan's Empire! And now, God has let them see again: they would have to see that the grave they are digging for someone else is a grave they are making for themselves first. In general, this idea of the resurrection of Dušan's Empire is mad and a mere illusion" (p. 199). He explicated such an opinion even deeper on 11 December: "Thank God the Bulgarians vanquished. In their cause, honour, Christian law and the pure Slavic cause have prevailed; utter dishonour, immorality and Hungarian hatred towards Slavhood are defeated in the Serbian cause. Bulgarian victories are ours, as well. Russian politics and diplomacy are not worth a straw" (p. 201).

### **e) Persistent Insistence on the Union**

No matter how many times he was disappointed with the attitude of the Orthodox people towards the persistently offered union, Strossmayer still never gave up on that intention. In his encyclical letter, dated 18 January 1891, he insisted again that one of the fundamental tasks of the Roman Catholic Church, ". . . as the Church of God, should be to gather all those parts of churches, which separated from the true Church of God due to unfortunate circumstances, into one whole again, and return them to the Holy unity, to which we are all called and directed according to Jesus Christ and the Holy Fathers of atonement. Since almost only the Eastern Church alone deserved the title of a church among that which had broke off and separated from the Holy Church through the centuries, it follows that it is the last and supreme purpose and task of the Holy Mother Church to reconcile with her old sister, the Eastern Church, and to bring it under the wing of the holy divine unity" (Book IV, p. 245). This "bringing in" of the Orthodox had preoccupied the Roman Catholics for centuries, thus Strossmayer recalls the viewpoints of the councils of Lyon and Florence, examples of Greek and Ukrainian Uniates, etc. "The heart, attached to God and Jesus Christ, hence foresees that at some time both of these churches shall reconcile and seek the holy unity without any pledge for its new strength, new life and new glory. If the premonition of my heart is not fooling me, this shall happen and be fulfilled by the end of this century, or in the first half of the next one, under the influence of God's Providence, and these great events which are to come and which God holds in his hand are not to anyone's disadvantage but to their advantage and benefit, as it suits such a divine and holy matter of all humankind. It is doubtless that this is the purpose and task of the Mother Church. . . Whoever thinks that the whole power, strength, victory and praise of the Church is in the holy unity, and thinks of the poor state of Christianity and the Holy Gospel in Europe and Asia, he will accidentally say immediately: Oh, if only the Eastern Church had never separated from the Western!" (p. 245-246).

In Strossmayer's opinion, the disappearance of Greek primacy and its having the main say in Orthodoxy, and the affirmation of Slavic Orthodox churches opened new possibilities for the achievement of unity. "Today, in the matter of reconciliation and unification of the two Churches, the main say of Greece has obviously been transferred to the great, powerful and glorious Slavic people, whom the reflection of God has evidently assigned the task of implementing reconciliation and unification, in the name of the entire

Eastern Church with the Western Church, which is in the heart of Jesus Christ and which belongs to the important duty of the Church” (p. 248). Of everything he personally did for that end, Strossmayer pointed out as the most significant that which had “occurred for a reason”, the fact that Vladimir Solovyov, whom he belaboured with the attributes “highly intelligent, highly educated and highly exquisite”, had written a brochure in which he explained the necessity of the accession of the Russian Orthodox Church to the union. The bishop of Đakovo claimed that, in his “. . . opinion, it was the best and most exquisite piece of work, in which the pure and holy principles of a holy, apostolic and general Church were managed and laid at its doors in the name of reconciliation and unification. This beautiful work is without equal in the entire literature from the beginning of the separation of the Churches up to the present day. This piece of work aroused great interest in the educated world, and certainly would not remain deprived of its fruit tomorrow. . . It is known that there was no separation or schism between the Churches at that time, when the glorious people adopted the faith of Jesus, that the holy faith, which that people had adopted, was pure, chaste and the very faith we, the Catholics, confess, and that St. Vladimir, in whose time it occurred, was a saint of both Churches,” (p. 248-249).

Embittered by the news that Queen Natalija had been sent to exile from Serbia, Strossmayer wrote the following to Rački on 20 May 1891: “This is a crime of a desecrated majesty, both of God and king. . . It can be best noticed in similar cases what the true church, what the true bishop and the true head of the Church are. If there were a true church and a true bishop among the Serbs, it could have hardly happened” (p. 269). His additional indignation was caused by the behaviour of the Montenegrin Prince Nikola, whom he tried to sway by all means to accept the concordat. In his letter to “his brother Franjo” dated 19 January 1893, he complained, “I was wondering if you know that the Montenegrin prince had published a poetic work named *The Poet and the Fairy*. This piece of work is beautiful, similar to and befitting *The Mountain Wreath*; superb language, superb thoughts, superb sentiments. It is made to tug at the heartstrings of the Serbian people, to take it to the skies and encourage heroic deeds. . . But, there is a flaw in that piece of work, not seen before with the Montenegrin prince, and that is that he rebukes, twice or thrice, Rome and the Holy Roman See, as well as the entire Christian West, seduced by Rome, due to the Battle of Kosovo and the defeat of the Serbs. This is something completely new in the writing of the Montenegrin prince. You will certainly know better than me that this is without any historical cause or evidence. Hatred towards the Croats flares inside the Serbs. The work appears to have been printed only in several copies. I would write to the prince and pay compliments to the work, but I shall not do so because of the attacks on Rome. I believe that he was stirred up by someone; a huge contradiction with his own self!” (p. 352-353). Rački responded to him on 28 January: “Your remarks on the prince’s creation of the poem are founded. He emphasized Serbdom and Orthodoxy too much. The influence of Novi Sad!” (p. 353).

Strossmayer was filled with sorrow for the blooming of Serbdom in Dubrovnik, and he grieved to his “brother Franjo” on 13 June: “We Croats, who were the first to publish the writers of Dubrovnik and Croatia, should have been in the leading position of this matter from the very beginning, and should have engraved the Croatian significance in it. Now, when the Serbs have done so, everything we do in these terms will just be the shadow from that glow, which the Serbs shine with contrary to the Croats. Now all of us who go to Dubrovnik go there more for fun than for any political demonstrations. Thus, we are immature children in each and every thing. . . This is the reason why our national

institutes, the Academy and *Matica*, hesitate to travel to Dubrovnik. I can honestly tell them that I would not advise them otherwise” (p. 376).

### **f) Three Germans, the Corner Stones of the Artificial Croatian Nation**

It would not hurt to mention here that Strossmayer’s letter to many other people were full of proselytistic passions and endeavours. Thus, on 23 June 1849, Strossmayer wrote to Andrija Torkvat Brlić: “I maintain that the also Russians want to be in the leading position regarding the ecclesiastical issue, the Russians who want to return from licentiousness to the arms of the Holy Mother Church, certainly more than our Eastern Serbs” (Joseph Georg Strossmayer: *Documents and Correspondences*, Book One, The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, 1933, p. 45). Paradoxically, in this same collection of correspondences, its editor Ferdo Šišić presented data on Strossmayer’s German origin, stating that his grandfather Paul Strossmayer originated from Linz in Upper Austria, and came to Osijek as a sergeant of the Imperial Army. Thus, it can be said that, from Šišić’s research and the results he achieved, three Croatianised Germans: Ljudevit Gaj, Joseph Georg Strossmayer and Franjo Tuđman, are the corner stones, the foundations of the projection of the artificial Croatian nation, formerly making it by with the help of the Illyrian Movement and Yugoslavhood, which presented a base for Strossmayer and Rački to first Croatianise the Slavonians, and then to focus on the Dalmatians, Bosnians and Herzegovinians, proving that all Serbian Catholics were “Croats”, grounding such endeavours on the thesis that the Serbs and Croats were one and a uniform people.

### **5. The Main Croatianiser of the Dalmatian Serbs, Mihovil Pavlinović**

The great work on the artificial Croatianisation of Slavonian Catholic Serbs, which was successfully done by Strossmayer and Rački with systematic clerical ideological indoctrination, was performed in Dalmatia by an eminent Roman Catholic priest, Mihovil Pavlinović. He was born in 1831 in Podgora, in the coastal area of Makarska, on the land of the former Serbian principedom of Nerenta, or Pagania as foreigners called it. Upon graduation from the seminary in Split and the school of theology in Zadar, he became a priest in his home town. In his time, Dalmatia, as a province of Austria, encompassed a much larger area – up to the Bay of Kotor, in comparison with the Dalmatia of the time of Croatian state, which spread between the Cetina River and Zadar. As a member of the first Dalmatian Council in 1861, Pavlinović got into a conflict with the *Italijanaši*, and cooperated with the Serbian politicians within the National Party. Soon upon establishing relations with Rački and Strossmayer, Pavlinović became an ardent supporter of the unification of Dalmatia with the Banate of Croatia and Slavonia, and the imposition of the Croatian national identification of the Dalmatian Catholic Serbs under the slogan of complete Serbian-Croatian national unity. In 1864, he even took an Orthodox priest and a prominent poet, Jovan Sundečić, as his blood-brother. However, he soon showed his true face as an ideologist of Croatian national exclusivism and religious exclusiveness, which he would maintain continually in a large number of political brochures until his death in 1887. Pavlinović presented such a tendency through a collection of folk songs, proverbs, phrases and words, but also in his poems, orations and

accounts of his travels. He actually positioned himself publicly as a political agitator and propagandist through all his literary attempts.

### **a) Croatian National Exclusivism, the Loyal Guardian of Roman Catholicism**

Mihovil Pavlinović presented his expressly clerical convictions in a precise manner in the brochure *On Religion and Politics (Narodni List, Zadar, 1855)*, which represents a polemic pamphlet by which the author came down heavily on the anti-clerical viewpoints of Nikša Gradija from Dubrovnik. Pavlinović claimed that it was insane to separate religion and politics, he idealized the historical role of the Roman Catholic Church, and condemned the French Revolution as the supreme expression of the criminal nature of perseverance in apostate misapprehensions. He regarded the Roman Catholic religion as the only true religion and its dogmas as absolute truths, and persistently insisted upon the concept of the historical Croatian state right in his political activities. Pavlinović's main point was that religious differences could not be overcome for the sake of an imaginary Yugoslavhood, and that the Croatian national exclusivism was a loyal guardian of Roman Catholicism. Pavlinović presented these fundamental viewpoints in his *Oration to my Voters (Narodni List, Zadar, 1897)* in a more concrete form fifteen years earlier. He expressed equal intolerance towards the opponents of Clericalism and those who underestimated the significance of the Croatian state right, who endeavoured to solve political problems within Dalmatia as Austrian Cisleithania, without any desire to submit to the Hungarian crown and the centre of political power in Pest for the sake of unification with Croatia and Slovenia. Pavlinović noted with unhidden acerbity on that occasion that “. . . some thought that it was not patriotic, for that naked Croatianhood reeked of Catholicism, and confused and irritated our countrymen, the Serbs, that it broke great foundations and hopes of the entire Croatian and Serbian people, that it mixed the members of the Party of Progress and the Liberal Party, that it hid the beauty of the imagined up Yugoslavia. Some thought that it was not utterly useful for us today in Cisleithania to have better laws than the Croatian ones, a better government than the Croatian one, that we would tomorrow experience worse sorrows with the Hungarians than those of today. Finally, some believed that it was not clever, because the state right was a matter of strength and time, that we were broken and powerless to obtain the right, and that the unification would come when it itself was ripe” (p. 7).

### **b) False Religious Tolerance as Bait for the Uniatism of Serbs**

In his initial phase of political activities, Pavlinović still hoped it was possible for the Orthodox Serbs to give in to the empty phrase of the Croatian state right, hoping that, in that way, they could first become a part of the Croatian political nation, and afterwards be Catholicized; hence, in the reverse order compared to the former historical practice. Thus, his pre-election speech was composed as a sermon of a Catholic priest to his prodigal people: “Unfortunately, there are unpatriotic Catholics among us who despise Christians and do not have faith in them, regard them as Russophiles, traitors; and are afraid to be in harmony with them. There are some Christians who dream of the progress of their Orthodoxy and their name with every progress of the nation; those who believe that if they are Christians they have to foster the Serbian idea everywhere; and they are stirred up by the

mentioning of Croatian national and state name. These are wounds; but wounds which should not be agitated as to not be hurt, just like they should not be insulted as to not be rankled. The greatest deaths are due to misunderstandings and secret suspicions, which poison the innocent, seduce the immature, kill love; our greatest obligation is to dispossess the cunning villain of a murderous weapon, by which he can hamper us all at once. This obligation is much easier when, thank God, there are many people on both sides who are famous for their honesty and doubtless patriotism; people whose deeds guarantee they are not able to hate, and whose knowledge proves that it is impossible for them to not know the history of the recognised deeds of their tribe” (p. 8).

Pavlinović’s speech here radiated with false religious tolerance, hoping that Christian Church unity could still be achieved, of course, by the subordination of Eastern churches to the Roman Bishop. According to his sermon, “. . . people whose confession was Catholicism should finally stand up and say to the degenerates and enthusiasts: Christians, Orthodox, Greek-Eastern churches, no matter whether they are Croats or Serbians, are our brothers; we observe one Gospel, adopt the same holy ordinances, learn about the same love. If our churches are separated, let not our hearts be so; let us compete in chastity and pray to God that the day of Church unity, the salvation of people, comes closer. Until then, let us keep the Christian principle in harmony, in national and state life, and reject apostasy, carelessness and turpitude, which want to creep into our people by force, and take away from them what the Turks did not: religion. Let us stick firmly to national and state unity, without which there is no homeland, no state, no freedom, no ease for anyone but the foreigner. If the Christians are now braver for the sake of our harmony, do not be afraid of either a Serbian or Russian attack; let them enjoy their freedom in their name and script, in church and on the field, as much as they want; let them see that Croatia is their real mother, that we are their close brothers, and that, without us, they would be only left with old humiliation, or new slavery, in this country. And you, the followers of the Greek-Eastern Church, who know to differentiate religion from nationality, church from state, frankly say to the lunatics and the cunning: children, step aside; away, you insignificant ones, do not hide under the holy name. You care neither about Orthodoxy, nor Serbdom, but only about your selfishness; you are keen on lying. Powerful and thriving people breed powerful and free churches; and there is no power without your own state. Our state is in our homeland; or homeland is Croatia; Croatia is one national and state body, with its own right and its own history. This country is next to the Serbian one; it is its neighbour and sister by blood, but this is Croatia. Croatianhood in its historical country and own task does not disturb Serbdom in the people, the same regarding the language and blood: state Croatianhood indeed disturbs very much the enemies of the Croatian and Serbian national life; Croatianhood disturbs the enemy to our freedom” (p. 8-9).

When the concept of the Croatian state right in its utterly constructed historical perspective showed itself to the most exemplary clerical ideologists for the creation of Roman Catholic proselytistic goals, they wanted to persuade the Orthodox Serbs that this was the most exemplary national and state framework in the Austro-Hungarian Empire for them as well. Pavlinović offered brotherhood, solidarity and complete unity to the Serbs, under the condition that they accepted the Croatian nation-building ambitions as their own. He also called on his fellow Catholic countrymen to not be religiously exclusive and politically short-sighted, but to search for what they had in common with Orthodoxy, what brought them closer and connected them, in order to contribute to the realisation of the Croatian political aspirations. “I protest against those Christians, the Serbs, who looked

sternly at me and whispered with suspicion that I had become a fanatic since I started to more resolutely defend the right of my and their Croatian homeland, since my duty called me to protect the principles of the Catholic Church which conflicted with those of the Orthodox Church; and I protest against those who called me a Jesuit for, while respecting the foreign religion, I observe mine own; I protest against those Catholics who christened me an Ultramontane and a Papist, because I believe that no one can be a Catholic without the Roman Pope; I protest against the liberals, who think that there can be virtuous people without religion, freedom without morals, state without religious law; who, by knowing neither the needs nor the heart of their people, impose the advocates of the sermon to them to be the slayers of their spirit” (p. 10).

Falsely preaching religious tolerance, he wanted to impose Catholic religious principles as mutual. Advocating for cooperation and unity with the Orthodox Serbs, he wanted to harness them in the realisation of the proclaimed Croatian state right. In this regard, he pointed out the following: “I am a Catholic by my confession; but I do not even think of insulting the idea of anyone’s religion, or to cause purely religious issues to interfere with politics. I am a Croat by my tribe; but I do not intend to Croatianise the world for this reason. These are my own beliefs, which are completely peaceful with equally firm beliefs of every virtuous Christian Serbs, when we all act harmoniously in the public field for the sake of the state right of our Croatian homeland, when we act for the sake of common Christian principles regarding the joint Christian issues” (p. 10-11). Mihovil Pavlinović used this opportunity to dismiss all objections directed at him by the critics due to his clerical endeavours in his political life: “I do not have the wish to turn the national assembly into a church one as some would like to impute; I shall say honestly, I am afraid of the idea that my work and the work of my sexton fellows, the most numerous and successful national workers, might help people of no religion to get hold of the assembly; that the national assembly may become a cause of national dizziness and religious carelessness; we are afraid of this idea, for we, the sextons, would not act against Christian goals” (p. 11).

Declaring himself as a freedom-oriented Slav and Yugoslav, he still vowed loyalty to his “virtuous, free, elected king” and rejected any anti-state scheming, because, allegedly, “we have the Croatian state” through this Hungarian king (p. 11). Pavlinović invited the Serbs and Croats, as a people separated by name and religion, to enter together the field of the constitutional struggle in order to protect the tradition of the Croatian state right. “Croatia, our homeland, in the general scramble among Germans, Hungarians, Turks, Italians, calls us today to defend its rights, the rights and freedom of all of us who are not degenerates, who call our mother: my mother!, who prey to God: our Father! Divided people, downtrodden people, rise up to the constitutional fight! Your mother is calling you, Croatia, your homeland, is crying” (p. 12). One of the key arguments with which Pavlinović supported his request for the annexation of Dalmatia to Croatia was that the authority of the ban did not neglect the Roman Catholic Church there, while in Cisleithania, under the direct rule of Vienna, the principle of the separation of church from state was being exercised. Therefore, he simply was not interested in any concept of Dalmatian self-government or any autonomist political programme.

Through an attempt of literary dialogue between the Catholics and Orthodox in his *Discourse on Slavhood, Yugoslavhood and Serbo-Croatianhood* (*Narodni List*, Zadar, 1876), Pavlinović entered a dispute with the Serbian national ideologists, particularly emphasizing the content of *The History of the Serbs* by Danilo Medaković, published in Novi Sad in 1851. What bothered him most was the statement that the Roman Church did

a huge disservice to the Serbian name and national progress by turning the Catholicised Serbs into the greatest enemies of their Orthodox brothers. The dialogue started with a broad topic whose first result was the statement that pan-Slavism stood no real chance for success because there was no uniform Slavic language, but that it could become a screen for the Russification of the smaller Slavic nations by the biggest one. He objected to the Yugoslav idea, claiming that it was a hidden pan-Serbian one and that it had the former Dušan's Empire as its model. Through the mouth of one of the participants of this fictitious dialogue, Pavlinović stated that the real name for the Orthodox Church was the Vlachian or Greek-Eastern Church. It was incomprehensible to him that the Orthodox Serbs "... would be called Orthodox by law, because that would mean that all the others were ignominious or, according to your grammar, non-orthodox (false). But, say it without finding fault: what would you say if the Catholics called themselves 'orthodox' (true believers)? Would you call them this name? Of course you wouldn't; because it would seem to you that you would then be admitting you were false believers. You see, everyone can call a Catholic a Catholic without his own humiliation; because this name presents nothing other than that which it is, i.e. an overall religion, or a religion widespread in the whole world; as it truly is; for, you can find Catholics in Europe, Asia, America, Africa, Oceania, in every corner of the world; and the Greek-Eastern (Eastern Orthodox) can only be found among a few nations and in a few countries. Why, the law of the state does not allow any religion to call itself such a name by which any other recognized religion could be insulted. Therefore, it has been cleverly determined that you should write your name and call yourselves Greek-Easterners, such as you are; because you observe the church of Constantinople, the Greek one; and we should be called Roman Catholics, such as we are, because we observe the Roman Church: and then, let us all live in peace" (p. 13).

### c) Criticism of Serbia and Idealisation of Croatia

Afterwards, Pavlinović brought to attention the fact that the citizens of Dubrovnik had called the Orthodox "Vlachs" from times immemorial, and the Dalmatians had called them *Grkaći*, which turned into *Hrkaći* with time. Claiming that the circumstances in imaginary Serbian lands were such that "not even someone else's chicken would be Serbianized" (p. 15), he particularly mocked the idea that Serbia should play the role of Piedmont among the South Slavs. He said that the Croats and Serbs were people "... of the same blood and language, but were not one regarding spiritual life; they were not one regarding their history and aspirations: they were not one regarding the national and state right: in one word, the Croats and the Serbs did not have one national consciousness, or one aspiration" (p. 20). Pavlinović could not solve the main language problem, so he tried to pass by it, claiming that it was just an exterior feature of nationality, but not its core. He gave primacy to consciousness. "Above all, nationalities want a consciousness of the same community; and that consciousness is maintained primarily by spiritual consciousness, sometimes state, sometimes educational, and sometimes religious, thus the same aspiration. If the core of nationality was precisely in the language itself, which is not true, the national idea could not creep into all other ideas. The nationality set into the foundations of the regulations of nation and king should be in conformity with other foundations, equally holy, without which there would be no order in humankind. . . If we Croats and the Serbs, with so many of us, indeed wanted to unite, what should we do? Or, if all the Serbs were to come under the king of Croatia. . . Even if the Serbs wanted to do

so, the Croats would not, I believe, for any price; for, such an annex could expose them to huge deaths in freedom, both religious and constitutional. I do not want to diminish Serbia nor the Serbs; but you have to admit that Croatia would not find particular happiness if her assembly were full with the sort who would adorn themselves with the Belgrade assembly” (p. 21-22).

In order to present such a danger in a more understandable way, Pavlinović pointed to the example of the Serbs who lived in Croatia. “It can be said that they almost ruled: they knew to edge their way everywhere. At the same time, there was no sacrifice, saint, or merit, to take a Catholic to Serbia or Montenegro” (p. 22). He found fault with Serbia for preventing the construction of Catholic churches on its land, and for pronouncing the papacy and Catholicism the greatest enemies of the Serbian people. “Most of the Croats maintain that Catholicism is the true and only saving religion. The Croats, allowing freedom for the heterodox people, particularly to their brothers of the Eastern Church, are not deadly for any religion; while it would mean the huge death of their religion and the Catholic Church if the Croats settled into a state community which was mostly non-Catholic” (p. 23). Catholics and Orthodox, in Pavlinović’s opinion, as Croatian Christians and Serbian Christians, can only live in peace if “. . . the Christians were the minority everywhere, or if a state right ruled everywhere, which is inspired by religious freedom, as it is in Croatia and even in Boka” (p. 23). All in all, it is not “. . . possible to reach real unity without the same consciousness and the same aspiration. Due to such truth, it is clearly said that, in the relationship between Serbia and Croatia, Serbia would not come under the Croatian crown by any means. And would Croatia come under Dušan's crown? Not even in a dream” (p. 23-24).

Mihovil Pavlinović emphasized that the reasons for the irreconcilability of the two national ideologies was brought down to a thesis according to which, “. . . from times immemorial to now, Croatia has had its state feature, its right, its obligations, its crown and its legal governors; it has had its community, its idea, which it cannot give up, and at the same time it cannot destroy its consciousness, erase its history, forget its name. If it were possible for the generation of today to do all this, to break all statesmanlike and dynastic connections, what would happen then? The Croatian state would disappear; the Croatian historical right would become numb; but the Croatian people, who would bring up a new generation, which would, with the torch of the natural right and the idea of Croatia, search for the borders of their country, on the basis of their religious and state freedom; they would not disappear. Even if the Croatian country disappeared, Serbia would not become anything else but the first neighbour to a dead foreign nation, because it would be crazy to think that the revolt of Croatia against the right of their kings and historical relations with Austro-Hungarian Empire could turn into a blessing for the Croatian people; or to wrench it from its standing relations, and blend it with Serbia” (p. 24).

#### **d) Groundless Theories about Bosnia and the Participation of Croats in the Battle of Kosovo**

The issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the intractable contradictions of Serbian and Croatian national ideologies. Pavlinović took a categorical and exclusive position on it, claiming that it was doubtlessly Croatian ethnic and political territory: “History denies that Bosnia is Serbian. History, which does not accept bribes nor gives affection to anyone, knows that Croatia ruled the area to the Drina River from the



beginning. Ancient division of *zhupans* and bans caused that the bans of one part of Bosnia, such as the bans of Posavina or of Dalmatia, moved apart in their rule, and sometimes even argued among themselves. But, the right of the kingdom of Croatia remained unharmed. The ban of Bosnia was one of the seven ban-electors of the king of Croatia. Krešimir the Great ruled Bosnia by himself. Croatian's claim to Bosnia was preserved under the Hungarian-Croatian crown even when certain kings started to appear in Bosnia with the weakening of coastal Croatia. According to their religious and political opinions, these kings always stood by Croatia; thus, every serious matter in Bosnia intertwined Croatia, and vice versa. There's Bosnian Hrvoje in Split; there's Tvrtko; here there are all the arguments with Hungary; there's Ban Pavle Šubić up to Skopje and the Bosnian mountain Ivan-planina; there's Queen Katarina in Rome; there's Ban Auersperga, who is still celebrated in folk songs; here's Prince Evgenija, who is still mentioned by the ravines and bridges next to Bosnia, and the deserted Zenica particularly cries. There's Ban Jelačić near Podzvizd in 1845! And what does Serbia have in Bosnia?" (p. 24-25).

Pavlinović was not much interested in historical truth, and he composed the dialogue in a mere pamphleteer way; thus, the two main interlocutors were an "intelligent and mature" Croat and a young and immature Serb, so the Serb said only slogans while the Croat ostensibly gave sober and reasonable answers. All the fabrications of Croatian romantic historiography were presented in these answers, for example those put forth by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, Tadija Smičiklas and Vjekoslav Klaić, such as the one from the alleged Charter by Trpimir dated 837, where it said that Slavonia as a Croatian province was an integral part of the Metropolitanate of Split in a church-organisational sense. It was claimed to be so until Methodius rebuilt the Metropolitanate of Lower Pannonia in Srem. Furthermore, according to this forged charter, it was claimed that Croatian *zhupas* (parishes) spread from the Cetina River to Bar. Pavlinović also ascribed to the alleged Kingdom of Croatia of having established borders on the River of Black Drim even in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. "It should be known that, already by the time of Lucius, i.e. last century, the entire area from Nin to Bar, except Zadar and six other islands and places, were called 'Hrvatska' (Croatia) among the people. This is testified by all Hungarian and Venetian military reports and annalists of the past centuries" (p. 27). Pavlinović's main arguments were the documents of the Priest Dukljanin and Andrija Dandolo, but, according to their imagination, the entire Serbia, i.e. Raška, was also an integral part of Croatia.

In accordance with such forgery-megalomania, Pavlinović undermined the entire Serbian history. He states that ". . . the Serbs came from the Subcarpathian Great Croatia after the Croats with three leaders. . . For Rašija, Zeta (Doclea), Travunija, i.e. the entire part of Roman Southern Dalmatia in Zagorje. . . Ancient books would say that, afterwards, the Croats accepted the Serbs in this area to protect them from the Bulgarians. However, a Croatian base has remained in Popovo up to now, and all the way along the coastal region of Dubrovnik and Kotor to Bar and Skadar. The relation of the Zachlumian princes' subjects towards the Croatian ruler remained unharmed in the *zhupas* (parishes) in Zagorje Romanija and Nevesinje during the rule of the Croatian dynasty, although it was immensely breaking up and loosening from Constantinople. . . As the popes used sacred privileges to improve the Catholic idea, so did the Byzantine emperors use religion and church to foster their Byzantine aspirations. Hence the two systems separated Croats and Serbs and confined them to two different directions. . . Constantine, stating that the Croats had liberated the Serbs from the Bulgarian yoke at

the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, counted all the Serbian towns, but did not go into Bosnia. Of course, counting Zahumlje, Konavlje and Trebinje as kind Byzantine gifts to the Serbs, so as to allegedly prove they were subjects of the Empire (which the Croats were not), he did not even mention Bosnia, which he obviously would not miss if he could by any chance. And how would he, when the very Byzantine Cedrenus regarded Bosniaks as the Croatian people even in the 11<sup>th</sup> century? . . . No one is yet familiar with the Serbs gaining any merits in the fight against Eurasian Avars, or of them doing any other heroic deed” (p. 29-30).

Filled with eulogies for both real and invented Croatian victories over the Bulgarians and claiming that Bosnia had never been and integral part of Serbia, but that it had always bordered with it on the Drina River, Pavlinović went on with the story from the moment the Byzantine Empire defeated Bulgaria and conquered their country. “They did not even touch Bosnia, because Stjepan, son of Krešimir II, had inherited it along with the other part of Croatia. Hilferding, differentiating the correctly named Croatia from its banates Popovo, Gacko, Zahumlje and Trebinje, said that the *zhupa* of Duklja (Zeta) was the only one in the coastal region which recognized the supreme power of the Serbian grand *zhupans*” (p. 32). Pavlinović found it completely indisputable “. . . that, in the ancient times, there was not a single mention of the legal individuality of Serbia, let alone a word of any affiliation of Bosnia to Serbia” (p. 33). Not mentioning the Croatian defeat in the Battle of the Gvozd Mountain, but presenting as the main reason the fact that the Croats were left without their royal family and that the Arpads had familial ties with their last king, Pavlinović stated that Croatia accepted a Hungarian king in order to preserve “its autonomy and establish domestic peace” (p. 34). How could he do anything different: “Bosnia, of course, joined the same state relation together with Croatia” (p. 34). Since then, supposedly, “The Hungarian-Croatian kings, according to the old custom of the Croatian kings, appointed bans in Bosnia to rule under their supreme authority” (p. 34-35). Pavlinović said that Tvrtko “. . . was crowned the Greek-Eastern Archbishop in Mileševo, mainly in order to obtain Serbia easier, as an alleged successor to the Nemanjić’s; just as, in 1848, Jelačić was inclined to Patriarch Rajačić, in order to obtain Vojvodina easier” (p. 36).

Pavlinović claimed that the Croats even fought in Kosovo and far surpassed Serbian warriors in their heroism. “The Turks were then quite far away from them, and the Croats themselves had plenty of problems at their own home. Yet, having heard of the Serbian difficulty, without any concerns for themselves, 30 thousand of them rushed to Kosovo. But what’s the good . . . when rottenness and discord, a sordid betrayal by Branković, ruined our martyrs. It is known that the Croats did not withdraw from Kosovo until the third day, when all the Serbs had already run away, and the rumour about Branković’s betrayal had spread” (p. 37). Boasting about the alleged Croatian heroism within the Hungarian army, which waged war against the Turks in Bosnia in 1463, Pavlinović stated here another fairytale-like construction: “While passing over the rivers of Drina, Raša (Lim) and Neretva, the soldiers became annoyed and started thinking: were they allowed, according to their souls as Christian crusaders, to rescue Greek-Eastern followers, and even bring them into their country? In order to appease the army, both Hungarian and Croatian, the King asked the Pope to state in writing as he solemnly declared: that God allowed them to rescue the Greek-Eastern followers from the Turkish hands, and take them in their country, for they were Christians too. Hence the migrations to Srem, Lika and Krbava” (p. 37-38).

Concocting this fantastic story further on to his imaginary interlocutor, Pavlinović says that “. . . there were no Serbs in Bosnia in ancient times. But, at several points . . . the Croats received them at their place; and then they spread over Bosnia and Croatia, although less in number than many believed; for, not all the Serbs observe the Eastern Church. You know that the Croats recognized the authority of the Constantinople Patriarch for some time in the 9th century. Since the Photios schism occurred, most of the Croats remained with the Roman Church; yet, some of them wanted to stay with the Eastern Church for the sake of rites, remaining, of course, Croats as they had been. This mingling of Serbdom with the Eastern religion or Orthodoxy occurred later in Serbia, according to Byzantine custom. In later times, this was attempted to be accomplished by all means, just to introduce the Serbian idea into Croatia in any way; and the poor Croats of the Eastern religion took on this Serbian name, imposed through Christian sermons and schooling, as the name of their religion; and the people who understand it, if they are honest, laugh at that religious Serbdom like at the stupid debauchery of an enthralled dreamers. Turncoats, of course, play with Serbdom for their own benefit. . . Of course, a Serb is a Serb, but in the Serbian homeland, within Serbian state borders” (p. 45-46).

Asked about the imaginary interlocutor from Boka, Pavlinović responded: “There are some of you who are Croats and some who are Serbs, by your blood; but you are on the state land of Croatia, therefore, you are all national and state Croats. Why, even at the time of Dušan, Boka Kotorska recognized the crown of Croatia! And no one will forbid those of you who want to use the name Serbian next to Orthodox, if you do not plant the Serbian national-religious name on the Croatian national and state name, as an alleged addition” (p. 46).

Since the dispute again returned to the Bosnian issue, Pavlinović despicably spoke of the Serbs there as of primitive shepherds without any national consciousness. Serbian merchants were interested only in money and profit, and he considered the Serbian military too weak to conquer Bosnia and Herzegovina. “A Turkish Bosniak would rather lean to a German, a Latin, or hell, than to a Vlach” (p. 47). Local Catholics wished for an Austrian emperor rather than a Serbian prince, and he considered that there were more adequate geographic conditions for Croatian pretensions. “Can you see that Croatia is girdled about Bosnia on all sides? Land, relations, trade – everything connects them indestructibly. Almost all Croatian districts on the land border would easily and naturally be extended and complemented to Trebinje, Mostar, Ljubuški, Županjac, Livno; through Bišće and over Novo; thus, Turkish Dalmatia (Herzegovina to the Neretva River) and Turkish Croatia (Bosnia to Vrbas) would be possessed, as it would be so with the military border these days, without any hindrance. Of course, Dalmatia gains its face and natural rear only with such expansion, and Croatian Posavina is tied, across Banja Luka and Jajce, to Coastal Dalmatia, as it has been since times immemorial. The most educated people, the Bosnian friars, scattered over the entire Bosnia, were influential with these same Turks, and are the carriers of Croatian ideas and memories. All this acts lively; all it holds together” (p. 49).

Aware that this would be an even greater territorial embrace than for Serbia, Pavlinović pronounced Croatian servitude under the Austrian Crown a virtue, advantage and benefit, saying, “If Croatia alone took the entire Bosnia on its back tomorrow, the Croatia yet not fully connected with the Military Krajina, with impoverished Dalmatia, would not, I am afraid, alone resist the pecuniary expenses or spiritual effort. To straighten up a European province after the Bosnian, precisely Turkish, desolation and savagery?! Thank God,

every cloud has a silver lining. Since Croatia found itself in the union of kingdoms and countries of the Habsburg Empire, and made numerous and difficult sacrifices to this union, today, in addition to the fact that a foreigner would not wrench its ancient possessions, it also has a guarantee that this union, for its own benefit, would help straighten up and raise these countries which would add living strength to the entire empire, along with the renewed life and progress of Croatia. And that is what I wanted to say . . . neither Hungary nor Austria, while existing, can by any means allow that any new country aspire to Bosnia; because it would easily become a terrible threat to the independence of the economy and state to all Posavina and the coastal region of Croatia, not only because of the land which belongs to the Kingdom of Croatia, but also because of its position” (p. 49). Unlike the Serbia of that time, which was proportionally rounded and had a natural direction of extending to the east and southeast, Pavlinović stated that “Croatia without Bosnia is trouble from Kotor to Zemun. The map itself says that Bosnia is a part of Croatia. It is Croatia, not Serbia, who has spilt its noblest blood for Bosnia for centuries” (p. 50).

Denying that the Croats had already taken the Serbian coastal region, Srem and Slavonia away from the Serbs, and that they were now preparing to wrench Bosnia and Herzegovina from them, Pavlinović continued his theorising: “Even if it were true, although it is not, that Dalmatia was a Serbian coastal region, that Srem and Slavonija were Serbian, and that the Croatian kingdom was formed despite this; and the Croatian consciousness prevailed there today, this would be a firm proof that Croatian idea and aspiration is sound and safe; which would be a very ominous sign for the spiritual strength of Serbdom. But I believe that a clever Serb understands today the gravity of the Serbian position, and that all the showing off with Bosnia, the whole yelling at the Croats, is nothing else but mere trifling lest someone might be scared and withdraw from his possession for the sake of giving it to them. It is a woeful sign for Serbdom . . . for it falls down in Bačka and Banat before the Germans and Romanians not only corporally, but both corporally and spiritually in old Serbia before the Bulgarians, even before the very Arnauts. Serbdom certainly experiences difficulties with Romanianhood, Bulgarianhood and Vlachianhood in the Serbian principedom itself. Some things cannot be hidden or concealed” (p. 54).

### **e) Denying the Ethnic Values of the Entire Serbian Nation**

According to Pavlinović, the Serbs are hopeless bullies and primitive people, who cannot easily follow the modern civilisational models. He was ready to take all concoctions that Serbian enemies presented about the Serbs to the European public as completely granted truths, and to contribute to the enriching of this repertoire with his own imagination as well. Afterwards, new lectures to the Serbian people followed: “Do, do as Vuk did: collect folk treasures, words, songs, traditions and wise sayings. Do as Vuk did; even if you eat Croatian words and songs, as he ate them, believing that you would eat the Croats in this way! There, let the poor old man be forgiven, since he revealed our common treasure to the world! Do, my gentlemen, as Daničić does: gather your old memories with your pious hand to get to your reason; study the Holy Scripture in order not to lose your religion; instruct your people to sensible judgment, so that their spiritual strength exerts itself and sees great deeds, which will help you raise Serbdom. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bushes. Sing from among the people, as Petrović did. Live with the people and for the people, as

prince Nikola does; chase the Turks away, as the Montenegrins do. Do so, and do not boast and threaten with a rod because you thus became hated by everyone who gets acquainted, if only a bit, with your imprudent endeavours. With your virtuous deeds, instead of wrestling, brawling with the Croats and Serbianising every Christian, you will make Serbdom famous so that it is recognised without bribery and mistrust. Honourable deeds can themselves raise Serbdom in order for something real to be created in the Slavic South” (p. 56-57).

Unlike the Serbs, to whom he denied any ethnic values and spiritual tradition, Pavlinović wrote about the Croats that they had “. . . already drunk their glass bottoms up, and that they brought themselves to their senses. The Croats were burdened with a special weight: the unification of the entire Croatia, the expansion of Christian education, the establishment of religious and state freedom in the East, shaking off the Byzantine influence. The Croats were to determine national autonomy in relation with the West: to introduce it to the value of the Slavic South in new creations within the progress of humankind” (p. 57). Regarding Serbian-Croatian relations, Pavlinović believed they did not need any special harmonisation, under the condition that the Serbs strictly did not interfere in the pretensions of the Croats. “The Serbs have their home, and the Croats have theirs; each of them does their best in their own home or state, and thus they will easily be in harmony. The Croats organise their home for themselves, and the Serbs do that for themselves; therefore, they do not disturb each another. If they want to move their fences away, the Serbs have their fields, pens and tradition, as already mentioned, and the Croats have theirs. Why would the Serbs always be attached to the Croats? Let them spread to the East, like real heroes: they have their major dealings with the Turks, and at times with the Romanians, Bulgarians and Arnauts. On the other hand, the Croats have theirs with the Hungarians, and at times with the Turks, Italians and Germans. The Serb should have, apart from corporal strength, a main reliance on the state and natural right. The Croat greatly relies on the historical right, in addition to spiritual strength. An enemy of a Serb cannot be a friend of a Croat; yet, a Croat fights in one way, a Serb fights in another. Both can act simultaneously: still, as they would be ridiculous if they plotted against each other, so they would be unconscious if they cut the same turf. . . Of course, when you say a Croat and a Serb, it is understood by itself that a Croat is a person who lives in Croatian country, and a Serb is a person who lives in Serbian country. These two names, Croat and Serb, should certainly be taken as two national and state names; otherwise, it would not make sense to regard them as two external national names, since both Croats and Serbs are one and the same people, according to their blood and language, i.e. genealogically” (p. 57-58).

Asked if there were Serbs at all in the Croatian state, Mihovil Pavlinović answered the following through his quasi-literary hero: “There are Serbs in the Croatian Triune Kingdom, according to migration or religion, the so-called Serbian; but, there are no Serbs in Croatia as a people different from the Croatian people, according to homeland or state; and there cannot be any according to their religion” (p. 58). In his opinion, the equalisation of the Orthodox people with the Serbs led “. . . to the fact that the entire Serbian nation would remain either without its state, or without its church or religion. Either, or. But, above all, it led to the fact that whoever was not a Christian could not be named Serb; and whoever belonged to the Eastern Church, no matter if he were a Russian, a Romanian, or a Frenchman, had to become a Serb” (p. 58). Pavlinović responded with a rhetoric question to the remark of his given interlocutor, according to which “. . . each Orthodox person in the Triune Kingdom who confessed the Serbian Orthodox religion and spoke Serbian was a true Serb”: “And what are you going to say to those people

who, not reaching the theological perception of those new religious teachers, truly learn this Serbian name in the church, but yet claim they are the Serbs of the Croatian nation and speak Croatian?" (p. 58).

### **f) The Imposition of the Croatian National Name**

Disguising the problem of the chakavian language as the native Croatian one – which he was not at all able to explain – further on, Pavlinović tried to present the fact that the Croats had always regarded the shtokavian language as the Croatian one. “The Serbian language and the so-called Serbian religion cannot reverse the name of the language and people which is named after their own country and state, and speak the same as the Serbs do. Why, the Croatian name was created in that manner and it remained as the national and state name in the Croatian Triune Kingdom. . . If Croatia is not Croatian, because there is a quarter of the so-called Serbs, i.e. the people of the same language but just of different religion, how can Serbia be Serbian with more than quarter of Romanians and Bulgarians, the people who are different from the Serbs with regard both to their origin and language?” (p. 59). Regarding the remark that Dalmatia, Boka and Srem were completely Serbian, Pavlinović pointed out that only a fifth part of the inhabitants who lived in Dalmatia were Christians, and, regarding Boka and Srem, he added, “If you honestly acknowledge the Croatian state right, of, say, the Triune Kingdom, then you acknowledge the unity of this Kingdom’s land. You know very well that certain districts in the entire Kingdom cannot have an individual state right: the districts are an integral part of the state entity. All your mentioning of Boka and Srem is real political and national nonsense. You Serbs best disprove yourselves, when, at the same time, you would like to impose your Serbian name on the great county of Srem, on the basis of your majority hardly greater than the half, while, according to your religious law, you would not allow the Croatian national and state name in Croatia to the majority of three quarters of the Croats. You best disprove yourselves when you impose your Serbian name on the third of the Croats in the district of Boka, while you, the seventh part in Croatian Dalmatia (excluding Boka), do not accept the Croatian national and state name. You see how difficult it is to be in the wrong and judge right! That is what imprudence and delirium lead to!” (p. 60).

Not disputing the fact that 'Hristians<sup>15</sup> lived in Croatia (whom he consistently differentiated from “Christians” in order to avoid the terms Orthodox and Catholics), Pavlinović demands that those Serbs, who were precisely known when they settled in Croatia, be declared as Croats. “We all know that the Serbs have ever run to Croatia, from the first war with the Bulgarians to the last one with the Turks, and that they have always been accepted as brothers, and protected as the Croats’ own poor people. However, it is a different thing when, in Croatia, a Serb wants to compare his religious or genealogical name with the Croatian state and national name. Ah, this goes in the direction which is not Croatian! Anyway, why the dispute? Why the difference between two names of the same people in one country? And why should the 'Hristians in Croatia be Serbianised?” (p. 61). He believed that the privileges of the Serbian Ecclesiastical-National Assembly made sense only in other parts of Hungary. “There are people with

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<sup>15</sup> This refers to the differences between the Serbian and Croatian dialects. In Serbian, “Christian” is pronounced “*Hrišćanin*”, while in Croatian it is pronounced “*Krišćanin*”.

different languages there who should be dissociated from. The Serbs settled in Bačka and Banat under Leopold I, and obtained certain privileges in addition to the right to return to their homeland again, to Old Serbia, once the emperor liberated it. Yet, I do not understand what goals and what national and educational features a Croatian countryman of the same language can have in Croatia. He needs neither privilege nor border there. When the Croats accepted the *uskoks*<sup>16</sup> from Turkey, they accepted them at theirs; and they found brothers in religion and language there. The Greek-Eastern religion has always been free in Croatia: the Croatian language is equal to the Serbian language” (p. 62). Therefore, all the Orthodox had to “. . . be good Croats of the Eastern Church in Croatia, as their children would be good Italians, or good French, had they run away to Italy or France” (p. 62).

Accordingly, “. . . the Serbs, i.e. the followers of Greek-Eastern Church, have their church-national privileges in Hungary with numerous languages; however, they cannot in their right mind make a separate people of the Serbs (’Hristians), in Croatia from the same people. When the members of the same country and tribe as the Croats force them to acknowledge a separate national name, on the basis of some alleged individuality and consciousness of the people, then the doubt ensues that, through an individual national name, they want to engage in un-Croatian aspirations: aspiration which would subsequently aim at destroying or dissolving the Croatian country. And then, the religion and name would be mere excuses for political goals. . . I know that there are followers of the Greek-Eastern Church in Croatia, some of whom were named after their heritage in their ancient homeland, and are named after their religion today, the Serbs; but I must not admit that these Serbs are some individual people, with some particular national or state right which would deny or oppose the right of the Croatian nation and state. Therefore, I acknowledge those religious or genetic Serbs in Croatia, according to nation and homeland, as people identical to other Croatian people, and thus call them all with one and the same national and state name, the Croats. This is the way all inhabitants of Croatia have been called from times immemorial, and recognised as pure and glorious Croats” (p. 62-63).

With regard to the question what the reaction would be if the Orthodox Serbs became obstinate and consistently identified themselves both as Serbs in respect to nation, and as Orthodox in respect to religion, Mihovil Pavlinović responded, “The Croats have not yet fallen down in the awareness of their right and entity in order to be afraid of your name. But, as it is not reasonable to ask from a Catholic that he regard the followers of the Greek-Eastern Church as ‘orthodox’, thus it is not reasonable to ask from a Croat that he, in his own kingdom, call the people with the same language and of the same country, brothers with whom he shares everything he has – rights, freedom, Croatian national and state glory – using another, allegedly national, name. . . Around twenty years ago, only the statement that there were Serbs in the Triune Kingdom was asked for, for the sake of harmony; and everything would be peaceful. Since, some time ago, a Serbian name for the follower of the Eastern Church started to be used as the allegedly religiously legal name, it benefited this falsely harmless wish. Afterwards, there also appeared a wish to acknowledge that the Serbs and Croats were equal people in the Triune Kingdom. Some perceived this wish as odd, since it was obvious that, in Croatia, those who started to call themselves Serbs were the same people as the Croats, thus there could be no question about national inequality. Yet, this inequality, which was without a subject, if it was not

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<sup>16</sup> Anti-Turkish Serbian guerrilla (in former Austria, present-day Croatia).

about different nations, this state equality, which existed regarding religion in Croatia, was created in the minds of some as if nothing purely Croatian could exist in Croatia. Of course, the name of the Croatian people could not be mentioned by itself, without harming the alleged brotherly harmony with Serbian people, who would no longer live in Croatia but in the Triune Kingdom, as if in some nameless, mutual house. That is how it is, my lord: while he begs (for rights), he has a golden mouth; when he is to give (his duties) in return, he turns his back. Indeed, let us talk as humans. The Serbs are either one people with the Croats or not. If they are one and the same people, the Croatian name, in the Croatian state, is a national and state name, equally of the Serbs and the Croats. If the Serbs are not one people with the Croats, then, precisely then, the Croats cannot allow themselves to be converted into Serbo-Croats; for, they would then cease to be what they are, they would become some kind of half-breed, or even something unneeded” (p. 63-64).

Thus, through his pseudo-logical speculations, Pavlinović reached the relativising of the question of the national name itself, implicitly revealing the ideological core and aims lurking from behind. “Is not the name in question? The Serbian name in the Croatian state should bow to the name of the kingdom, which guarantees one and the same nationality, one and the same language, one state and religious freedom both to the Serbs and Croats. Would the anger against the Croatian name in Croatian country, the anger against the name which takes nothing away from you and gives you everything, be a proof of brotherly love and patriotism, while you deeply bow to the Hungarian state name in Hungary, which recognises nothing but your religion? . . . Not acknowledging a state name, which marks your right, nationality and freedom, breeds suspicion that all public swearing or treating each other as brothers is nothing but the veil of secret endeavours for the downfall of Croatia. . . This new non-love towards everything which is Croatian, this, to say it truly, anti-Croatian fury, opens the eyes of the Croats to finally protect themselves from the villain, who is more dangerous because he is more domestic, who creeps into the poor people under the veil of religious law in order to raise hatred towards their own people, their blood and country. . . These un-brotherly incitements, believe me, mostly instigate the educated Croats of the Eastern Church to start to hate this Serbia name, which would aspire to tear and wrest away the freedom and glory from their Croatian country. Sooner or later, our accounts should be settled!” (p. 64-65).

Regarding the initiative to accept the term “Serbo-Croatian people” for the sake of compromise, with a view of harmony and unity, Pavlinović reflects, “A true Serb will always reject, believe me, this half-breed name, just like a true Croat. This name will be accepted only by those Croatian quasi-Serbs, who did not dare to publicly point out the religious hatred and un-Croatian aspirations in Croatia, and are, therefore, satisfied with just impeding us in the development of Croatian thought and consciousness, and with undermining the reputation of the Croatian people and the united Croatian kingdom in the world. The Croatian-Serbian name will be accepted by those generous patriots, who would like to plant a bait out of Croatian sacrifices with which they would lure all their tribesmen Serbs out of Croatia, in order to engage together in constructing some invented building, which bears no foundation in life whatsoever. Then, Croatianhood-Serbdom would be agreed to by the children, which have already started to make noise and to not think and get to know people, much less act for the freedom of the people. When casting spells, look straight in the eyes, my gentlemen. Where have you heard that this Serbian-Croatian name was accepted in any Serbian area?” (p. 65). Pavlinović regarded the term “Serbo-Croatian language” as “even worse nonsense. You could make two people out of one in the name



somehow, since, according to Turkish nonsense, you have divided it, counting the name of religion and not of nationality. Some of our boors think simple-mindedly of it, as well. But to make two languages out of one and the same language, with a view of assembling it in a whole, is unprecedented, I believe, even among the blacks themselves. By allowing a brother and countryman the Serbian name, to be proud of it as of a religious-national name, he can be as well allowed to find this name in his own language, until he realises his delusion. But I should be asked if I want to call my Croatian language the ‘Croatian-Serbian language’, or if I want to say that I do not have my own language or that it is refined and improved by the mixture of Serbian language” (p. 65-66).

Pavlinović lets the Serbs choose their name as they wish, falsely “tolerantly”, until he succeeded in imposing the Croatian national name on them and Croatian name on their language. “Naming one language by two synonymous names (Serbian or Croatian) can be accepted, because the state name comes along with the national name and marks individually two national groups speaking that language. But assembling two different titles of one language into one appears to me worse than if someone said to me: I eat *kruh-hleb*<sup>17</sup> (bread-bread), or: I breathe *vazduh-zrak* (air-air). This is idleness emerging from unreasonable compliance on one side, and un-Croatian greed on the other, similar to the greed of the false mother at the judgement of Salomon... I neither respect nor damn those so-called Serbo-Croats. But some of the Croats do not even ask whether they called their Croatian language and Croatian people purely Croatian. The Croats do no mind anyone’s titles, but would mind un-Croatian aspirations, which their own unconsciousness would support to some extent if they yielded to further escapades. A conscious Croat has to take care not to confuse our relations in the minds of foreigners, as there have been many cases, unfortunately, to the disadvantage of Croatia. A Croat has to take care not to assent to a conspirator, denying himself and playing the immature youth against each other. There are greater troubles in Dalmatia. The Croats from Posavina call their language Croatian, and the Serbs in the principedom call their language Serbian still: when the Dalmatians say that their language is Serbo-Croatian, then the foreigners think that it is some third language, which is neither Croatian nor Serbian, but some immature mixture which cannot be given some true characteristics of a language. At least, this is what the highly-ranked Viennese gossip about when they are asked about the national language in the middle classroom in Dalmatia. Serbo-Croatian! This is dishonour“ (p. 66-67).

### **g) Accusing the Serbs of Alleged Collaboration with the Austrian-Hungarian Government**

Further on, Pavlinović imputed to the Serbs that, by insisting on the name of their national language, they acted to the benefit of the Austrian government, which prevented the administrative unification of Dalmatia with Croatia and Slavonia. “Conspirators are giving in to crude ingredients. The name of the Croatian language in Dalmatia does not hold with the Cisleithanian government, as our aspiration to unify with Croatia does not hold with them either. Government officers are making efforts in bureaus and barracks in every way in which they could pull the poor Croatian consciousness and name – which is borne in the heart, clothes, land, out of the soul – and to insert the newly

<sup>17</sup> In the Serbian dialect, “bread” is called “*hleb*”, while in the Croatian dialect it is called “*kruh*”.

created name of the Dalmatian people. Of course, the government is helped by the autonomists, who, knowing that they cannot present the Italian name to the people under their noses, are planting a Dalmatian name in them, thus hoping to gain two things: first, that our common people, as alleged Dalmatians, starts thinking that they are different from the Croatians; and second, that the Dalmatian name embraces the Italian language and nationality, then the Illyrian one, then the Slavic one, then the Serbo-Croatian one, and some more, of which, according to the tally of those gentlemen, there are plenty of: as, in their opinion, there are inhabitants of Boka, Morlak, Primorje, Konava, Neretva, Bodula, of all sorts, in half a million Dalmatian souls!? This denial, or at least hiding, of Croatianhood is to the benefit of that enthusiast, who wants, through the difference of religious law, to imprint an awareness of the difference in nationalities, invited to dissolve, under the Serbian name, the Croatian Kingdom into coastal and mountainous regions of a future Dušan's Empire. Those guileless Croats, dreaming of a unified Yugoslavia, resembling a unified Italy, take that 'Serbo-Croatian', governmental and autonomist and Greater Serbian bait; then, those whose greatest Mass today is electors' votes, and tomorrow it will be taken care of by those who are still alive" (p. 67).

Pavlinović considers the interests of those three factors, which simultaneously, in his opinion, support "Serbo-Croatianhood", in the following way: "Serbo-Croatianhood is of a double assistance to the Cisleithania government: first, it mixes the foundations of the state Croatianhood; and second, it provides it with excuses for not implementing the law on the rights of nationalities. Serbo-Croatianhood helps the autonomists, for they know they can easier plant Dalmatianhood with it, which is somewhat older among common people, at least as the name of the country and province Dalmatia; therefore, it can defend itself better against the unknown and suspicious Serbo-Croatian name. Furthermore, this helps autonomists to easier criticise the written language and again say all kinds of things about our political aspirations. Serbo-Croatianhood helps the followers of Dušan (the Emperor), who are against the progress of Croatianhood; since they cannot yet publicly appear with the unknown Serbdom, they endeavour to find its home with Croatianhood, under the veil of brotherly love and harmony, until the circumstances become favourable to present it publicly thick-skinned, and to prove that it is excessive, even if not crazy, to have two names for one single people and one single language, which is, of course, Serbian. Isn't it? Since all the Serbs in Serbia and outside of it support the Serbian name of the people and language, with time, all the 'Hristians would do the same, i.e. a large part of the Croats themselves; accordingly, for the sake of easier pronunciation, the adjective 'Croatian' would drop out of the name of both people and language: there is practically that saying of Vuk's: everyone a Serb everywhere" (p. 67-68).

### **h) Exclusive Croatianhood Instead of the Illyrian Movement and Yugoslavhood**

Ignoring all objective inclinations which made his ideological predecessors reach for the Illyrian Movement or Yugoslavhood, in order to assert Croatianhood in the union with Serbdom and to sway the Catholic Serbs to accept a Croatian national identity, Pavlinović reproached them now, when they had completed an enormous job, since they did not immediately at the beginning of the national campaign go in the direction of exclusive Croatianhood. In this sense, he insisted, "Had the Croats asked for a better direction initially, they would not have wandered through Slavhood, the Illyrian

Movement and Yugoslavhood. You would notice that, especially since the establishment of the youth conspiracy, the literary 'Hristians, accepting the Serbian name outside of Serbia, do not accept the religious name to the extent that they accept the aspirations for Dušan's Empire, which they believe to resurrect through the name. But they impose this aspiration on the common people in the same way as the priests do, only through religious principles, and thus invert things; therefore, in the end, as seen above, the common people accept Serbdom as a part of the 'Hristian religion. . . Especially because of this, we Croats, both Catholics and 'Hristians, have to be careful on time, not to let this Serbian aspiration in Croatian free, where it is not justified at all and where it aims at destroying us. Common people, of course, know nothing about the intention of this harmless Serbian name to ensue through its religious nature. The people do not see that the name of the Serbian religion is directed at their alienation from their heterodox brothers and at dissuasion from their homeland Croatia, in order to plant it easier in the other homeland, which would allegedly be sweeter and more beneficial to their religion. And since the religion has ever been and ever will be a main drive for the greatest national foundations, sacrifice and undertakings, the conscious Croat is to take care not to add names to his national name, which do not make any sense in Croatia if not signifying a religion, and which are able to alienate a good number of the sons from Croatia by means of religious nature and endeavours" (p. 68-69).

### **i) Religious Sentiment Before the National One**

Emphasising the power of the religious sentiment as dominant in comparison with the national identity, expressed either by love or hatred, Pavlinović pointed out that the transformation of the religious into the national can divide the people of two religions. "The creation of a Serb, according to nation, out of a Christian (i.e. Orthodox – note by V. Š.), is equal to forcing a Croat to the aspiration of state unification with the Serbian people. This aspiration is against the right, obligations, spiritual and material benefits of the Croatian people. This aspiration should be rejected by every conscious Croat. This aspiration should be ardently opposed by every Catholic Croat. This aspiration would lead to revolution, to the greatest national downfall. It is unintelligent, unpatriotic, unspiritual and unfeasible. This is why I do not want to be a Serbo-Croat but a Croat, created by God and brought up by my mother country" (p. 69-70). Here the moment appeared for Pavlinović to present his thesis on the superiority of the Roman Catholic religion and its maximum adequacy to the Croatian national entity. As he pointed out: "I am mentioning Catholicism, not with any hostile intents against the brothers of another religion, but only in order to prove that, since the majority of the Croats confesses the Catholic religion, this religion provides them with spiritual unity, a precious treasure, which is to be protected by ever nation as a special gift from God and a guarantee of mutual peace and harmony" (p.70).

He said he did not find faults with the Serbs for fostering and protecting the Orthodox faith, ". . . but we did reproach the Serbs for wishing to plant Serbdom everywhere, and for regarding it as the main means of political Serbianisation; and, in some way, they hold this Orthodoxy of theirs as an integral and inseparable honour of their national and state characteristic. Therewith, the Serbs not only spoil and insult the independence and dignity of their religion, but they also repel all those who might perhaps be Serbs according to nation and state, but who do not want to be so according to religious law. Furthermore,

they repel those neighbours who, bearing their national and state characteristic, do not want to sacrifice it for the sake of mere blood relations, being afraid of adverse consequences for their religion. Of course, in order to save their state independence and to secure the progress of their education and freedom of their religion, they are forced, in some manner, to carefully disassociate themselves from neighbours and relatives, who want to break their unity of people and state through the levers of religion. This is what we reproach them for and protect ourselves against” (p. 70-71). In his wording, Pavlinović advocated for complete religious freedom, but, at the same time, he claimed that inter-religious relations, both in Croatia and in all other Catholic states, were arranged on the principles of this freedom from times immemorial. “The Catholic proved to be tolerable both in France and Austria, and in Rome itself. Rumours about the Spanish inquisition, about St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre, are particular and individual events of the Middle Ages, which were never conducted by the Catholic Church, but were ensued by governments, when all countries regarded disorder in the existing unity of religion as disorder of the general peace; when the codes of all nations claimed that the breach of religious law should be punished before any other breach; finally, when the statesmen abused that religious court, as any other, for their state benefits. There was the inquisition court in the papal state, as well; but there was no ruthless courts of Philip (the Spanish king), which were rebuked and blessed by popes. These courts were not for non-Catholics” (p. 71).

Thus alleviating the real situation in Catholic countries, Pavlinović attempted to present any evidence that the situation was worse in non-Catholic countries and that the Roman Catholics were often systematically persecuted. The alleged atrocities of the English, Russians, Germans and the Swiss, in his opinion, “. . . is concrete evidence of what we can hope for from the Serbian majority. The Croats should protect themselves from Serbo-Croatianhood, because the national Serbdom identified itself with religious-national Serbdom; this, again, obviously seeks to turn into a religious-state or national-state Serbdom in the consciousness of the Croatian citizens. National-state Serbdom is suicide for the Croat; it deprives him of the right to an independent state; it throws him into the deserted field of rebellion from the foundations of lawfulness, kept and established through a century-long struggle and sacrifice: it exposes him to a secure downfall, both spiritual and real; unless that hero is born, the hero who would defeat Turkey at once with his iron club, who would blow away the Austrian Empire and wipe the Hungarians from the face of the earth. . . Your reason tells you that the Croats and the Serbs, if they indeed are the people of a same tribe and language, are not of one thought, one state, rights or equal obligations; we cannot wipe them out today without burying and killing ourselves. The reason between the Serbdom and Croatianhood is not a mere difference of words. There are two histories, two states, two doctrines, two populations, and finally two community-state systems. These differences, along with the union of blood and language, are not ostensible: the division from times immemorial is not without constant consequences; individual development is not without individuality. Croatianhood is, with its difference, Westward; Serbdom is Eastward. The history cannot be entangled: a live person wants his own life. All these differences can be adjusted and assembled into a higher union; it cannot be set into a unit anymore, without destroying one side or another” (p. 72-73).

In order to provide more support to his thesis on the impossibility of complete Serbo-Croatian national unity, Pavlinović offered additional argumentation: “A specific name which mentions a specific history, specific land, specific state entity, is not an empty

name; this name does not allow itself to be changed, as some dress, according to will, ah! On one side, a community, established and fostered on the freest and vastest land, on the deep blue sea; on the other side, on the field of a constitutional fight, principles of the European state right, through the language of civilised Europe (Latin), through Christian-European terms, this community cannot be mixed and identified with the community which the Byzantine Empire covered with the Slavic-Serbian letter, monasticism and courtiers; then the Turkishhood pressed, cut open and cornered it to the very church form. The Serbian teachings followed the path of Dositeje, that unfrocked monk and educator, according to Voltair's views; we see that the priest themselves like Lutheran theological books, which earlier and easier tap Eastern Orthodoxy than Catholicism. That is said for sacral people, excessive public lectures and the students of the Great School. Plenty of evil teachings penetrated among the Croats, unfortunately, from foreign party-papers, books and universities; but these teachings gained round with the Serbs, without objections. A Croat, regardless of which religion, finally feels in his heart that he is not a Serb; the same as when a Serb flies into a rage if you tell him he is a Croat. This may be sad, but it is true; and the worst pity is the politics which dream on falsehood, on non-life" (p. 73).

Regarding the alphabet, Pavlinović thought that both Cyrillic and Latin alphabet were equally Slavic scripts, but favoured the Latin alphabet. How ". . . can we accept that patched-up alphabet when we are assured that you too (referring to the Serbs – note V. Š.) will abandon it, when you see for yourself that the letters are mere tools for education: the simpler, the more adequate. The Cyrillic alphabet will not expand your Serbdom as it will not defend Orthodoxy. Look at the Germans abandoning their gothic letter, allegedly national!" (p. 74). It is sad that the Croats did not take the ikavian dialect as a literary one. "We, the kind-hearted Croats, suddenly renounced, for the sake of harmony, both our name and our ikavian dialect, which almost alone ruled our old books, and exists today among the majority of our people from Osik to Vis. The brothers followed for some time; but, when they saw that the orthography according to the Lower Herzegovinian dialect gained ground in Croatian literature, the dialect which Vuk pronounced as the most beautiful and purest Serbian dialect, the brothers started to withdraw; and, as if not to mix with the Croats, they withdrew to the ekavian dialect of Šumadija" (p. 76). Pavlinović claimed the Serbian national songs were Serbian as much as Croatian. In his opinion, it was not sufficient to be only Serbian ". . . because the Serbs first brought them to light. But a song is not a girl, who first comes, is first served. Song belongs to the entire people. So-called female songs are equally sung by the Croats and the Serbs. And heroic songs of the Middle Ages are almost all Croatian, from the time of the *uskoks* from Senj and Kotari" (p. 79).

Pavlinović was able to offer an explanation for the fact that those old epic songs celebrated Serbian emperors and princes, and did not even mention ancient Croatian rulers. According to him, ". . . it is all natural. Subject matter, pictures, national poetry, is as old as the people. With the occurrence of a folk event, a folk song particularly formed around it. The old Croatian heroic age is long since gone; so everything in the following Croatian life went regularly and peacefully. Then the horror of Turks and doomed Kosovo arrived. Of course, entire older folk songs gathered around the decline of Kosovo, which mixed the Slavic South, and almost destroyed Serbia, in order to lament; then all the folk woes and ancient glories and the new ones listed in addition to it. Yet, there is still ancient Croatian song. See just those about the Ban Strahina!" (p. 79). In order to harm the Serbs more severely, Pavlinović ascribed to them not only to have taken a majority of the songs from the Croats, but being spiritually empty and incapable of nation-building as a people,

and pointed, as a proof, to the conspiracy for the murder of Prince Mihailo Obrenović, while especially finding fault with the Serbian youth for freedom-like aspirations in social life. He claimed that the Serbs were without a living religion, actually superstitious, greedy for what is not theirs and cunning. He even reproached them for their hostile attitude towards the Western crusaders on their journey through Serbian countries. By a caricatured and gleeful presentation of the entire Serbian history, Pavlinović suggested that this “. . . should make all the sons of Croatia, both Catholics and ’Hristians, see that they are unaware, believing that it would help the national matter, or make them proud, if they called themselves Serbs. Pseudo-Serbs and quasi-Serbs should finally take the drunkard glasses of haughtiness and boasting away from their mouth, which turn their blind eyes to the abyss of Serbian problems” (p. 90).

Pavlinović said that the Croats were Papists, indeed. “Papists, of course, if they recognised the Pope as the spiritual head of their Catholic Church, and if, in the Middle Ages, popes, the only carriers of advanced state thought, were the judges of international law; it was precisely them who introduced the Croats into the order of state nations. . . Not only Gregory, but many popes before him actively engaged in the strengthening of the Croatian state, while Byzantine emperors sought conversely to rout it by all means. . . Gregory VII wanted to place, next to the rotten Byzantine state, a real Christian one: which would inherit it in its time. He reckoned that only Croatia had sufficient strength to accept the guarding of the Eastern gate and to resist the attack of Islamism” (p. 97-98). The Croats relied on the Roman Catholic Church as “. . . the support to their state independence and the Church of divine blessing among people. The Church will bloom eastward through Croatia; and the reputation of Croatia will be multiplied by ten through the Church. . . In Croatia, there were the followers of the Greek-Eastern Church, some from times immemorial, some since the Turkish wars; but, up to recently, they were all called Croats, because they and their fathers’ fathers were born in Croatia, spoke Croatian, fostered the Croatian idea, shed their blood for Croatia for centuries, and enjoyed all the Croatian privileges without objections. The Serbian name came to Croatia from the Serbian principdom, partly through the Serbian immigrants, and partly through the priests and monks brought up in Sremski Karlovci. Croatian kind-hearted politics were first impressed by Serbdom, for the sake of young hopes, which were fostered around the Serbian independent smallish country, naturally among innocent hearts. Serbia was waking up; Croatia still snoozed, wrapped in a Hungarian rug and a Venetian dolman. The Serbian name started to be connected with the religious law, and the Croatian name started to be removed with the followers of the Eastern Church. The war against the Turks, the heroism of Karađorđe and Miloš provided national pride, which had not appeared in Croatia since the last Turkish wars. During the last wars with the Germans, French and Italians, the lords, sacristans, and literary writers were Germanised, Hungarianised and Italianised, and all of them buried the pride of the Croatian name. Of course, the Croatian name was defamed through Italian movements: while the Serbian name became more honourable and dearer through the heroism of the rising people, and even more through the action of several partial and ignorant literary writers (Šafarik, Stefanović, Kopitar, Grim, Miklošić). Therefore the current tumult appeared, and therefore, a greater obligation for the Croats to shine light on the right and honour of the Croatian name” (p. 105-106).

### **j) Pavlinović's Fury at the Independent Political Appearance of the Dalmatian Serbs**

Pavlinović offered the freedom of religion and all civil rights and complete equality to the Serbian Orthodox, under the condition that they fulfilled their duty towards the "unified" Croatian people and the "entire" Croatian state. "If we all are the beneficiaries of one Croatian freedom, if we all are the sons of one Croatian country, we all are liable to be proud of Croatian citizenship; we are all liable to say to the world that we are the sons of one mother Croatia. If some of the 'Hristian brothers in Croatia do not want to be called Croats according to the tribe, they should admit, what everyone living knows, that they are Croats according to the Croatian country and Croatian state" (p. 106). Boasting about the tradition of a made-up Croatian constitutionality and even claiming that the "Croatian constitution" was older and more individual than the English one, Mihovil Pavlinović still subsumed all Croatian national aspirations under the interests of the governing Austrian dynasty. He believed that a permanent interest of the Habsburg imperial house was to strengthen the entire state by strengthening Croatia ". . . through the legal unification of Dalmatia, then, in a most favourable diplomatic manner, the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the position of Austria in central Europe would improve, which would be most adequate for the peace in the West. Thus, the Eastern question would be solved in the first instance, and the way would be paved for the revival of the East, without an abrupt downfall of Turkey and deaths by Russia. Work on the strengthening of Croatia is the work for the Dynasty and an equal alliance of those kingdoms of His Majesty's, which had no centres out of the borders of the Empire. The reputation and influence that the Austrian-Hungarian state still has today in the world is a huge support to Croatia, which would thus, for the sake of state needs, have the best reimbursement for the innumerable sacrifices which it made through centuries for Christianity, civility and the Empire. A unified Croatia, with the extended land in Bosnia and countless ports on the way to Suez, shall become, so God help us, the main federal kingdom" (p. 107-108).

Emphasising a thesis that the Croats, unlike the Serbs, reached a high degree of spiritual individuality, Pavlinović concludes his brochure with an additional undermining of the Serbian people. In his opinion, ". . . Serbdom would hardly achieve anything while it rubs itself off with Orthodoxy: this identification of Serbdom with Orthodoxy is to its disadvantage before Europe, for the fear of Russia; it bothers it before the Catholics, for the Eastern arrogance and intolerance. Of course, this identification of Serbdom with Orthodoxy scares even Serbia's co-believers, the Bulgarians, and repulses them from the Serbs, for the fear of Serbianisation which is ruthlessly driven by the Zion Party in Serbia. Indeed, the Serbian people and country bear the Greek-Eastern, or Byzantine mark, just as the Croatian people and country, of course, have the Roman Catholic (European) significance. But the Serbs should clear the hatred of the Catholics from their heart. . . The Serbs should clear that hatred which Dušan horribly wreaked. . . Dušan ordered to gouge the eyes out of the Catholics, although, in his army, he had many well-chosen soldiers and a main war-lord who were Catholics; although he again negotiated with the Pope concerning unification, calling him a spiritual father, knowing himself that the crown for Stefan the First-Crowned had come from Rome. When Dušan wrested Bosnia, up to Travnik, from Stjepan, he incited Serbian bishops and priors to banish Catholic priests and friars, and to force the people to be christened again, similar to that in Russia today. Silver and gold were carried

off from the Catholic churches in Zeta, and all the most inhuman deeds were performed compared to the craziest religious banishments ever” (p. 110).

In the same year, Pavlinović published *Folk Documents* (Narodni List, Zadar, 1876), in which he sought to promote his basic idea with a semi-narrative style and tendentiously altered folk songs, and already the following year in *Croatian Conversations* (Narodni List, Zadar, 1877), he expanded his dispute in the form of a dialogue, including many trivial issues. The political Croatianisation of the Dalmatian population under the veil of the administrative unification of Croatia and Slovenia gained its foothold initially with the Orthodox Serbs, who naively believed in the honesty of the promoter of Serbian-Croatian national unity. Regaining consciousness and realising the Croatian-centrist and Roman Catholic fraud, the Serbs started to present them politically in an independent manner, having despised the empty phrases of “triune”, which motivated Pavlinović to vent his own fury, bile and hatred in the brochure *Croatian Thought and Serbian Thought in Dalmatia from 1848 to 1882* (Narodni List, Zadar, 1882). Mostly, he came down on Božidar Petranović and Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša. Pavlinović said that Serbian national thought in Dalmatia first appeared bashfully and subtly out of the “. . . slogan ‘divide and rule’ and in 1880; it appeared in the light of the day with its ‘godfathers’, priests, and a nanny, the youth of the Greek-Eastern seminary” (p. 24). The Serbs, both Orthodox and Catholics, asserted the Serbian national consciousness and demanded political individuality in Dalmatia. In addition, they rejected phrases about the historical right and Croatian political nation. Pavlinović most rebuked Dalmatian Catholics of preserved national consciousness, and said that they acted “. . . under the name of Serbo-Catholics, diminishing and reproaching everything Catholic and Croatian in the world, and spreading subversive religious and state theories” (p. 25).

The Serbian Party and national thought in Primorje spoilt many plans of the centre of Roman Catholic Croatian movement, and Pavlinović said that it “. . . shaped itself independently, with the main aim of Serbian unity and independence, with the coastal, mountainous and Danubian provinces of Dušan’s Empire, where there was room, if not name, for Croatia and Bulgaria. However, as much as this Serbian Party in Dalmatia today was the origin of independence and political aspirations, no one in the world hid the vague and independent conception, such as the first initiatives being neither political nor patriotic” (p. 27). Complaining that he needed a lot of patience to present the gradual development of the Serbian idea and its endeavours, Pavlinović said that, with time, Serbian minds were filled with those thoughts and inconsistencies. “What is favourable in Zagreb is intolerable in Zadar. What smoulders in Cetinje under the bush is what blows in Novi Sad and flares in Belgrade. An extraordinary abundance of insincerity, contradiction, difference in request. But, all this does not bother the unified thought: Serbdom, all and everywhere along with natural Orthodoxy, to govern on the ruins of Croatia. Poisoning people to unify easier, teaching to hate brothers in order to suppress patriotism, rebuking religion and freedom of consciousness to uncultivate national freedom! Plotting against your own country to resurrect an invented fatherland from the dead!” (p. 27).



## **B. The Direct Ideological Predecessors of the Genocidal Clerical-Fascist Creation of the Independent State of Croatia**

### **1. Ante Starčević as the Founder of the Modern Croatian National Ideology**

Up to the time of Ante Starčević, a Croatian national ideology did not even exist in the true sense of this word. Individual ideological efforts of several authors represented merely thematically limited romantic outburst of emotions, and the Illyrian and Yugoslav wanderings are the best testimony of the lack of national identity and a collective consciousness which would gather the different ethnical substratum, chakavian, kajkavian and shtokavian, on the Roman Catholic religious foundation. Ante Starčević, as well, born at Žitnik near Gospić in 1823, was a cadet of the Roman Catholic seminary, the one in Pest, where he obtained his Ph.D. in Philosophy and Liberal Arts, in 1848. In 1861, he established the Croatian Party of Rights, and the political extremism he promoted was classified as an anti-Hungarian rebellion; therefore, Starčević was sentenced to a month in prison in Zagreb in 1863. He went to prison again in 1871 for several months. Several times, he was an assembly representative, and his party published as its papers *Horvat*, *Horvatska* and *Sloboda*<sup>18</sup>. The assembly club of the Party of Rights started to publish his collected works in 1893, and a re-printed edition was published in 1995 (Inačica, Varaždin, 1995).

#### **a) Tudjman on the Criminal Course of Starčević**

Writing a preface to the re-printed issue of Starčević's works, the then President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tudjman characterised the historical role of his ideological founder in the following manner: "Today, in our time, a hundred years after the death of Dr. Ante Starčević – ideologists of the modern Croatian national programme for the creation of an independent Croatian state, based on the Croatian historical state right – when we hold in our hands his *Works*, it seems that the entire entanglement of the fate of the Croatian people in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which found one of its most stratified and most consistent interpreters precisely in Starčević, appears before our eyes. Although his interest was and remained in the world of the time when he lived and acted, Starčević devoted his most lucid thoughts to the Croatian people and its position in the tangled hank of political relations of that time. Starčević's texts, in which he warned of a Croatian people who did not understand the core of the political fate of their own people, and thus continually placed it within the political interests of others, have been of particular significance up to now. Consistency and firmness in thinking and promoting Croatian statehood and national self-importance make Dr. Ante Starčević the founder of the self-important, Croatian nation-building political thought, the creator of a modern idea of Croatian national independence" (*Works of Dr. Ante Starčević*, Book I, Orations, p. 4).

Tudjman explicitly confirmed that he was a follower of Starčević's ideology of the "Croatian historical right", and that Starčević's work presented a true and permanent inspiration for him during the creation of the current independent Croatian state. He expressed these attitudes with the following wording: "It is not accidental that today's

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<sup>18</sup> *Croat, Croatia and Freedom*

sovereign and independent Croatia found its most important source in the work of the Father of the Country, basing its programme, besides general democratic principles of modern civilisation, *inter alia*, on Starčević's Croatian historical state right. The *Works of Dr. Ante Starčević* were a permanent and true inspiration to the people who inherited and promoted the idea of a free Croatia during difficult and turbulent times, which particularly contributed to the creation of a sovereign independent state. I believe that today's generations, and particularly the young ones, will find, in this supplemented and enriched edition, the same encouragements which fearlessly lead the most exquisite Croatian people in their fight for the realisation of Croatian statehood on the rough path towards Croatian freedom and sovereignty, with faith in an independent Croatia" (p. 4).

It emerged that Franjo Tuđman and his neo-Ustasha regime showed special promptness, consistency and sturdiness in the implementation of Starčević's ideological viewpoints towards the Serbian people, and the most important aspect for this study is precisely the one of Starčević's entire political doctrine. The overall Serbian destiny during the First World War and the Second World War, as well as during the civil war due to the dissolution of the Yugoslavian state, is precisely projected in Starčević's works. Dormant for centuries, the Roman Catholic hatred towards the people who persistently rejected to accept papal primacy, and settled as an insuperable obstacle for the penetration to Eastern European and Asian lands, poured out of the pen of the main Croatian national ideologist like a torrent, and was articulated as a criminal vow which followed the succeeding generations of the Catholic Serbs, forced to identify themselves as members of Croatian nation, whom they had no ethnical relations with for almost two thousand years.

### **b) Equalising the Serbs with Slaves and Itching**

Attributing a light mixing of the letters "v" and "b" to ancient Roman and Greek writers, Starčević endeavoured to equalise the conceptual meaning of the word "servus" with that of the word "serbus" in his treatise *The Name Serb*, in 1868. On that basis, he claimed that the nouns "Serbi" and "Servi" had completely the same meaning, and thus concluded, "If this truth were known and considered by those writers, who gloat with the name Serb, in all probability, they would not be so willing to write or talk about the nation of the Serbs" (Book 3, *Scientific-Political Treatises*, p. 54). From there it follows that the name "Serbi" (the Serbs) signifies slaves, but this was not enough for Starčević; further on, he constructed that the Serbs originated from slave bastards of the Scythians. Even for the term "Slavi" (the Slavs), i.e. Slaveni or Sloveni, he said they signified slaves, therefore, both "Serbs" and "Slavs" would have identical meaning.

Whereas some of the Slavists, on the basis of ancient works, concluded that the Serbian name was more widespread in ancient times than the Slavic one, Starčević presented his viewpoint that ". . . therefore, it is no wonder that the name Serb, even before the names Slav, Wend, Anta, etc. appeared, and together with these names and after them, covered all Slavs as a general name, and it is no wonder that the name Serb is so widespread. Who does not see that Slav and Serb are the same, that both these names replace a slave, consistently, that these are not personal names but common, general words?" (p. 63-64).

Apart from the Serbs originally being "people of the slaves", Starčević related their ethnic name to the word *svrab* (itching), for which he said it had been pronounced as

“serb” among the Croats, and then continued, “Earlier, the *serb* (itching) was a greater trouble than leprosy, and it is known that the ancient peoples suffered from leprosy. Thus, leprosy was just one type of *serb* (itching)” (p. 68). Besides, “. . . there were many kinds of *serbs*, and it attacked not only people but livestock as well. *Serbiva* (itchy) or a leprous sheep is just a word today, but Virgil cried bitterly because: ‘a detestable *serb* attacked his sheep’. Who can hear today of *serbiva* sheep or cattle? Even then, Cato shouted at the top of his voice: ‘Take care of the cattle and poultry not to get ‘itchy’. In short, *serb* and *serbež* could be found often with the same Romans, where *serb* was rarer than in the east, and further in south. With the Greeks, *serb* developed more ferociously than the same leprosy. It is little known about louse, the thing which is compared with the *serbež*; but it made a lot of work for the ancient people. . . Well, for the connoisseur of the ancient times, there is no wonder in the Serbian name, if it emerged from *serbež*” (p. 68-69).

One would already start thinking that “*serb*” and “*serbež*” are international expressions for itching, as Starčević presented in his translated quotations. “Titus Flavius Josephus complained about the writers who noted that the Jews in Egypt were *serbivi*, which meant the same – leprous” (p. 69). Ignoring the way this expression read in the original, Starčević noted to his mainly uneducated audience that it was identical and that *serbiv* people were in question. “What cannot be concealed here is the truth that the Jews brought the *serb* from Egypt; ancient books tell about this illness mixed with leprosy” (p. 70). Hence comes the objection to domestic writers who “. . . call the majority of Croatian people with the name Serbs, all based on the foundation of a name which they neither understand nor know how it was created in Croatia” (p. 71).

### c) Serbs, the Main Culprits for Hungarianisation, and Other Paradoxes

These principal viewpoints and pseudo-historiographical speculations were just Starčević’s foundation for a political confrontation with Serbian national representatives. He started his confrontation with the treatise *Parties in Croatia*, published in *Hrvat* in that same year, directed primarily against the *Mađarons* (pro-Hungarian activists), mainly Croatian noblemen joining greater Hungarian ideologists from Pest. The alleged poisoning of the Croatian national entity with the Slavic-Serbian spirit was, in his opinion, an additional factor of danger during the time of intensive Hungarianisation and proof of double guilt of the denationalised noblemen. “Instead of crushing the Illyrian-Slavic-Serbdom at once; instead of ardently advocating for Croatianhood; proving that Illyrian Serbia is nothing but Croatia, both in history and law for centuries, and in nationality today; that Illyrian-Serbian-Slavhood is nothing but an illusion, under which the Croats would destroy and bring distress to themselves, and instead of all this, *Mađarons* joined the Hungarians” (p. 98).

Starčević severely reproached the Slavo-Serbs, besides *mađaronština*<sup>19</sup>, and also Russophilia, which he explained as follows: “During the Crimean War, the West rose up against Russia. What with? With all of its strength: needling and talking, swearing and rebuking opponents. What did Croatia get for that inclination towards Russia? The fact that Germanhood was introduced to us, with praises from almost all of Europe; the fact, that our shackles were tightened; the fact that, in addition to the misfortune we had, we

<sup>19</sup> Pro-Hungarian activism.

gained the hatred of all the educated, of all the progressing world: we were given all this as tools of Slavhood. Did Russia help us? It has been proved by the nature of things, even clearer with the act, that the West cannot bear Russian domination in the East; that it will not allow Russia even a fortress at the Black Sea; that it is more powerful than Russia; that the people of Crete, having shed so much blood and crushed up their country, fell down because they rose in the tenor of Russia; that Russia, regarding a small abhorrence of the West, instead of helping Crete, it begged and swore that it did not have its hand in Crete. On these facts, the Slavo-Serbs narrate about the omnipotence of Russia and say that it is going to set us free. . . . By all means, Russia wants to obliterate religion, nationality, people and the name of the Poles, which is not to be punished but obliterated to the end. Regarding this action of Russia, the Slavoserbs sing a Russian anthem” (p. 100-101).

Starčević stated that the Serbs originally opposed the overtaking of the control by the *Mađarons*, but, afterwards, they completely adjusted to it. According to the original political clamour, it appeared “. . . that none of the Slavoserbs were going to stay in Croatia, or at least in service, but would move away to their old Slavia or Serbia, or that they would banish Hungarians or *Mađarons* out of Europe. When this did not take off, they did not just move away and hold firmly to their services, but they stuck out their tongues to *Mađarons*; they behaved in such a manner, that as there were no Germans among them, there is neither Hungarians nor *Mađarons* among them today” (p. 101). Blinded by a boiling hatred, Starčević accused Serbs of being guilty of the Croats finding themselves under Hungarian rule. He even referred to Aristotle, whom he ascribed to have noticed, in his time, the existence of entire peoples of a slavish, “subservient” nature. “The Slavoserbs must have originated from that impure race, the Slavoserbs who are not just slaves in everything but who work on making everyone, even themselves, come to slavery and stay there. There are the Slavoserbs who were made such by foreigners. The foreigners seek to find several men among people who are excellent for their purposes, quick for honour and money. They try to make these people famed among others; they, in their time, twisted and beguiled people so that they themselves rushed to ruin” (p. 107). In Starčević’s categorical apparatus, the term “Slavoserb” became a headword for everything bad and immoral, for every obsequious and treacherous behaviour. “The immigrants in Croatia account for the Slavoserbs. Those people despise a nation when they see that they do not respect themselves. A foreigner is born in Croatia and gets old without learning Croatian: if a foreigner came among fifty Slavoserbs, stayed there for five years, if he were a brewer, all of them would adjust to him and speak, if they know how, his language. There are Slavoserbs who mean well but do wrong, love people and freedom and yet betray both. Those are the people who walk on the feet of others, who stick to the unreasonable harmony and majority. If eight out of ten people say that Christmas comes before Christmas Eve and this is obligatory, both of those remaining Slavoserbs would accept that, and would pronounce everyone who mars such harmony as a madman and a thief. Every Slavoserb, every *Mađarolac*, fits into one of these five types. Actually, they are all the same: slavery means population to all of them, and they are a population of slavery. Therefore, as long as there is slavery, there will be the Slavoserbs, and as long as there are Slavoserbs, there will be slavery” (p. 108).

#### **d) Starčević's Explicit Anti-Slavic Viewpoints**

Starčević was endlessly bothered by the fact that the Serbs had such a highly developed national consciousness, and he would Croatianise them very gladly, and therefore he fought tooth and nail to besmirch their national name, presenting it as unworthy and a headword for various immoralities. Besides Serbs, he would gladly Croatianise the Slovenes as well, and he attempted to present the Serbian name as an artificial and planted creation, explaining this viewpoint in the following manner: "A hundred years have not passed since the Slavoserbs, the people of Russia and Austria, endeavoured to make the Serbian name a national one. It has not been forty years since they started imposing this name on the Montenegrins. Among our people, between Macedonia and Germany, no one, besides the Slavoserbs, regards this name as national. During eight centuries of the existence of our literature, there has not been even a trace of Serbian literature or Serbian national history. The religion known today as 'Eastern Orthodox' was not known anywhere, even in Greece, until the time of Russian King Peter I. Until then, the Eastern Church remained with the ancient rites and believed that it had objections to the established Church assembly and its conclusion. However, it had never concluded something opposite to that conclusion, but remained with the ancient ways there as well. This real Eastern Church was followed by, in stable times, almost the entire population of the eastern and north-eastern country. From the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century on, it was noticed that the impermanent population of the Turkish Empire lingered in the Croatian provinces of Turkey. Those people escaped before the Turks and settled next to our current borders with Turkey, in the lower area around the Sava River and the Drava River, and in the neighbouring Hungary. Those people were mainly of Romanian nationality. They were of neither Christian religion, and were accepted here under the condition that they would take on Christianity. Those people were called, and even called themselves, Albanians, Raci, Vlachs, Greeks, Illyrians, everything except Serbs. Having taken on Christianity as found among the domestic Croatian people, those people mixed through marriages so much, it was Croatianised so much, that today, in those areas, there are tribes of both religions, without differentiating one man from another in anything" (p. 115).

The Serbs in Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, therefore, by origin they may be literally anything, but Starčević persistently negated that they are real Serbs. He even "Croatianised" the Orthodox, although he never managed to impose the Croatian national consciousness on them. He attributed the basic guilt to the Russians for the identification of Orthodoxy with Serbdom. "Russian Peter I made himself the head of church and religion, which means that he made religion a mere tool of the state. Yet, we do not know the extent to which this spirit entered the Eastern Church of Croatia and Turkey; but the Russian Church is obliged to do what and how its emperor commands. This is ancient Greekhood, new Byzantinehood, current Russianhood; but the Croatian Church, either Western or Eastern, has never legally agreed to it. Since Russia set to the East, it says it is the guardian of the Eastern Church. The Slavoserbs are paving the way for it. Austria, knowing that there would not be Russia in the East, helped the Slavoserbs, and they work precisely for it. For, what can be more favourable to it than the dissolving of the Croats, their disharmony and living in dreams? The population of the Eastern Church is mainly an ancient Croatian population, and the remaining part recast into Croats. And those privileges, given by the Emperor Leopold I to Arsenije Černojević and his fugitives, are for these people, and the entire people and their religion, just tolerated or not, is neither

set on a worthy place nor assessed. And it has never occurred to the Slavoserbs to help raise greater educational establishments for religion for these people, or to facilitate the maintenance of the priesthood. However, the Slavoserbs take care of the Tyroleans, Austrians, Czechs, etc. The Slavoserbs seek to make these purely Croatian people a Serbian nationality” (p. 116).

According to Starčević, the real Serbs are unquestionable Croats, and he also demanded that the Serbs from the Principedom of Serbia Croatianise as soon as possible, because that was the only way for them to save themselves from the serious danger of being Romanianised. “In the Principedom of Serbia, except the influence of Jesuits and their fellows, the situation with nationality is quite the same as ours. Whatever our readers deemed about this, what we are going to say must be unconditionally maintained by any statesman. That foreign breed, which spread from Turkey and was Croatianised across the mentioned countries, where it did not mix with Croatian breed, even today bears a particular, non-Croatian form and special nature. But, they make the minority. However, the nationality of that breeds sustains itself so weakly, that Romanianhood mowed it down. This applies to the simple people as well. There are Romanians in the Principedom of Croatia; even so, there is no possibility that they would become in-Romanianised, although there are not a lot of them with regard to the proportion of other people and the influence of the non-Romanian government. And what is the situation with the simple people, for instance, in Banat? Our, that is, the Serbian people were Romanianised there. Let’s take into account only fifty years, and compare according to nationality many places in Banat, at the beginning of this century and today. We will find there that Romanianhood rapidly spread during this period, to our disadvantage. The Eastern Church of our nationality has had power over Romanians so far. Since Romanianhood suffocates us so much so far, what will happen in some 50 to 100 years, when Romanianhood flourished with new strength? This question will be answered by every expert not governed by impure passion: if Serbdom remains isolated, if the Serbs do not stick to Croatianhood and restore their strength from it, the same language heard in Bucharest today will be heard in Belgrade in some hundred years. The Serbs have no strength to support their nationality, nothing can be built on that nationality. Here is another possibility: that the foreign breed will perish if it does not mix with the Croatian breed. The readers should consider marriages, matrimones. Care should be taken of educated people and common people. The readers shall notice that pure marriages, when both husband and wife are of that breed, have no children. Conversely, where only one, either husband or wife, is of that breed, the readers can see fertility and the blessing of God. This means that the foreign breed has no future” (p. 116-117).

On the other hand, Starčević would Croatianise all the Slovenes, relying on the fact that the Slovenes from Zagreb, Križevci and Varaždin, the kajkavians, had mainly been Croatianised. Regarding this, he wrote: “Slovenianhood will be considered in short. We have noticed that simple people are called Slovenes. We do not know since when. But we do know that this branch of Croats moved to its current homeland even before the remaining Croats conquered the entire former Dalmatia; we also know that Slovenia was a limb of the remaining part of Croatia, and that it was separated from it in pieces starting from some 700; finally, we know that those people speak the Croatian language, or, as others say, dialect. We do not know in detail how the Germans fascinated them during that time. We know how the Slavoserbs fascinate them today, and we say a lot when saying that there are mostly Russian evangelists and students in Carniola and Styria. The direction of a Slavic messiah is

too obvious; not allowing the strengthening of Catholicism in the East, not allowing the harmonisation and strengthening of Croatian nationality. As long as three nationalities are in question, as long as it is acted on three sides, with every side plotting against both neighbours, until the people of the same religion are gathered, until then there is no progress in Croatia, the Slavoserbs can be servants for wage, Russia may have hope until then. To conclude the matter of Slovenianhood; we direct these questions to the Slovenes: How long are you going to wait for your salvation by the Russians, on the basis of the past and present? Will you yourself fall down and ruin your people during your waiting? If you care about your religion, can you protect it from Protestantism, which is knocking on your door? If you care about your nationality, can you develop and maintain it against Germanhood and Italianhood, which are embracing you? If you care about welfare, trade, turnover, can you hope for it as receipts of Italy or Germany? If you love peace, can you have it as a limb of Italy or Germany, as a limb of the countries which cannot move away facing any intrigue in the West? Conversely, if you are a limb of your Croatian people, try to answer these questions and then judge: who is waited for, if not you, by the fruits of such land too fertile and neglected, the fruit of craft, turnover and trade, of which not even a seed-bud appeared with us? Indeed, if we, who are writing this, were for example Greeks, and if our country were the Princedom of Serbia or Carniola, we would state this judgment of ours about the situation and future of our people and country. We should be careful in order not to search for each other too late. Was it needed, in order to reach such a simple and obvious conclusion, to blacken so many papers answering the first question of this article? This was not needed for those who adjusted to bowing to every word heard from the mouths of Austria or Russia, or seen from the pen of the Slavoserbs. We are not writing for such” (p. 117-118).

In his polemical zeal and through his unscrupulous attacks against his opponents and the political opponents of the Party of Rights, Starčević often called them all “Slavoserbs”, regarding this, perhaps, as the lowest possible level of degrading and the greatest offence. “We regard the Slavoserbs as such a worthless bunch, that we believe that they, outside of their community, cannot have any, and hardly us, as envious or hostile; but, that bunch of people sold themselves to anyone who wanted them, served and serves as tools against our people and country, because their strength lasts until their mask is taken off, and then the people see and perceive that bunch in their true light. We were taking that mask off, we will be taking that mask off and we will have it taken off. The readers know that our judgments of the Slavoserbs are not just empty words; the readers know that this bunch made an offer to our party, it wanted to mix with us; but, we rejected such an impure population. We shall endeavour that this holy passion does not leave us in the future either” (p. 129). And all those who criticise the programme of the *Pravaši* are “Slavoserbs”, according to Starčević. “Indeed, who objects to our programme? The Slavoserbs and their teachers. Why are they objecting? Because they are the Slavoserbs, enemies of freedom, people and country; because only our programme stands in their way; because they know that only our supporters are not activists of their actions; because they see their standing is weak while our programme exists. And how are they objecting to us? In such a manner that they condemn themselves in every objections, and strengthen our programme, and what is most beautiful, neither they nor their municipalities see this. However, we know this is a particular breed, and therefore do not wonder” (p. 130). The main criticism for Serbs and Slovenes is constantly presented regarding their rejection to be Croatianised. “But, if the Serbs and the

inhabitants of the Krajina believe they can do without Croatianhood, how come the Slavoserbs do not stand up to Croatianhood but sacrifice it for a Serb and a person from the Krajina? If these people, without any national history, without ancient literature, intend to stay by themselves, why are the Slavoserbs betraying Croatian literature and Croatian history, why are they desecrating Croatian nationality with some impure ingredients? While those people work for themselves alone, not for the entire Croatianhood, can we regard their sons, who live in our country, as something else but foreigners, enemies? In one word: while those people do not care about the Croats, why do the Slavoserbs not only care about those people, but precisely subject the Croats to them? However, besides the Slavoserbs and their teachers, who invented, who incites, who inflames those nationalities against Croatianhood? Nobody. If there were no Slavoserbs and their teachers, how long would that clamour, those nationalities, last? Not even a year. Who is, then, the culprit of that intrigue and disagreement? The Slavoserbs themselves and their teachers” (p. 131).

For Starčević, the expression “Slavoserbs” represented a collective term encompassing all kinds of betrayal, corruption and meanness. ”If the Slavoserbs betray our country to anyone for money, are not they teaching or authorising everyone else to do so? For, if anyone plots to make our country a municipality of Italy, or Turkey, etc., what can those Slavoserbs, who made Croatia a municipality of Hungary, object to him? Are not all treasons actually the same, do not they all kill the national existence? The Slavoserbs regard the entire people as merely a base to satisfy their selfishness. What would happen if one Slavoserb were paid by a Russian, another by an Italian, etc? Not only would there be disagreement among the people, but we would gladly watch what the Slavoserbs would do among themselves, as well!” (p. 131). The ”Slavoserbs” and their social communities, according to Starčević, are “skin bags which bellow and roar as Austria, Russia or someone else blows them up; those are the heads which measure practicality only according to their particular advantages and disadvantages, those are the people who stand below the lowest crudeness in their knowledge and reason” (p. 135).

### **e) Denying the Entire Serbian History and Settling Accounts With the Illyrian Movement, Pan-Slavism and Yugoslavhood**

Expressly supporting anti-Slavic viewpoints, Starčević sarcastically named everything he understood under the term “Slavoserbs” (with a synonymous term *Mađarolci*) in his treatise *Would you go to Slavhood or Croatianhood?* improvised in the form of a dialogue. Addressing the “more moderate” urban public workers, he insisted on the following, with ultimate zeal: “You are making mistakes against Croats and Croatia when you regard Slavs, *Mađarolci* and what-is-the-name-of-that impure spawn as livestock or any other common name up to now. Take care of your humanity, your nobility; traitors to a nation and a country should be called real names. There will come a time when these masked conspirators against Croatia will cry at the top of their voice that they were stupid, a silent treasure, when they betrayed Croatia. Is it right that this excuse, this confession, helps them, defends them from due punishment? No, it is not. Not knowing a matter you have not learned is not always a sin; but engaging superficially in work on which the honour and welfare of a country depends, without being competent for it; willingly, in spite of the warnings of the reasonable, leaving the legal foundation; inventing illusions and beguiling and poisoning people with them; presenting yourself as a representative of a free people, living off the calluses of that people, and then



pronouncing those people as slaves of anyone who wants to be their master; in one word: to direct every step, every word in order to dishonour, humiliate, make your people enslaved - whoever does so is: a rascal, awaiting an axe already in this world. Don't you see that the Slavs, the *Mađarolci*, are plotting to destroy the Croats on an organised basis? Don't you see that the very Croatian people give birth to and bring up their traitors? Don't you see that Croatian non-Croats are breaking us more mercilessly and into smaller parts than all the foreign enemies of Croatia, all the disasters we have survived so far? Don't you see that this christened poultry is an ancient line of that damn breed, which some time ago instilled a dislike of the Croatian name and people in all people and nations of progress and freedom? Don't you see that the leaders of the *Mađarolci* and all their active supporters are not insane cattle, but sly thieves of the freedom, honour and welfare of the Croats?" (p. 41-42).

Here Starčević started to deny the entire Serbian history as a mere invention, called all Serbs Croats and boiled with rage at their refusal to accept this identification. However, with equal zest, he got tough with the Croatian Illyrian Movement, Yugoslavhood and Pan-Slavism. He continued with his rhetorical questions in these terms: "Don't you see that, with the help of foreigners, they are inventing nationalities in Croatia that do not exist; they are finding some kingdoms and empires that never existed; that they are accepting empty, according to the foreigners, created titles as actual countries; that they are speaking in the name of some 'triune kingdom', in the name of some Yugoslavs and Illyrians, about countries and people that nobody reasonable knows anything about? Don't you know why they are sticking to this invention of a 'triune kingdom', to those invented names and peoples? In order that the world laughs at us; in order that our rights and country are not returned to the Croats; no one has any obligation regarding the 'triune kingdom', which does not exist either in the world or public rights, no one is bonded to the illusion known as Yugoslavia or Illyria, and many have obligations towards the kingdom of Croatia, towards the Croatian people" (p. 42).

Here, Starčević obviously overlooked or missed the fact that, up until his time, it had not even been possible to impose the Croatian national name on the Slavonians and Dalmatians, and he would already like to impose it on the Orthodox Serbs. "You have properly proved that entire people between Macedonia and Germany, between the Danube and the Adriatic sea, has only one nationality, only one country, only one life - Croatian life; but still you do not want to see what that conspiracy does with its and foreign power, instead you regard those obvious traitors only as treasure? (the expression "treasure" here means "cattle" – V. Š.). If you stick with that name and nobility in the future, if you go on hiding those rascals, do not wonder when you hear that the true Croats call you *Stekliše* (savage) treasure ("stekliš", in Starčević's vocabulary, means "a savage" or "a rogue" – V. Š.); count your merits and sins in comparison with your humanity if you find yourselves mixed with the traitors to Croatia; and remember that the traitors to people and country are judged and executed in the same manner as wild dogs. Do you see, to tell you both right and true, do you know that green (wood) burns along with the dry" (p. 42).

The extent of Starčević's endless and uncontrolled anti-Serbian hatred is shown in his extensive essay *The Constitutions of France*, in which, discussing French revolutionary events during the last decade of the 18th c. up to the end of the 19th c. using an obvious compiling method, he used the term "Slavoserbs" to mark all the bearers of the most negative political occurrences and treacherous behaviour. He found every occasion appropriate to mention it, as though by the way or for the sake of

comparison: “The Slavoserbs, who are always plotting against the Croatian people and are always spoiling it, say that these people are spineless and cowardly, although all their misfortune and evils and shortcoming originate only from them, and they themselves are defending them” (book 5, p. 9). Afterwards, commenting on the attitude of the French public towards Napoleon’s overthrowing, he noted: ”What would be the Slavoserbs like, who would not just work for themselves, who would not advocate every evil which brings them profit, and would not criticise every good and those who work for the general welfare” (p. 45). Even King Louis XVIII from the Restoration period, as well as his entire court camarilla, was suitable to be named a “Slavoserb” due to the king’s licentious and unpatriotic behaviour. “You are looking at sick minds, many of them. You are looking at a poisoned heart, hypocrisy, impudence, selfishness, caddishness, malice: you could hardly find a complete Slavoserb in that man” (p. 73). Supporting the *coup d’etat* and the restoration of the empire by Louis Bonaparte, Starčević mocked the French Republicans, saying that they “were afraid and frightened of the people in this century, because they knew that all of them and everything theirs was loathsome to the people; because they were convinced that they are a minute poisonous minority that is known, like other Slavoserbs, for plotting, malice, evil deeds, extortion, spoiling and betraying people and for all kinds of defence of their all and only conditions of existence. It is also possible to understand why the Republicans and their foreign affiliates, the Slavoserbs of all nationalities, presented that *coup d’etat* as a particular horror to primitive people” (p. 138).

Further on, he accused the “Slavoserbs” of following their beliefs only when it was to their personal or group material benefit, while their words about beliefs, testimony, religion, conscience and spirituality in public life just served to dazzle primitive people. “You see that only the malefactors of people, and then only in front of the primitive people, refer to their beliefs, their conscience, etc., in public business; you see why the Slavoserbs spoil and turn people into poultry in every way, in order to believe nonsense that not even hens could believe. When primitive people take the bait, and then feel the consequences of their folly, the Slavoserbs say and explain that they did not mean anything bad, that is enough for the people; though not one of them would stand a cook that would spoil the meal, although she would vow to have meant well and that she acted according to her belief. While people suffer only through their folly, the Slavoserbs enjoy *precium sangvinis*<sup>20</sup> and prepare new tricks in order to execute new treason. And they are good at it” (p. 163).

Starčević openly expressed his intolerance towards the Jews, as well. He named them “a breed that, as long as they were known about, had ever been the same as today: a breed, with some exceptions, without any morality and any country, a breed whose every limb was devoted only to individual benefit or to the benefit of their relatives” (p. 189). In addition, he expressed his belief that “the Jews, allowed into private life without reason, excessively spoilt and poisoned the French people” (p. 189). However, as long as there were Serbs, not even the Jews could be the worst. “The Jews are less harmful than the Slavoserbs. For the Jews only take care of themselves and their fellows and, when they are not good at it, they do not object to the profit, progress and benefit of others; but the Slavoserbs are always only in favour of evil: if they cannot gain benefit, they seek to damage a good or righteous matter or those who are in for it” (p. 189-190). Since such a

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<sup>20</sup> the price of blood

dangerous “breed” was in question, Starčević pointed out: “We have no reason to believe that there was no Slavoserbian breed, of this or that name, of this or that nature, and that it does not exist in other countries” (p. 188). To demonstrate the paradoxicality of his viewpoints, Starčević broached an example of a famous “Croat”, Emperor Dušan. “In Dušan’s Code, it can be seen that the breed of Slavoserbs had nothing but privileges in his country, i.e. being foreign and impure, it can be banished any time. In other Croatian countries as well, the breed did not have any public right, but wandered across them as foreign until it was banished, or until it left by itself and went somewhere else, in order to return occasionally” (p. 187-188).

However, it was in his treatise *The Slavoserbian Breed Across Croatia* that Ante Starčević completed his anti-Serbian ideological concept, particularly motivated by his odiousness towards the Serbian rebellion against Turkish rule. Regarding this, he noted in the preface: “Last year, my friends told me that the Slavoserbs of Turkey, not knowing and unable to do greater evil, rebelled and invented battles and victories, burnt and killed on occasion and laid the blame and barbarity on Mohammedans or others - that ten thousand of them, excellent for fighting, escaped here. I responded to them: you live among the Slavoserbian breed of the Western Church, so you can recognise it; only those breeds in Russia, Turkey and Austria, are in accord with those wanton rebels and wish them luck; the remainder of Europe, which shows an inclination towards them, is either ignorant or bought: the Slavoserbs of Turkey, plotting and then running to saddle someone else, have done the same they are doing today ever since” (book 3, p. 139). Emphasising that the privileges that Emperor Leopold bestowed upon the Serbs in 1743 were formally addressed to the Illyrian-Racian nation, Starčević denied the very existence of the Serbian nation. “The educated world knows that the name Serb or Serv is ancient, that the name Slav generally meant a slave of all people in the Middle Ages; that the Croats and Poles had always tried to avoid this foreign name; and that this name does not refer to them any more than it does the English. However, since this happens, this appears in both forms in the Croatian provinces, I have related these two forms, which the science can only confirm and continue” (p. 140). How grotesque it sounds when Starčević wrote that the “last trace of the most illustrious Croatian dynasty of the Nemanjićs was extinguished in Emperor Stefan Dušan, who ruled over the north-eastern Croatian provinces as kings for centuries. He took the title of Caesar, not caring whether the others recognised it. Primitive people called him and still call him Emperor, not knowing that they are dishonouring him in this manner. Upon his death, dishonour started to rule these countries and, after severe stirrings, Lazar Branković, croatianised but apparently of impure blood, became the ruler in most of these countries. Foreign people with him overpowered the others in those areas” (p. 158). According to Starčević, these foreign people of impure blood were Vlachs or Roma. Apart from this, “Miloš Kobilić presented himself as a Croat, thus the very Turk defended his honour and glory against his countrymen” (p. 158). Therefore, the Croatian defeats in the Battle of Kosovo and afterwards were caused by the penetration of impure Vlachian blood into Croatian areas and, according to Starčević, those Vlachs appeared as Raci, starting from 1404 on the Danubian island of Csepel below Pest. “Obviously, the impure people of those countries must have died completely during all those escapes, slaughters and captures, in order to be more fertile than it appeared through the centuries. But the breed has maintained its ingredients” (p. 161). The Slavoserbian impure breed was persevered by constant inflow of “pure” blood. “Were the Turks truly as powerful in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> c., as presented in histories and deeds? Would they

progress as they did if the Croatian breed had not been overpowered by the impure breed in Albania, Rascia and Serbia, and poisoned in Bosnia?" (p. 162).

Regarding the Serbs who passed over to the Hungarian territory as savage outlaws, Starčević claimed that "Hungarians also saw that the breed was for nothing more than theft and banditry; that it was never for a good thing: that it is always guilty and blames others for it; that it is a hero only before and after the battle and otherwise always when there is no demise; that instead of properly fighting against the Turks, it runs away from them as from a fire: the Hungarians watched this for centuries, but still this breed is shoving its oars into Hungary as in its own country, and is eagerly awaited there" (p. 165). Starčević found the difference between that "Serbian impure breed" and "true" Croats in the fact that the Serbs had no surnames and, allegedly, the Croats did. Regarding this, he said: "Even in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, people of foreign breed, like the Turks, had only one, christened name; there was not a trace of tribe or family name. Therefore, until the end of that century, when two names could be found in Croatian countries, it was proof that their bearers were Croats or the Croatianised" (p. 165).

Starčević claimed that those "non-unified", the Orthodox, known under the name of Raci or Illyrians, embraced the Serbian name in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "Upon the success of Miloš Obrenović in Serbia, the Illyrians turned into the Serbs and, after selecting the names through the centuries, this breed took the name that best suited it. Vienna, rushing to the constitution of Croatia and Hungary, found assistants among those Serbs and Croatian Illyrians and opponents among the very Hungarians" (p. 205). Afterwards, Starčević concluded: "We have seen the number of national names this breed changed, that individuals in Hungary had pure Hungarian surnames, and that they had no surnames in Croatia even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Upon command, they had to accept them here and wanted to change them, which some of their relatives still do today. It was seen in the name 'Serb' that the Tribals wandered, that Rascia, Serbia and Tribalia mixed and that their borders were uncertain" (p. 208-209).

Since the time when "St. Sava Nemanjić separated the Croatian Eastern Church from the Patriarch of Constantinople" (p. 213), according to Starčević, the "Slavoserbian breed" entered all the "Croatian" countries. "We can see that the breed became quite croatianised in Croatia. When the Turks started fighting, the breed mainly remained where it found peace. In the Croatian provinces of Turkey, it has a smattering of Croatian, elsewhere of Turkish, Bulgarian, Romanian and Greek. The breed has not learnt real Croatian, but a language very similar to Croatian, in the Principedom of Serbia, even in Hungary" (p. 214-215). On the one hand, the Slavoserbs were the worst bandits, embodiment of crime, cruelty, lies and immorality and, on the other, the main pillar of Austrian self-will and the bureaucratic reign of terror. With such reasoning, in his article *Turkey*, Starčević accused the Serbs of approving of everything that the Austrian government wanted and of simultaneously falsely presenting the inner Turkish social circumstances. "Austria, in order to wrest the final spark of freedom, in order to make people blind slaves of its self-will, seeks to defame both people and its laws and its entire situation, seeks to besmirch it in the public opinion. For these ends, as well as for everything evil, it has faithful servants, known as the Slavoserbs to us. And why does Austria besmirch and reproach foreign governments? In order to hide the trouble from its people, in which they are killed, and in order to inflame those people, in its own time, against those governments and states. And there it has the Slavoserbs as its valuable apostles. Our readers know the opinion that almost the entire Croatian people of Austria have about Turkey. It is believed that there is no

barbarity, slavery, misfortune, caddishness. Who says so? The Slavoserbs. And who believes the Slavoserbs? Primitive people. How come the Slavoserbs know the situation in Turkey? From Austria, Russia and alike. Ask a Slavoserb if he has studied the history of Turkey, if he knows the Koran and its code, if he knows the situation in Turkey from verifiable reports that can be trusted, ask him and you will notice at once that he has never seen a man who knows such things. But the Slavoserbs know everything without learning anything” (p. 220).

Further on in the same text, Starčević said that the Slavoserbs were “disgusting beings of slavery and want to identify entire world with them, they want to organise the entire people and they do not know to organise their languages but wait for other to organise even their teachers” (p. 223). Claiming that religious tolerance was very developed in Turkey and that the actual freedom was greater than in Austria, he came down heavily on the Serbian vicars in order to improve the position of their Christian countrymen in Bosnia. “How can those Slavoserbs, who used all their and Austrian power to defend a much worse and unjust serfdom here with us than in Turkey up to 1848, rebuke the Turkish dislike of the Christians; those Slavoserbs against whom Kossuth abolished serfdom; those Slavoserbs who enchained our border with the dislike of Austria, a dislike which cannot be even close to that of Turkey” (p. 226). Starčević attributed unprecedented selfishness and self-centredness. “Upon their death, it is of no concern for the Slavoserbs whether Croatia would be the happiest, or fall down into the abyss, or become enslaved. Give the Slavoserbs just for today; they do not care about other people, nation, their children or tomorrow. To tell the truth, there is no such muddy fiend outside of Croatia; selfishness, intolerance and stupidity are all equal things” (p. 228). He sent his word to the Bosnian Christians that “the Slavoserbs had betrayed us for their stomachs and sought to betray you as well” (p. 237). Since there was no chance for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join tiny Croatia in his time, but just to join Austria or Serbia, Starčević opined they should do better to better stay within Turkey.

Therefore, Starčević would like, by all means, to appease the rebellious atmosphere of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Christians, the Orthodox and the Catholics. “Bosnia is said to have a marvellous land, which would suit a Croat of Austria well ... The Slavoserbs, servants of Austria, promise to distribute this land particularly to the frontiersmen” (p. 238). In these terms, “if Bosnia came under Austrian rule as separate to us, then the Slavoserbs would be brought and lured to Bosnia in transition. This spawn presents itself as Croats, not only before the primitive people but before everyone they deem to be able to dishonour and instill a dislike of the Croats in” (p. 241). Everything negative in its military and bureaucratic apparatus would come along with the Austrian army, which would certainly bring distress and devastation to Bosnia. “The Bosniaks would ascribe all their misfortune to us, the Croats, Austria would teach them so with the Slavoserbs and assure them of their opinion. And then, who can introduce love and harmony between the Bosniaks and us, the remaining Croats? Does not the obvious downfall of the Croats lie in this unification, if it occurs? Who does not prefer that either Bosnia or we fall down into the abyss, than to unite under Austria? Only the Slavoserbs want that” (p. 241). Therefore, it would be best for the Bosnians to stay under Turkish rule indefinitely, and Starčević taught them: “Bosniaks of all three religions, you should know that there is no future for you, unless you recognise and consider yourselves as brothers of one nation and one country; if you help each other in a brotherly way; if you know that Bosnia and Dalmatia were and again have to be a fireside of Croatian glory

and magnitude; if you exclude your Slavoserbs the way we did with ours; if you regard everyone who plots or would plot that Bosnia submits to anyone else as traitor and enemy; if you engage in useful science with all your attention; if you work hard and live hard-headedly; if you do not act as means for any and anyone's purpose; if you do not try to fly without wings; if you act effortfully for yourselves at the right time. If you go in this direction, you, who are in your middle age today, will live up, even under the Turks, to privileges and progress. Otherwise, you shall only be decaying until you finally vanish" (p. 237).

### **f) The Denunciation of Protestantism**

The essay *Jubilees* represented Starčević's attempt to systematically present his viewpoints on church matters, but he did not manage to elevate himself above a standard apology of Catholicism and Papacy, with severe denunciation of Orthodoxy and Protestantism. As always, this was his opportunity, at least as an aside, to heap up some anti-Serbian insults. Even when he sought to morally disqualify the Protestants, he said that, "both to them and the Slavoserbs, malice and delusion were the main way of living" (book 4, p. 10-11). In addition, he deemed that "the Protestants must be against the Pope in order to justify their deviation from him", while the Catholics may be "against the Pope due to their ignorance or caddishness" (p. 10-11). He openly mocked bishop Strossmayer's advocacy of the unification of the Western and Eastern Church, especially in the Balkans. Starčević did not believe in the effectiveness of a dialogue between the Orthodox and the Catholics, bearing in mind their intractable political differences. "For a Slavoserb, as he opens his mouth in the assembly, cannot say anything but nonsense about public matters or object to his work, because anyone can easily refute him: the cream of the Slavoserbian intelligentsia decided not to talk in the assembly 'in order not to allow opponents to excel'. The same people also preached that the government boasted about having defeated the opposition and they were not pleased when everyone reasonable regarded them as a wing of a governmental party, determined to harm any lawful matter and to gain something. The cream of the Slavoserbian intelligentsia does not know or does not want to know that, regarding public matters, the opponents, whoever they are, have the right to state their opinion on anything; that there is no dispute unless different and opposing opinions are heard; and that it is not righteous to present yourselves as representatives of the people and, if possible, not to represent people. When even this misery did not go well to the extent it was entangled, the fellows of Mr Bishop started to divide, and we waited impatiently to see what the Slavoserbs were going to concoct next in order to beguile their supporters" (p. 22).

### **g) Fierce Opposition to the Liberation Fight of the Balkan Peoples**

Even when Starčević discussed social and political circumstances in Russia in an utterly naïve and simplified manner in his essay *Russian Relations*, he could not help expressing, at least as an aside, his ultimate anti-Serbian hatred, here naming the Russian nihilists "Slavoserbs" (book 8, p. 48). Further on, in his article *On the Polish Constitution*, when mocking at the pamphlet of the Polish immigrants who unrealistically wanted to renew their country, Starčević said that their document "is like a Slavoserbian one: one half contains only lies, the other does not contain any truth, and both are full of nonsense" (book 3, p. 457). Then, in his article *Russia*, he thoroughly explicated his opinion on the

Russian political problems: “In Russia, the government is foreign and opposing the Russians, true Russians are foreigners in their own country as we are in ours. What the Slavoserbs do with us is what the Slavoserbs do in Russia: they are tools, assistants of the foreigners against the people. When you hear that this or that Russian plots about Slavhood, Pan-Slavism, you should know that this is a Slavoserb and that he is a brother of those who plot here with us about Yugoslavia, Serbia, Slavhood: about anything else but Croatia and Croatianhood. Russian Slavoserbs, as well as ours, are beguiling people, feeding them with antics, repulsing them from the mind and the true path, by walking on which they can only progress. Thus, the Russian people, like the Croatian, being dizzy, do not take care of their misfortune, do not think of the way to help themselves, but are only securing their trouble and strengthening the lordship of foreigners in their own country” (p. 425). The Slavoserbs are “the apostles to make the country an independent state, or give them autonomy, to allow two opposite breeds to slaughter and strangle each other, without any of them having the conditions for political life. The same would be if these countries were broken into a number of autonomous or independent small countries: the breeds would banish one another; a ruler could not rely on any of them. To give a piece of these countries to Montenegro or Serbia would mean to strengthen the enemies of Turkey, who are not harmful to themselves but, as a Russian weapon, are deathly for Turkey” (p. 39-40). Starčević would solve the Eastern issue using the same racist principles. “It is not a laughing matter to solve the Eastern issue, but if the Serbs gird up their loins, and they are boasting they will, it will be solved in two hours, if not sooner. It is known that the Serbs are a special breed, Romanian in Romania, Bulgarian in Bulgaria, Turkish or Greek in Rumelia, of Croatian nationality and language in Croatia. I am speaking here of the Serbs in what is now Serbia, a former part of Croatia. What is the price of that breed? I have written elsewhere about their origin and that they speak Croatian. According to the formation of the head, according to their entire appearance and significance, it is easier to differentiate a Serb from a Croat than, for instance, a Russian from a Spaniard. Now, check with Lamartine, Hammer, and you will find that the Turks used to capture so many Serbs, that two Serbs used to be sold for one wether, the prettiest Serbian woman for an *opanak*<sup>21</sup> or boots, that 50,000 of them were captured and betrayed Belgrade to the Turks on the Sava River, etc. Compare this price for the Serbs in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, when they were at their most numerous, and then you will know what the people of Turkey think of that breed. Remember that this breed had various names, that Busbeck described them as Rascians or Raci on his journey, that he monitored them, that he researched their origin and, after all his research, he said he did not know where those weird people originated from” (p. 41-42).

Starčević believed that the best way of solving the so-called Eastern issue was a thorough reform of the Turkish country with all the Balkan peoples remaining within it, and he further engaged in expounding details of his own vision regarding this solution and actual reform measures. “The Christians would either stick to Turkey and, having learnt the official language, they could accept and perform every state post with honour and benefit, or would continue to be its opponents, enemies. In the first case, a huge goal would be achieved: peace, satisfaction, the welfare of the East and, afterwards, of the entire Europe. In the second case, the road would be paved for achieving the same goal. For, if Turkish breed is too weak to live, it should be sacrificed and people capable of living should be placed in its stead. Those peoples, the Bulgarians or Croats, would soon

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<sup>21</sup> Serbian moccasin with upturned toes

be so devoted they could constitute countries of sufficient power to live in harmony without disadvantage to other people. So, in both cases, the “Eastern issue” would be solved and, in both cases, it would be better for Russia than Russia itself could ever solve it” (p. 45-46). If only there was someone to entrust the Croats with this historic assignment on a tray.

In his essay *The Eastern Issue*, firstly published in the *Croatian Rights* in 1899, Starčević most openly spoke out against the liberation efforts of the Balkan peoples and their attempts to liberate themselves from Turkish enslavement. He particularly persuaded the Bosnian Christians – the Orthodox and the Catholics – that it would be best for them to stay under Turkish rule. At the same time, he was full of scorn towards the Orthodox religion in general and said of its followers “that this breed was immeasurably more impure, untidy, lazy, stubborn, hypocritical and unfaithful than the Catholics; that it complained about everyone although it was always to blame, both to itself and to others; that it always rebelled; that it always snapped at the Jews, since it did not dare snap at the Mohammedans and it was not Catholic. This harassment ran in its blood and it would exist as long as this breed existed with other peoples and religions among it or sticking to it. It is quick, as well as blind, to do any malice; it appears courteous, brave at first sight; but that is just the appearance, for it seeks ambush, huggermugger, it is courteous with words, but withdraws when it notices a considerable obstacle” (book 7, p. 23).

He claimed that the Bosnian Muslim nobility were of pure-blooded Croatian origin and completely denied the existence of the Serbian people, maintaining that, since the times of the Romans, this term was a headword for slaves who had forcibly dug in the mines. “These poor people must have been numerous, since they obtained a geographical mark in the travel writings of the Emperor Antoninus and elsewhere, and then appeared as a people under the name of Servetium, Serbetium, Servitium, collectively slaves, Servi, Serve, Serbi or Serbe. We do not wonder at Serbetium and Orbitium, since we know that some call the great poet Vergil and others Virgil. We do not wonder at mixing b and v, since we know that the Romans did the same and that the same word *servus* is noted as *serbus* – and the French and the Italians interchange those letters in Roman words. Thus, you see that, in ancient times, *serb* signified a slave, as well as *slav* in the Middle Ages; therefore, Mr. Thompson, without knowing so, is right when he maintains that these words are identical. Not a single people called themselves Slavs in their own language, according to its nationality; it has not even been a hundred years since some Croatianised people, being incited, named themselves Serbs and christened the Croatian language as Serbian” (p. 29-30).

Wading deeper into history with his alchemical pseudo-historical method, Starčević claimed that “the Serbs on the left side of the Danube were the slaves of the Poles, the Croats, the Avars; they were neither invited by Heraclius nor by anyone else; they did not fight against the Avars; but, when the Avarians conquered the Croats, the Serbs escaped to Heraclius who marked their settlement in Macedonia; they were not on their own their, but merely a settlement, subjects of the Byzantines; Serbia – a geographical name, the former Moesia Superior – was so small that the Croats gave not a single *ban*, out of seven, to it, but ruled over it through a *zhupan*“ (p. 33). Although, at that time, the Serbs had partially liberated themselves and gained two independent, internationally recognised countries, Starčević diminished this success with the following words: “The Serbs of the Principedom proved not to be suitable for state life; if there had been no religious fanaticism among them and if Russia had not promised Bosnia and Herzegovina to them, they would subject



themselves to Turkey tomorrow, because they are in a worse position than the Bosniaks, in all aspects. To subject the nobility of Bosnia to this breed would be even weirder than to subject the English to the Irish. This time of rebellion of the poor” (p. 427) which was supported by Russia, and they protected German interests. “Who is the real enemy of all downtrodden peoples in the east, if not the Germans and the friends of the Germans? Only the Slavoserbs rebuke the Turks and Hungarians: reasonable people regard these nations as small threat in comparison with the main enemy, the Germans” (p. 428). Afterwards, he claimed that “the Slavoserbs poisoned and weakened people who would clutch at Austria” (p. 429).

Pointing out that, so far in history, many peoples and countries were ruined due to a lack of strength and vitality, in this article, Starčević also wondered: “Who can say that, with time, this cannot also occur with the people who, beyond any reason, appear with a slavish name – the Slavic or Serbian? Never, in any form, has or will have a reasonable man been called a Slav or a Serb. Science does not stand these names; both have to perish with education. Only ignorance and fanaticism stick to these names and both sicknesses are perishing from the people. Only true, historical, national names have strength. A weaker name can subdue to a stronger one only through competition in progress; a people smaller in number may mix with a larger people with good intention, as history shows. So, this is the crucial thing: stage the competition and give it the opportunity to develop in freedom. According to history and nationality, only two people in the east are akin to the Russians: the Croats and the Bulgarians. If the East by itself, and Russia in it, have any future, this future depends on these two peoples, and only on them. Both peoples have the strength of life and progress. Even then, Russia seeks to harm these people wherever and whenever it can” (p. 430-431). He was particularly angry at the fact that Russia continually presented itself as a protector of the Orthodox peoples, suggesting that Russian state politics should abandon religious motives. “We know that many of our readers are going to sneer at this explanation. We are sneering, as well. What? We will be told. Do you think that the Russians can abandon Byzantium? Do you think that freedom or progress is for Byzantium? Do you think that Byzantium is anything other than Slavoserbdom? Do you believe that Russia is lead by reason? Do you believe that Russia sees that Serbia is in a worse situation today than 50 years ago, despite 50 years of freedom, despite all means and assistance? Do you think that Russia is for something else or that it will act for something other than slavery and stupidity? Do you think that the Russians see their humiliation, their dishonour, their trouble?” (p. 432).

He wrote similarly in his article *Where Do We Stand*, pointing out that the historical flow would be completely different had the Croatian people managed to break free from foreign spirit in time, to free and unify all territories with the firm hand of a capable leader, who would regenerate it with their maximum engagement of intellectual and material powers. “The Slavoserbian breed, decaying by itself, although galvanised by the enemies of the Croats, would have been free long since and would have emerged thriving. Foreign nationalities, settled in Croatia, would melt into Croatian nationalities, as everyone did while the Croats had strength and pride. The Bulgarians, a branch of Croatia in its state bud, and who therefore collapsed with the weakening of the Croats, would mix with their own blood with time. The remaining neighbours of ours would either be with us in freedom and progress or would be on their own and would therefore perish, leaving room for people with life. The Eastern issue either would not appear in public or, if it did, the Croats would solve it to their benefit, and thus to the benefit of all humankind” (p.

393-394). Croatian interests and their realisation, according to Starčević, were constantly undermined by internal Serbian subversion, which was systematic and continual. In his article *The Abolition of Borders*, he wondered “what the Slavoserbs thought about Croatia, about the entire Croatian people. That Croatia was not for anything, that the Croats were not for anything more than slaves for the Tyroleans, Hungarians, Roma, Russians and everyone who paid the Slavoserbs” (p. 245).

He saw that problem in the issue of the Military border, the abolition of which the Croats persistently demanded, and which the Serbs rejected ever more persistently. “Austria shoves its litter on all the better and easier places on its border. This Austrian spawn has the same job at the border that the Slavoserbian spawn has in provinces. This job comprises: spying, denouncing, drinking, poisoning family peace and matrimonial loyalty, giving and accepting bribes, spreading guilt and all misfortune and making people dull and alluring them. As it is to honest people in provinces due to the Slavoserbs, the same is it to the better frontiersmen due to the brothers of the Slavoserbs, the Austrian brood” (p. 247). However, he hopes that the structure of the border population is different from the impression one gets from the loudest opponents of Croatian aspirations. “There are very few real Slavoserbs on the border – people with a slave-like mentality, people who have sworn against the Croats and who work both publicly and secretly for Austria. These people should be marked, even if late, so that we and the other Croats can recognize them, so that neither will the Slavoserbs help Austria, nor will Austria help the Slavoserbs; those people will see that the ones they despise, disregard and betray will be the ones who will try them, i.e. the Croats” (p. 248). However these are just his hopes and expectations, but the reality stood against them – the reality that Starčević could not ignore in the period of more than a decade prior to the official abolishment of the Military Krajina. “As long as it depends on Austria and the Slavoserbs, the frontier will never be abolished. Austria and the Slavoserbs are honest only when they do evil” (p. 256).

Expanding further that “there is no evil or shame that the Slavoserbs would not do against a Croat” (p. 273) and claiming that where “the reason ceases, there lies Slavoserbianism and one does not know which is greater – irrationality or insolence” (p. 270), in his article *Bargaining*, Ante Starčević defines the Slavoserbs as the worst traitors of Croatia, saying: “We should not compare the Slavoserbs even with the worst people, least of all with the Hungarians. Every Hungarian, even the worst one of them, loves freedom and the greatness of his homeland and could never consciously betray Hungary. The deal with Austria was made by those who, in other situations, showed their knowledge of government and patriotism. And the Slavoserbs are a special breed, garbage of a people: they betrayed Croatia and, if need be, they will do it again, even without benefit to themselves, just for the sake of it; they are, in their nature, without reason and integrity, against freedom and against all that is good” (p. 299). That Slavoserbian breed, which, in Starčević’s words, drags itself through Croatia, is, from his political standpoint, “the sworn conspirator against Croatia, while Vienna raises, fosters and breeds it only to the detriment and shame of the Croatian people” (p. 330). Furthermore, he often attributes to them quite bizarre things, such as the following insinuation: “the Slavoserbs created and proclaimed a dogma that teaches that the Croats cannot exist on their own, but must be under the Hungarians or under Austria” (p. 331). This is followed by an additional explanation: “Anyone can see that this dogma cannot bear elucidation or discussion: by itself, it cannot take root among the people. How then

shall the Slavoserbs disseminate it? In a roundabout way, indirectly: attack those that are against it, attack them with swearwords, lies, sophistries, obscenities – attack publicly or secretly, attack with all means of evil and those used by villains” (p. 331-332).

It is interesting how Starčević presents the parliamentary conflicts with the “Slavoserbs” in his brochure *Some Memories*. Their reaction to a speech that they allegedly disagreed with was such that the “Slavoserbs grunted like the animal on which bacon grows. Nevertheless, having suffered a few blows, the Slavoserbs, ran away like real dogs run when one of them is beaten. With just a few words we silenced the Slavoserbs” (p. 339). He also calls the Slavoserbs “Austrian puppies”, who shun from verbal clashes if the opponent demonstrates self-confidence and determination. According to Starčević, the Slavoserbs “never say what they want or what they do not want. One never knows what to expect from them. That, I later realized, was no wonder, since only a madman would ask irrational people and sell-outs to say what they want or do not want; only a madman would get carried away by their answer: they want and do not want whatever their master wants or does not want. But enough of these reflections – they undermine my previous opinions completely, they free me of doubt, they give me the truth: that the Slavoserbs are sworn traitors to Croatia” (p. 340). He continues to give yet another definition of the Slavoserbs. “Slavoserbs are garbage of a people, the kind of people who sell themselves to anyone and at any price offered, who will sell Croatia into slavery to every buyer; the kind of people that anyone can buy for a bowl of potatoes if nothing else is offered; any country would be ashamed to have them, save for Austria and other bad governments; people among whom the most skilled would only get a job cleaning pipes from a good government; people who are, in their slave-like nature, against all that is good, glorious and magnificent; who have sworn to eradicate the Croatian people from the face of the earth, and who work on that. Those are the Slavoserbs – the power of Austria in Croatia. Until it is exterminated among the people, let this force help Austria, as no one is envious of it” (p. 342). To that point, “if the Slavoserbs had a spark of reason and integrity, they would not be Slavoserbs – and if they had any sense of patriotism, they would not be traitors to the Croatian people” (p. 346).

### **h) A Storyteller of Modest Literary Talent**

Since “Slavoserbianism” is, for Starčević, much more than an ethnic affiliation – a mentality, pattern of behaviour, system of values and embodiment of immorality and primitivism – he uses this term, as we have already seen in the French and Russian examples, to characterise similar negative phenomena in other states. His wish is to make the term “Slavoserbianism” a synonym of universal evil, expecting that it could thus be disqualified as such within the Serbian people, which would lead to widespread denationalisation and Croatization. Until this is accomplished, he is against the weakening of Turkey, so he attacks those elements on the Russian political scene that persistently lobby for freeing the Christian peoples from Turkish serfdom. “There is also a Slavoserbian breed in Russia. This breed is, as elsewhere, as evil, as it is restless. It does not care for freedom or enlightenment; just like the German breed, it is not concerned with knowledge and by its nature it cannot think, its spirit refuses every sublime or solemn thought: it remains barbaric and blindly rushes into change and conquests. That breed is large in Russia and the Russian rulers must make concessions

to it elsewhere. Where? Turkey has so far proved to be the most convenient place” (p. 397).

He reproaches Russia for instrumentalizing Slavism and the Christian Orthodox religion as a means for realizing its greater state interests. “The Russians will not give up their name in order to take on the disgusting Slavic name – or Serbian, which is the same ... The famous Slavic Russia has scholars in every profession; yet, it has not shown a Slavic man who could go head to head with, for instance, Iordanus, Dobrovsky, Kopitar, Kolar, Šafárik, Miklošić, etc. Slavism is an Austrian child, Austria gave birth to it and brought it up so that the Polish, Croats and Czechs could start daydreaming, letting go of their rights and distinctiveness, and so that it could call these people, who incline towards the north – Slavs, and get praise and assistance from the West against the deadly Slavic people. By its nature, Slavoserbianism in any form leads to Russianism, in which it dissolves. And how could anyone in Austria work for Russia? – Slavoserbianism has changed its name, but does the same thing. The development of Slavoserbianism turned it against Austria and, even today, Austria hardly realizes the trap it has itself created. The Hungarians assisted Austria in that endeavour as much as they could. Russia, speaking of these different peoples, uses the Slavoserbian name, and thus obliterates the distinctiveness of these weak peoples and deludes them; Russia, without any objection and with Austrian help, carries out its design” (p. 398-399).

On the one hand, Starčević disparages all the Christian anguish under Turkish rule, and, on the other, he accuses the Christians as if they were to be blamed for their own position as slaves. “The misfortune of the Christians in Turkey is a direct consequence of their deceitfulness, disbelief and soullessness – and, as such, they cannot expect anything better, and as long as they are in this position, they themselves cannot be any better. Not under any circumstance is it possible to equate these corrupt and ill-bred commoners with Mohammedans and history does not show any such equality between so different and hostile classes” (p. 399).

His concept is totally clear, yet deeply unrealistic. According to his concept, all the Serbs should remain under Turkish serfdom until Croatia strengthens and achieves independence; it would then annex them and turn them into Croats, i.e. it would explain and convince them that they have always been Croats and nothing else. However, this Croatization of Orthodox Serbs proved impossible in both Croatia and Slavonia. That is the origin of Starčević’s insurmountable wrath, which is fuelled by his personal frustration, taking into consideration that his mother was an Orthodox Serb. The problem of his own individual national identity could only be efficiently solved if the Croatian national consciousness could be forced upon the Orthodox Serbs of that area. He does this by trying to make them sick of their Serbian name, to morally disqualify its etymological sources and, in the present day, to change the meaning of the particular term “Slavoserbs” so that this unique denominator signifies all the elements of negative political behaviour, especially treason and immorality. In this attempt, Starčević created a myriad of short pamphlets, which he published on two occasions – in 1878 and 1898 – under the title *Letters of the Madarolacah*, explaining in the introduction that “*Madarolaci*” was only a synonym for the “Slavoserbs”. In these letters, as he himself notes, he wanted to show their “jumps, silences, wishes, nature, purpose, means, character, ways, knowledge: all their living. That writing should be a faithful, truthful painting; it should carry the shepherd’s order, the bell ringer’s or the herder’s commands

and information on the flock, etc., and it must show the characteristics of wickedness, the trait of Slavoserbs” (Book 6, p. IV).

In order to avoid any confusion, Starčević emphasizes at the very beginning that the “Name ‘Slavoserb’ is ethnic for that breed; it cannot be appropriately replaced with any other name. And names like shepherd, herder, bell ringer and flock are more than convenient for both the flock and governor” (p. V). In addition, he demonstrates his fanaticism with the claim that he witnessed “that the Slavoserbs do not grunt and bleat without reason; that their goal is to derogate the Croatian language and thus make it repulsive to others; that their guttural language, besides everything else, cannot be pronounced even by a German speaker – such a boor” (p. VII-VIII). In response to the objections from his surroundings regarding the counter-productiveness of his anti-Serbian tirades, Starčević answers that he “values five righteous, hardworking, reasonable readers higher than five million Slavoserbs” (p. VII). According to Ante Starčević, the Slavoserbs are a “slave-like breed, a pest more disgusting than any other. Let us take three levels of perfection in a man: the level of the animal, the level of reason and level of the mind – spirituality. The Slavoserbs have not yet completely reached the lowest level, and they cannot rise from it. They do not have any consciousness; they cannot read like men; they cannot learn anything; they cannot be any worse or any better than they are; in general, all of them are the same, except for their agility and cunningness, which come from exercise; full or hungry, they cannot keep quiet about or bark at themselves, be still or jump, but act in everything in the way their shepherds determine. Their bell ringers will keep our writ under a foreign name and will read it more studiously than anyone else and, since they have no reason, they will deliver it to their shepherd and ask instructions from him, but they will forbid it to the herd and will all keep silent about it and prevent it from reaching the public, working to ensure that it fails. They do not dare praise the writ, firstly because it is against their nature and aspirations, and secondly, because they would lose their herd. They do not dare criticize the writ either, since anyone who is reasonable and righteous knows and believes that what they shout at the most is the best. Therefore, by judging it, they would also do damage to themselves” (p. VIII-IX).

To answer the doubts of his closest collaborators – even Eugen Kvaternik – whether he seriously thinks what he says of the Slavoserbs, Starčević specifies: “There is no truth to which I could testify more firmly than to what I have told you about the Slavoserbs; I am not so certain that this puny foal will grow into a strong horse, as I am certain that no man, not even the worst one, can become of a Slavoserb” (p. X). Explaining further how there is no difference whatsoever between the Slavoserbs, he expounds: “We know that there is a difference, e.g. between an English and Turopolje swine, etc. The same goes for the Slavoserbs. They are the garbage of slaves of Europe, Asia and Africa. And all the Slavoserbs are, by their nature, for slavery, for any sort of evil, for anything bad, just as, e.g. a swine is for mud. If one counts all the atrocities of all the criminals in Lepoglava, they would not amount to three percent of the atrocities that are secretly dreamt about or, when possible, performed by the best and most righteous Slavoserb. If you do not hold this to be the undoubted truth, you will always find yourself befooled” (p. XI). Lamenting that the Croatian aristocracy is ruined, that Croatian citizenry or intelligentsia does not exist in the real sense of the word and that the peasants are utterly backward and hostile to all that is good and sublime, he finds that, even for this state of affairs, the main culprits are the Slavoserbs. “The Slavoserbs are in power in that

municipality. Now, beware: as long as the Slavoserbs are in power, this populace must remain as they are: and as long as it remains like this, it will not come to its senses or do any good. Who can ever think that the Slavoserbs will allow, let alone strive that the populace enlightens, gains knowledge and strengthens when they themselves live on its folly, evil and weakness?" (p. XIV).

Starčević strives very hard to convince his followers and supporters, especially those prone to hesitation and scepticism, "that the Croatian breed is in dire downfall; that it will take a long time to recuperate; that the Slavoserbian breed, the tool of slavery and evil, was, is and will be nurtured by all the foreigners, since no other nation could annihilate this people as the Slavoserbs have; that teaching an ox or a Slavoserb is the same thing; that a Slavoserb will, as you wish, admit, allow and say anything, but will eventually do what he wants; that whenever a Slavoserb utters the words people or homeland or freedom, or any other good word, he has already harmed the people or is planning to harm it" (p. XIX-XX). In an abundance of preposterous statements, storytelling and narrating ambitions, but without any literary talent, Starčević continues to reel off insults, slanders and rancour, among which is the following spiritual landmark: "Even the Croatian spinsters know that the Slavoserbs are the cane in the hands of a blind man. To speak to a Slavoserb about homeland, about people, about anything else but the belly would be the same as to speak to a foul animal about virtuousness and ethics. If this were not the truth, how could one comprehend why the Slavoserbs stick to those who reduced our people from glory to distress? Who, if in their place, would not rather fraternize with the devil than with the ones they fraternize with? The devil only kills the soul, while their protectors, governors of governors, kill both the soul and body. You go to hell on account of wickedness, and the main wellhead of wickedness is slavery, ignorance and poverty. The greatest number of souls in hell comes from despots. Slavery, insanity and poverty, those are the characteristics of the Slavoserbs and their governors. All of this is still fine. But look at the miracle: To a Slavoserb, as to mute cattle, all the sanctity is in their belly ... If you therefore think that the Slavoserbs are not ranged lower than a mute animal, that they are not a slave-like breed: show me any other animal that does not move away from the one who beats it. You give a piece of bread to that litter, and strike them and even flay them to the bone, and you have him available for every evil, and you have him against a Croat" (Part One, p. 75-76).

In his favourite manner of pasquil dialogue, Starčević concludes that "The Croatian nation is the eldest – it is the oak, while all the rest of the Slavic nationalities are but acorns or oak galls. If my tribe were not killed by Austria or the Hungarians, I would have long since proved that they come from *Buga*, the younger sister of the five Croats who conquered the Danube's right bank of Croatia. No family can be happy without faith, nor can a country. Among all the faiths, Roman Catholicism is the best. It leads the people to enlightenment, happiness and freedom; Protestantism unbridles the passion; the eastern faith leaves people in and reinforces animalism and slavery" (p. 138-139). Starčević let loose all of his anti-Slavic animosity with a torrent of the most defamatory terms in inaptly worded sentences, where humour falls short. "The Slav is a ram. And, the Slovene, just like a ram, is kept for fleece until the time comes for it to be slaughtered ... The Slav is stench. And, as we flee stench, so we flee the Slav when we do not need him" (Part Two, p. 116) As for the Slavoserbs, according to Starčević, they considered despondency to be vigour, "treason to be achievement, informing on

someone to be legality, flattery to be love, poverty to be evil, humbleness to be insanity, decency to be evil, justice to be weakness, honesty to be insolence, integrity to be a concoction to trick the ignorant, truth to be scorn” (p. 164).

## **2. Eugen Kvaternik, Founder of the Ideology of the Croatian Party of Rights**

Starčević’s closest collaborator, the ideologically like-minded Eugen Kvaternik (1825-1871), tried to play the Russian card in his youth, entering into Russian espionage and even obtaining Russian citizenship in 1858. Though he occasionally expressed bitterness since the political circles in St Petersburg did not have much confidence in him because of his Catholic faith. In 1859, he travelled to Italy and France, propagating Croatian national liberation and agitating against the Habsburg rule. In the book *Croatia and the Italian Confederation*, published in Paris in 1855, he basically delineated a complete programme of the future Party of Rights, which he proclaimed in 1861 together with Ante Starčević. He pronounced all the South Slavs to be Croats, including the Serbs. The year before, he even succeeded in offering the Croatian crown to Louis Bonaparte. In his emigrant days, Nikola Tomazeo supported him greatly, but they soon started arguing bitterly as Tomazeo was decidedly against Croatian territorial claims to Dalmatia. As Kvaternik had access in St Petersburg, at one time, to the *Secret Book* on Russian and western politics regarding Palestine, and was able to copy long excerpts from it, he found himself in Rome in 1860 and handed over a fraction of his writings to the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. Cardinal Barnabo put him in touch with Austrian diplomats and “the Croatian national revolutionary” was even able to make contact with Rechberg, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, which led him to the opposite camp from the previous Italian revolutionary one.

### **a) Collaboration Between two Police Agents - Strossmayer and Kvaternik**

As Ljerka Kuntić writes in the preface to Eugen Kvaternik’s book *Political Writings. Discussions, Speeches, Articles, Memoranda, Letters* (Znanje, Zagreb 1971), “Kvaternik especially sought to coax Rechberg with Catholic propaganda, seeking compensation for the *Russian Secret* as a religious writ. Actually, he was asking for the money in order to start his political action in Croatia. As instructed by Rechberg, Police Minister Thierry made contact with Kvaternik. An agent of this Minister allowed Kvaternik to return to his homeland” (p. 21). Before leaving Austria, Kvaternik kept addressing Strossmayer too, and the Viennese Ministers assessed that this was a very clever agent, who could be very dangerous in enemy hands. They suspected that he still kept his ties with the Russians, but assumed that they should maintain relations with him so as to neutralize any possible dangers more easily and in due course. Discontented with the Austrian restraint, Kvaternik addressed another Austrian official Nowosielski, offering collaboration and mentioning the *Secret Book*. As Kuntić further elaborates, “He used that script as bait on various sides, in what he thought was a very discrete manner. Thus, he informed Nowosielski that the Russian and Slav interests were too important to him and that he could not betray them. Kvaternik indeed remained consistent in this position

on Russia and the Slavs, and many times, year after year, publicly and privately, he kept stating that Russian, Slavic and Serbian politics is, next to Croatian and western politics, a permanent alternative for the Croats. In that name, using the interesting material in the *Secret Book*, he proposed that Nowosielski accept him into the Russian consular service in Sisak” (p. 22). Apropos Kvaternik’s case, it became clear that Strossmayer was in the service of the Austrian police as well. “The general assessment of Kvaternik by the Viennese Ministers resulted in contact between Minister of Police and Strossmayer; Strossmayer was entrusted with the task of informing Kvaternik about the positive outcome of the talks, which was done on 21 September 1860” (p. 23).

Strossmayer first called Kvaternik to Vienna, and later to Zagreb, giving him instructions what to write about and striving to protect him in the intellectual circles of Zagreb. The political programme that Kvaternik advocated at the time was obviously supported by the Viennese government circles, because it was anti-Hungarian, and it lobbied for a special status for Croatia under Austrian rule. Strossmayer made it possible for Kvaternik to publish a few political brochures. Since Kvaternik, together with Starčević, acted more determinedly during the next two years, he was banished from Croatia in 1863 by Ban Šokčević and Chancellor Mažuranić after it was revealed that he was a Russian citizen. In many newspapers, he was openly accused of being a double Russian-Austrian spy and some objected that he was an immoral political agitator who sold himself to the one who paid the most. He found himself in exile in France and again turned to Napoleon III. But the situation changed considerably there because the French government began taking the Serbian interest into account much more within the Balkan politics. Kvaternik very soon became convinced of that. “When he came to Paris, the French press wrote about Serbia in the way he wanted them to write about Croatia” (p. 31). Next year, he became a Polish agent and operated on a mission against Austrian interests and for Polish national emigration. While Kvaternik daydreamed about various rebellious ventures, Strossmayer was making a real effort to ensure his return to Zagreb. However, when Kvaternik showed up in 1866, he was banished from Croatia again. The next year though, he was able to return for good, due to a general amnesty and, in 1869, he was informed that he was released from Russian citizenship. In 1871, using the peasants from Krajina, who were discontented with the government’s treatment of their forests, he attempted the insane act of organizing an armed uprising in Rakovica near Ogulin. The authorities soon quelled the uprising and Kvaternik was killed.

### **b) The Sale of the Russian Government Secret**

In a letter to Nikola Tomazeo, written in Paris on 22 April 1860, Kvaternik complains that he was not trusted in Russia because he is Catholic, saying that the Russian politicians are cunning and overtaken by blind barbarian fanaticism, and confiding that this was the reason he started hating the entire Russian kind. In his first letter to Count Rechberg, dated 12 July of that same year, where he offers his spy services and asks for money in return, he explains in more detail his Roman Catholic exclusivism and anti-Russian position. When offering the secret Russian writes to the Austrian Police Minister, he emphasized that his offer relates to the “most holy political-religious and commercial interests of Catholicism against the Christian Orthodox elements” (p. 98). To that regard, he further indicates that “it pleased Providence that I was able to obtain the contents of the most secret Russian book, moreover in a quite



moral manner, but I must guard the secret of that journey most conscientiously now and even for quite some time; its contents are no less secretive systematic plans of almost priceless importance and impetus, of which I gave an excerpt to His Excellency the Envoy in Rome (*NB.* Austrian Ambassador A. von Bach – V. Š.) so that he could have a complete picture; those are the principles established by the Russian Imperial Government, to be adhered to and executed in the Holy Land so that, by executing them strictly and carefully, Russia could achieve political influence and predominance in the East, so that it would expel Catholicism and any other religious influence from the West and that finally in those blessed regions, based on its political-religious predominance, it can solely establish its interest, that being trade” (p. 99).

In an attempt to explain how a Croat could have obtained the secret script of a great Slavic and Christian Orthodox power, Kvaternik once again invoked supernatural powers: “Just as if Providence ruled over all that deluge of misfortune and disappointment that was looming over my head for years, so this writ – a pledge for the triumph of the Christian Orthodox religion and the Russian influence in the East, which, according to the eminent authors of the brochure, was intended for the 7 highest ranking figures of the empire – fell into the hands of one Catholic after so many tribulations! – Also in Russia, I must have felt the nauseating waver of the Slavic idea that I myself had created, just as many others from my nation; and I must have gained a belief that the Russians behaved in a systematically hostile way towards my homeland and people, of which the majority is Catholic, and only because of that simple fact! Because the Russians decided, although lacking in confidence, to accept and use me for the benefit of my people and against Austria, not because of their love of Slavdom, but motivated by the fear of falling short in the eyes of Croatian people by refusing the first Croat who came to them; or, rather, because of their hatred towards Austria at that time. Later though, they would abandon me, which is that much absurd, allowing me to compromise myself in every sense, but mostly by publishing the diplomatic-political work entitled *Croatia and the Italian Federation*, a book published last year in Paris during the Italian-Austrian war” (p. 101).

That act of dredging himself in ash because of his previous anti-Austrian stands leads him to justify his motive for divulging the Russian secret. In that respect, as he mentions, “there were two main circumstances that lead me to inform a ruling Catholic house of the aforementioned secret book; primarily: the Catholic faith to which I belong with persuasion; the foundations of that faith would be threatened if the intentions of its mortal enemies were to be manifested; then: politics. The latter drives me towards the ruling house of my people more than to any other in Europe, despite everything I did in the last three years. And why? I am convinced, on the basis of experience and facts, that the Croatian people can only expect a premeditated burden and evil will from every European government and every people’s movement; while the Habsburg house must, if it truly wants to survive, not only sooner or later establish the Croatian nation in all its glory and historical power of the people, placing it against the people of its enemies, but it must also rely on it, as that is its only support left in the whole building, whose lustre might fade in a day” (p. 101-102). Following this, he denounces the intentions of France and Russia, in whose service he was, saying: “Russia is destroying the Croatian nation with the help of the fanatical Serbdom in Croatian estates in Turkey; in the Austrian estates, it is sacrificed to Hungarians, so that with the preponderance of the Slavic element, a balance could be achieved in relation to France’s involvement in Hungary;

religious fanaticism, under the guise of Serbom is plotting against the Croatian people, splitting the Croats, for the future, into two large blocks from which should stem the triumph of the Bulgarian-Serbian Orthodoxy over the Croatian Catholic element counting four million people” (p. 102-103). In his opinion, Russia organizes schemes in order to destroy the Croatian people, “the natural representative of Catholicism among South Slavs” (p. 103). He also turned against the Italians, depicting them as Hungarian allies and renouncing his existing friendship with the Italian national leaders. “The movement of the Christians in Turkey, that is orchestrated by Russia, is conflicting with the interests of the Habsburg house; first of all, it takes away from the Croatian nation all of Turkish Croatia from the Sava all the way down to the Neretva and the Buna Rivers (it is incorrect to call it Herzegovina), and then also Croatian Bosnia between the Bosna and the Drina Rivers” (p. 103).

Eugen Kvaternik’s main motive for disclosing the Russian secret writ was money, and he openly speaks about it, even delivering a concrete financial request. In that regard, he reveals: “Following my conscience, I preferred first and foremost to turn to the power that is moral and pious, that is the Roman Curia; I left to them the choice of deciding which Catholic power would be given the advantage in receiving the information about these political and trading secrets. For that purpose, I travelled to Rome a month ago, where I spoke with His Eminence Monsignor Barnabo, Prefect of Propaganda. According to him, the financial state of the Roman court is so unfavourable that, at this moment, Propaganda cannot bare any financial sacrifices. In accordance to these circumstances, he advised me to turn to His Excellency the Envoy of Austria; all the more, since the book contains important information on ties that were secretly arranged between the Roman and Parisian courts regarding the Palestine affairs, of which I warned him” (p. 103-104).

Kvaternik is convinced that it is in Austria’s great interest to obtain these secrets, as they are of vital importance to the survival of the Austrian Lloyd maritime company, but even more so, it should get its hands on the “secrets that concern it as the primary power that protects Catholicism and the representative of the German and Slavic peoples; and finally because of the secrets that concern it as a great European power” (p. 105).

Urging Vienna to decide on his request as soon as possible, Kvaternik explains his impatience: “My circumstances cannot allow the possibility of extending the uncertainty in which I have persisted until now, only due to love for Catholicism” (p. 106). In addition to that, as he mentions, “my conscience tells me that I have already endured many material sacrifices for my Catholic beliefs” (p. 106). He indicates more about the general political circumstances in this very elaborate letter: “it would be desirable, for the sake of happiness of Catholicism against the Christian Orthodox religion, that Austria take over the acquisition of a secret that assures both political and commercial profit in the Holy Land; and even though it is excruciating for the undersigned to gain a sad understanding that in Rome they worry more about that city and its surroundings than about threats to the faith (although speaking of faith, the city of Rome itself depends on it) it would be even more excruciating if he had to approach France, who would without a doubt know how to decide on the importance of an offer upon which hang the interests of the century. Therefore, I will not put the interest of Austria before that of France only with regard to sacristy. Finally – and this is virtually impossible – even if France, for whatever reason, refuses to save Catholicism from the traps and dangers that are entirely Byzantine, then I would know what needs to be done. God,

himself, would want it so and his irrefutable decisions must be done, and no longer the decisions of the Russian statesmen. In that case, I have already made up my mind in advance and entirely” (p. 106-107).

### **c) Kvaternik’s Geopolitical Analyses**

In a very detailed manner, Kvaternik elaborates that, for the ruling Habsburg house “it would be most prudent to restore the Croatian kingdom, using the Croatian state right, on all territories to which the Croats aspire – a kingdom that would be equal to Hungary and would spread as far as Petrovaradin. To the east of Petrovaradin, Hungarian Banat, Transylvania, Bukovina and the Romanian counties should, according to him, form an independent Romania; thus, the Croats and the Hungarians would be the most efficient means in the hands of Vienna to counter all future Hungarian aspirations. In addition, he is convinced that, “with one blow, Austria would wipe out the Russian led Serbian-Hungarian schemes, by completely cutting the Hungarians from the Serbs and isolating the Hungarian element on that side from the foreign countries” (p. 120). After all, “the Croatian people is a natural and main shield for the Austrian house against all the Russian intentions with the assistance of the Serbs and Hungarians” (p. 124). Kvaternik recalls his personal knowledge and experience, stating that, while he was in the Russian service, he discovered Russia’s expansionist intentions that were based on the Christian Orthodox religion. “For that purpose, Russia is demanding with all its power the regions for the Serbs within Turkey that are historically, legally and naturally Croatian; in that regard, Russia is following a complete system that I would be able to describe, if Your Excellency wished so. That is why Russia didn’t distinguish or ban my often mentioned book, because I proved, contrary to Mr. Šafárik’s dubious sources, that what is being sought for the Serbs is the holy and natural property of the Catholic Croats ... By connecting parts of Turkish Croatia with the ones belonging to the Bosnian Serbs, Russia is counting with certainty, and very skilfully if her intentions do not go astray, that the Christian Orthodox element will not only absorb the Catholics (100,000 against 600,000) but also, with the political and numerical influence on the development of things in the intended Bosnian-Serb state, the Croatian Muslim element as well (450,000), forcing it with double pressure to accept Orthodoxy, which would totally ruin Catholicism” (p. 124).

His geopolitical analyses, quite convincing for his time, assumes a more complete form by including the broader Balkan factors and estimates of historical possibilities of the eventually planned political and military actions of a strategic character. Kvaternik continues elaborating in that direction and writes: “To achieve that goal, brochures and newspapers incessantly write about the abovementioned Croatian regions as if they are Serbian; this systematically eradicates the Croatian name. This is where the most evil Russian-Serbian schemes stem from, when, directly among the Croatian Christian Orthodox people, they misuse the holiness of faith to convince them that what is Christian Orthodox in the Croatian South is not Croatian but Serbian; religious fanaticism gets the job done, especially in the Turkish regions that border Serbia and Montenegro, where they were successful at instilling the belief in people that only Serbdom can set them free. But the trouble does not stop there. The mass of three million Serbs in Turkey, when they liberate themselves and are coaxed with annexing of the Croatian part of Bosnia and are then united into one political body, should first

approach the Serbs in Hungary and the Orthodox Croats in Austria. It is common knowledge that a fifth of the Croatian nation is of the Orthodox faith; they live exactly along the border of this new Bosnian-Serb state, in Military Krajina, so they are under the direct and religious influence of their already Serbianized fellow believers. Croats in general, oppressed and divided by Austria, especially the Orthodox ones, will start to turn to their brothers. They will betray their name and their natural homeland of Croatia and will Serbianize themselves under the influence of the roaring Russian means. To make the misfortune even greater, Military Krajina is completely out of the sphere of influence of Civil Croatia” (p. 124-125).

Kvaternik draws his final conclusion with the help of a few rhetorical questions, in order to make the content of the text more dramatic. “Is it a miracle if half a million Orthodox Croats and Hungarian Serbs start to gravitate towards three million Russian Serbs? It is a lesser miracle if one accepts the fatal political blindness of the action whereby the Patriarch of Karlovac is, on Croatian soil and in the midst of Croatian people, called the Patriarch of the Serbian people! Did the Serbian Patriarch, who arrived to Hungary from Macedonia under Leopold I, Serbianize the Croats through that act of arriving? Moreover, Mr. Czoernig dares to create Serbo-Croatian nation, knowing as little about the South Slavs as I do of the Chinese. Doesn’t this mean, Excellency, acting fatally and brainlessly to the benefit of the Russians who are mocking us? What can one say about these follies? Instead of strengthening the Croatian people and abandoning Serbdom, it is being weakened in favour of Austria’s enemies. Who is not familiar with the Russian emissaries who visited all of Dalmatia, probing Orthodox Croats about their Croatian nationality to which they are so loyal? At the same time, instead of reinforcing them in their natural integrity, Austria uses *Morlachism* to systematically destroy that honourable Croatian people counting 430,000 souls, most of them Catholic; it was deceitfully invented by the traitors of their own land, the inhabitants of Dalmatian cities, in order to hide their treason and unfaithfulness from the people, because they gravitate to Italianism; the same is being done by separation from the rest of the body of Croatian people; finally, the Croats are being murdered as a nation through the use of Italian language, which is a lethal enemy of Austria” (p. 125-126).

Kvaternik’s final warning is very serious. “If the Austrian slavery continues *ad infinitum*, is there a Christian Orthodox Croatian who will not succumb in the end? Not only will this people’s apostasy weaken the Croatian nation, which is already torn by the Slavic nationality, but the Croatian Catholic element, oppressed and split into two camps within its own nation, will sooner or later have to succumb to the four million Serbs and Serbianized Croats, who are liberated and united with Bulgarians; because, even the Catholics will finally remember that they are Slavic, will join Serbdom and, with that, Russia as well, if Austria is not able to protect them from Hungarianism. This process is so natural that everything that is Christian Orthodox and honest in people would submit by virtue of Serbdom to Russia, if Austria or anyone else subordinated the Croats to the Hungarians.” (p. 126).

Kvaternik expresses regret that Austria had so far never done anything “to protect the Croatian nation from those dangers, which are more obvious than Hungarianism? Instead of reinforcing the Croatian Catholic nationality and uniting it, so that they could resist the Bulgarian-Serbian-Russian Orthodoxy, they divided it without seeing a greater enemy and greater danger in the vicinity, due to a stupid fear of the Croatian people.

Creating – contrary to history and nature – the Slavic nationality, and robbing the Croatian Catholic element of the assistance of 800,000 souls, they strengthened the enemy of four million! It is not in vain that Serbian writers want the Croats of Noric race to perish. Their starting point is the blind Austrian act, seeing how illogical Austrian politics ripped them from the rest of the body of Croatian people. I will not speak about the other political mistakes in that regard; if only Austria would one day want to see a strong Croatian people, united in one nationality and beyond the differences in faith and region, if only the heavens would allow it happen before it is too late! As Austria has two major enemies today, Napoleonism, helped by Hungarianism, and Russianism, helped by Serbdom, it is crucial that it establish the Croatian element in time, to confront the right and the left” (p. 127).

#### **d) Anti-Serbianism as Kvaternik’s Main Determinant**

Serbs are the main danger for Kvaternik, hence his greater preoccupation with this problem. In the following letter as well, a special kind of memorandum, Serbdom is incessantly at the centre of his attention: “I am especially emphasizing the following with regard to Serbdom: in the Croatian regions of Turkey, the numbers are in favour of Catholicism and Croatiandom, if the Croatian regions are separated from the Serbian. In those regions, there are 200,000 Catholics, 150,000 Christian Orthodox and 400,000 Muslims. If the king of all Croatia succeeds in conquering those regions again – *jure post limini* – and to unite them with the rest of the body of people, it is completely natural that the 400,000 Muslims, under the influence of the Catholic state, will become Catholic and not Orthodox; and that the Orthodox Croats in Turkey will share the fortunate and glorious destiny of their fellow believers, the Austrian Orthodox Croats. Then, the entire Croatian race gathered around their constitutional king, will jointly exert pressure on the 2.5 million Serbs, which is favourable for the ruling house because, being situated between the Croats and the Bulgarians, they will then be forced – as proven in history – to ask to be united with the Croats, in order to address the rise of Bulgarianism and Byzantism” (p. 127). So Austria would most efficiently protect itself by protecting the Croats. According to Kvaternik, as long as Croatia is great and strong, Austria is more secure. In all of this, he threatens a little that, in desperation, the Croats could submit to the Russian option. “Impious Hungarianism could lead the honest part of the Catholic people to accept Orthodoxy in order to save themselves from Hungarianism and finally destroy it” (p. 128).

After the Austrian Minister of Interior responded favourably, through Bishop Strossmayer, Kvaternik sent a new letter to Count Rechberg on 26 October 1860, one full of indulgency and manifold flattering utterances. The political part of the letter is dedicated to the presentation of standard platitudes on the Croatian state right and repeated outpours of anti-Serbian and anti-Russian hatred. Among the concrete points, it is crucial that Kvaternik warns about the existing successes of the “Russian politics in the southernmost part of Dalmatia. Only the glory of the Croatian name, deeply rooted within the people of those regions, has defied Serbdom so far; will the most luminous Austrian house make use of that?” (p. 159). This is obviously referring to Boka Kotorska, where there was no trace of the Croatian name at that time and where Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Serbs had been living for centuries. Kvaternik wonders, “Wouldn’t it be smarter politically to unite that part of Croatia with Upper Croatia,

acknowledging history and the Pragmatic Sanction and secure it in that way for the German influence? Wouldn't the defence of that part of Croatia be much stronger if the whole force of Croatian people, united with Austria, supervised it instead Austria by itself" (p. 159-160). By fulfilling this megalomaniac Croatian fad, according to Kvaternik, "civilization and Christianity would only have accomplished their previous obligation, which they owed to the Croatian people because of the favours they did for the good of humanity in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when they fought Tartar barbarianism, destroying it" (p. 160).

The key argument that Kvaternik uses to support his request to annex Srem to Croatia, is the removal of territorial ties between Hungary and Serbia. Referring again to the Pragmatic Sanction, Kvaternik insists that "certainly, the part of Srem that was illegally joined to Vojvodina in 1848 (against which our parliament protested most gravely), must again be connected to the Croatian Kingdom – with or without abolishing Vojvodina and not only because of the law. If Vojvodina unites with Hungary and if Srem does not become a part of Croatia, the Hungarians will come into direct contact with foreign countries; if it remains Serbian, they are again in direct contact with Serbia. It is more favourable for the luminous Austrian house, in both cases, to leave that historical and national territory in the hands of Croats" (p. 162-163). There is also a warning that if Austria neglects Croatian interests and ignores the real dangers that are threatening it, the English imperial factor could join the game. Kvaternik expresses the opinion "that England will, in good time and due course, know to value Croatiandom against the French-Russian Serbo-Hungarianism, even if Austria remains blind to its value or underestimates it. There was a reason for my mentioning elsewhere that, for its own sake, Austria should create a strong and unified Croatiandom, if it did not exist" (p. 164).

As Kvaternik emphasizes in closing the letter, "The Croatian people is called upon to be the second jewel in the Austrian crown, directly after the German one, due to its geographical location, historical-political position in the world, ... because of its compact and pure nation, able to preserve the unity and cohesion of Austria, and finally because it is an armed people. Even the angry Serbs will then gravitate towards Zagreb rather than Belgrade; if the Croatian people are strong, united and content under the Austrian sceptre, they will attract the Serbs with their splendour; there will come a time again when the insanely self-conscious Serbs will start coming to Zagreb in pilgrimage processions – again to the benefit of Austria. Contrary to that: even the smallest neglect of the Croats for the love of Hungarians, will teach the former to speak the same language as the Serbs, and then all that is honest will gravitate to Belgrade and Russia" (p. 165-166).

### **e) The Materialization of Kvaternik's Concept in the Independent State of Croatia**

These two letters contain the complete Croatian national ideology advocated by Eugen Kvaternik, and it is fully explicated therein. Upon his return to Zagreb, he acted in a more secretive manner. He continued to discuss the basic postulates of the Croatian state right in brochures and political circles, at first disguising the real objectives of his programme through dishonest calls for solidarity with the Serbs and other Slavs. Later, he increased the usage of rhetorical constructions and phrases from Starčević's

vocabulary. Kvaternik's works show that he was more intelligent and educated than Starčević, as well as more talented for conspiracy in political activity. The Rakovica uprising was nevertheless a completely reckless act and an expression of uncontrolled adventurism, which he had already exhibited before. Deprived of any moral dilemmas and greedy for money, like Ljudevit Gaj, he often sold his services and was always ready to try and gain Russian confidence using the ideological tide of pan-Slavism of his time, and to spy on the great Slavic and Orthodox powers for the account of the Western Catholic ones.

With Kvaternik, the Croatian national thought gained maturity. He considerably outgrew the beginner's naiveté of Janko Drašković and Ljudevit Gaj. Rački, Strossmayer and Ivan Mažuranić developed the foundation of his political activity by convincing the Slavonians and, partly, the Dalmatians to identify with Croatiandom, while Starčević added only regular doses of political extremism and verbal aggression. Although they never openly admitted it, it is obvious that the Radić brothers, Antun and Stjepan, based their key political views on Kvaternik's concept and its first historical materialization was achieved by the Ustasha head Ante Pavelić during World War II. It is not without significance or historical symbolism that Kvaternik's offspring, "army commander" Slavko Kvaternik, proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia in 1941 prior to Pavelić's arrival in Zagreb.

### **3. Historiographical and Ethnological Platitudes of Antun Radić**

The first real Croatian ethnologist was undoubtedly Antun Radić, Stjepan's elder brother. His basic approach to scientific research was directed towards Pan-Slavism and upholds the national unity of the Serbs and Croats, as that is the only way that he can call valued creations of the Serbian people Croatian. He calls Dalmatia, Croatia, Istria, Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatian lands, but he had a chance to see for himself, when he travelled in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1899, that there is no mention of the Croatian name in the Catholic villages. It is completely unknown to the people. When he is unable to solve this problem, he bypasses it and completes it by cunningly circumventing the essence. In the *Dom (Home)* magazine from 1900, whose issues for that year represent the first volume of his collected works, as he himself wrote all the articles, he states as follows: "This tiny piece of Croatian land between the Drava and the sea, where the cities of Križevci, Varaždin and Zagreb are located – this tiny piece of land and the people living there have preserved the old Croatian name. Here, ever person is proud of their Croatian name, while in other lands of ours that name is being forgotten, and some started calling themselves Dalmatians, some Slavonians, some Bosnians, some Herzegovinians, and so on. And how is it, you may ask, that the people in other Croatian lands have all but forgotten their old name? By loosing their government, their ban and their learned and wealthy upper class. Everything was handed to foreigners: Italian and Turkish or, even worse, the Italianized or Turkish convert was the gentleman and the master, while the Croat was the servant and serf. Everyone learned and wealthy was a foreigner. And, on that tiny piece of Croatian land, the Croatian ban remained, the Croatian gentry remained and that is where the people preserved their name too" (Antun Radić: *Collected Works, Peasant Unity*, Zagreb 1936, Vol. II, p. 36).

### a) Promoting Zagorje into Croatian Piedmont

Indeed, the Croatian people did not forget its name in the regions where they preserved their language, but the people went into mass emigration when the Turks came. In the newly settled regions, the name was also preserved until the people were assimilated through language. The Croatian ban never held court in Zagreb, but the Slavonian-Croatian-Dalmatian ban, although there was not even a smallest part of Dalmatia within his banate, and over the centuries, the relocated landlords would impose the Croatian name on the domestic Kajkavian speaking population. Being conscious of these facts that undermined his national concept, Radić resorted to spinning fairytales. To such a senseless peasant crowd, he attributes amazing elements of collective consciousness, stating that “The Croatian people in this small land, although there is only a handful of it: these people have always and for ever had it in their mind and in their heart that they have brothers who once lived under the same roof with them. When this small land between the Drava and the sea was the smallest and most unfortunate, even then our forefathers would keep in the mind and on the tongue that they were only the remnants, only the ruins of the one-time Croatian kingdom. Our forefathers in that small land always and eternally sighed with their brothers; the thought of the whole Croatian people has never died here and it has always been known here that this handful of people is not the whole Croatian people. You should here how these Croats between the Drava and the sea have shown this with a great act. These Croats speak a slightly different language than the Croats in other Croatian lands. But when these Croats began to write books and publish newspapers again, some 60 years ago and more, they did not write their books and newspapers in their own language, but in the language spoken by the greater part of Croatian people in Dalmatia, Slavonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina!” (p. 36-37).

And so those wonderful Croats abandoned their own language and accepted a foreign one, the Shtokavian language of the slandered “Croats” who did not possess a single trace of Croatian national consciousness. We take over your language as ours so that we would convince you more easily that you too are Croats. “And to this day, those Croats between the Drava and the sea think the most, write the most and speak the most about Croatian unity, of one Croatian home. Among those Croats in Zagreb – that is where the Croatian academies are, that is where the Croatian books and newspapers are published for the entire Croatian people. The Croats in Zagreb work most on everything that is beneficial to the entire Croatian people. Judge the following yourself: very few newspapers and very few Croatian books would ever see the light of day if it were not for the Croats around Zagreb who purchase them. And yet, the entire Croatian people can read and reads these Croatian books. Look at the books published by the Matica Hrvatska, look at the books of the Literary Association of St Jerome [*Društvo Sv. Jeronima*]: these books wouldn’t exist, if they were not held and paid for by Croats in this little Croatia and Slavonia that is adjoined to it. And it is, our *Dom*: out of every hundred *Dom* subscribers, only five are from Bosnia-Herzegovina, five from Istria and less than three from Dalmatia! And so you see, where the old Croatian name is preserved, where the Croatian thought is alive and where there is love for the entire Croatian people: that is in Croatia. And that is why this little Croatia – she is the mother of all the Croatian lands. She is like a spark, leftover on the hearth under the ash. God



grant, from that spark, a flame will stir up, shiny and warm, to brighten and heat all the Croats!” (p. 37).

### **b) Inclusion of the Slovenes into the Croatian National Corpus**

In order to somewhat corroborate this kind of national concept, Antun Radić must immediately resort to forgery, to appropriating old Dubrovian literature and subsequently Croatizing it artificially, especially Ivan Gundulić and his works. Although there is nothing Croatian in him, Radić asserts without any factual backing that, in addition to lauding Dubravian freedom, Gundulić “was already contemplating how the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina could free themselves from Turkish slavery” (p. 53). As it was quite difficult in practice to find that a Croatian from Zagorje, an Istrian and a Bosnian Catholic consider themselves to be related or to believe that they belong to the same tribe, Radić laments over the fact that “all of us Croats do not have one national thought. We treat people of the same language and from the same tribe as foreigners, we do not need anything from one another, we do not hope for anything from one another, in one word: God created us to be one, but we do not know anything about that yet, we do not see that law” (p. 84).

By appropriating all the lands between the Danube and the Drina as Croatian, Radić must separate this megalomaniac Croatian entity from the other Slavs. Therefore, he first searches for a way to throw the Slovenes into the artificial Croatian national corpus, having previously mentioned that the Croats are Slavs: “Firstly I will tell you about the two tribes that do not have their own name, but are called the same as all of us together, who speak similar languages. Those are Slovenes and Slovaks. It is the same as when you find an orphan who has no father or mother or a home, so no one can tell whose it is: then they call it by the name of the village it is from. You, yourself know that when a man without a home comes into your village and makes his home in someone else’s, then he is often called by the name of the village that he is from. That is how it is with the Slovenes and Slovaks. They never had their own home, their own state or government, which is why they do not have a separate name. Slovenes mostly live on both sides of the upper Sava. The Sava springs in their land. The lands where Slovenes live are called *Kranjska* [Carniola], *Štajerska* [Styria] and *Koruška* [Carinthia], but some also live in Istria. That is why Slovenes are called the *Kranjci* and *Štajerci*. The total number of Slovenes totals half the number of Croats. Some Croats and even some Slovenes say that the *Kranjci* and *Štajerci* are Mountain Croats, and some Slovenes are sad to hear that. But nonetheless Croats and Slovenes always and everywhere get along well. Slovenes are beginning to see that the Germans will choke them all little by little, if they do not agree with their closest brothers, the Croats. The *Dom* posted that Ferjančić, a Slovene, spoke in the delegation in Vienna in favour of the Croatian right and one government for the Croats and Slovenes” (p. 86).

### **c) Radić’s Recommendation for Resolving the Serbian Issue with an Emphasis on the Bosnian Junction**

Radić has a different version to explain the Serbian issue. According to its overall approach, “the Serbs and Croats are of the same tribe and language. But, as I expounded when we discussed the Croatian national thought, it is not enough to have one language

and one tribe: in addition, it is necessary to have one thought. And Croats and Serbs do not have one thought, each wants their own home. And, further, the truth is also that many foreigners came to Croatia - the Germans for example. They learned Croatian and today they are Croats. And many Greeks, Albanians, Romanians, Aromanians, Shqiptars and even Gypsies, settled among the Serbs and all of them, some well and some poorly, learned our language, which is called Serbian in the east, and those are all now Serbs or *Srblji*. What can be added here is that the Serbs are of the Greek canon, so their priests pull them to the other side a little. That is why, if we take the language alone into consideration, it is difficult to say where the Serbs live, as the language is the same for the Croats and for the Serbs. But if we consider the thought, then we must say that the Serbs live on the right side of the lowest part of the Sava and the Drina, in Serbia, where they have their king. There in Serbia, there are more than half a million of real Serbs, which is two to three hundred thousand more than all the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There are about 260,000 Montenegrins, which is about five times more than the population of Zagreb. There are many Montenegrins of the Greek canon in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and even in Lika and Srem. You know that people from Lika and Srem sent a request to the Croatian Assembly to use their own flag and other things” (p. 86-87).

Antun Radić expressly negates the Serbian national distinction of the trans-border Serbs (*Prečani*). He relates that, in the time of the great Turkish invasion, “the Austrian emperors let all kinds of fugitives into our country. At that time, they were called the Vlachs and Rascians, and people still call them that today. Just recently, I informed you that the Croatian Assembly has already had dealings with them, because they have gathered today under the Serbian name and are demanding the Serbian flag and other things” (p. 121). Moreover, Radić tries to explain in detail the ethnic meaning of the term and notion “Vlach”, maintaining his basic anti-Serbian tendency. “In Croatia and Slavonia, Catholics call every man of the Greek rite Vlach, i.e. every Orthodox believer; and the ‘Vlachs’ call themselves Christians or ‘Serbs’. – In Dalmatia, coastal inhabitants use the name Vlach for every peasant from Zagorje who is far from the sea, regardless of whether he is of Roman or Greek canon. – In Herzeg-Bosnia, the Turks use the name Vlach for every Christian, whether he is Catholic or *Srb*, as they say there. – The old Croats used the name Vlach for every Italian or Latin, so the Vlachian language was the same as what we today call Italian. And today, there is a street in Zagreb called *Vlaška*, because Italian masons used to live there. At the same time, they used to call every Italian in Zagreb Vlachs. Even today, the Slovenes (*Kranjci*) refer to an Italian as Vlach or *Lah*, and *laški* – that is the same as Italian language. The Czechs and Polish do not know what an Italian is, but to every Italian they say Vlach or *Vloh* and, instead of the ‘Italian language’, they use the term *Vloski*, meaning Vlachian. – A Hungarian calls a Romanian a Vlach or, in Hungarian pronunciation, *Olah*. Also, a German is familiar with the word *Vlaški*, and he says for the French and Italians that they speak *Velški* or Vlachian. From all this, it can be seen that everyone call the Italians and their cousins ‘Vlachs’ - that is, all the peoples whose language is similar to the old Roman language, since their language developed from the Roman, while some even kept their Roman name – the Romanians or Hungarian ‘Vlachs’” (p. 125).

After such a detailed explanation, he comes to an ultimately biased concretization, which Radić begins with three questions: “How come the Croats also call each other ‘Vlachs’? Why do the Croats in Croatia and Slavonia call our people of the Greek rite

Vlachs? Why do those in Dalmatia call our peasant man Vlach? I will answer the first question this way: all sorts of peoples fled into our lands before the Turkish power, among which were our people, but also many Vlachs - Romanians that is, the subjects of the old Roman Empire, whose emperor lived in Greek Constantinople. Our people, as well as other Slavic peoples (Czechs and Polish), have long used the name Vlach for everything Roman, so they also called all the emigrants from the Roman Empire 'Vlachs'. And it is well known that the Greeks called their Constantinople Empire 'Roman', so they called themselves '*Romajori*', i.e. Romans - and even today a part of Bulgarian land is called '*Rumelija*' or 'Romania'. And it is from the neighbouring lands that the majority of emigrants came. Let our people of the Greek rite remember this, and let them not complain if someone calls them today by the old name of 'Vlachs'. As long as they want to be separate and something special in the Croatian land, people will call them by this name, because this name was not invented, it is not invective, but an old and real Croatian and Slavic word" (p. 126-126). Hence, they can never be Serbs; they should melt into Croats and, until that is done, the Croats will call them Vlachs.

Even though there were a hundred thousand more Serbs than Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1900, and twice as many Catholics, Antun Radić consistently attempts to Croatize them all. He recounts that he travelled there last year and that some Serb told him that the Serbs would go into battle with greater joy than to a wedding and that they are ready, in that regard, to burn everything above their head without worrying about the consequences. "And now you judge: what could become of a people who would burn everything above their head, and go into battle not knowing why, just to say: whatever happens! He would ravage, destroy and burn everything without knowing why. He just knows that he is not well – but does not possess enough intellect to ponder a little: how it could be even better without arson and battle. That is why it is so hard to deal with our Serbian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because they are in the darkness, as in a sack. He thinks that you can still do something with battles and arson – but does not have a true friend who would elucidate his reason. There are a few enlightened Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina who think a bit more: they think that Bosnia should be joined with the Serbian kingdom and Herzegovina with Montenegro. That is what is written in the Serbian newspapers. However, not only do the great powers reject this, but no good could come from it. Our Muslims cannot stand to see a live Serb, so all hell would break loose if they would fall under Serbian power. And, above all, Serbia is in an incredible state of chaos, so what would happen if Turks – Muslims and Roman Catholics – would now fall under Serbian rule!" (p. 182-183).

That is why Radić has a convenient solution for that problem, presenting it by answering the question of "what the Roman Catholics want? Our peasants and uneducated people in Bosnia and Herzegovina – they know what they want least of all. But they have long had their leaders, Franciscan friars, of whom the *Dom* magazine has already spoken. From ancient times, they are in agreement with our people in Dalmatia - they would most like to join with their Croatian brothers in Dalmatia and Croatia. And nowadays, there are other educated people too who, in their heart, carry this Croatian thought, which was obvious during the celebration of the *Trebević* flag. There, almost all the educated young Muslim Croats joined the Croatian Catholics ... As a Croat, I cannot tell you anything other than what I firmly believe in, and it is that no other thought could have gathered and united all our people from the Danube to the sea and from Mountain Triglav to the Balkans Mountains. I believe in this as firmly as I believe that my mother

gave birth to me and that I will die. And I will die more peacefully if, at my dying hour, I can say that I, too, have contributed to the idea that one thought and love can unite all our people that have been tugged left and right by various demons, filling them with poison and despair against its brothers and suffocating and flaying them” (p. 183).

By explaining that Slovenes and Croats are almost the same people and that it is very easy to achieve unity and harmony between them, Radić lists the Serbs as an example of the opposite. Contrary to the Slovenes, whose leaders show an affinity to accept Croatian national thought, “the Serbs are on the other side, particularly those who are mixed with us. It is said that the reason is that the Serbs are of a different faith than the Croats. And that is the truth. Not one of our Serbs would think of himself as a Serb if it was not for the Orthodox faith that they call ‘Serbian’. And not only that. The Bulgarians are of the same faith as Serbs, yet the Serbs fight with them too. And the Bulgarians are a calm and diligent people. That is why I believe that what causes this is the fact that the Serbs would like to be great and always must be the first – like little children. And you know that children are like this until they come to their senses. So let us not fight or argue with them, because it would be in vain. One thing only will be helpful and that is to teach them. We should not boast or play heroes in front of them – they love to play heroes and boast – but we must be quiet and work laboriously as men, not as little children. If one of them knows how to read, let our peasant give him our book of wisdom. That should be one of our peasant’s primary concerns, as they are mixed with our people of the ‘Serbian’ faith because, if the Croatian peasants do not turn to them and draw them into our circle, our gentry will never do that” (p. 248).

While commenting on the verses of the folk song *All the Rascians Lose their Souls when They Kiss the Šokci Girls* [*Ala Rac dušu gubi, kad Šokicu ljubi*], Antun Radić continues to emphasize his hypothesis that the Serbs are Christian Orthodox Croats, explaining: “And why are they called *Raci*? - I will tell you: the land or region between the present-day Montenegro and Serbia, and even further away in today’s Turkey, was in the old times, 500 and more years ago, called *Racija* or *Rascija*. Two hundred years ago, when Turks beat the Christian army, many hundreds of thousands of people moved away from this land of *Racija* into Hungary and Croatia. And those were mostly the people of our language and of the Greek Christian faith that have not melted into our people even now – and, even today, they have the name of their homeland – they speak *Racki* and are called the *Raci*. Many of those people live among our people in Lower Croatia, so it would be best if our people taught them that they are not *Raci* and that they do not speak *Racki*, but that they are Croats and that they speak Croatian. And those who distinguish and separate themselves from the Croats, and if they are good for nothing, then they are not worth being invited to join us. Those can go to the Gypsies, because the Gypsies are that kind of people - like the Jews - who cannot be tamed or domesticated in a foreign country in which they arrive. So: either the Croats or the Gypsies, but never *Raci*! Tell them like that, clearly and in Croatian!” (Vol. 3, p. 266).

#### **d) The Pope’s Decree Generates the Croatian Nation**

In the article entitled *Croats, Roman Faith and Politics*, published in the *Dom* magazine on 27 September 1901, Antun Radić openly says that the Roman Pope had a critical influence that all Catholics who speak the Shtokavian (Serbian) language should be treated as Croats and that they should be subjected to this kind of collective

consciousness. He writes about it as follows: “The thing that happened in Rome still resonates around the world. It is obvious that the Pope performed a greater thing and did not just turn an old lodging into a court of science. And that greater thing is this: each Roman Catholic, or at least each Roman Catholic priest of our language, whether he is from Istria, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Srem or Upper Croatia is a Croat ... And there is a good deal of politics in it, whether you like it or not. This should not be kept secret ... these two things should be kept in mind: 1) There are people in our lands who are of Greek or Orthodox faith and who have, for the last 30-40 years, been calling themselves *Srblji*; every Christian Orthodox who lives in our country is a *Srbljin*. Thus, for example, some immigrant Greeks, after learning our language, became *Srblji* just because they are of the Greek Orthodox faith. It is already said that there is a Serbian faith. It is obvious that this faith made the Serbs, so many accepted themselves as *Srblji* who would have been Croats if there had not been for this rule, or some kind of law: he who is of the Christian Orthodox faith – he is a Serb! – Against this, another rule rises: he who is of Roman Catholic faith – he is a Croat! 2) If the rule was that each Croat was a Serb if he was of the Christian Orthodox faith, even then the *Srblji* counted the Roman Catholics of our language as Serbs, because of the same language. Hence, there are, as you know, Roman Catholic priests who say they are *Srblji*. They now, whether they like it or not, must be known by Croats, if they want to get higher education in Rome. And, even without that, it is self-evident, that there will be few Roman Catholic priests who would want to be *Srblji* when they see what is decreed in Rome – that is, that Roman Catholics should be Croatian. – And if one of our Orthodox Christians or Muslims wants to be a Croat – from now on no one forbids him so. Hence, Croats and *Srblji* are equal now: all our Christian Orthodox are Serbs, and all Roman Catholics are Croats; but if a Roman Catholic or ‘Turk’ wants to be Serbs – the *Srblji* do not forbid it; and again if any Christian Orthodox or ‘Turk’ wants to be Croatian – the Croats do not forbid it” (p. 318-319).

The dilemma that appeared among the Croatian public right after the First Catholic Congress in 1900 in Zagreb, and which grew even more in proportion after the Vatican sanctioned its basic conclusion, was whether Croatian thought will only be used as an instrument for the Roman church to carry out its politics and its faith or will it be the opposite. This did not interest Radić very much. He thought that the personal and group motivations are, in this case, of incidental importance if the ones for whom the Croatian national thought is primary and the ones for whom the church interests are most important work jointly and honestly. They will work for both causes, because they are not mutually exclusive. “But where is ‘politics’ in all of this? Here it is: as the majority of Serbs praised their priests and helped them spread and anchor the Serbian Orthodox faith (because in this way the number of the Serbs increased), so will the majority of Croats now praise and help the Roman Catholic priests in spreading and anchoring the Roman Catholic faith, as that will help spread and anchor the Croatian thought. Many Croats, who wouldn’t ordinarily care for the Roman Catholic Church, will care for it and be friendly with the Roman Catholic priests for the sake of the Croatian people’s cause. And, again, many Roman Catholic priests, who would otherwise not be too interested in the Croatian cause, will now watch for the Croatian cause and will be friends with the Croats – to return them the favour. This kind of ‘politics’ cannot be objected to. From the beginning of time, one cause serves the other, one thought calls on the other for assistance, one is a tool for the other or, as our gentry would say, means. And, for a good

and honest end, you can use every good and honest means. So one could only be against this politics if they think that either the Roman faith, the Church or Croatian thought is not a good and honest end” (p. 319).

Radić further gives a direct answer to the question, “What constitutes the means here and what is the main cause? Is the Roman faith and church the main end, and Croatian thought should serve as its means – or is the Croatian thought the main cause and the Roman faith will only assist us?” (p. 319). His answer is very pragmatic and serves more to blur the essential problem, rather than unravelling it. He says: “Not only is it true that the Roman faith and church are the main cause for one, and Croatian thought for another – but there are those kinds of people who one day prefer the Croatian thought and the next the Roman church. Why couldn’t they both work together?! Why wouldn’t the one who is pulled both ways – work on both things. They are not opposed. It is obvious: in any case, some will work, the others will assist. And one person also will work one time and assist another time” (p. 320). But the Catholic Serbs are faced with a great dilemma – whether to renounce their faith or their nationality.

Under the systematic indoctrination of persistent and unscrupulous friars during the following decades, the majority renounced the Serbian nation, and opted for the artificial “Croatian” one. Only strong personalities and great minds withstood it, such as Milan Rešetar, Vladimir Dvorniković and Ivo Andrić, who stayed true to Serbdom. However, the croatianisation of the Serbian Catholics encountered resistance at the outset, even resulting in hesitancy by the Vatican. Thus, in the newspaper *Dom* from 25 October 1901, Radić wrote: “Justice for the Pontifical Croatian College of St. Jerome in Rome has not yet been achieved. Now, via his archbishop and a minister, the Montenegrin Prince has sent a letter to the Pope in Rome, requesting that the Serbs in that College receive the same rights as the Croats. God knows what the Serbs have got to do with it! It is precisely this matter that clearly showed how everthing, from all sides, is rising up against Croatian thought. We Croats have no friends anywhere. The Pope was under attack from all sides for having justly decided on just one matter in favour of the Croats. Those near the Pope were so frightened and seemingly ashamed at the thought of having to defend the Croats. They themselves immediately started to destroy all which the Pope had solemnly promised and confirmed by his seal“. (p. 376).

### **e) Claiming Ownership over Marko Kraljevic**

Antun Radić expressed incessant Croatian national mythomania and megalomania in his numerous texts which claimed ownership over Marko Kraljević and treated him as a great Croatian hero . In the 13 December 1901 issue of the newspaper *Dom*, Radić compares Kraljević to Ante Starčević, writing, among other things, “Take, for example, Marko Kraljević! The whole nation lauds and praises him as a hero . We know, as the poem goes, that Marko was a true reveller, though a good one, good-hearted and inclined to the poor. But that does not matter, because at the time there was the biggest and greatest peril from the Turks and the Turkish forces (the oppression) – and Marko was against the Turks, and he defended the poor from the Turkish oppression. Although later Marko would even turn into a Turk out of spite, the people did not care, but rather they remembered only his heroism in fighting the Turks. That is what matters, and therefore Marko still has a good reputation to this day, afte 500 years.

Five-hundred years later, the Croatian nation found itself in great peril once again: our enemies wanted to destroy the old Croatian kingdom and wipe us from the face of the earth. And again, Marko Kraljević appeared, a new one, fighting back just as ruthlessly with pen and paper, just like the other Marko had with his mace. It was the late Starčević himself, God bless his soul! Nor was he an angel, just like Marko: the Old Man too would have joined the *Mađaroni* out of spite (as they say, at one point he was of the same mind as *Mađaron* Baron Rauch) – but the people cared only for his perseverance against all enemies – and the people speak well of him even today. However, there was no longer a place in the world for Marko, a world in which every sort of cowards wanted to be a hero like him could become one: when the rifle came to the world - which could from secret places kill even the bravest hero -.Marko had to go to the grave. The same happened to the Old Man and his comrades – they were all buried from the moment every Židović (a name referring to Jews in a derogatory manner), who does not speak a word of Croatian, wants to be a greater Croat than Starčević himself. What can the heavy mace in a hero's hand do against the rifle in the hand of a coward? What can Croatian heart and honesty do against – it's no use continuing.

Glory be then to Starčević, for he held the heavy mace in his honest and heroic Croatian hand. And the mace – it represented the idea of Croatian freedom. It was this idea that mercilessly fought against our enemies, it filled them with fear like the Turks feared Marko's mace. However, neither Marko nor Starčević liberated their nation. True, there are still those who sit half asleep by the hearth, listening to the old story about how Marko will rise from his grave and defeat the Turks; likewise there are still good and honest Croats who wait for salvation by a word from the long-since-passed Starčević. But if these heroes did not free the nation while alive, they will not save it when dead and buried. Glory and eternal mention be then to those two men, for they were true heroes. But, alas, heroes of their mould are no longer good for the battles of today“ . (p. 408).

Now is the time for “heroes” of a new mould, like the Radić brothers, who out did all their national role models with perfidiousness and hypocrisy, and above all with cheap political demagogy. The extent to which this demagogy is present in Antun Radić's work can be found in the shocking example of his explanation of why Zagreb became the capital city of Croatia, although it was located faraway in the outskirts of the lands that the Croatian national idea completely professed Explaining the significance of the capital city for every nation and state, Radić, on the matter of Zagreb, underlines that it had been “. . . the Croatian capital city from the times when all our national kings died away, that is, from the times when we came under the threat and danger of peril from the North: at once we moved our heart and strength nearer to the enemy. Other nations did this as well: Paris is nearer to its old enemies the English than to its weak cousins the Italians. The Russians had the old capital, “holy” Moscow, right in the heart of the Russian country; but when Russian Tsar, Peter the Great, had a showdown with the Swedes, when he started to ‘eat cherries from the same bowl’ as the Germans – he was not sorry to leave the old and holy Moscow, because he had to: he had to place his heart and strength right under his enemy's nose. And thus, with great difficulty, he founded a new city on the shores of the sea, in the mud: Saint Petersburg. There you see! The strength of a nation lies in its capital city – and the strength and power of the nation must be placed directly across from the enemy.

Therefore, he who once blundered that it would be more convenient if Sarajevo was the capital of Croatia instead of Zagreb was wrong. That is rubbish. That would be like someone running away with his main army before the enemy! And it does not matter that Sarajevo is located in the centre of Croatian land; the nation does not distribute its strength with callipers. Such a thought could have only occurred to a fool, who commands the nation from a closed room: Forward march – straight into the wall with your heads! Is Saint Petersburg placed in the heart of the Russian land? No, it is on its border. And is the human itself in the centre of the body? Is the head on the belly?! If the Croatian capital were to be moved at all, it would be better to move the strength of the nation to Ljubljana of Bijela Kranjska – right under the nose of the Germans!“ (p. 338).

### **f) Enthusiasm over Starčević's Ideas**

It was not odd to see Antun Radić angry with the Roman Pope when, due to the Vatican's tight-rope-walking politics and bringing Italian and Hungarian interests into accord, he would neglect Croatian ones. Thus, in *Dom* from 27 February 1902, this distinguished Croatian national ideologist laments, "The Croats have always been loyal to the Pope, like innocent children who are blind to every evil, because they do not know any evil. Moreover, the Croats did not pay mind to the fact that many foreigners, and even countrymen, ridiculed them for allegedly being the Pope's servants and being loyal to Pope, like the bankrupt Spanish aristocrats. Especially during the last few years, during the reign of Leo XIII, the Croats had hoped that he would somewhat support the Croatian cause, or least as much as he could within his powers, by, for example, allowing the Lord's holy mass for the whole Croatian nation to be served in Old Croatian and not Latin. After that, the Croats were happy to see that the Pope had recently set up a choir in Rome which bore a Croatian title, and which was for the Croats: let accomplished priests study there, and let it be known that they are Croats, and not "Illyrians" or "Yugoslavs". But nothing happened. Neither did the Pope allow the mass to be served in Croatian, nor did he set up the choir. Just in the last few days, the Pope took back his word and once again set up some "Illyrian" choir for priests, while there is no sign of a Croatian one. It is said that he had to do so, because he faced opposition from the Italians, Hungarians and Serbs – Montenegrins. I do not know what more intelligent people have been saying about it, but in my opinion it was not right to hope that the Pope would to some extent help the Croats – because they are Croats. It is not within his power. He has authority over religion, religious education and religious affairs, in which the Catholics Croats have to stay loyal and obedient to him. And in that which pertains to Croatianhood, he seeks no loyalty and obedience." (p. 79).

These words are proof that the Roman Catholic Church nurtured an artificial national consciousness which at one point grew to become capable of acting more independently of its creator. This was more prominent in the case of Antun's brother, Stjepan, who would gain great popularity with the people, but who would also amass great anger against himself from the clerical circles. The Radić brothers were endlessly loyal to the Vatican when the Roman Curia unreservedly supported Croatian national aspirations, but lacked understanding for its diplomatic manoeuvrings and alternative options. Like Gaj, Strossmayer, Rački, and Starčević, they were not above plotting with Russia if they deemed it to be at some point politically useful.



Such re-orientation was most present in times of great disappointment, when the Vatican proved itself ready to trade with Croatian national interests in order to satisfy the Italians, Germans or Hungarians. Therefore, oral commitment to the Russian option represented the most effective Croatian threat for preventing excessive neglect of Croatian national interests. In his article *Croats, Let Us Return to the Right Path!*, published in *Dom* on 27 March 1902, Radić explains: "Nowadays nobody asks about us, the Croats. They only order us around and do whatever they like with us. It is no wonder that we have been completely desperate and lost due to such misery and neglect, and that we take what we can get, even a piece of straw. Thus some of our people accepted that thin piece of straw in Rome, when the Holy Father, the Pope, opened some school there for Catholic Croatian priests – and some of us instantly thought that Rome would help us, and that Rome, with just one letter, would regulate and settle "the Croatian issue", that is, the issue of unity and liberty for the Croatian nation! As if that is something that has to do with the Pope, the Holy Father! And there it is – that piece of straw sank too – the Pope denied what he had promised. They say that he did it to fulfil the wishes of the Montenegrin Prince. There! The Prince of one little Montenegro with a handful of Montenegrins can do more in Rome than twenty Croatian bishops! But then, he is 'the only friend of the Russian Tsar'! Even a blind man would have to open his eyes to that – if he is not afraid of the light. But our people have been afraid of light and truth for some time now, and they do not want to open their eyes. Therefore, the only hope we have is our sound Croatian mind: It must prevail, as it has prevailed so many times before, and showed us the way. All our great men – Gaj and his companions, Preradović, Strossmayer, Rački, Kvaternik, and even Starčević – were more or less to a degree familiar with this right path, because it is in the Croats' blood, as it is in a bird's blood to want to fly. Great Croats will come again, who will lead their people on the right path." (p. 86-87).

But all the pretended panslavic outpours and cunning support of Serbian-Croatian unity, based even on "the Croatian state right", fall apart when Antun Radić, and later his brother Stjepan, vent their apologetic tirades over Ante Starčević's thought and work. Thus, in the same issue of *Dom*, Antun Radić warns: "No one, who for even a moment opposed that thought which has led and carried those people who supported the late Ante Starčević, should stand before the nation. No one, not even those who look at the Serbs differently from the late Starčević and some other members of his party (pravaši). Everyone else can say what they like, the truth is this: when Starčević's thought is gone, Croatian thought will be gone too; and not because it was Starčević who created it, but because he repeated the thought of our grandfathers in the most perilous hour, defending it fearlessly in spite of ridicule, diligently and patiently suffering for it, thus saving many, so many that we still cannot fathom it. And to let his name turn Croats away from the Croatian thought! Never mind names, they are fleeting – let us hold to thoughts! Do not fight for the Party of Rights' name (stranka prava), but for its thought. If needs be (and it is!) to "swallow", "devour", and "destroy" somebody, then let us destroy the last trace of those who are against the Party of Rights' thought, that is the thought of our Croatian grandfathers – either they are for it now, or they can be without it. Let us destroy all the cowards and triflers, who are always here and there, and yet who are nor here nor there; who always and forever only "deliberate", but in truth only fear for their own skin, because they do not have Croatian heart. Let us destroy that, and again the Croatian youth will be restored to life, Croatian cities will come back to life again, once

again there will be people who will deliver us from this fear and sleepiness, from this ultimate national shame we find ourselves in today. And if we do that, it does not matter whether the new party will be called the “Party of Rights” as well, because it really will be a party of rights, not just by name. In my opinion, the name “Party of Rights” should not bother anyone – but every Croat, and not just the party’s members (pravaši), must take care and strive to make the new party not just a party of rights by name and a party of nothing by everything else” (p. 91-92).

Also in this issue of the *Dom*, Radić writes about troubles regarding the Pontifical Croatian College of St. Jerome in Rome, how it changed the name to a Croatian one, and then returned it to its original Illyrian name. “When the Pope did that, some newspapers mentioned that it was great that the Pope had chosen to give the choir a Croatian name, when it used to be called “Illyric” or a “Slavonian *Gostinjac*”. But there came the trouble! Some Italians from Dalmatia were against it, saying that it was not for the Croats, but only for the Dalmatians, regardless of whether they were Croats or Italians. A number of Dalmatians forcibly opened the college and settled inside until this matter reached court, and later the hands of the Austro-Hungarian envoy. The Montenegrin duke also opposed the Pope’s letter, on account that the Pope had decided that Catholic Montenegrins could attend classes in the college, forgetting, however, that the Montenegrins were Serbs, while the college was for the Croats, and not for Serbs – and the duke did not want his people to go to Rome under a Croatian label, under the Croatian name. The Pope relented and returned the college its previous name: it was a college for “Illyrians”. The Montenegrin duke agreed, but to be certain that it would be known that his Montenegrins, who were not Croats, but who were not Illyrians either; it was decided, with the Pope’s consent, that the Montenegrins might freely study the Serbian language there, and moreover, study it using the Cyrillic script. Acrimonious articles started to appear in our newspapers, and young people started to organize themselves, making arrangements to abandon the Roman faith and turn to Orthodoxy. After all that, the archbishop of Sarajevo, Štadler, set off for Rome and, on behalf of all the Croatian archbishops, delivered one long letter to the Pope, which stated that the Croats had been wronged, and that the Croats could raise funds and establish another college in Rome, a new one, which would be clearly designated as a college for the Croats” (p. 107).

In the *Dom (The Homestead)* issued on 24 April 1902, the tone of Radić’s article about the same issue was more reconciling. He started with the question: “Will the Croats now calm down regarding their St Jerome in Rome? The Holy Father the Pope wrote a lengthy letter to the archbishop of Zagreb, Posilović, telling him to communicate it to all the other Croatian bishops and to the whole nation. In it, the Pope wrote that he had always and forever taken special care for the Croatian nation, and that the Croats had always been grateful and willingly accepted everything that they had been given from Rome, whereas now they were restless because the College of St. Jerome in Rome was no longer designated as Croatian, but as Illyrian again. No one had any reason to complain at all, wrote the Pope, because everything had been as before, and even better. Concerning the name, there had been all kinds of problems on account of which the Pope had had a hard time. However, whatever the Pope had done with regard to this matter, he wrote, he had not done it because he was an enemy of Croatian politics; he is not an enemy of the idea of the unification of the whole Croatian people in all Croatian lands. That was nice. One can see that the Croatian thought really is something, thus it

must be known to the whole world – because what the Pope writes to the bishops of a whole nation is something that is known worldwide. One can see that a powerful thought is precisely the one which defends and celebrates the true Croatian national name, that defends it not only at home but also abroad, whereas not long ago there were many, primarily our people, who were satisfied, even at home, with the foreign and invented names obscure to all, such as “Illyrian” and “Yugoslav”. One should bear this in mind. When the Pope decided that St. Jerome was not to be called “Saint Jerome of the Croatians”, as you already know, the archbishop of the Archdiocese of *Vrhbosna*, Štadler, complained to the Pope. Then the Pope wrote that nobody had any reason to complain. God knows whether the Pope also thought by that that Archbishop Štadler does not have any reasons to complain either? Priests and other high officials cannot stop congratulating Archbishop Štadler for his open support of the Croatian name, and for having spoken openly before both friends and enemies alike. The newspaper *Dom* also extends its congratulations together with everybody else, wishing Archbishop Štadler all of God’s blessings, especially strength in every trouble and distress, because there are lot of them, and more will yet come, worse than these, which he will have to overcome and sustain. We already mentioned once that he is in a difficult place, but no one else could be better suited for it than he” (p. 125).

To what extent this problem bothered Antun Radić can be seen from his comment from 29 May 1902, when he wrote that under the pressure of Rome, Archbishop Štadler had changed his mind and took back all that he had already written in his letter of protest. According to Radić, had the issue of the St. Jerome College “. . . been solved as we Croats wanted it to be solved, it would have been a step towards our national bliss and glory. Following the Pope’s orders, Archbishop Štadler let that issue go, and presumably, following his example, other bishops and priests will also let it go, so nothing will come of it. It is not hard to believe that many times before, our high-ranking church officials have set aside the national cause because of an order from Rome, even though they were perhaps against it. One cannot prove it easily, but now we can believe it is so. – Does the Roman Catholic religion demand it? That is the question!” (p. 155). Radić called all those happenings terrible intrigue, because “. . . you cannot call all that mess in connection to some College of St Jerome in Rome anything else than terrible intrigue, a terrible scandal. How unfortunate are the lands of the Croats and the nation! Deceived by everyone, worse than they deceive a blind man, just like a true fool! (p. 154).

Having once again given a short history of the four-century-old college and stressing the worth of its assets that amounted to approximately eight to ten million crowns, Radić went on to describe the “sensible” behaviour of the Italians as a reaction to the transition of name of the college from Illyrian to Croatian, and then explained the further events that occurred after Zagreb had been filled with excitement due to the decision that the Pope had originally made. “After a while, the Pope ordered that the college was to be called Illyrian as before, also recognising that, under such a name, it would pertain to the “Serbs” as well – but no trace of the Croatian name! The Croats began to get angry and started to loudly express their anger at Montenegro and its duke, and his envoy Vojnović (who had previously gone to see the Pope on that matter, and who then arranged for the Serbian name to be recognized, and who knows what else). Also, there were angry outbursts directed at the Hungarians and Germans, that they had forced the Pope to such a fault. Then Archbishop Štadler visited the Pope, bitterly complaining that he had given

in to Croatian enemies, particularly stressing among these enemies the governments in Vienna and in Pest. Štadler begged the Pope to redress the wrong he had done and to return the Croatian name to the college. Everything that Štadler had said to the Pope on that occasion was later published in the newspapers. Then the Croats started to glorify Štadler as a true Croat and hero who had fearlessly told the complete truth to our enemies in public and to their face. Bishop Strossmayer commended him too, as did the Zagreb Canonical Kaptol, various councils of priests and individual priests with their congregations. The Pope wrote a letter to Posilović, one of the archbishops in Zagreb, stating that the Croats should calm down; that the Pope is their friend, but that he has been under great pressure from all sides, and that he had to do what he did, never wishing to belittle the Croatian nation. Vučković, a delegate, told all this to his delegation, and the minister replied that it was not true that Štadler had reproached the governments in Vienna and Pest, and added that nobody had forced the Pope to anything, and that he had changed the name of the college by himself; and Štadler, the minister said, had slandered him on purpose. Then everybody wanted to congratulate and greet Štadler. In the midst of all those congratulations, a letter from Štadler appeared in the newspapers, in which he claimed that that was not what he had said to the Pope, and that the newspapers were wrong; but the real reason why it was not so was because he had received instructions from Rome telling him that it was not so. Then Štadler came under the attack of the Hungarian and Jewish newspapers, which started to make fun of him and the whole Croatian nation” (p. 154-155).

To appease the embittered and confounded Croatian public, Antun Radić wrote in the same newspaper: “Because of Štadler, i.e. because he took back and denied all that he had been praised and looked up to for – every honest man in Zagreb, and probably in all Croatian lands, are feeling as if they have been scorched and even beaten. Everybody says that we have never been so disgraced. There are those who are merry – because they will benefit from their speculations. Most of them are confused, not knowing what to say, and many of them are afraid to say what is already on the tip of their tongue. I will say only this: disgrace here, disgrace there – this has proven more useful for showing both the gentlemen and the people which path we should follow than if we had spent fifty years fighting and arguing about it. Something has changed suddenly, thus we will be able to take one step further – towards freedom, that fundamental human dignity; and towards truth, that most precious treasure. Now, we only have to take care not to overdo it, and to not throw ourselves into arms of the Jews and their friends” (p. 158).

Radić found support for these soothing tones in his unique rationalisation of the existing situation. Regarding the papal intrigue and betrayed expectations of the Croats, Radić decided to emphasise two points that should be communicated to the nation: “Firstly: this affair and intrigue does not have anything to do with our religion. It is about the politics that come from Rome, and we Croats, should have faith in such Roman politics as much as we believe in any other politics. Holy Father the Pope has himself proven best that it is all just politics when he skilfully decided upon this matter, which he latter denied; and that is something that can be done in politics, but not in religion. In this matter, the Pope made a mistake, for the first or the second time, but in religious teachings he cannot be wrong. Secondly, the politics from Rome are the task of some high church officials, that is, bishops and archbishops, and not some provincial parsons and chaplains. Therefore watch out: if it can happen that the people do not believe in the politics managed by the bishops, it must not happen that the people cannot

trust their national religious officials, who are in no way responsible for the politics of high-level religious officials. The parsons and chaplains need not obey their bishop if he orders them to do something related to politics, and true, our Croatian parsons have never obeyed such orders in most cases, but have always supported the people, even when it was contrary to the bishop's will. Where would, for example, Dalmatia and Istria be today, if in politics all our Croatian priests had to follow the will of the Croatian bishops, who have clearly for ever and always been and are the Italians and "Talijanaši"<sup>22</sup> One should always bear this in mind; that will preserve old unity amongst true Croatian priests and people. Where will a tear fall from, if not from an eye! Where will priest go without his people, and people without their priest?" (p. 170).

### g) The Creator of the Idea of the "Croatian Orthodox Church"

In several texts, Antun Radić had different opinions about the allegedly greater closeness of the Bosnian Muslims with the local Catholics than with the Orthodox population. In the *Dom* from 10 July 1902, he wanted to find a more detailed answer in order to explain how it had occurred that ". . . our 'Turks' in Bosnia and Herzegovina hate 'Christians' much more than they hate Catholics. However, in our times, they have begun somehow to associate and agree more with the 'Christians', i.e. the Serbs – but that is 'politics'. I have spent few days in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and have seen it for myself, and then asked people why it was like that. First I will explain this, and then we will go further, to the very thing itself. They say, and it is true, that our people of the 'Serbian' religion kept rebelling against the Turks – the Ottomans and the Turkish converts –rebelling and slaughtering them without mercy; while the Catholics, the 'latins' did not do that: they were docile, obedient and submissive. Before 'Austria' (e.g. the army of Emperor in Vienna) came to Bosnia, the Turks suffered largely because of the attacks from "hajduks"<sup>23</sup>, and those were the well known "eskiya"<sup>24</sup> (e.g. hajduks) – who were mostly Serbs. Our 'Turks' remember that to this day. When I noticed that, I asked: Why did only the Christians rebel? Why did not 'Christian' Catholics rebel as well? Some things were told to me, and something I saw for myself. And it isn't anything special, God knows what – it is easily understood when you think about it" (p. 194).

Although Radić was motivated by the embarrassing discovery that the Bosnian Catholics were traditionally too obedient, submissive and docile, and thus they suffered too much and were completely neglected in his time because their outcries could not be heard, his "insight" resulted in some other outcome – for him not so desired. This can be clearly understood from the following excerpt: "Our so-called 'Christians' – they are Christians as well, only their priests are not under the Pope (or, as the people like to say incorrectly: "they do not believe in the Pope"), whereas, the Catholics are subject to the Pope – which makes a great difference. The difference is in that that the Catholic priests, who are subject to the Pope, have completely different schools and a different order. Under the Pope, there is no priest who would drop out from his 'twelve schools', whereas among the 'Christians' or 'Serbian Orthodox', priests there are those who have

<sup>22</sup> *Talijanaši* – The Italians understood that one segment of the ethnic Croats were slavofonic Italians (and part of the Croatian nation thought of themselves as the Italians, so called *talijanaši*.

<sup>23</sup> *Hajduk* – a freedom fighter in the Balkans in the times of the Ottoman Empire, a rebel against the Turks.

<sup>24</sup> *Bandit* (tur).

not finished any school, but grazed goats belonging to a monastery, during long winter evenings, learning the Cyrillic alphabet, that is, to read (and write poorly), from some bearded monk, and then were ordained. Today, there are only small numbers of those who have finished such 'schooling', but from the beginning they were all like that. Where have you seen any Catholic priest to plough a field or load fertilizer into a cart, etc.? And how many 'Serbian' priests do that, like every neighbour – Pantelija, Tanasija or Ilija? Now tell me this: Is it unexpected that the Catholic friars (or uncles, as they are called there, where there were no other Catholic priests in Bosnia in the beginning) – is it unexpected that they took care of their Christian brothers in one way, while the 'Serbian' priests took care of them in another way – that is, not at all? It is not at all unexpected, but completely logical. When the 'Christians' or Orthodox people, besides the violence and oppression, could oppose their masters the Turks, it often happened that the priests were with the people slaughtering, looting and setting fire, as everybody else; and when the Catholic people would rebel, there among them were their 'uncles', e.g. the Franciscans, to calm down and appease them, and then perhaps to call on the *agha* or *bey*, *quadi* and even the *pasha* himself to explain the situation to them, and to pray a little for their congregation too. This is how it was more or less in the past, and that is why the 'Turks' do not look the same at 'Christians' and Catholics even today" (p. 194-195). As a harbinger who announced the idea upon which the Pavelić's project of the "Croatian Orthodox Church" would later be put into practice, in *Dom* in an article issued on 26 January 1903, containing exactly the same phrase, Antun Radić, commenting on it as an idea that had already been published in a newspapers issued in Zagreb, explained the underlying motives of such an initiative; he thus wrote, "Religion divides and separates the nation, so it can easily be said that when there are two religions, there are two nations, and I could almost say two enemies. The Croats are a good example of this, because faith has divided and disorganized us, and is still dividing us today. You must have heard about this, as the newspapers are full of it: whoever is of the Orthodox faith does not want to be a Croat, but a Serb. It has become prevalent to such an extent that Croatian mothers bear sons who are Serbs as follows – there is a Croat mother who is Catholic and a Serbian father who is Orthodox: their children, particularly the sons, will be Serbs, who will wholeheartedly fight against the Croats, while the Croats are supporters of the idea that Croatia must be given its right<sup>25</sup>. Also, there are cases where a Croat father has sons who are Serbs if their mother is a lively Serbian women of the Orthodox faith. Lastly, there are other such cases too: a child is baptized in the Orthodox Church, but later when he comes of age, he thinks like this: Why would I be Serbian on account that I am Orthodox, regardless of whether the religion is known as "Serbian Orthodox"?! Why would I be Serbian and against the Croats, when I was born in Croatia, surrounded by Croats, when I speak the same language as they do, and when I see that the enemies of the Croats are my enemies too?" But when he finds himself among others who are Orthodox, they find fault with him, saying: You cannot be a Croat when all of us are Serbs and you are of our Serbian Orthodox faith. Having seen all this, some of our people have come to the following idea: Alright, let everyone have his own belief, as they wish; but who wants to be a Croat, let him be a Croat. And not only that, but also this: when Orthodox Serbs have their Serbian Orthodox Church: the Serbs – Serbian, the Croats – Croatian! If it were so, then Orthodox Croats would stay Croats,

<sup>25</sup> The Party of Rights, or The Party of the Rights – Stranka prava (cro). – Its name comes from the idea that Croatia should have been given the right to a state, or justice by having its state.

because they would not have to go to the Serbian Church! That is how you have the “Croatian Orthodox Church” (p. 51-52).

Explaining the Orthodox national concept and different ecclesiastical organisations in Eastern and Western Christianity respectively, Radić further elaborates his basic idea, saying, “There are Croats of the Orthodox faith. But look here: the Orthodox Greeks have their Greek Church, the Orthodox Russians have their Russian Church, the Orthodox Romanians have a Romanian one, the Orthodox Serbs have a Serbian Church, and the Orthodox Croats – they do not have their own church, but must go to the Serbian Orthodox Church. Everyone goes to their own church, only the Croats must go to a Serbian Church! So, the Russians are in a Russian church, Greeks are in a Greek church – consequently there will be no Chinese in the Serbian church but, we must rightfully assume, Serbs – must we not?! Why would it then be Serbian if there were no Serbs in it? There is no other option then for the Orthodox Croats but to become Serbs! Our people did not want to accept this, and therefore they came to the following idea: how would it be if we, who are the Orthodox Croats, founded our own church too, our Croatian Church – because we can see that every Orthodox nation has its church, and if the Russians were in a Russian church, Serbs in a Serbian church – then the Croats should be in a Croatian church! These are the reasons for which some of our people have come to this idea, and in my opinion, these reasons are completely justifiable” (p. 53). However, after he had nicely presented his case, crediting his ideas to other, unidentified people, Radić became aware of the main obstacle which made him restless and depressed: “Judging from what would happen if the Orthodox Croats started to demand to have their own Croatian Orthodox Church” (p. 54); the answer was unpleasant, as he remembered how self-will in the matters of church were punished by anathema. “Nothing would come of that. If, for example, there were (which is impossible) a lot of people and some Orthodox episcopate (bishop) who wished to found a Croatian Church, he would be immediately cursed and excommunicated from the Orthodox Church by the Serbian Patriarch. There is no use telling what would happen after that. Vienna and Pest would be against it; no help would come from abroad because the Russians would be against it too. If, for example, the Croatian authorities were adamant to have it – I do not know what would happen; I suppose nothing – the time is not right for any church to be established whatsoever” (p. 54).

In his article *Who Saved the Croatian Nation?*, published in *Dom* on 3 December 1903, Antun Radić, explained how the Slovenians were turned into Croats. “In the old days, 300-400 years ago, around Zagreb, Križevci, Sisak, Požega, etc., in Croatia on the other side of the mountain of Velebit down to the sea – there was not a single Croat in all that land. The Croats lived further from Velebit, closer to the sea, while the Slovenians or Slovenians lived around Zagreb, etc., and all the way to the west, past Ljubljana, further down, on the banks of the river Sava. But the Croats live there today! And where are the Slovenians? Have they disappeared? Well, you can infer by yourselves whether they perished: when the Croatian rule and state on the other side of Velebit near the sea perished, the Croatian bans moved and settled among the Slovenians in Zagreb, and kept their title as bans, who were responsible for the administration as the Croatian authority. Thus, the Slovenians had a Croatian ban, who for them was not a foreigner, as the language of the Slovenians was similar or completely the same as that of the Croats. Little by little, after they had received a Croatian ban and Croatian authority, the people started to refer to their nation as

Croatian. Thus, the Slovenians started to refer to themselves as Croats – the name *Slovenians* disappeared. Therefore, today, around Zagreb you cannot find any peasant who knows who the Slovenians or Slovenians were; they claim that they are Croats instead” (Book V, p. 328).

The following year, in the *Dom* issued on 31 March 1904, Antun Radić further tried to water down national diversity between the Croats and Serbs, reducing them solely to religious differences. In his article *The Catholic Serbs and the Orthodox Croats*, he wrote, “Generally, people believe that a man of ours who obeys the Roman law (a Catholic) cannot be Serb, and that a man who follows the ‘old’ or Orthodox law (or Vlach) cannot be Croat. However, on one hand there are a few ‘Orthodox Croats’ in Lika and around Zagreb; and on the other hand there are many ‘Serbian Catholics’ in the south, particularly near the sea, around Dubrovnik and Kotor. Moreover, I have heard that in Dubrovnik itself and its vicinity, there are six Roman (Catholic or Latin) priests who claim to be Serbs. What an odd lot we are! The Croats are glad to hear that there are ‘Orthodox Croats’ here and there, but cannot understand how a Latin could be a Serb; likewise the Serbs are proud to hear that there are Serbs who are Catholics, but on the other hand they argue that all those people of the Orthodox faith who live in Croatia Proper and Bosnian Croatia are all true Serbs. That is how strange the people are! Well, if you ask me, I too would reply that I find it pretty odd when, for example, a priest who is a Latin claims that he is Serbian. What do we, then, make of it? My opinion is the following: I suppose there is no doubt that the Croats used to be one nation and the Serbs another, and that both knew why the former ones are the Croats and the latter ones are the Serbs. I wonder why would they have different names if it were not so. However, although it appears that the Croats were one nation and the Serbs another, their languages seemed to be very similar, and their character, customs and life-styles identical. Only that way were they likely to blend so that it was hard to tell them apart. I claim that they were indistinguishable to other people, but no matter, they themselves knew who was a Serb amongst them and who was a Croat. This difference would have, however, disappeared, i.e. our people today would not have known at all why one was a Croat and why the other was a Serb, if something else had not appeared. Now, you think I will say that if it had not been for the religion that appeared, which made our Catholics stick to the Croats, even if they had not been Croats traditionally, and making those of the Orthodox faith to stick to the Serbs, even if there had not been anything in them and on them that is Serbian – but it is not just an issue of religion” (Book VI, p. 107).

According to Radić, the state, or more particularly, the nature of the political authority over the nation or its segments, was a more important factor than faith. “One should know well how faith used to spread – it was as follows: the people who were subjects of a Catholic ruler must have become Catholics with time. It had to be that way. Perhaps you noted that in the old times, crusaders were sent to Bosnia to convert the ‘nation of Bogomils’ to the Catholic religion. But it was not always necessary to send an army – it could be done peacefully. It is certain that the subjects, one way or another, with time, accepted the religion of their masters. Therefore, in our country, which was first under Catholic rulers, then under national Croatian kings, then Hungarians and lastly the Emperor from Vienna – not a single village of a different religion would have existed in our lands today if Orthodox believers had not arrived some 200 years ago, who settled under the Catholic rulers, and to whom the Emperor gave his promise in writing that he would not intervene whatsoever in the matters of their faith. However, it



did not stop the Orthodox from turning into Catholics and becoming so-called Uniates (united). Now it is clear that in the beginning, it was not faith that divided our people, but authority and politics: those who were under one rule were also under one religion and church. If we were just a little more intelligent we could learn something from this. In short, the Croats had had their own state long before the Serbs got theirs. Well, when today there is no difference between the Croats and Serbs, and when neither the former nor the latter can tell why they are different – would not it be reasonable that all our people in the Croatian state are Croats, and in the Serbian one Serbs? Why would anyone ask about religion? We have seen that faith was the consequence of an already established authority. Why would this be our point of division?! But there is the rub. There are some of our people, however, who are adamantly against the Croatian state and are for the Serbian one. Therefore, the only thing that is important is to know what one thinks and wants, i.e. what kind of politics one wants. Whoever is one of ‘our’ men, and wants the Croatian state – he is a Croat, regardless of what his religion is, and who does not want the Croatian state, he is not a Croat, regardless of whether he is three times a Catholic. It goes the same for the intelligentsia, which means that there is no other distinctions between the Croats and Serbs, except related to politics. Uneducated people, of course, believe they are Serbs because they are of the ‘Serbian’ (Orthodox) faith” (p. 107-108).

#### **h) A Pseudo-historical Fairy Tale Instead of Real Insight into the Process of Croatianisation**

Radić’s romantic tirades, with which he inundated every issue of the *Dom*, are in fact evidence of the consolidation of a newly composed Croatian nation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He admits it himself, although indirectly, and discusses it in an issue of the *Dom* from 10 November 1904, within the context of the current political concern: “Who created the Croats?” (Book VI, p. 306). Firstly, he mentions two common opinions prevalent in the community, according to which all the credit for the formation of the Croatian nation went to Ante Starčević. The first opinion that Radić assigns to an unidentified interlocutor is this: “It is easy for you to say this today, Sir! But, if 20 years ago, you found yourself in inland Croatia, e.g. in Vinkovci, and declared that you were a Croatian and that all those people living there were Croats, you would consider yourself lucky if your were just laughed at and not beaten up – something not easily avoidable in those days. Not only was it like that among the gentry but also, and more so, among the peasants, who were ‘*Raci*’<sup>26</sup> and ‘*Šokci*’ – while the Croats did not exist whatsoever. And why today are the gentry in Slavonia mostly Croats, and the peasants proudly declare themselves Croats, Croatian peasants? Who, for example, created those Croats? It was the Party of Rights. Ante Starčević and his thought created Croats out of an unconscious mass! Now you know Sir, how it was, and you can easily say it!” (p. 306). The other imaginary interlocutor interprets it as follows: “I don’t know what it is like there in Croatia, but I can tell you that we Dalmatians first became *starčevićans*<sup>27</sup>, and then Croats. If it hadn’t been for him and Spinčić, I wouldn’t be a Croat to this day, but perhaps a most fierce opponent, an enemy to all that is Croatian. In the best case I

<sup>26</sup> Raci (Rac, Ratzen, Ratzians, Rasciani) is the name that the Hungarians and Germans used for the Serbs.

<sup>27</sup> *Stračevićans* – proponents of Starčević and his ideas.

would have been ‘*Šćav*’, Slav, Slavic – but never would have a Croat become of me!” (p. 306).

Of course, undue merits were being attributed to Radić, because this action of the Croatianisation of Slavonia was carried out by Roman Catholic priests, under the direct management of Strossmayer and Rački. Something similar was done in Dalmatia, although they did not have a bishop there who was of Strossmayer’s calibre. In Dalmatia, the Roman Catholic friars in an organized and systematic way prepared the social preconditions for Mihovil Pavlinović’s political concept. Antun Radić was annoyed by the divinisation of Starčević’s political role, but when it was not certain how to solve the dilemma about the role of clericalism in Croatian political life and whether clericals should form independent political party, he was reluctant to reveal the complete truth, and went on with his quibbles, expanding the opinions of imaginary interlocutors from Slavonia and Dalmatia: “I could go on and on like this, especially for Bosnia and Herzegovina – but if you think about it you would see that this is enough. And really, if you think more deeply about it, it is a real eye-opener which leads you to exclaim: ‘By Jove, it’s true! Except for those few Zagreb *Zagorci*,<sup>28</sup> and the little pieces of territory of Upper Posavina and Podravina – there had been no Croats there before Starčević. If you remember how we Croats used to be glorious, great and strong, how come we disappeared – where and when?! We didn’t disappear, we just didn’t know that we were Croats! The nation was unconscious of itself! That explains everything! Starčević created this Croatian national consciousness, the consciousness that we are the sons of the glorious Croatian nation’. I could now pose this question: If we have not disappeared, then how, why and when were we transformed into ‘*Šokci*’ and ‘*Raci*’, ‘Dalmatians’, etc.? I will stop there to tell you what I think. There is a saying that one who wants to prove too much will not prove anything – moreover, he proves to the contrary. It is exactly the case in this matter. Some Croats, being too excited when they saw how our people started to open their eyes to the truth, and to congregate and feel united under the name of Croatia, overwhelmed with excitement and immensely respecting the late Ante Starčević, their leader, they started to act as if they had forgotten that there were Croats before, and began to write and argue in the mentioned manner. They started to think that there would not have been a single Croat if it had not been for Stračević. Not only is this not true, but it is damaging to us as well” (p. 306).

By such a choice of words, Radić actually avoids taking into consideration the heart of the matter, and instead of one exact answer, he offered a pseudo-historical tale in his wish to negate the real state of affairs before the Croatianisation had begun. He simply could not accept the truth that those people who represented themselves in his time as Croats – and there were many of them – were in no way related to the original Croats, but they had a national consciousness imposed on them afterwards. “If this is true, our opponents could argue that in the beginning, there were only a few Croats, in comparison to the Slovenians, Slavonians, Bosniaks, Dalmatians, and particularly Serbs, etc., and that it was only some sort of indirect, circumstantial ‘propaganda’ from Zagreb and God knows from where else, passing hands ten times, that helped the creation of the

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<sup>28</sup> People living in Hrvatsko Zagorje (meaning Croatian upland or hinterland).

Croats, for no other reason but to spoil the plans of the Serbs and Hungarians. Truly, we have such good ‘friends’ who used to claim it and still do, unconsciously aided by many zealous Croats, that the Croats were created by this or that. But it was not so. A long time ago, about half a thousand years ago and much later, our nation generally did not speak one and the same language, as it does not today either, nor did it call itself by one name, but there were Croats, Serbs, Nerentas, the inhabitants of Zachlunia; later there appeared Bosniaks, Slavonians, etc. This is not anything new. Fore example, the Germans were known by ten names at least (Allemans, Bavarians, Saxons, Francs, etc). If somebody asks if, for example, the former inhabitants of Zachlunia were Serbs – such a question is void of real meaning, because the Croats were Croats, and the Zachlumians were Zachlumians. But it is completely another thing when one tribe that called themselves Croats founded their own state and had their own ruler. Then they started to wonder whether, for example, the Zachlumians were also the subjects of the Croatian or some other ruler? And when the Zachlumians founded their own state, it was possible to claim that those Croats who were the subjects of the ruler of Zachlunia were not Croats but Zachlumians” (p. 306-307).

At this point Radić was tormented by many original historical testimonies indicating that the Zachlumians were ethnic Serbs, so he prattled on and on, with increasingly less conviction: “There is no sense in justifying whether the Zachlumians, the inhabitants of Lika, the Bosniaks, etc., were Croats or Serbs, or something else. They were Zachlumians, *Ličani*, Bosniaks, etc., until they become the subjects of the Croatian ruler, and even after. With time all those tribes under the Croatian rule started to call themselves Croats. If, for example, the *Ličani* had established their own state and rule, and imposed their authority on other nations, the whole nation under their control would have called itself *Ličani*. To sum up, a complete nation gets one name when it creates its own state which is named after the tribe which is the founder of the state. Little by little, all the people living in the state are called by that name. It was so worldwide, and it is so with us. There is no doubt at all that some Croatian tribe founded a state as early as one thousand years ago, and that it still exists today in some form. However, it was soon quartered, left without national rule, which passed to Pest or Vienna. It is no wonder that the people that used to be one nation in one Croatian land now started to bear false names after the area or location they lived in. So, locals in Dalmatia were Dalmatians, in Bosnia they started to call themselves Bosniaks, etc. The late Starčević and his adherents did not make the Croats; however, they succeeded in something else: they disseminated the idea that Croats had had their own state, and thus it would be just to let them have it again. As I already explained above, when one tribe of a nation has its own state, with time it gets one name: only then is it a true nation” (p. 307).

Often repeating that Serbs and Croats constitute the same nation, Antun Radić tries to impose the assumption that the Croats were located west from the rivers of Drava and Danube, and the Serbs to the east. However, he was for the development of mutual relations and insisted on their obligation to help each other towards the realization of their nation-building ideas within their clearly demarcated territories. Discussing in his *Interpretation of the Programme or What the Croatian Popular Party Wants*, he stresses the following: “The Croats and Serbs constitute one nation, owing to which they must see eye to eye in political actions, particularly in areas where they live together. By that I mean all Croats and Serbs, not just the Croats and the Orthodox in Croatia Proper. Not all of the Orthodox in Croatia Proper are of Serbian origin. Only the inhabitants of Srem

are Serbs. The others who are of the Orthodox religion call themselves Serbs on account of their faith, officially designated as Serbian Orthodox by Khuen's decree. That is why there are Orthodox villagers in Upper Croatia who claim to be Serbs. In addition, spurred by their gentry, they have already expressed their demands to have the Serbian flag and particular rights as Serbs, or in a word, they have started to practice Serbian politics in Croatia. The Croatian Peasant Party does not recognize these Serbian politics in the Croatian territory. However, it is committed to and has an intention to direct its best Orthodox peasant brothers to the Croatian state right and to the peasant programme. The Serbs in Serbia are another thing. They too have for a long time had their own state, like the Croats. We wish our brothers who speak the same language, who have the same customs and who are from the same tribe all the best" (Book VII, p. 108-109).

On another occasion, in *The 1902 Christmas Message*, Radić treated all South Slavs as Croats, writing, "The members of the South Slavic tribe live all the way from the Adriatic Sea, along its coast to the south, from there to the north and east along the banks of the Danube and its tributary to the Black Sea. In this extensive territory only one language is spoken, the Croatian language, only one poem is recited, the poem about Marko Kraljević. . . Those members of our tribe who inhabit the coast of the Black Sea almost drowned in the floods from Asia, greatly corrupting our blood, our customs, our language – they even adopted another name for themselves. Our tribesmen who live on the banks of the Danube all the way to the Black Sea are not Croats or Slovenians any more, but received an Asian name: Bulgarians. The Bulgarians of today are one strand of our South Slavic tribe. Our tribe that inhabits the coasts of the Adriatic Sea has preserved its name and liberty for a thousand years. They constitute another strand: those who are Croats and who have always been Croats, along side who the Slovenians suffer, willingly or not. The members of our nation who live far away from both seas, who have occasionally relied on support from Constantinople, sometimes from the Greeks and another time from Rome and the Western nations, are now called Serbs. " (Book VIII, p. 7-8).

Afterwards he claims that they were members of a unique Croatian tribe, noting that a distinction should be made between the concepts of tribe and nation. "Therefore, the Croatian tribe is not one nation as its members do not have one wish and one idea. The Bulgarians have their state and they think only of themselves. The Serbs have their state and think only of themselves, and often against the Bulgarians and Croats respectively. And even the Montenegrins have their tiny state, and their duke takes care of his interests. The Bulgarians, Serbians, Croats and Slovenians – they belong to one tribe, but not one nation. They do not make one nation as they do not have one thought, one desire, one aspiration" (p. 2).

According to Radić, the Croatian thought had always been the most powerful one among the people of the South Slavic tribe. "Everyone who is a member of the Croatian and South Slavic tribes, who has a wish and idea about the agreement and unification of our tribes into one free homeland and state of Croatia, with Zagreb as its centre, is a member of the Croatian nation. He who looks upon Ljubljana or Belgrade and even Sophia – he is not a Croat. . . There are ideas of Croatia more or less everywhere where our tribesmen live. Only on the shores of the Black Sea and in the state of Serbia is there not any trace of the Croatian idea. But in Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Istria, Primorje, Carniola, Styria, and even in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are educated and uneducated people, rich and poor, who know what the Croatian idea is and who act in

favour of it. It is true that in these lands there are those who are not for one Croatian homeland, but for a Slovenian one, or particularly for a Serbian one. But if we are fortunate and smart enough, we could say without dilemma that all those mentioned lands, with God's help, will be a Croatian homeland one day" (p. 8-9).

After having first calculated statistical data regarding the populations in all these countries, disregarding the Germans, Italians and Hungarians, Antun Radić concluded that there were six million Croats living there. "It should be noted that among these people there is over one million of those who are – as they have been taught – of the 'Serbian' religion, and are still taught to belong to the Serbian nation, i.e. to the Serbian idea. There is another million people who do not read books written in pure Croatian, but read (and they read a lot) Slovenian books. They are the Slovenians in Carniola, Styria, Carinthia and near the sea. Finally, there is over half a million people of the 'Turkish' religion among them, who still do not know what side to take. Therefore, of that number of six million people we are left with three million true fundamental Croats" (p. 10). The language issue, the existence of "three Croatian speeches", Radić explains as follows: "Some Croats say *što* and *šta*, some instead of *što* use *ća*, and some *kaj* or *kej*. But that is not the only difference: those who use *ća* or *kaj* also speak differently. None of these ways of speech are specifically restricted to only one type of Croats, i.e. White, Red or Black Croats, but all three parties speak two of these speeches. Thus, the White Croats use *kaj* in the west (towards Carniola), and *što* in the east (towards Srem and Serbia). The Red Croats who live by the sea, use *ća*, while those who live farther from the sea use *što*. The Black Croats who live near the coast use *ća*, and those who live farther from the sea use *kaj*" (p. 11).

What is particularly interesting here is the fact that, to the standard classification of the Croats into the "White" and "Red" Croatians, Antun Radić, in a cheap, pamphleteer Croatian historiography, adds a class of the "Black" Croats. He discusses the "three Croatian branches", giving a detailed, but ultimately arbitrary and absurd explanation: "The White and Red Croats, and White and Red Croatia have been mentioned in books more than a thousand years old. The White Croats are those Croats who live in the plains abundant in linen and hemp, which is why they usually wear white clothes. The Red are those Croats who live in the mountainous areas, grazing sheep and goats that provide wool and goat hair. The apparel made from it is darker, with shades of red. Even if it is not pure red, the Red Croats were called such, when the others ones were called White Croats. Nowadays, they can be called Red because of the red caps that they wear, while all White Croats wear hats. Also, there are the Black Croats. They live near the Germans and Italians from whom they took the custom of being dressed in black. All three strands represent true Croats. Who dares say to the inhabitants of Posavina or Zagorje that they are not Croats? They are the White Croats. Who dares say to an inhabitant of Lika or Poljice in Dalmatia, or to an inhabitant of Podgora that he is not a Croat? Each is proud of his red cap. And who dares say to an inhabitant of Vrbanja from the island of Krk or to an inhabitant of Starigrad from the island of Hvar that he is not a Croat, even if they are predominantly dressed like the Italians? We have been fortunate with this from the aspect of the Croats and our Croatian idea. Why? Because the Red Croats represent a link to that nation of our tribe who wants to stay by itself in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or who wants to go further from us towards Montenegro or Serbia respectively. The Black Croats are our link with the Slovenians not only on account of their national apparel, but to a certain extent on account of their language. Finally, the

White Croats are our link with both. The White Croats who are directly linked to White Carniolans to the west, and the White Croats in Srem are the same as their brothers across the Sava in Serbia” (p. 10-11).

### **i) Disciplining the Serbs According to Croatian Political Standards**

In *The Croatian Nation* from 1905, Radić entered into an argument with the editors of the Zagreb periodical *Srbobran*, which had criticized the Croatian Popular Party Assembly. Among other things, he stresses, “Those who write for the periodical *Srbobran* maintain and write that Croats are one nation, and that Serbs are another nation, while our program says that Serbs and Croats are one nation, and thus they have to make political agreements. In our opinion, we are one nation, but we have two states: Serbs have the Serbian state, Croats have the Croatian state. In our opinion, only Croatian politics can be maintained in Croatia, i.e. such politics that are in favour of the Croatian state, so the Serbs who are in Croatia are to act in favour of that Croatian state, in favour of our common homeland. Serbs do not talk and write like this; more so, when we Croats talk about the Croatian state right (there is no state without such a state right), the Serbs criticize it instantly, adding that the so-called Croats are *stekliši* (i.e. *starčevićans*). In one word: the Serbs cannot partly agree, or even, they cannot agree at all with the Croatian state, i.e. with the idea that there is a Croatian state where Serbs would live too. Consequently, the Serbs more favour those Croats who do not think highly of the Croatian state right. Since the CPPP<sup>29</sup> is for the Croatian state right, those who publish their texts in *Srbobran* have labelled it as *stekliš* a couple of times already, thus making it is easily understood what their attitude is towards our party. Whether those who write for *Srbobran* and the other Serbs now accept the idea of the Croatian state, it is hard to tell. We believe that that is possible.” (Book IX, p. 106).

When they did not want to accept declaring themselves as “Orthodox Croats” under any circumstances, Antun Radić, in his article *The Peasant Party in Srem*, published in *Dom* in 1907, gives his recipe how the Serbs should behave in political life in order to comply with the Croatian standard. His motive to write was the fact that the Serbs, who did not care for the concept of the Croatian state right, had won the parliament elections in Srem. “As much as we would be not sorry if a great majority of the representatives from Srem were true Serbs, i.e. true peoples’ folk, who love both the Serbian people and our Croatian homeland, its freedom and its right, which they would readily defend from any aggressor – that is how much we think it would not be right if in the Croatian parliament only Orthodox Serbs would represent Srem, which is the case now – which would be not only wrong but regretful and disgraceful. We can see, as we have already mentioned, that there is an equal number of Catholics and Orthodox in Srem. So, when there are thirteen representatives from Srem and none of them is a true Croat – that is proof that something is not right; it is proof that up to 150 thousand Catholics, purely Croatian people, do not have their representative, which means that nobody asks about them. This must not be, and it will not be. In our country, in Croatia, the Croats should have the leading role, those who first settled in this country, who defended it successfully from the aggressor, and, most importantly, who are today in the majority in the homeland. With this true and just thought, the Peasant Party went to Srem. It

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<sup>29</sup> Croatian People's Peasant Party

presented it sincerely and openly to our Serbs who speak our language and who are from our tribe, and stressed it more to our Hungarians and Germans who have settled there. All of them should know that their freedom, justice and respect of everything that is dear and holy is guaranteed to all, but simultaneously they should know that they live in Croatia and that they are obliged to, above all, love, respect and defend it as a whole, unanimously with the Croats, from any aggressor; while the Croats as the oldest nation and majority have the leading role: they are the leaders. Thus, if in some area there are only ten Croats out of a hundred people, they should have the leading role, because only they can understand in the right way, feel in the right way the true thought and true aspirations of the rest of the Creation nation.” (Book X, p. 117-118).

Thinking that by nice words, decisive stances and political campaigns, the Serbs could be talked into being harnessed to the Croatian political cart, in several articles Antun Radić opposes the open Croatian intolerance towards the Serbian people with calls to lynching and persecution. Thus in the *Dom* published in 1908, in his article *Perilous Political Speculation*, he sends a message to the pro-Frank legions that were calling to bloodshed: “We know the Serbs, and our opinion of them is not something unknown! We ought to act with them in accord. In the territory of the Croatian state there is no room for Serbian politics, because the Croats have their state, and the Serbs have theirs. According to its population and its past, Bosnia is Croatian, while the political circumstances have brought it under the same ruler with the rest of Croatia. Serbs have settled in Bosnia the same as in Croatia – they are trouble for us from a national point of view in Bosnia as well as in Croatia – but a bloodthirsty legion will only aggravate it” (p. 212). Therefore, there is no difference between Radić and Frank and the rest of Stračević’s followers regarding the ultimate political goal, but only in relation to the appropriateness of certain methods of action.

In his article *The Serbs and Croatian National Politics*, published in the same periodical in the same year, Radić further elaborates his anti-Serbian attitudes: “The Serbs have become not only the agent of discord, but also of temptation for the Croatian politicians. Everybody knows, and can see that Croatia does not have its parliament today because of the Serbs. Why? Because, not only are the Serbs within that majority too and, without them this majority would not have existed, but because without their will, the majority cannot do anything in certain essential matters. This is a well-known fact to the highest ranking politicians of the Empire, and it is the reason why they do not have confidence in that majority and do not give it power. It is enough to mention only one thing if one wants to understand why they do not have confidence. If this majority had had power, it would have been against the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Empire, as the Emperor and King has recently proclaimed. Even now, this majority is afraid to utter a word, and all because of the Serbs who are against the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (p. 213).

In 1909, supporting the known Zagreb anti-Serbian “high treason” trial, in his article *Charges Against the Serbs for High Treason*, Antun Radić came down on the propaganda for Greater Serbia and the national consciousness in general. In an affirmative tone he retold the political charges in detail and stressed: “Firstly, the Church and its religious schools were put into the service of spreading the propaganda about Greater Serbia. Their duty was to spread Serbdom, which is what they do today. After the Greek-Eastern population had received the Serbian name, and after it had accepted the Serbian customs and culture, etc., they started to spread the ‘Serbian coat of arms’,

the 'Serbian flag' and the 'Serbian script'. After these had been spread, they started to produce evidence before those people who were 'Serbs by religion' about their arrival and settlement from the Kingdom of Serbia under these emblems. Simultaneously, they disseminated the idea that these people are identical (the same) as the people who called themselves Serbs in the Kingdom of Serbia. They found the proof for it in the fact that their 'flags, coat of arms and script were Serbian'. That, together with the name one got at baptism, represented, as they argued, the characteristics of one and inseparable Serbian tribe and nation. In speeches given on the events celebrating Saint Sava, and on other occasions and merry events, the memory of the ex-Serbian Empire, Tsar Dušan, Tsar Lazar, etc., started to spread. Simultaneously with singing in the memory of Saint Sava, a political programme was introduced, explaining how Bačka, Banat, Srem, Lika, Krbava i Banija were Serbian lands within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and that Serbdom extended all the way from the sea shores to the Danube. From the moment King Petar I Karadjordjević acceded to the throne and the *Slav South Society* was founded in Belgrade, . . . and the organising of the 'Serbs' was carried out in these territories, the Greek-Orthodox population in the so-called 'Serbian lands' outside the borders of 'Serbia' had already been taught (they had already learned) to say how those were Serbian lands, that Serbia was there and will be there, and therefore had already believed that those lands were parts of the Kingdom of Serbia by right, and maintained that the Serbian king is their king, while the '*Šokci* Croats' inhabiting these lands were Serbs who had lost their national identity, renegades and Austrian mercenaries. These tendencies of Greater Serbian propaganda imply that its driver is the one in whose favour it has been spread, and that is the Kingdom of Serbia; and that those who are engaged in it are in service of the Kingdom of Serbia" (Book X, p. 32-33).

Aware that Bosnia and Herzegovina had absolutely been void of any Croatian national thought before the first half of 19th century, and also the Catholic villages even at the onset of the 20th century, in his article *The Croatian and Catholic Thought in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, published in the periodical *Dom* in 1910, Radić explicitly admitted it. "The Croatian national idea has been apparent to some extent in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 50 years, during the Ottoman rule, and the first who acquired it were those Franciscans who were educated by the Bishop of Djakovo, Strossmayer, in his seminary for priests. After the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croatian national idea was reinforced by A. Starčević's ideas, who particularly valued Bosnian Muslims and their religion, owing to which there was an increasingly greater number of Muslims, especially younger ones, who declared themselves as Croats." (p. 202). Therefore, Radić bitterly objects to the Catholic exclusivism practiced by the Archbishop of Vrhbosna, Štadler, in the dissemination of the Croatian national ideas. Štadler openly insisted on the position that ". . . everything that is Croatian must be Catholic as well. Therefore, it is understood that the Croats can only be Catholics, and consequently that the Muslims and Orthodox ('Serbs' by religion) are to be moved away from the Croats. Indeed, this thought was uttered at the Catholic Congress (meeting) in Zagreb in 1900, chaired by Archbishop Štadler. Where that idea leads, according to which all the Croats should be Catholics, is obvious from the current intrigues and confusion that have been brewing among the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. from the disagreement between Archbishop Štadler and Bishop Marković" (p. 203).



## j) Radić's Linguistic Demarcation Formula

Antun Radić exceptionally fiercely came down on the book *The Grammar and Stylistics of the Croatian or Serbian Literary Language*, by Toma Maretić, published in Zagreb in 1899. He particularly objects to his position that “. . . not only does the Croatian literary language begin with Vuk Karadžić, but Vuk is its only source and rule. A foreign reader will rightfully think that there was no Croatian literary language before Vuk. Consequently, if there was not a literary language, there were not writers or literature” (Book XIV, p. 8) Radić maintained that there had been Croatian writers who used the correct Croatian language before Vuk's time, but in support of this idea he gave the examples of only those writers who were Catholic Serbs: Andrija Kačić Miošić, Matija Reljković and Ivan Gundulić, for whom Croatianhood was a completely unknown concept. He did not hide that he was concerned that Maretić's approach opened the door to the likely conclusion that the “. . . Croatian literary language was non-existent before Vuk, or if it existed, the Croats had abandoned their literary language and adopted another, i.e. Vuk's language. Some go even further in their deliberations, saying that Vuk's language is the Serbian language. Consequently, the current literary language of the Croats is Serbian” (p. 15) In addition, Radić argues that “. . . the correct Croatian language would have existed, and it did exist, without Vuk and his works, while on the contrary, without the past in which the Croatian language existed there would not have been either Vuk's fame nor Vuk's language, which is as incorrect as it is correct” (p. 17).

The critical review of Maretić's approach to fundamental linguistic concerns resulted in Radić's own literary-linguistic demarcation formula, according to which: “The Croats have had their own literary language since the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, it was not one language, but there were several written dialects. In the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, a larger number of Croats abandoned their written dialect and adopted the shtokavian written dialect, in which a larger share of the more noteworthy literature had been written by that time than in any other dialect. The history of literature provides more examples of this. On one hand, for a while the literary production in the shtokavian dialect was ebbing away to an almost complete standstill, on the other hand, the writers of other dialects were less familiar with the shtokavian dialect. Consequently, the Croatian written language seemed to be under the influence of the old written shtokavian dialect on the one hand, and under the influence of the contemporary dialects of speech on the other hand. In recent times, the Croats have started to produce linguists who have tried not only to eliminate from the Croatian literary language the impact of both influences, but also all other products of the literary tradition. These linguists have been attempting to introduce a discontinuation in the Croatian literary tradition and build it exclusively on the basis of the work of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, the much renowned publisher of folklore, who had an exceptional understanding of his mother tongue. His mother tongue was the written shtovakian dialect itself, in which the Croats had written centuries before Vuk, thanks to which he himself learned a lot. However, Vuk was not a writer nor an artist. His work is missing all that which poets and fiction writers infuse into the literary language. Moreover, his writings almost completely lack tradition. Karadžić's literary work did not influence and could not have influenced any of the Croatian poets or fiction writers, but that was not an obstacle for the publication of one

huge grammar of his works and writings under the title *The Grammar of the Croatian and Serbian Literary Language*” (p. 15-16)

Radić objected to Maretić for having added torlakian as a fourth dialect to shtokavian, chakavian and kajkavian, which is a dialect close to “. . . the Bulgarian language, as kajkavian is close to the Slovenian language” (p. 25). Radić’s first question was whether there was a Croat who would consider torlakian a Croatian language, and without a pause he adamantly replies that there are none. “I do not ask if there is such a Serb, because I do not doubt that a nation who speaks that way would claim that it speaks Serbian” (p. 26). He basically maintained that “. . . the characteristics of the torlakian dialect are not the characteristics of our language, but of a foreign language. It is not a dialect at all, let alone a main dialect of our language that could be classified alongside the chakavian and kajkavian dialects” (p. 29). Although he completely deprecated the torlakian dialect as one in which not a single literary work had been produced, contrary to the case of the chakavian and kajkavian dialects, Radić was right at least in one thing, when he noted that torlakian was shtokavian, whereas the leading linguists such as Aleksandar Belić would discover that it was a middle shtokavian in comparison to the dialects of Macedonian, which were old shtokavian, in addition to the new shtokavian that included ekavian, ijekavian and ikavian.

As for Vuk Karadžić and his literary language, according to Antun Radić, “. . . the Croatian writers and readers have long since been painfully constrained by that philological burden unscrupulously imposed upon them contrary to the reason of the educated Croatian community in general, contrary to the hundred-year-old tradition of Croatian literature, which they have nevertheless tolerated reasonably” (p. 32). In addition to that, he referred to the Zagreb linguistic “pedants” who maintained that Vuk’s language is “bovine”. “However, there is no educated Croat who would maintain that the Croatian written language started with Vuk” (p. 34). But they all argued that the Serb Gundulić and Ivan Mažuranić, who had stolen Njegos’s epic on *Smail-aga Čengić*, wrote in Croatian. According to Radić, “. . . the Croatian literary language is one thing, the Serbian literary language is another thing; the Croatian literary language is one of the oldest languages among the languages of the cultural European nations, while Serbian is one of the most recent. If we remember how the Serbs currently refer to old Croatian literature as theirs, i.e. Serbian, while half a century ago it never occurred to anyone to think of it as theirs or even call it Serbian, we can be satisfied: we can see that they walk in the footsteps – even if it is 50 years behind – of the Croats. If they follow in this, they will follow in another thing. And concerning the fact that at the same time they claim that that literary tradition is not Croatian, let us hope that they will also – if they follow the same path – do as the Croats. It is hard to think they could advance otherwise” (p. 36).

### **k) The Defence of Clericalism and Radić’s Satisfaction with the Croatianisation of the Bosnian Muslims**

In his article *The Opponent of Croatianhood*, published in 1900 in the periodical *Obzor*, Antun Radić came down on the Czech journalist Josip Haleček who, as he says, “. . . knowingly or not, does not see too much good in Croatianhood, and is tireless in his efforts to present the Croats and Croatianhood to the Czech and Slavic people in as negative a context as possible, as the traitors of the Slavic thought, the oppressors of the

Serbs in Croatia – to whom he attributes all the virtues and advantages over the Croats, and who are, regarding our mutual conflict, as pure and innocent as white lambs” (Book XVI, p. 67). He particularly objected to Haleček for his opinion of the Serbs as superior in every way, while he maintained that the Croats were inferior. With regard to this attitude, Radić said that the “. . . Roman Catholic priests are major initiators of the national and cultural efforts among the Croats,” although, according to Radić, Haleček “cannot help admitting that those national and cultural efforts bring some sort of comfort. Nevertheless, the Catholic clergy as the sole culprit of utter evil, hindrance and degeneration in Croatia and Dalmatia, which are all optical illusions of Haleček’s, is the recurring theme of his book” (p. 68). According to Radić, “. . . accusations of the Catholic Croatian clergy for the alleged hindrance and degeneration of the Croatian nation with regard to the national politics and national culture are therefore a specialty of the perverse fruits of Haleček’s mind, where Haleček stands in total opposition to the other members of the Czech tribe. Haleček, however, intelligently avoids the memory of the Bishop Strossmayer, lest the absurdity of his opinion on the degenerative influence of the Croatian Catholic clergy upon the Croatian nation, which begot Bishop Strossmayer, an epitomised role model of the Catholic clergy in the community, be fully noticed” (p. 68).

Radić goes on with his reproach of Haleček for his critical statements about *Obzor*, his attacks on Ante Starčević as “the begetter of all the evil in Croatia” (p. 68), and the fact that he argued that the Croats “even had to borrow the language for their literature from the Serbs” (p. 68). In Radić’s opinion, the most abominable point in Haleček’s book was “. . . when he writes with certain cynical maliciousness about the alleged corporal degeneration of the Croats in Dalmatia, the countless ‘rickety skulls’ his eye had spotted in a procession in Split” (p. 69). Defending Starčević, Radić confirmed that Starčević had never acknowledged the Serbs and constantly called them by insulting names, but wondered what the cause of such statements was. “When was it that this bitterness suddenly poured out from his soul? It was when he was provoked by the Serbian slogan: Everyone a Serb everywhere. Such Serbianisation of the Croatian name, forceful dissemination abroad of the Croatian folk poems and all that is Croatian, only under the Serbian name, occurred mostly thanks to the opinion of other nations, even the Czechs themselves, according to which the Serbs are culturally and quantitatively far more powerful than the Croats. And we, the Croats, what have we been doing with regard to this? In the certificates issued by our schools, our mother tongues is called ‘Croatian or Serbian’ – but take a look at the certificates issued by the Serbian schools; is there room for Croatian? Therefore, what is Croatian is Serbian as well, but what is Serbian is only Serbian. For the sake of harmony and accord, which the Croats observed as something that contained higher, more ideal goals, and salvation for both nationalities respectively – for the sake of harmony and accord we, the Croats, were called Illyrian, Yugoslavs and Croato-Serbs, and under these names dispatched the fruits of our literature to the world. The Serbs (in insignificant numbers) would agree to that accord at home, but in the outer world they had words only for the Serbian books, Serbian arts, and Serbian nation” (p. 70).

To reinforce such a stance, Radić gives several examples: “Our highest-ranking institute of culture is even to this day called ‘Yugoslav’; the Serbs do not have such a name, which is a sign that they do not even have that keen insight into the life of their own and our national life, on account of which a more general name has been given to

the fruit of our own culture. In their tenderness, the Serbs have referred to our brotherly gatherings in literary salons as a weakness, an acknowledgment of helplessness, which directs us to them, etc. Indeed we feel lonely and weak and we suffer a lot because of it, and we are ready to suffer even more in the future; but are they stronger?

“Serious Croatian newspapers and writers follow with love and emotions what goes on in Serbian politics, literature and art; the Serbs almost do not pay any mind to us at all, they deny our existence and sell literary and art production of the Croats to the world under the Serbian name. In Croatian schools, Serbian history, folklore, and national culture are subjects of the textbooks, fictions, and scientific works as much as their own, i.e. Croatian ones; Serbian books, as well as those which are published at home hardly mention the Croatian name. We know who introduces discord among us, but the Serbian brothers do not. They do not see where the source of their chauvinism is and to what end it serves; otherwise they would not have lived under the illusion that Croats do not exist, that that is only some kind of joke of the Caniolans (kajkavian speakers), that the Serbian lands extend to the sea, etc. Thus, Mr. Haleček taught the Czechs as well that the Croats did not have their own literary language until they took it from the Serbs. Is it not impudence and an unforgivable sin of a man who is a public figure, whose judgments are authoritarian and who teaches others about the Croats, for which he is not qualified enough, who does not know them or willingly presents them falsely?” (p. 70-71).

In the periodical *Obzor* from 1902, Antun Radić, with particular rage discussed with the author of a text published in the *Serbian Literary Journal*, who denied that Croats had a developed national consciousness, stating that Roman Catholic priests had been incapacitating them for political action for ages, while clericalism had predominantly had them engaged in the service of foreigners. In his reply to these basic allegations, Radić writes, “. . . a Croat is therefore a notion identical with the clericals! Who is not a clerical, he is not a Croat! This is why the Serbs are reproachful to us. Those Serbs who are far and wide known for their religious fanaticism, who do not put religious truth to use for anything else but for the most ferocious national chauvinism, while they would like to cover up their ‘Serbian Orthodox clericalism’ – in the real sense of the word – by a public display of some kind of ‘freethinking’, in comparison to which any and even the most fanatical ‘cleric of Rome’ is a progressive man! These ‘freethinkers’ regardless of their party support and demand a religious school, and even have the audacity to reproach us Croats, who in 1874 rebuilt our new schooling system on new foundations due to ‘clericalism’! Indeed there is no need for some particular ‘clerical and conservative’ parties of who knows what nature! They are envious to see how the Croatian clergy is to a great extent active in both the cultural and political life. But why is that which is deemed a merit in the case of the Serbs deemed a crime in the case of the Croats?” (p.109).

In *Obzor* in 1914, Radić published a half-essay, and a half-account of travels under the title *Our Turks*, in which he expressed satisfaction with the results of a systematic action of the Croatianisation of the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “At last, there are Muslim Croats, with a considerable number of educated people, i.e. intelligentsia in their community, to whom books and the Arabic language, Persian and Turkish are all their spiritual sustenance, and Turkish has been until recently a predominant need, which is now Arabic” (p. 229). Giving credit to Ante Starčević for having been the first who was mindfully active in this field, Antun Radić stressed all the importance of the

achieved success, although partial, writing, “Fifty years ago, to say that they were Turks, about whom tales were told in frightened villages located on the upper flow of the Sava as late as 1878, after the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that they had horses whose tails were so long that they wrapped around their waists – that these were Croats; or, let us not take into consideration only the sad narrow-minded multitude – to say to our wider somewhat educated community, that those, ‘*nujani*’ and ‘*balije*’ are our brothers, that they are Croats, by all means some ancient and most pure-bred Croatian aristocracy; and to give a hunch to the highly educated community of ours, to our clerical and other aristocracy to think that the future Croatian state is to be built in unity, or at least considering that which to us is so foreign and in everything different the ‘Turks’ – that has been, however it may seem natural to us, such a rise of Croatian national thought, such a consciousness and conviction in its unconquerable power, such emancipation of the Croatian national thought from all that is artificial – religious and political – alleged impassable obstacles, that it can only be compared with the revivable thought of our literary national unity and that exalted and pious embrace of old literature that is Croatian. In spite of all that mentioned, and in spite of certain aspects of the unsympathetic personality of A. Starčević, the originator of this thought, such a thought of the Croatianhood of our Muslims at first indeed painfully, and then generally accepted, proves how unfounded the statement is that the Croatian nation enslaved by ‘Jesuitism’, ‘papism’, Austrianism, etc., has lost its national being and such like. If today it is possible to speak in addition about national unity, that is undoubtedly an eternal, impassable merit of the Croats. But the East left its mark. We shall not speak about the exclusiveness of Orthodox Serbdom, which for a very long time, while the Croats were digging out of the dust the old literature of Dubrovnik, did not have any understanding nor feelings for this ‘Jesuit’ literature. It plundered Islam far worse” (p. 232-233).

#### **4. Stjepan Radić’s National Ideology**

As the undisputable Croatian political leader in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Stjepan Radić (1871-1928) significantly contributed to the articulation of the national ideology, acting as a link between Strossmayer and Starčević to Pavelić, but also adding to this ideological concept his own original variety of peasant-like demagogy. In 1904, with his brother Antun, he founded the Croatian Popular Peasant Party, which in its title will later have a republican name, so that later, after the reconciliation with King Aleksandar Karadjordjević, the name of the party was consolidated as the Croatian Peasant Party. In the political life of the Croatian-Slavonian banate in the time of Austro-Hungary, Starčević for just a short period of time had contacts with a Croatian-Serbian coalition, only to soon disregard them, and in the dawn of WWI establish strong relations with first Croatian Party of Rights, and then proponents of Frank, the so-called “*frankovci*”. In 1918, he eagerly objected to the entry of Croatia in the joint Yugoslav state. He was arrested and imprisoned several times before the war for political rebelliousness, and after the war for separatism. In 1924, he arrived as far as at Moscow to make his party a member of the Peasant International. In 1925, he renounced republican aspirations and entered into a coalition with the Serbian radicals, which persevered to 1927. He was the minister of education. His political tactics were always based on the consistent attitude never to be consistent. In his adult age he acted as an explicit anti-clericalist, so that while he was alive, the Roman Catholic Church did not have success in gaining a

significant position in the political arena. That is probably the main reason for his assassination in 1928, although a member of the Radical Party, Puniša Račić, was the direct executor, and the assassination was obviously staged to put the blame as easily as possible on the government and court circles.

### **a) Tudjman's Assessment of Radić's Role in the History of Croatia**

Assessing Radić's historical role and significance in the foreword of the book *Political Writings, Speeches and Documents*, by Radić (published by "Home and World", Zagreb, 1994), Franjo Tudjman wrote: "Six and a half decades after Stjepan Radić's painful death, with full historical truth it can be said that he belongs to a class of those Croatian titans who, with their names, marked the consistency and integrity of the Croatian nation in the history of Europe and the world. In a sequence of renowned and great Croatian men, rulers, national champions and martyrs, from the first princes Trpimir, Domagoj and Branimir; the kings Tomislav, Krešimir and Zvonimir; through the Croatian noblemen the Šubić's, Berislavić's, Zrinski's and Frankopan's; to the bans Jelačić and Mažuranić, Starčević, Kvaternik and Pavlinović in the previous century; Stjepan Radić will become the main character of Croatian history in this century, in the times of a turning point after World War I, after the dissolution of the Monarchy of the Habsburgs and integration of the Croatian lands in 1918 with Serbia, Montenegro and Slovenia into Kingdom of Slovenia Croatia and Serbia, in a new state creation in European history in which all the South Slavic peoples except the Bulgarians assembled. In his lifetime, S. Radić became not just the party's champion of the peasant national movement, but the teacher and unquestionable leader of the Croatian nation; moreover, the designer of the modern Croatian nation: thus, he was justly regarded as the 'crownless Croatian king' or the selected president of the Croatian republic by plebiscite. After his death, Radić will become a symbol of overall Croatianhood, thus recognized by almost all ideological-political adversaries from the Croatian ranks, from the members of the Party of Rights (*'pravaši'*) on the right wing to the Communists on the left wing. For the first time in modern Croatian history, by his sacrifice, Radić will indebt all the Croatian classes and social strata into a united national movement for Croatian liberty and a republic under the highly hoisted flag before the whole world, on a universal democratic platform" (p. 9).

By the way, this foreword is the integral text of the lecture *Stjepan Radić in Croatian History*, delivered by Tudjman in 1988, in the headquarters of the Ustasha emigration in Canada and the USA. Bearing in mind that Radić was beginning to act politically precisely when Starčević, Pavlinović, Mažuranić, Rački and Strossmayer were leaving the public and life stage, Tudjman states that Stjepan Radić was "... the offspring of overall political thought, but in the first place the direct fruit of Starčević's nation-building Croatianhood, the same as the other two most distinguished Croatian champions in his time – Trumbić and Supilo – but who had been profoundly different from them. While in order to achieve Croatian goals Trumbić and Supilo indeed sought for new ways, not leaving the existing party programme framework, and pinning their hopes on the development of international conditions and foreign alliances; Radić from the very beginning was taken by the insight that in the future, Croatia would depend on a national movement's strength and programme of its own Croatian nation, and therefore acted, completely focused on its absolute majority, the peasantry" (p. 14). Tudjman

maintained that Radić's historical role was that of a messiah, because he managed to, from an ignorant mass of people deprived of their rights, create a strong, well organised and politically conscious entity, which contributed mostly to the formation and self-determination of the Croatian national being.

Although he stated that Radić is the successor of all the Croatian national ideologists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Tadjman nevertheless insisted that his connection with Starčević was the most direct, reinforcing that by emphasising strong ideological compatibilities, but also pseudo-historical phantasmagorias. "As Ante Starčević sprung from the Croatian revival movement under the name of Illyria, thus Stjepan Radić could appear only from under the wings of Starčević's self-Croatianhood and his opposition to new romanticist misconceptions. Having realized more deeply and decisively than all his contemporaries the danger of melting Croatianhood into any supranational ideas, regardless of whether they are Illyrian or Slavic, Austro-Slavic or South Slavic, Starčević would think out and develop the idea of self-Croatianhood at the level of contemporary European thought. He had no doubt that the Croatian nation had to build its existence and future exclusively on its individual national self-existence and its historical state right. Other nations have done that as well, and the Croatia nation is one of the oldest and few nations with a European past, which from its appearance on the territory of the current homeland (as early as in 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Croats entered into an agreement with Pope Agaton) and the establishment of its state in the Middle Ages (known by its historical monuments from 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards), has preserved, in uninterrupted continuity, despite all the historical fermentations, at least as one whole, its political and historical autonomy. That was the base upon which Starčević glorified the ideal of the reestablishment of a united and completely independent Croatia, utterly freed from any connections with both Pest and Vienna, but also independent from Serbia, in which advocates of South Slavic unity sought support, in spite of the fact that, just recently liberated from Turkish, it had already started to promote expansionistic aspirations for Croatian lands" (p 15).

Besides Starčević, Radić's ideological and political role model was Eugen Kvaternik, who was also a founder of the idea of the Croatian state right. "From Starčević and Kvaternik, Radić would adopt the Croatian historical and state programme and infuse social content in it, as well as his political experience, integrating Starčević's doctrine, in addition to Kvaternik's practice. Starčević could be his role model because of his firm consistency in the advocacy of Croatian ideals, but also because his philosophical knowledge that in politics – as in life – one should continuously learn and find adequate solutions for the circumstances. . . . Kvaternik's tragic destiny in the hopeless rebellion showcased only the moral greatness of sacrifice, but not its purpose, while on the contrary, Ivan Mažuranić's pragmatic activity in the field of state politics and culture was more than beneficial for the homeland" (p. 16).

Referring to the short period of Radić's interest in the concept of Yugoslav solidarity and unity built by Križanić, Guj, Kukuljević, Strossmayer, Rački, Trumbić and Supilo, Tadjman is very aware of what was behind that idea and how the Vatican had planned to use it for the realization of its multi-century proselytistic aspirations. Thus, Tadjman says, "The development of the idea of Slavic solidarity was also stimulated by the idea of again achieving the unity of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. In the Great Schism, namely, it was the Slavic nations that were divided between the East and West, so the aspirations of the Holy See for the revival of an ecclesiastical unity were

necessarily reflected in the advocacy of their representatives for the unity of the Slavic nations. However, precisely because of that, those ideas would not be widely accepted in Orthodox Russian and Serbia, but would be understood as an attempt of the Popes of Rome for Uniatism. There Slavism is identified with the Orthodox religion, and then with the idea of Greater Russian or Greater Serbian states. All these contradictions surfaced in the example of both Križanić and the Russian Slavophiles, and the Austro-Slavism and Yugoslavism of Rački and Strossmayer. Juraj Križanić (1618-1683.), a friar in Rome and a Zagreb canon, the first ideologist of the ethnic and linguistic unity of the Slavic nations, would give the leading role to the reformed Russia, as a counterbalance to German (and also Protestant) expansionism, in vain. With his Western Christian ideas, but in the form of Slavism, he was pronounced as suspicious in Moscow and expelled by the Tsar to Siberia where he would stay 15 years in total, only to, when he became suspicious in Rome as well, be killed near Vienna in a battle against the Turks, fighting in the ranks of the Polish army of Jan Sobieski” (p. 16-17).

Regarding the idea of Austro-Slavism, Tadjman states that it was developed by the Catholic Slavic nations, listing them as the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats and Slovenians. The meaning of this idea was a simultaneous opposition to pan-Germanism and Hungarian hegemonism on one hand, as well as “Slavophilic Orthodox pan-Russianism”, on the other hand. If the ideas of pan-Slavism and Austro-Slavism, taking into account the basic motivation of their major supporters, did not fall onto fertile soil, the Croats refocused on the idea of South Slavic unity, as they had a completely clear, practical interest in it and a reason to support it. Tadjman further explains: “. . . the idea of Slovenian-Croatian-Serbian unity was based on the generally accepted theory of the time that ethnically and linguistically related nations should create one nation and state. That idea of South Slavic unity on Croatian soil should have in the beginning served for national unity and the creation of single state body, separate from all South Slavs, on the foundations of the historical statehood of Croatia and its achievement of equality with Hungary and Austria. The more unattainable the goal in its political sense at that time, the stronger the idea of unity of all South Slavic nations, i.e. of the legitimacy and need of unification of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs from the Empire with Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria. In the time of World War I, the idea of South Slavic national unity served as a basis for the request of a Yugoslav Committee, led by Trumbić and Supilo (in the beginning even against will of Serbia) for unification in one common state, in order to prevent the intentions of the victorious Allied forces to hand over vast areas of Croatia, all of Istria and the greater part of Dalmatia to Italy, and also to Serbia, who demanded Srem, a greater part of Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and South Dalmatia” (p. 17).

### **b) Radić as a Cohesive Factor in the Fight Against the Serbian Nation**

Aware of the ethnic-linguistic unity of all Slavic nations, Stjepan Radić nevertheless continuously insisted on the historical and national uniqueness of Croatianhood, and therefore subjected all his Slavistic efforts to strengthening the autonomy and territorial enlargement of Croatia Proper, striving to get Serbia to willingly accept such a solution. “However, political expectations were one thing, and political reality was another thing, in which all illusions of national unity were being dispelled one by one. After the representatives of the Orthodox population in the Military Krajina had taken Vienna’s



side against its return under the rule of a ban (and the Serbian politicians were not just against the unification of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia Proper, but of Dalmatia as well), the Serbian support for Khuen's regime and open indication of war for the destruction of Croatianhood resulted in the sobering up of even the most ardent supporters of Croatian-Serbian and South Slavic unity, except the inexperienced, immature youth and the adherents of class internationalism" (p. 18). As Serbs mostly did not permit to be instrumentalised, following their own national ideal, the already seemingly fervent Yugoslavs, Strossmayer and Rački, increasingly openly condemned Serbian politics, beginning to reconcile with Starčević. Radić appeared exactly at that time, inviting the Croats to a joint suppression of the political force of the Serbian element.

The demagogical populism and principle: to not have any principle, brought great political success to Radić, owing to which Croatian clericalism very soon after his death started to forget all the disputes and clashes from the past, behaving as if he had always belonged to it. Describing Radić's political legacy, Tujman consciously neglects and even ignores the influences of the clerical component, but stresses that all Radić's adherents declared themselves not only as supporters of Maček, but also as Ustashas and Communists. "Namely, Radić's ideas permeated the Croatian national being to such an extent that his very name became a notion and symbol of the national consciousness and aspiration of the Croatian nation to achieve its freedom and establish a sovereign state. For it, and because of it, Radić, that is his programme and thoughts, will be referred to by all three factions that would be equally present in the war arena as the main factors of Croatian politics at the time of World War II: both Maček's Croatian Party of Rights and Pavelić's Ustasha movement, and also Tito's Communist movement to no less extent. And not just from reasons of demagogy and propaganda. Each of these three factions, regardless of the fact that they were in severe ideological opposition, had bases for referring to Radić, if not completely, at least partially. Of course, to the greatest extent it was Maček's Croatian Party of Rights who was the successor and support on which Radić's whole programme was based" (p. 29-30).

However, the war-time circumstances pushed that party to the margin of the political happenings, and put the Ustashas and Communists in the foreground. As Franjo Tujman explains, "Pavelić's Ustasha movement presented the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) as the direct revolutionary realization of the goals by which 'Radić's great people's liberation movement' had been oriented (*The Croatian Nation*, 8 October 1941). Pavelić ordered that the day of the political assassination of Radić and his comrades in the Parliament in Belgrade (20 May) be celebrated as 'a holy day for the Croatian nation' and for the memory of all the 'Croatian martyrs'. The work and teachings of S. Radić were described as the vanguard of the Ustasha movement and the Independent State of Croatia as a 'peasant state', established in the 'revolutionary momentum' of the destruction of the Versailles European order and birth of new one. On such a foundation, created by Radić, the Ustasha movement would strive to acquire the support of the Croatian nation, which accepted the dissolution of the monarchist Yugoslavia as the disappearance of evil, and in the first moment, the Independent State of Croatia as their own state. On such a foundation, one smaller part of the Croatian Party of Rights itself, from its right wing, got actively involved in the development of the Independent State of Croatia, and even joined the Ustasha movement itself. Thus, in the summer 1941, 126 parliament representatives and officials of the peasant movement

(of which there were 15 representatives and 14 substitutes), and as it was noted, 15 local organisations, who signed a declaration of the association with Pavelić's movement, which nevertheless was a proportionally insignificant number. Some of them would become ministers, grand župans and other officials of the Independent State of Croatia" (p.30). Early in 1942, sixty parliament representatives and members of the Central Committee of the Croatian Peasant Party were directly co-opted into the Ustasha Croatian National Parliament. Seeking to present the members of the Croatian Party of Rights as still a democratic political force, Tujman keeps silent about the fact that the ordinary membership of this party was joining Ustashas in massive numbers, nor does he mention the overall membership of the so-called Peasant Protection, paramilitary formations formed by the Croatian Peasants' Party within Croatia Proper. "When, on top of everything, it started to become increasingly obvious that the Independent State of Croatia would share the destiny of the defeated Axis forces, it can be understood that Pavelić was increasingly treated with greater restraint, dissatisfaction and hostility, even by those who had initially received the pronouncement of the independent Croatia with benevolence and hope" (p. 31).

### **c) The Followers of Radić's Ideology in the Partisan Ranks**

Consequently, when it became obvious that the Ustasha option would lose, there was an increasing reorientation to the Communist option, significantly aided by the totalitarian character of both movements and their parallel anti-Serbian orientation. "The Communist movement in Croatia stressed from the time of Radić's assassination and dictatorship, imposed on 6 January, that it followed the idea that it could achieve by revolution what Radić could not by his peacemaking. That was the basis of cooperation of the Croatian nationalists and Communists in the prisons of hegemonistic Yugoslavia, and also of a mutual resemblance in the campaign of the left wing of Radić's movement and revolutionary workers' movement in the Communists' efforts to establish an antifascist national frontline in dawn of World War II. During the War and revolution, Tito's Partisan movement would with time attract supporters in Croatia precisely by reference to Radić and his ideals. The implementation of such politics, especially which reference to Andrija Hebrang, one of sixty Partisan brigades under the Main Headquarters of Croatia, would be named after the Radić Brothers . . . in October 1943, on the territory liberated by the Partisans, an Executive Committee of the Croatian Peasant Party, later called the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (HRSS) would be formed by and with the supporters of the Croatian Peasant Party – who were the officials actively involved in the National Liberation Movement (NOP) – in order to stress the intention of the reacceptance of Radić's tradition even by its name" (p. 31). Many distinguished supporters of Radić were appointed the highest office holders of the revolutionary authorities.

Radić's distinguished supporters had a significant role in the emigration. The most significant was, as Tujman explains, "the involvement of part of the leadership (Krnjević, Šutej, Šubašić) in the Yugoslav government in exile, which was of immense importance, because it affirmed the Croatian views, in comparison to the Greater Serbian ones, before the international community and our diaspora, but did not have an influence upon the events in the country. . . The fact that from the circles of leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party, who were Croatian representatives in the Yugoslav

government in front of the Allies, Dr. I. Šubašić, the Croatia Proper Ban, and Minister Dr. J. Šutej agreed to cooperate with Tito's revolutionary government, showing that they too in his social federalism saw a kind of rebirth of Radić's programme, because on the basis of the AVNOJ federal state of Croatia, it had to have full equality guaranteed with recognition of the right to self-determination even to secession. . . . The fact that on Croatian soil, not a single idea, neither the Ustasha nor the Communist movement, could have even tried to achieve their particular goals without reference to Radić, is proof in itself of the historically important seedlings of his programmatic ideas as much as of their deep and sustainable rootedness in the spiritual being of the Croatian nation" (p. 32-33).

#### **d) Building a Policy on Obvious Forgeries**

The first books published by Stjepan Radić were a grammar book, a textbook and a dictionary of the Czech language, while after several political articles and newsletters, his paper *Croats and Serbs*, from 1902, captured significant public attention. It was written as a polemic response to a text by a Serbian author published in the Zagreb magazine *Serbian Defender (Srbobran)*, in which the Croats were accused of the appropriation of the Serbian language. Radić responded that it was “. . . absurd to say that we, the Croats, have stolen the language of the Serbs. Only without thinking could it be objected that we do not have our own particular national language. To avoid any misunderstandings, let us think how satisfied the Germans would be if the Poles or Czechs stole their language from them, even if they immediately called it Polish or Czech. In addition, to avoid any misinterpretations of such an example, let us just remember how the Russians persecute the Poles, how the Poles persecute the Little Russians, and how the Czechs even to this day are bitter in their accusations of the Slovaks, and all that only because the Poles do not want to learn Russian, the Little Russians do not want to learn Polish, and the Slovaks do not want to learn Czech. Moreover, there are examples of this in our vicinity: how we feel sorry when we hear some pro-Bulgarian (*bugaraš*) from Skopje speaks intentionally using lot of Bulgarian words, while we know he can speak correct Serbian. Would not it be more to our likings if he would show us that he is conscious of Bulgaria, but doing so using correct and carefully chosen words of the Serbian literary language? Let us know imagine that the Croats, those miserable poor ones, the only ones among all human beings without a capacity to speak, and wishing to be humans at all costs, that they, as I have said, with such faith that, as it is written in the Gospels, moves mountains, wanted to speak Serbian, and that the Holy Ghost pored out Himself in fervent Serbian languages on their heads; would not they, in that case, deserve to be saved, even under the Croatian name? However, when we know and after some thinking we conclude that the Croats did not start to speak by a miracle, but that the ones (in Dalmatia, Slavonia, in Banate and Upper Krajina, and in Bosnia) have from time immemorial spoken in the ikavian sub-dialect of the shtokavian dialect, and that among others the kajkavian dialect prevailed, which is, according to phonetic rules, a pure ekavian dialect, when we know that and think about it, we will understand the psychological reason for which they easily accepted and so quickly perfected the literary kajkavian dialect in Zagreb: the overall old Croatian provincial territory is pure ekavian, and the rest of the Croatian lands sound with ikavian. Therefore, the Croatian south-west and north-east became united once and for

all in the cultural and literary aspect under the Zagreb literary school, after it identified this literary language even in Posavska Croatia” (Stjepan Radić: *Selected Political Papers*, “*Menhora*”, Opatija, 1995, p. 140-141).

Such a construction requires more and more lies, to which Radić is no stranger whenever he thinks he will have a political benefit out of it. For example, he is capable of giving the nebulous statement that the inhabitants of Dubrovnik used to speak ikavian, or he goes even further in his fabrications saying that ijekavian was generally derived from ikavian. As a result, he tries to clarify his basic view: “The Zagreb school emulates the models from Dubrovnik: firstly, the locals in Dubrovnik used ikavian, then more and more ijekavian, as if they wanted to preserve a link between the Croatian (ikavian) West and Serbian (ekavian) East. Instead of the classics from Dubrovnik, Vuk was mesmerized by the folk poems from Herzegovina, with verses of which, it is our hunch at least, even the fairies of Dubrovnik were rocked in their cradles. Therefore, not only did Vuk’s school and the Zagreb school meet on the same path, but they followed each other in the same footsteps, because of which it seemed that the people in Belgrade and Zagreb would write in exactly the same way regardless of their different ways of speech. However, ikavian is very far from Belgrade, which is why Vuk’s school, with a pronunciation from Herzegovina, did not preserved itself there: in Serbia, the pronunciation that prevails in life prevails in the speech, while in the Zagreb literary school, such a literary language that you cannot find anywhere in that mutilated Croatia, more known under its historical name, was preserved and perfected – in the remains of the remnants of the then-glorious Croatian kingdom. . . Thus, even that burning question about language theft boils down, in the end, to the question of territory and name; the question is, namely, if Croatia before the invasion of the Turks was extended to those territories where the Croatian literary language was spoken in the past and is spoken today. Also, are there, then, Croats who use the shtokavian dialect? To the former question, even serious Serbian historians reply in unison by their recognition of Dalmatia to the north of the river Neretva to have been in the beginning the cradle, and then the core of Croatian state; also, the current geography replies to that by showing that Slavonia is an integral part of modern Croatia. Dalmatia and Slavonia, however, are purely shtokavian lands. Any Serb may reply to the latter question when travelling across Slavonia to Zagreb, across Bosnia to Dubrovnik, across Dalmatia to Rijeka and so on. He will hear and see everywhere a lot of people – in many places even the great majority of locals – who use shtokavian, and claim they are Croats” (p 141-142).

In case such an elaboration should be disputed on a professional and scientific basis, Radić immediately provided a back-up answer: “We may, for example say that all of this is not true and that the true Croatia is just that piece of land seen from the belfry of the Zagreb Cathedral, and the number of shtokavian-speaking Croats is not much greater than that of the kajkavians; and that neither the kajkavians were Croats, but Slovenians, and that those Slovenians, by an order from Vienna or by the Roman Catholic Church started to learn Serbian hastily, and when all of them learned it – me being among them too, as I was born kajkavian-speaking – they called the language they had learned the Croatian language, again by an order that came from Vienna or ‘the Pope of Rome’. Would that be stealing? Because one came out of two: or the Croats have been speaking Serbian from time immemorial and writing in Serbian – calling it, of course Croatian – then they had no need for stealing: or their kajkavian was such mumbo jumbo that they had to sweat hard until they learned that it was so, and in my opinion, to speak, read and

write well in Serbian. Then, in that effort they acquired the right to give a name to their product, either from their own will or by somebody's instruction. However, another objection can also be heard: first, the Croats stole the Serbian language, and then corrupted it. In legal terms, instead of 'corrupt', it is said that they 'revised' it. In that case, the Croats have their own language, because to everyone rightfully belongs that which is revised, but the owner must be compensated for having damaged the original product that was the object of revision. No matter how we look at this important issue, we are convinced that the Croats, indeed, have their own original language; or, according to some, a spoken language; and according to others, an acquired language. It is true that that language is not particular; but if it were, the article titled *Serbian and the Croats* would not have been understood in Zagreb, so conscious citizens from our capital would not have reacted to it as they reacted in Prague to the German violence of the aggressor in 1898" (p. 142-143).

### **e) A Justification of the Pogrom of the Serbs and a Malevolent Interpretation of Pan-Slavism**

Here Radić made allusions to the famous anti-Serbian demonstrations held in Zagreb that turned into a real pogrom. He said that the pogrom had been provoked by the Serbs themselves, and even that the article that appeared in the *Serbian Defender* had been a herald of the war, which is why the Croats stood up; although before that they could not be set in motion by any of the *Mađaronis'* attacks, financial looting or the constant diminishing of the banates' autonomy. The demolition of Serbian shops and apartments was followed by ruthless repercussions directed towards the Serbs who were found there. As Radić described, "Zagreb seems as if rejuvenated, everything in it makes you feel as if in 1895, when in front of the Serbian City Hall and Serbian Orthodox Church, in the so-called King's days, vast numbers of people shouted out demands to have the two Serbian flags fluttering on the Serbian property taken down, while it never even occurred to anyone to wonder what the law foresaw concerning the Hungarian flag fluttering equally proudly on the Banate Hall, Parliament, and Town Arch" (p. 14). He objected to the Serbs for opposing the Croats and their state right, while forgetting how their compatriots had suffered under the Turkish rule, and overseeing the danger from increasingly obvious Hungarianisation. Earlier, Rački had already imputed the Serbian newspapers, claiming that the Hungarian authorities had been financing them to sow blind fanaticism, foulness and deceitfulness of the aggressors.

Further pretending that he had Slavic ideological convictions, Stjepan Radić thus describes his motives to settle in Zemun for a while in 1900: "Zemun in Croatia! How long it took and how much evidence I had to produce to convince my Belgrade acquaintances of this fact! The evidence that Zemun and Srem and all Slavonia will either stay part of Croatia or will become Hungary has always been most effective. In Belgrade, whenever I presented such an alternative choice, the former was determinedly supported, so I, speaking and writing for the Serbs, did not call the Slavonians anything other than Slavonian Croatia. Indeed many months passed after which my acquaintances did not only become my personal friends but supporters of those politics, completely reconciling the Croatian aspirations for state and national independence with both South Slavic national unity and Slavic mutuality. I defended and developed those politics before numerous younger and older ordinary Serbs, and whoever among them became

my friends, they did it thanks to the determination with which I represented my views, and the clarity with which I developed them” (p. 148-149). He would like to have removed all prejudices and misunderstandings accrued between the Serbs and Croats, and for cooperation and mutuality to be established, a united political action, but all strictly in compliance with the territorial aspirations derived by Croatian politicians from their make-believe historical rights.

Although in principle, Radić blamed both Serbian and Croatian intellectuals for the instigation of hatred, he claimed that the situation concerning that matter was much worse on the Serbian side, and gave two reasons for it: “The first reason is that the more recent Serbian literature is founded on the Serbian dictionary and Serbian folk poems of the commoner Vuk Karadžić, an ingenious worker in the professor’s office of the Austrian civil servant Kopitar; whereas all the more recent Croatian literature, with some exceptions in the most contemporary times, sprang from classic Slavic literature, i.e. the literature of Dubrovnik, which was turned towards the Polish sun by Gundulić, and with the successors of Gundulić, towards the two-headed Russian eagle. In the heroic poems from Kosovo, blood is shed and the Serbian name is repeatedly mentioned; the poets from Dubrovnik glorify liberty and lift the Slavic fairies to the stars, i.e. Slavic education. Consequently, we are fortunate that Preradović followed in Vraz’s footsteps, because otherwise he would have left us a bloodstained image of a vengeful scimitar instead of the miraculous statue, ‘Grandfather and Son’; the other reason is that the Serbs have had sound and strong relations only with Russia, whereas they do not care for the other Slavic peoples. However, the Serbs do not travel to Russia to know it better and then love it more, but regularly go there to get educated, usually as Russian or Serbian grant recipients, i.e. to build a career. Such grant recipients usually live in institutes, and often do not learn Russian after one, two or more years. They do not follow (read) the Russian literature in those institutes because they cannot read it, not to mention that they do not know any members of the intelligentsia. So it usually happens that the Serbs who stayed in Russia are Russophobes, or just political Russophiles, i.e. admirers of the Russian state power, among which there are just few who would be familiar with the pristine idealism of a considerable share of the Russian, particularly younger, intelligentsia, the colossal energy of the best representatives of Russian high society and the inexhaustible creative power of the spirit of the Russian people” (p. 153-154).

Thus, according to Radić, contrary to the Serbs, the Croats are conscious and sincere Russophiles because they are enthusiastic about the great Russian soul and its intellectual achievements. He keeps persistently insisting on the view that the Serbs and Croats are one people, immediately offering an explanation: “We should fuse with the Serbs towards the outside, so that for those abroad there will be only Croatia from Rijeka to Zemun, and beyond that, Serbia; but only as two signs of one and the same national and cultural concept, as two representatives of one and the same most justifiable and most natural cultural and economic community. There is one big obstacle on that path: the Croats and Serbs – or better said, their intelligentsia – who have never or for anything been in conflict for a thousand years, within the last twenty years or so succumbed to foreign influences and today have become similar to brothers plotting against one another. . . . For me, the Serbs and Croats are not just a concept in ethnography, just one nation designed by nature. The Serbs and Croats – I will leave out for a moment the Slovenians and Bulgarians – in my consciousness are one whole,

inseparable in ethnic terms, and therefore my patriotism is Croatian only because it is most reasonable and most natural to show it by my actions in the Croatian part of that whole, because, on the other hand, as a Croatian I already have some inherited framework for my patriotic efforts: the state of Croatia. And the Serb, active within this framework, is a Croatian patriot with a Serbian name, or from legal aspect, he is a citizen of Croatia, i.e. a worker in the Croatian part of a national plot of land, but he is not a Croatian politically, which would mean that his Croatianhood is a result of training organised by the state, whereas, as I have explained above, it is the result of the actual distribution of one Croatian cultural whole into two main areas of statehood and law” (p. 159-160).

### **f) An Interpretation of the Serbian and Croatian National Consciousness**

According to Radić’s ideological vision, the Serbian national consciousness was fatally distorted by none other than Vuk Karadžić himself, while the Croatian one developed normally. “The idea of Slavic mutuality is a good genius, a guardian angel of our national revival, just as our idea of comprehensive national unity under the Illyrian name was the brightest star of our national resurrection. The Serbs have only started to feel the power of this idea, just as the Polish have too, because Vuk’s Serbian slogan – originally just a joyous exclamation of a simple commoner, who on his travels heard and understood everywhere his mother tongue – ‘everyone a Serb everywhere’, and the Polish slogan ‘Poland from sea (Baltic) to sea (Black)’, have equally sprung from the same self-confidence appearing among the Serbs and Poles as a natural consequence of overly powerful historicism. The difference between the two is that among the Poles, such historicism developed to the extent of territorial megalomania, but only amongst the aristocracy, while among the Serbs, a megalomania spread among those who to the greatest extent belong to the most ordinary and democratic people. Among us, the Croats, fanatical megalomaniacs are only overzealous foreign neophytes, and such a people at home whose names simply end with ‘ić’, and who are being patronized from Pest, or from Vienna, or Rome. All the rest, which is even a little imbued by Slavic thought, is ready at any moment to reconcile with the Serbs, moreover to reconcile with them from the outside and completely fuse and unite. That is the reason for our Illyrian and Yugoslav ‘rambling’, and that is the reason why we witness the continuous appearance of those who speak of ‘alleged’ and of ‘some’ Slavic mutuality. That is our only advantage over the Serbs, an advantage that would have already been our common national virtue and source of the people’s invincible strength, if these days Zagreb would listen to the greatest Slavic genius, a Croatian kajkavian speaker, Jurij Križanić, instead of the greatest living Croat. However, alas, the great majority of the ‘conscious’ citizens of Zagreb still do not know at all who Juraj Križanić was” (p. 154-155.). Therefore, the basic Croatian problem is that not all Croats are capable of understanding the necessity of the ultimately perfidious conception of an approach to the Serbs, so that they can be successfully instrumentalised for the realisation of Croatian state-building interests, let alone the far-reaching importance of Križanić’s past proselytistic efforts and attempts of Uniatising Russia.

### g) The Shrewd Croatianisation of Dubrovnik

In 1902 Stjepan Radić published a book of his memories from prison under the title *Memories from Prison*, which does not have any significant literary value, but which is important because in it, in a format of an alleged dialogue with some brother in misery from the same cell, he uses it to express his own views on Serbo-Croatian relations, which are actually a summarised expression of the overall Croatian national ideology in that regard. The dialogue begins with the clarification of Eugen Kumičić's assumption from his novel *The Zrinski and Frankopan Conspiracy*, in which he claimed that Petar Zrinski had ties to Dubrovnik, and even that Gundulić's son defended the Croatianhood of Dubrovnik. Radić treats this issue shrewdly. He does not agree with Kumičić, regarding his assumptions as overstated. Then, with pretended temperance, he presents a milder lie that the natives of Dubrovnik, in addition to Slavic, more often called their language Croatian. From the following excerpt it can be seen that he nonetheless insisted on a much realer argument, considering Dubrovnik, at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, an integral part of the Austrian province of Dalmatia, which Radić calls "Dalmatian Croatia". On that matter Radić says, "Kumičić is wrong when he depicts Gundulić's son as a radical Croat. For Gundulić as well as for all the people from Dubrovnik, that patriotism was unconditionally Dubrovnik patriotism, while their national consciousness was Slavinian, Slavic. However, the truth is, and it is completely natural that it is so, that the people of Dubrovnik, when they were outside the borders of their republic, looked to the nation of the same language in which they wrote and spoke, and besides calling it Slavic they much more often called it Croatian. But why would we quarrel about the past, when our present clearly shows that Dubrovnik is in Dalmatian Croatia, and that Dalmatian Croatia is in the Habsburg Monarchy, which could lose it only for the benefit of Italy, and not whatsoever in favour of Montenegro, let alone Serbia" (Stjepan Radić: *Memories from Prison*, Matica Hrvatska – "Zora", Zagreb 1971, p. 80).

To a direct question of whether there were Serbs in Dalmatia and Dubrovnik, Radić replied that those are Croats who declare themselves as Serbs, comparing them with his alienated compatriots known as *Mađaroni* and *Talijanaši*. "They live in Dubrovnik and Dalmatia too, but it can be easily proved that they are political Serbs, that is, such Croats who in every Catholic see a Jesuit, and in every Austrian they see a German, and thus they embraced the Serbian thought exactly the same way as some other Croats embraced the Italian or Hungarian thought. The difference is only that such Croats who work for Italy or Hungary we consider traitors, whereas we cannot say that to the Croats who work for Serbia, because we are one nation, which is why Serbian irredentism in Croatia is not traitorous if all the Croatian and Slavic lands want to disentangle from Austrian and Hungarian influence and the influence of Rome, with the aid of Serbian force and Russian help. However, if any ex-Croat who is now a political Serb, or any true Serb, wants to annex, for example, to Montenegro just a part of Croatia, perhaps south Dalmatia, and would give north Dalmatia and Istria to Italy without hesitation, and also current Croatian Primorje with Rijeka to Hungary, then such a Croat or Serb is even a bigger traitor than that *Mađaron* or *Talijanaš*, only because, in the name of the Slavic Orthodox faith and in the name of the freedom of one part of the nation, he ruins and destroys another part of the nation. Well, to tell you frankly, no matter how much this business is criminal, it is hard for me to call it treacherous, because we do not doubt at all that such Croats and Serbs are more blind than corrupt. I can reconcile with them



because they nevertheless defend the Serbian part of the nation, and there are chances that either they themselves, or their children, will realize that they have taken the wrong path” (p. 80-81).

Of course, all the time Radić tried to present himself as a maximally reasonable and composed interlocutor, and his Serbian interlocutor as a violent and aggressive ignoramus. When that interlocutor, whose real existence is dubious, objected to the practical implications of Radić’s attitude, implying that “. . . all us Serbs who are not free would have to accept the Pope and Austria and help to build a Greater Croatia, which would in turn stifle and suffocate both free Serbian states” (p. 81), Radić answered readily: “We have spoken about it at length, how Croatia is to be and will be, and how it already is the strongest defence to Serbia and Montenegro. But for the time being we shall not go so far; let us stay in Dalmatian Croatia. I have seen it for myself going on foot there as a pupil, especially in Bukovica, that Serbdom has been introduced among the people by religious agitation, because more than once I heard with my own ears how a peasant said that he was a Serb, although he spoke Croatian” (p. 81).

### **h) Perfidious Demagogy by the Highest Jesuit Standards**

Seemingly feeling sorry for the Serbs who lived across the Sava and Danube for not having any demarcated national territory, but are helplessly exposed to the process of Hungarianisation and Germanisation, Radić all of a sudden vents out his Croatian national megalomania. In that sense he gives three assumptions already rooted among the Croatian ideologists, however not substantiated by facts: “Firstly, Slavonia and Croatia are the same thing, which is why in the Middle Ages the bans were titled the bans of the whole Croatia and Slavonia, that is, bans of the Slavic land; secondly, the authority of the bans, as far as the Croatian kings were concerned, extended to and entered current north-western Serbia, that is, the so-called Banate of Mačva, and in the earliest times Srem belonged to Bulgaria for a short time, after which it passed into the hands of Greek Byzantium, and finally it fell under the Turks, but never belonged to Hungary, because, thanks to the Croatian arms which, jointly with the rest of the East Croatia, was always returning it to the rest of Croatia; thirdly, the following is central to this matter: Srem, as well as all of Slavonia, is part of Croatia and if it is taken from it, it will not belong to Serbia, but to a Hungary influenced by *Mađaroni*. Therefore, I ask you, what do you prefer to say, that Slavonia is in Hungary or in Croatia?” (p. 83-84). To this, the uneducated Serb, according to Radić’s imagination, replies, “It is difficult for me to decide. To tell you the truth, it would be better for us Serbs that it is in Hungary, because we would be together as a whole and could defend ourselves more easily . . . with our Serbian consciousness, with our name and our Orthodox faith” (p. 84).

This is just cause for a real torrent of the deprecating and belittling intolerance towards the Orthodox religion, and also towards the Serbian name as well: “Firstly, you have spoken well; every national defence needs a national consciousness; the other two you interpreted badly: the Serbian name and the Serbian Orthodox belief do not defend anybody by themselves, but need more defence. As a fifth-grader I was in Trieste where I learned from the leader of the Croats there, the editor of *Our Harmony*, that there were about one hundred people who are of the Orthodox religion and who called themselves Serbs, but who thought, spoke and felt Italian. Returning from Russia in 1888, I visited a

Russian priest in Pest with two Serbian university students from Tököliánum, and among other things, we discussed a lot about how in Pest there were many who are of the Orthodox belief and who called themselves Serbs, but who spoke, thought and felt Hungarian. Lastly, as you already bitterly complained to me, and in my travels I saw for myself, that in Novi Sad, Pančevo, Bela Crkva, Vršac, Velika Kikinda and Sombor, there is an increasing number of the Serbian intelligentsia who remained Orthodox and who are called Serbian, but speak, think, feel and work in Hungarian. The Serbian name and Serbian Orthodox belief cannot, therefore, be defended by Serbdom in Hungary, but need a stronger foundation and sharper weapons” (p. 84).

The Serb, in this probably made up dialogue, replied, “I know well what you are getting at: you want all of us to take one another by the hand and become Catholics; that is why you are more dangerous to us than the Hungarians: firstly, a Hungarian must take off our heads, rip the Serbian heart out of our bosoms, rip out the Serbian hopes and memories, and then he can assimilate us; but the Croat, he does not touch the head at all, but only puts a different cap on it with words written on it that say: You are a Croat and a Croatian son, Croatia is your homeland, and Holy Father the Pope your spiritual leader. Therefore it is easier to assimilate us as Croats than Hungarians, and I still say that it would be better for us if we were all in Hungary and not in Croatia” (p. 84). Of course, Radić has already prepared an answer to this as well: “You have learned all of that from *The Flag* that is published in Novi Sad, or from *Serbian Defender* from Zagreb, and it is really a pity that you do not see even that much, to be aware that the very words you speak and your experience are against you. We have just spoken about how the Serbs are being assimilated by the Italians and Hungarians, and where do you see a Serb who was assimilated by the Croats? Also, when such a Serb, as you have vividly said, would only put on another cap, it would be much better than to replace his head, heart and soul. I at least sincerely and openly say: God forbid that I would have to choose between Serbdom or Hungarianism or some other foreign nation, but if were to so happen, I would a hundred times more rather be a Serb than a Hungarian, Italian or German” (p. 85.).

To these words, at least in Radić’s cunningly managed drama plot, even the most hard-bitten Serb must become friendly and tame. Thus the humble confession by the imprisoned Serb who was lucky enough to meet one learned and “good-intentioned“ Croat in prison: “I can only give you one answer after my heart: if I cannot be a Serb, then I do not even have to live at all; but according to reason, I admit that it is far better for a Serb to become a Croat than a Hungarian” (p. 85). That is, however, only cause for a new torrent of seemingly sensible, but ultimately pretentious arguments on Radić’s side: “You are just a Serb and of such kind who thinks that Serbdom is only in the feeling, in the Serbian name, and in the Serbian Orthodox faith. In other words, you are still somewhere in the Middle Ages, when there was no national consciousness, but only tribal pride or, better said, spite. You came with that pride to upper Croatia and found yourself suddenly in a community that is as much spiteful as you yourself. There you started to put emphasis on the Kingdom of Serbia and the Serbian king, and to mock the Croatian ban. If you had had any trace of national consciousness, you would have been sorry for having today in the seat of the Croatian bans a man who called himself a Hungarian patriot, and who, in fact, is nothing more than a practical Tyrolean count who has stayed in Croatia for so long only because of the Croatian and Serbian spite. If you had had a national consciousness, you would have been telling those Croats as you have

told me about all the pains and sufferings of the Serbs in Hungary, and your speech would end more or less like this: Gentlemen, as soon as I stepped into Croatia, crossing from Pančevo to Zemun, it immediately dawned on me. True, there, Germanism is still being suppressed, and Hungarianism is still being imposed. Both, however, penetrate in here, in upper Croatia, but the Croatian language is used still in schools, courts and in all the political areas. Our theatre society has lot of work in all areas, we speak Serbian, and Croatian is regulated where you are, so we understand one another beautifully. There a person can feel that our national unity is not just an empty slogan, because if everyone has divided us, the common language unites us – that most powerful resource of education, the safest guarantee of nationality. I am a Serb, as a Serb I will live and die, but, gentlemen, a Serb from Hungary, which today is the mother only to Hungarians, while to all other non-Hungarian peoples it is an evil stepmother. Thus, because I am not Napoleon to change state borders, but just a modest actor, and because for my patriotism I seek a sound foundation, I rise a glass to our national unity in the Habsburg Empire and the strongest support for that unity: Croatian state autonomy, led by a ban who will not be recommended by a Hungarian minister or president. As an unfortunate Serb from Hungary, as a Serb who does not have a homeland, I shout happily: Long live Croatia!” (p. 85-86).

That is a ready-made recipe for how the Serbs should look in order to satisfy the Croatian taste. Consequently, he gives a lesson to the Serbian inmate how he would not be in prison if, instead of anti-Croatian speeches, he had delivered speeches following Radić's instructions. As Radić directly explains to him: “The Croatian *starčevićans* would not denounce you as a traitor after such a speech. But when you wanted to take them across the Drina, and no less as Serbs, and on top of that bring them under the rule of such a king as Milan, then do not wonder if you set off their spite” (p. 86). The Serb is culpable himself for all he had lived through because he supported counter-Croatian views. When he finally realised it, the following question slipped from his lips: “Do you know how many Serbs there may be, for whom you say that we made them turn Serbian only by religious agitation, who according to your view still speak Croatian, and just think they are of the Serbian religion?” (p 87). Before that, he had confirmed that Radić recognised the presence of the Serbs in Srem. Once again, Radić explained patiently and generously: “I have spoken at length about how it is contrary to common sense when a Croat ‘does not recognize’ a Serb or vice versa. Also, I have interpreted how evil it is that Croatianhood increasingly leaned on Catholicism, and in Bosnia even equalled Croatianhood to Catholicism, the same as Serbdom had identified itself with the Orthodox religion. Therefore, do not speak so improperly that I recognise only those Serbs who live in the County of Srem of Slavonic Croatia. Don't you remember, for God's sake, how we have agreed that nationality is a matter of consciousness and not of some outside recognition or denial of it, and that a true Croatian stays Croatian and true Serbs stays Serbian no matter if the whole world would not recognize them as such? However, what is in question here is whether the very basis of our national survival is destroyed when a handful of Dalmatian Serbs most resolutely oppose the unification with Croatia, in that matter agreeing with the Italians and admirer of Italians, and when, on the other hand, the other handful of the Serbs in the ex-Krajina vote as one for pro-Hungarian (*Madjaron*), i.e. Hungarian politics in Croatia Proper. I say ‘a handful of Serbs’ because, not taking into account the County of Srem, there must be about 300 thousand of them in total, therefore hardly 1/20 of all our nation; and look, because of

this 1/20, Croatia and Serbia argue one against the other, and the overall national life of ours is destroyed” (p. 87).

To the Serb’s comment that it was not possible to ask from his people to accept the authority of Rome and Austria, as well as how Radić’s claiming at one moment that there were two hundred thousand, and in another moment three hundred thousand Serbs, created great confusion, Radić recites, speaking a mile a minute: “You keep returning to the same topic of Rome and Austria. When I mentioned 200 thousand Serbs, I had in mind the Orthodox Serbs living in the area between the rivers Kupa, Una and the Adriatic Sea. That is a collection of Croatian lands, that is where the road to Rijeka passes, and it will not be long before it passes by to Split as well; there is hardly a trace of a foreign thing there, and, look, it is exactly where we Croats are most powerless and weak, because that is where Serbdom is the most prominent politically. As you know, I condemn Serbdom as a political barrier to Croatianhood in Srem and Dubrovnik, and not to mention such Serbdom in Dalmatian Bukovica, and even in Lika and Krbava! Speaking about this, I have told you that it is a national crime to orient those of the Orthodox religion who live on these territories towards any Serbian political thought. Today, I also had in mind the Serbs in Slavonia, and that is the reason why I said that there are 300 thousand of them in total. But it seems that it is more certain that there are more of them than that number, than less. However, if they were a completely foreign people who spoke Mongolian and were of a non-Christian belief, thus dispersed and small in number compared to the Croats, I could understand that they could only perform a murderous work against Croatia; in Dalmatia in the hands of the Italians, and in Croatia in the hands of the Hungarians; let alone the fact that we are all one blood, one kind, one suffering in the past, one trouble today and one hope in the future. And on top of it, the Serbs in Croatia were all those Serbs who, from time immemorial, in Srem and also of late in the rest of Croatia, are the sworn enemies of Croatian state independence, because they put it into their heads once and for all that it could not be without the Pope and Austria” (p.88).

Continuing Serbian criticism of the Pope’s politics and an absolute lack of confidence in his intentions seems to be Radić’s most painful sore spot. However, his answer in this department is the shortest, as he simply avoids a detailed explanation: “Concerning the Pope, to the degree that is he our religious leader, he deserves that you speak of him with at least that same degree of respect, as you would if you spoke about the a Caliph of Constantinople if you found yourself in the company of some bey from Bosnia; and the degree to which the Pope, or better said, the Papal Court is a representative of the rapacious politics of Rome, those times have long passed, when the Latin or and let alone the Slavic peoples served those politics” (p 88). To the Serbian comment that Russia does not trust the Croats, Radić replies with a cunningly acted pan-Slavic commitment: “We Croats are great Slavs, but our aristocracy has many prejudices about Russia, for which such Orthodox politics, which the Serbian intelligentsia boasts about, are most responsible; on the other hand, the Serbs are more or less for a political alliance with Russia, but they do not care at all about cultural mutuality with other Slavs, which is a result of the political powerlessness of the Slavs in the Habsburg Monarchy, that is presented to the Serbs as only a German and Hungarian state. However, look, the old Dubrovnik for which we fight was taken away both for Slavic culture and for Polish precedence, and later for the Russian precedence amongst the Slavic nations. Nowadays, it has been divided amongst us, because a Croat goes to Prague, Krakow or Lvov, or at

least to Vienna to meet with a Slovenian, Czech, Pole, Little Russian or Slovakian, and shuns Moscow and St. Petersburg, and more so Belgrade and Sofia; the same as a Serb who, when he goes to Vienna, goes to see a German, or in Czech he looks for Karlovy Vary and not Prague, while he does not at all ask about Zagreb and Ljubljana, about Krakow and Lvov and especially Warsaw” (p. 90.).

Generally, Radić laments over the lack of Serbo-Croatian national harmony, but finds that guilt lies in the first place with the Serbian side, and stresses that the Serbs in Croatia “. . . nowadays are the main obstacle and responsible for why Croatia cannot feel relieved and for why it is actually only a Hungarian province” (p. 91). To the comment about how he can think that *Bunjevci* are Croats, Radić responds: “Those who are not Croats today, they will become Croats tomorrow, as the ‘*Šokci*’ in Srem or Slavonia have become and are becoming Croats. I deeply regret that national conscious-building, or better said, that national activity of conversion that we have linked closely on one hand with the Catholic religion and on the other with the Orthodox religion. It would be better if efforts were focused on the development of a pure national basis both in Belgrade and in Zagreb, because of which today there would be a couple of hundred thousand Catholic Serbs and approximate as many Orthodox Croats. However, when we have flung ourselves into agitation and mere baptizing, we will not stop until that matter is completed. It will not be long until there will be no person of the Orthodox religion who can speak our language, and who will not claim that he is a Serb, even if he lived under Triglav itself. This is also how the Catholics in Podrinje in Bosnia will all become Croats” (p. 91). He goes on to bitterly complain because, allegedly, “. . . the Serbs in Hungary consider themselves to be something higher, just like the Germans and Jews, and thus they, along with the Germans and Jews, turn into Hungarians the fastest, because the civil servant positions attract them, and because for them, the allure of state authority is irresistible, regardless of whether it is Hungarian or violent” (p. 92).

### **i) Winning Russia Over by Defaming Serbian Russophilia**

Not only did Radić act out that he was “big” Russophile when he thought it could have been of any use to him politically or financially, but he was even ready to accuse the Serbs, traditionally loyal to Russia, of an anti-Russian position. In his book *The Croatian Political Catechism* published in 1913 in Pittsburgh, Vuk Karadžić found himself under more direct attacks from Radić for having linguistically distanced the Serbs from the Russians by his spelling reform. It is obvious that Radić was in fact sorry because the Serbs did not keep a Serbo-Russian or Slavic-Serbian hybrid variant as their literary language, thus many Serbian Catholics and also Orthodox Serbs – considering that it would not be their mother tongue – would be more easily artificially slipped into the Croatian national body, at the moment when the Croats cunningly thought to proclaim the Serbian national language, shtokavian, as their own literary language, although the Croatian people actually had never used it. Radić writes: “Before the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbs wrote using the Cyrillic script and the Russian spelling. Then, all of a sudden the following happened: an Austrian civil servant (a professor and advisor in the court), a Slovenian by birth and Kopitar by name, met an extremely resourceful Serb, Vuk Karadžić. After he had reached an agreement with the Austrian court, he used that man, Vuk, to destroy any trace of a literary link between Serbia and Russia. With Kopitar’s help, Vuk rejected Russian Cyrillic and introduced

Serbian Cyrillic, and also an alleged letter from the Latin script 'j' and also in fact a French letter, 'ž', as only the French pronounce it in that way. As soon as that happened, not a single Serb could read Russian any more, and not a single Russian could understand Serbian. That is what the government in Vienna had wanted. Therefore, the national Serbian government led by Prince Mihajlo (who was killed in 1868, because he was dangerous for Austria) prohibited Vuk's spelling in Serbia. However, later, especially under the rule of the notorious King Milan, this spelling of Vuk's became completely familiar, a household thing, until, at last, Count Khuen introduced it in Croatia Proper too, where luckily it could not do any damage, because we Croats write using the Latin script" (Stjepan Radić: *The Croatian Political Catechism, For the World, Slavic and Croatian Public*, "Menorah", Opatija 1995, p. 188).

Radić tried to win over the Russians in all sorts of ways to support Croatian national aspirations. In his confession *My Political Autobiography*, he brags about himself how in 1909 in St. Petersburg, he intensively tried in influential intellectual circles to make Russia recognize the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He said the following to a Russian minister, Baron Friedriks, on one occasion: ". . . the annexation of Bosnia for the Slavic cause is a profit, on the condition that Russia maintains at least to some degree, instead of Orthodox or territorial politics, Slavic national (people's) politics, which really means the politics of peasant democracy. I dissected this matter for a while, and particularly spoke convincingly about the senselessness and terrible danger for Russia (due to the local revolution), if it were to engage in a war because of Bosnia" (Stjepan Radić: *Political Papers, Speeches and Documents*, p. 52-53). Of course, he had it published as late as 1928, presenting himself in the aftermath as a far-sighted visionary. It is interesting that Radić, on the occasion of one of his lectures that he delivered in St. Petersburg, irritated all the Serbs present so much that they loudly objected. "In St. Petersburg at that time, there was the Society of Public Labourers, headed by Milukov and Maklakov. I succeeded in lecturing in this Society about the right of Croatia and Croats to Bosnia and Herzegovina from a territorial, cultural and national-economic aspect, but most successfully from the purely national aspect, because of the fact that the Bosnian Muslims, who are all Slavs and the oldest nation in Bosnia, increasingly support Croats in the national and political sense, because of which Bosnia and Herzegovina is indeed already today (1909), when the people are taken into account, as much Croatian as it is Serbian. My lecture lasted almost two hours, with many interruptions and distractions coming from the present Serbs who, particularly in the beginning, interrupted every word of mine with ironic (scornful) comments. However, I succeeded in having the political circles of St. Petersburg seriously discuss everything I lectured" (p. 51).

### **j) The Usual Croatian Claims to Bosnia and Herzegovina**

In his booklet the *Living Croatian Right to Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Croatian Peasant Popular Party, Zagreb, 1908), Radić elaborated in detail those claims to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Radić begins his quasi-legal construction with the assumption of some imaginary European right to Bosnia and Herzegovina, imagining Europe as some moral and political whole, the collective will of which is a product of a concerted reconciliation of the interests of the great powers. At the Congress of Vienna, it was they who decided that Austro-Hungary should occupy that territory, as the Turkish authorities

were not capable of redressing peace and order in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Allegedly, that is how Europe transferred its right to one of its own powers, in order for the right to be materialised at all. According to this construction, the Habsburg Monarchy reinforced its right with the exercise of its mandate and an implementation of internal reforms, including accelerated economic development and the establishment of a constitutional order. Therefore, according to Radić, the European and Austro-Hungarian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina was indisputable. However, according to him, the problem was in the fact that the Croats were not mentioned at all. Therefore, he had to abandon himself to day-dreaming, the result of which was the following formula: “Pursuant to the Croatian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is not any new written document in place, which is why it could seem at the first glance that the right is not current, that it is not alive. However, as soon as this matter is looked into more thoroughly, we will be convinced that the Dynasty and Monarchy cannot sustain Bosnia and Herzegovina without Croatia, as much as Europe could not draw in Bosnia and Herzegovina under its direct sphere of influence without the Habsburg Dynasty and Monarchy. Therefore, as our Dynasty and Monarchy did not receive from Europe any written authorisation to carry out the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, yet it did it with full right, and as it may already be seen, with the willing or unwilling recognition of all the high authorities in Europe, that is how the Croatian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina will – even more so because it is current and living – without any special document show its strength, after which that right will be recognized by all key factors” (p. 28-29).

According to Radić, the Croatian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina is made of two components – the state and national right. In the case of the so-called state right, he subdivides it into historical and positive, thus saying, “A great part of Bosnia, both before and after the occupation, was known in the German, French and English maps by the name of Turkish Croatia. It was so because the Croatian ban ruled in these areas as integral parts of the Croatian state long after the fall of Bosnia. This fact is known, then, outside Croatia as well. What is less known in the Monarchy and the whole of Europe is that Bosnia itself was the core of the old Croatian state, and that especially for contemporary Bosnia all the way up to the Vrbas, it is possible to prove that it territorially belongs to the Croatian state beyond any doubt. Anyway, there is no need to present the ancient historical facts before the public opinion of the Monarchy and the rest of Europe, the sound foundation of which can only be judged by historians; politicians are not known by their virtue of thorough knowledge of the history of their own nation anyway, let alone of some other one. Therefore, it is far more effective to refer to the positive Croatian state right, both in territorial and constitutional terms, before the Monarchy and Europe, and to derive from this positive state right the affiliation of Bosnia as an implacable logical consequence” (p. 29-30).

For Radić, the real pains had yet to come. He can prove the certain autonomous status of Croatia and Slovenia within Hungary. But he cannot talk about some state right, not to mention a positive one. Neither does he refer to the famous “*Pacta Conventa*”, in all probability aware that it was a historiographic falsification, but he mentions the Agreement from Cetinje from 1527, by which the Croatian feudal lords recognized Ferdinand Habsburg as their king after the Battle of Mohacs, and the Pragmatic Sanction from 1712 by which the Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian feudal parliament accepted the matrilineal primogeniture. That was all before the Croato-Hungarian Settlement Agreement from 1868, covering two laws concerning some

individual and autonomous rights of minor significance. “The conspiracy of the royal throne in 1867 provided Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia not only with the formal right to ‘all those territories and provinces. . . which shall with God’s will be re-acquired’, but also the right – actual and real – with particular focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina; it is obvious, namely, that the territories and nations must not be liberated from Turkish oppression in order to be subjected to Hungarian oppression” (p. 34).

Aware that after the Settlement Agreement, Croatia and Slavonia were completely dependant on Hungary, Radić says that such dependence does not have legal, economic, social and cultural justification, so consequently it will disappear as soon as the Hungarian Parliament is democratised in the near future. “Then the border connection between Croatia and the whole Empire will gain value, after which the internal strength of the state organisation and geo-strategic position of Croatia will start to have effects on Bosnia, forcefully and irresistibly. Also, cooperation with Hungary might be accelerated, which is why Croatia, even without repeating the year of 1848, may actually and legally find itself out of the grasp of even the smallest political authority; even now, there is no other influence of Pest over Croatia. Therefore, the Croatian state right will not, and cannot, have influence over Bosnia and Herzegovina as some lifeless legal formula; more precisely, such a right will not act by itself, but it will be the strength of the Croatian state that acts, which emanates from an organic link with the rest of the Empire, from its regulations of a modern European state (administration, judiciary, education system, healthcare, etc.), from Croatia’s position on the map which encompasses Bosnia on all sides, and finally, particularly and especially from the position and authority of the ban, which is by its tradition simultaneously a guarantee for both the Dynasty and the nation, and under its constitutional obligations it is in compliance with contemporary political views. In one word: we Croats have already been influencing, and will continue to influence Bosnia and Herzegovina, thanks to our state right, and more so our state regulations, especially when these are to be founded soundly in the peasantry and ordinary people, adding to it comprehensive internal politics in the national economy especially” (p. 36-37).

Radić insisted on the fact that the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina was exclusively an internal matter of Austro-Hungary, since that territory had become an integral part of the Habsburg Empire. In addition, he thought that the nation living there was not any special one that could become a separate state-building element or independent entity of the public law. “However, the Austrian government, in agreement with the government of Hungary, has tried hard to create a separate Bosnian nation, which is why it sometimes calls the language that the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina use ‘Bosnian’, and sometimes the ‘territorial language’, even calling for help from Dr. Vatroslav Jagić, a famous scientist, to give his opinion on that. However, such an attempt failed, which is why at that time, Bosnianhood as a special nationality, when it was at its peak, was accepted only by a few Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Catholics and Orthodox did not want even to hear about it. Consequently, Bosnia and Herzegovina stayed divided into three religions, to which different national names were to be attributed in vain” (p. 38).

To Radić it was clear that there could not be any question of three separate nations. Moreover, he was intelligent enough and historically and ethnographically informed enough not to call all the Bosnians and Herzegovinians Croats. Where the Croatian territorial aspirations could not be reinforced whatsoever by Croatianhood alone, Radić



adhered to national unity with the Serbs, supporting Yugoslav or pan-Slavic ideas just because he did not want the Croatian aspirations to be out of the game from the very beginning. Firstly, he pronounced total unity with the Serbs, and then by political actions sought to keep the Serbian national interests at bay. Again, in that he was a hard-line supporter of Strossmayer, which is why his reasoning is as follows: "From the aspect of scientifically objective ethnography, the ordinary people in Bosnia and Herzegovina with Slovenians, Croats and Serbs comprise one nation; from a subjective point of view, i.e. according to their consciousness and their aspirations, these people are divided into three wholes: some wholeheartedly embraced the Croatian national and political aspirations, some embraced the Serbian aspirations and some are at one point on one side, and on the other point on the other side; but most of the time they have been sitting on the fence. Even in the times of Turkish rule, it seemed that the Serbian aspirations would prevail, by its political, and not national and cultural content. Moreover, immediately prior to the occupation, the movement for the annexation of Bosnia by Serbia and of Herzegovina by Montenegro was especially alive and strong. However, as soon as the occupation happened, little by little the Serbs renounced, at least publicly, their political aspirations, and just to win over the Muslims, they started to take actions to reintroduce the sovereignty of the Turkish Sultan into Bosnia and Herzegovina. That lasted a whole year. In such a spirit, all over Bosnia a multitude of demonstrations were organised, envoys were dispatched to Constantinople, and the backward European newspapers and magazines were filled with alleged horrors of the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, only to prove how the Habsburg Monarchy is less well-mannered and more unjust than Turkey" (p. 39-40).

As a result, the gap between Serbian and Croatian politics regarding the occupation of Austro-Hungary remained wide. One vigorously resisted the aggressor and the later annexation, while the other wholeheartedly supported both the occupation and annexation, seeing in them a national chance for themselves. Naturally, Radić was completely biased, interpreting Serbian efforts to terminate Austrian rule even at the cost of a temporary restoration of Turkey in these words: "This approach of the Serbian politicians unintentionally evokes the Biblical image of the Court of Solomon. As we know, two women in a quarrel over one live child – the other having suffocated overnight – came before the wise King. Solomon, without thinking long, decided the living child should be cut in half and divided between the two women. The woman who was not its mother welcomed such a decision. However, the real mother shouted out that the child should be given to the other one, thus provoking Solomon's judgment to give the child, alive, to her, because she is its mother. Croatia and Serbia are those two women. For thirty years, Serbia has been asking the child to be slaughtered, i.e. to be given to Turkey, while Croatia, as its true mother, has many times declared that it is better that Bosnia be even given to Serbia, than to return under Turkish rule. This is unequivocal evidence of the Croatian right to Bosnia, better than all philosophising. In addition, it is vital to mention that Serbia with Montenegro have so many times proposed, as now, that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be divided, not only between the two tiny Serbian states, but between them and both halves of the current monarchy. As if this is not enough, Dr. Tomanović, the president of the Ministry of Montenegro, proposes that Bosnia should stay Turkish legally, but actually Austrian, or be proclaimed independent under the protection, i.e. under the care of all high authorities, which would haggle over it, as the saying goes, as the devil haggles over a sinful soul. All these bases

and all these proposals are in fact terrible proof that, both between Serbia and Montenegro and between them and Bosnia there are no national, i.e. moral ties whatsoever, but only political wishes of the most base sort” (p. 40-41).

Responding to the Serbian assumptions that there were no Croats in Bosnia, Radić said that there used to be a lot of Croats in Czech and Poland. Therefore, his hideous argumentation by which he supported the Croatian aspirations was reduced to absurdity. At the same time, the Serbian aspirations were treated as mere political wishes, void of any ethnic basis and exclusively founded on selfishness. “These two are proof that those are merely political wishes, and there are more proofs should these two not be enough: the one-mindedness with which the Serbs claim that there have not been any Croats in Bosnia from ancient times, but that the Austrian occupation brought them and raised them. The other phenomenon is the Serbian treatment of the Slavic intelligentsia among civil servants and non-civil servants in Bosnia. The former argument, coupled with the common Serbian belief, or more precisely, the common ignorance of the Serbian intelligentsia, the ignorance which is the cause of such an illusion that Austria created a common Croatian name and Croatian nation. If ancient Russian, Czech and Polish history was taught in Serbian schools, Serbs would also know how long ago Nestor, an annalist from Kiev, among other Russian tribes, mentioned the Croats; the Croats, as a ramified tribe, lived in a larger part of the north-eastern Czech state as late as the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and even today, he mentions, there are many places in Czech that are called ‘Harvatice’, and many families with the surname Haravat; he goes on to mention how all of current Galicia around Krakow was called ‘Hrobacija’ or ‘Horvacija’, of which there are interesting historical documents kept in the Jagiellonian Library in Krakow; how news of Greater Croatia in east Galicia came to Constantinople to the much-talked-about imperial writer Constantine Porphyrogenitus, etc. However, there would be no need to mention all of this to our brothers, who would feel the need for internal unity, but the central and most important for them would be, the same as to us Croats, that we all speak one language, that we were, as we are today, in one and the same national trouble, and that we all, more than ever, need to jointly invest our efforts in cultural and economic development. We Croats erected many immortal monuments to this joint investment of efforts, and for them we have many times completely overlooked our most justified political aspirations, and often even pushed aside our individual national name. However, the Serbs, instead of seeing in that a real national whole, at least in common education, they have seen precisely in that our alleged lack of consciousness, when we so weakly hold to our national name” (p. 41-42).

In the article *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, published in *Dom* in April 1907, Stjepan Radić claims that “. . . only Croats live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. all the nation speaks one language, and that language is our Croatian language. However, that nation is divided into three religions: Roman Catholic, Greek-Eastern, and Mohammedan or Muslim (‘Turkish’). Today, there could be about 420,000 Catholics, about 790,000 Orthodox, and about 620,000 Mohammedans. The Catholics who are even slightly educated maintain that they are all Croats, the Orthodox claim to be Serbs, and the Mohammedans call themselves Turks. Many Bosniaks and Herzegovinians call their language Croatian, particularly the Catholics and Mohammedans (event those who are not educated), whereas the majority say that they speak Bosnian. Most educated Mohammedans claim to be Croats, and only some – for political reasons – adhere to the Serbs” (p. 186). However, he was most troubled by the future of Bosnia and

Herzegovina, as the Orthodox did not even want to hear about the Croatian option, and the Muslims would most of all prefer to return under Turkish rule. “We Croats are already accustomed to thinking that there is no free and united Croatia without Bosnia and Herzegovina, which would, together with Dalmatia, enlarge our homeland by one and a half times. There is certainly no one amongst us who would not like our homeland to be as bigger, stronger, more glorious and happier as possible; but there are few of us to whom it would occur how it is a difficult task, and how we would have to roll up our sleeves” (p. 189).

### **k) Attacks on Serbian State-Building**

Contrary to the Croats, who, in Radić’s opinion, promoted the idea of South Slavic national unity all over the world, the Serbs behaved ultimately selfishly. “The Serbian politicians all, without exception, disseminate just totally one-sided and completely distorted information all over the Slavic and non-Slavic world, with the exclusively Serbian tendency to conquer” (p. 44). On one hand, the Croats were warm and cordial, gregariously unanimous in their Slavhood, as Radić continued: “. . . on the other hand, in Serbia, both the Catholics and the Orthodox from our monarchy are called ‘Swabians’ or ‘Šojkas’, not only by the intelligentsia but by the uneducated people too. Therefore, the Serbs who live across the Sava and Danube are still perceived as foreigners even in Belgrade after so many years. When we know that, then there is no wonder that in Serbian literature and politics, as in the lives of ordinary people, there is not a trace of the Slavic solidarity. Only from time to time, Serbia, and Montenegro even more, are capable of suddenly expressing great but one-sided sympathy for Russia, and then only if it is politically to their advantage. The Russians themselves were unpleasantly surprised by such a phenomenon, particularly those who had the opportunity to know Serbia better and see for themselves how the Serbian intelligentsia has had unfavourable opinions of everything that is Russian, and how it has not been interested in anything that is Slavic. Thus, when I was, as I have already mentioned, in Zemun, this was what happened to me: an excellent Russian publicist, travelling around the Balkans and staying for a couple of days in the Serbian capital city, told me in the presence of many Serbs how he was pained when he saw that they were not committed friends of the Russians in Serbia. He went on in that regard, and then turned to the Serbs and reproached them with these words: You Serbs, for already two hundred years, have been referring your sons to our spiritual academies, and for almost one hundred years to other schools in Russia, especially military ones; therefore, Russia and Serbia have had very close relations; but, look there, I have not found anyone among you who knows Russian well, and moreover, who could speak and write about it with such a love as, for example, this Croat here” (p. 44-45).

For a moment one could think that Stjepan Radić was capable of convincing even himself in the truthfulness of his own concoctions, or even in his fantasy of how he himself was in such a situation to defend the Serbs from the reproaches of an unknown Russian intellectual. How much more absurd were these next words of his: “Of course, I tried to calm this Russian down, warning him that only those who have contacts in the right places are referred to Russia from Serbia, that they spend their days in some institutes as if they were in prison, that they, being in such a situation, could not have a real picture of Russia, whereas myself, in the days of my youth when I was filled with enthusiasm, and who in my mature age have not lost it, I studied in the first place the

unofficial Russia, the Russian literature and ordinary Russians, free as a bird, without any other obligation but that which an honest man has towards the truth and a conscientious Slav towards his national brothers. However, the Russian did not relent, and started to even fiercely attack the one-sided Russophilia of the Serbs, which only exists in relation to their demands for enlargement beyond their territorial borders, and the moment Russia does not fulfil that demand, all the Serbs come down on it as if it was their greatest enemy” (p. 45-46). Unfortunately, the various Serbian circles of people among the political elite inclined to Austria, with their pro-Western condescension and faddishness, provided Radić an empirical basis for such a perfidiously schemed assumption.

Skilfully seasoning his arguments with false Croatian self-criticism, Stjepan Radić did so in order to come down even more forcefully on the Serbian national character and state-building efforts. In that regard, he writes, “We Croats could be reproached as well for our support of Starčević and his ideas, namely, our adherence to Frank’s ideas, which represent a negation of Slavhood, and moreover of Serbdom. However, it should be underlined that both support of Starčević’s ideas and of Frank’s represent a reaction, on one hand, to an excessive political yielding to the Serbs, owing to which so many of our politicians were capable of renouncing even the Croatian state right and their national name; and on the other hand, to the un-brotherly behaviour of the Serbs in Croatia, who always, without exception, most determinedly and most actively supported all Croatian enemies. It will suffice to say that the Serbs in Croatia have been the sharpest spike of the spurs of Count Khuen’s Magyaronian system for twenty years. On top of it all, the Serbs thought that it was necessary to defend their nationality in Zagreb much more actively than in, say, Novi Sad, so they started to publish *The Serbian Defender (Srbobran)* in Zagreb. Moreover, at the moment when Khuen’s system fell apart, they went so far as to communicate from Belgrade in *The Serbian Defender* the message that it would be useful to wage a war against the Croats, to their extermination. As a reaction to that, Dr. Josip Frank, as he praised himself later, arranged that shameful looting of the Orthodox merchants from 1 to 3 September 1902” (p. 46-47).

Therefore, any anti-Serbian act undertaken by the Croatian side was literally fully justified by previous Serbian behaviour, or presented as an appropriate response to intended political provocation. Radić was shrewd enough not to justify the wrongs, murders, looting, and persecution. However, he constantly found some rational explanation for them, regarding them as an emotional reaction that was impossible to articulate in a civilized manner. “However, no matter how sad and shameful those September events were, they cannot be compared with that mark of Cain with which the Serbs branded themselves in the kingdom, when in 1885, under the leadership of King Milan, they so un-brotherly attacked the Bulgarians only because Bulgaria, with all its strength, consciousness and labour enlarged itself through Eastern Rumelia, therefore only to the disadvantage of the Turks. If the Serbs were not in any other way guilty concerning Slavhood, this would be enough to make all and every Slavic nation refuse their aspirations to Bosnia and Herzegovina; moreover, because the overall Serbian preparation for the war had a purely medieval, conquering character, and in the centre of Belgrade, the people talked without fear and shame about the Ustasha troops that would make another Macedonia out of Bosnia, and concerning the fact that there were over four hundred thousand Catholics in Bosnia to arrange and perform a slaughter there

similar to the slaughter in Armenia in 1897. The fact which proved that this was unfortunately possible, and what I saw for myself, is that all of Serbia, from Belgrade to Vranje, blames the whole Croatian nation for the September events of 1902, which is why I have heard in Vranje how even tender Serbian women were fraught with horror because of the Croats, about whom, due to Serbian schools and the Serbian press, did not know anything but that in September 1902, they allegedly wanted to demolish the Orthodox church in Zagreb” (p. 47-48).

That was, according to Radić, only one basis of the differentiation of the national consciousness of Serbs and Croats, which, in the least, testifies of the big Croatian soul, similar to the Russian one, and of Serbian selfishness. “The overall history of the current coalition between the Croats and the Serbs is sound proof of the big difference between the national consciousness of us Croats and the Serbs. The strongest party in that coalition is, as we already know, the Croatian Party of Rights, which for a very long time did not recognise Serbs in the territory of the Croatian state, considering the fact that they speak the same language as we do. For three years now, that party gives such an example of the national consciousness that it really seems unbelievable. We do not have in mind those members of the party, who in insane hatred of Austria, immediately took up arms against Vienna, and who became friends with the Serbs because of their passion; rather, we have in mind those Croatian patriots – the people gathered around *The National Defence*, published in Osijek, and *Croatia*, published Zagreb, who perceive Serbs as our national brothers and then, when they are full of fear that these brothers of ours will sooner or later let us down, as it was under Khuen’s regime, then they cannot in their patriotic mind assume responsibility that it was they who gave cause to the Serbs, or at least an excuse, to do so. That is why we can see how unusually modest those who belong to the better part of the party are, a modesty which is in general a characteristic of all Croatian relations with the Serbs. On the contrary, such Croatian behaviour has not yet provoked any turnabout amongst the Serbs – here we do not take into account those Serbs in Serbia, or in Montenegro, or the Serbs in Bosnia – so that on the occasion of the recent elections in Dalmatia, they would be prepared to reach an agreement in time to go against the Italians in Zadar; but on the contrary, they announced that such a thing was out of the question. The moment when a Croatian party in Croatia was taken aback by that, which treats Serbs in the way as the Croatian Party of Rights treats the Serbs in Croatia Proper, then immediately the *Zagreb Serbian Defender* reproached the Dalmatian Serbs for not wanting to accept the Croatian votes, namely two places in the Parliament, when the Croats did not ask for any favours from the Serbs for it. Nevertheless, all these examples are not as decisive as the latest peasant movement in Croatia Proper, which for the fourth year now has covered the overall territory on the basis of complete national unity of Croats and Serbs, and of consistent Slavic solidarity, no less then in the purest Croatian districts” (p. 48-49). Thus, the recognition slipped from Radić’s lips contrary to his will, that total national unity and consistent Slavic solidarity between the Serbs and Croats was possible only in the purest Croatian environments, in other words, in places where there were no Serbs at all, and thus it was not necessary to hear out their original national interests or goals.

The problem existed only where Serbs lived alongside Croats, where they were even in the majority. It had been shown that it was not possible to infuse into their minds the idea of the Croatian state right and the assimilating, proselytistic national thought. Proudly concluding how such an idea had already been deeply rooted in the peasants’

minds, of course, of only Catholics, Radić said that it was those nationally conscious Croatian peasants and “. . . not the Croatian legions, who will unite Bosnia with Croatia Proper and Dalmatian Croatia” (p. 50). He goes on to stress that the Croatian peasantry had for the past decades lived to see both a social and economic revival, and articulated their own accrued political force through their own peasant party, which rapidly developed and was increasingly successful in its activities. “All this should be mentioned and stressed, because only with such an economic and cultural development of the peasantry does the Croatian nation achieve that level at which its influence on Bosnia will become irresistible, and the Croatian right so current and live, beyond any deceit whatsoever. . . Without its Czechs, Slovenians and Poles, and especially without the Croats, our Monarchy would have conquered Bosnia too, but would not have brought sustainable peace to it, nor order. That is such an important matter that it deserves to be looked into more. Currently in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are so many members of the Slavic and Croatian intelligentsia active today, that, for example, already in Sarajevo alone, according to the distinction of its intelligentsia, there is now the same cultural centre and hearth as in Ljubljana and Zagreb, Belgrade and Sofia. Moreover, Sarajevo has precedence in many things over the mentioned centres. In Sarajevo, there are far less political quibbles than in Belgrade, and far less factionism than in Zagreb. Be that as it may, the intelligentsia from Sarajevo should not be judged only by its number but by its excellence. That which is objected to this or that civil servant, particularly to a German, does not negate, but reinforces the argument that such great Slavic and Croatian psychological capital is invested in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that today without it, Bosnia and Herzegovina would still be and would remain just a military camp, where a general roar and slaughter would occur as soon as the military force gave way, or perhaps went away” (p. 52-53).

Again, the Serbs, and alongside them the Hungarians, represented a major problem for such an idyllic vision. “It is the Serbs who so spitefully claim ownership over Bosnia, and the Hungarians too, who as soon as they open their mouth to devour it, both do not want to hear anything about that Slavic and Croatian psychological capital, which is why both the Serbian and Hungarian lack of culture is so excessive, that in thousands of Croatian, Slovenian, Czech and Polish cultural workers in Bosnia they only see immigrant breadwinners, or carpetbaggers, as if those thousands and thousands of brothers of ours have not brought with them neither hear nor mind to Bosnia, nor honesty or diligence, but only ‘Swabian carpetbags’. Such a lack of culture could be understood in the case of Hungarians, because they, as true Asians, instinctively feel repugnance towards anything which is truly European; however, the Serbs are difficult to understand, much less justify, because the Czechs and other Slavs come to Bosnia and Herzegovina not only with one-sided sympathies for the Serbs, but with that erroneous opinion that there is not an indigenous Bosnian population in Bosnia at all. This what the overall Slavic press writes about, and especially the European one, which in Belgrade on this matter receives prepared and even well ‘rewarded’ articles. Even if the Serbs are not guilty of anything else but for having organised the so-called anti-carpetbagger movement, owing to which, if there had not been the annexation, Bosnia would have lost its best public workers; and since from the times of the occupation until today, they most ruthlessly and shamelessly deny the very survival of the indigenous Croatianhood in Bosnia – these two have already been stripping them of any right to demand Bosnia on account of the national principle. It is true that today the Croats in Bosnia and

Herzegovina are the minority; but in Europe, the people and nations are not counted like in Asia, but are weighed, i.e. assessed by their cultural and economic capacities. These capacities are in the first place reflected in the ethical family life, in the sense for the economy, in respect for personal and any other property, and therefore, in the inclination to public order and organisation. If we were to assess the Bosnian-Herzegovinian people from that point of view – and as Europeans and Slavs, we cannot assess it differently – then the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unconditionally the first and most important element. We can unequivocally see that for ourselves the moment we compare the Bosnian Muslims and Orthodox population with this Croatian element” (p. 53-54).

### **D) The Fabrication of National Contrasts**

However, the Bosnian Muslims represented a major problem and obstacle to Radić’s Croatian megalomania for two fundamental reasons – the distorted consciousness of their own Turkish identity, and their susceptibility to Serbian national propaganda. “Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims are our people by blood and language, i.e. very true Slavs, and not only by blood and language, but by their honesty. But these people of ours are so carried away by Constantinople and the Turkish Sultan – not only as their caliph and their religious leader, but as their emperor and master – that they do not know any other political thought. When I travelled around Bosnia and Herzegovina, conversing with that good and diligent folk of ours, regardless of where I was, I only heard one question: When you have seen so much of the world, then, tell us, have you seen our Emperor as well? To what degree they are devoted to the sultan as their emperor and master was most obvious in 1897 during the Greek-Turkish war. If you had come to any Turkish tavern, or better said, a stand somewhere in an unnoticed corner, you would have seen how our ‘Turks’ passionately listen to all the news about the war, with flames in their eyes, thus saying: If only we could be there now and shed our blood for the Emperor. Such loyalty and devotion is a sympathetic phenomenon, but simultaneously the reason for their having been taken in so many times by the Serbian agents. Particularly, they fell for it when they started to move out massively, especially from the Krajina, and were even more victimised, because at that time they did not enrol their children in the alleged schools of the Germans or Gavurs<sup>30</sup>. To let the forefathers’ land slip from one’s hands and to seal up the windows lest education could come to them is really a sign of great political weakness. Moreover, when we agree that on one hand, our Muslims are affluent, and on the other hand poor, thus among them there is almost no one who belongs to the middle class, then we shall be even more convinced that they have a future only when, keeping their religious sacred objects, embrace the Croatian thought of a national state, because, at the same time, it means to embrace a true state organisation and such European education that complies with our Slavic character” (p. 54-55).

Whereas for the Muslims, Radić has only feelings of pity for their quasi-national misconception, for the Orthodox he feels open contempt and revulsion. In his words, “. . . the Orthodox are either great martyrs or the miserable poor. They do not have a middle class either. Those who are affluent are speculators, not just in trade but in politics as well. In politics, they speculate with the most sacred feelings of the Muslims, and

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<sup>30</sup> A Gavur is a pejorative term that Islamic people use especially for Christians and for the Greeks. tr.n.

therefore pretend that they likewise support the Sultan; however, they are not either for King Peter nor Duke Nikola, but only for their own benefit. Those land owners also speculate with the misfortune of the Orthodox poor, and even more with the belligerence of that same poor. Instead of offering to that those poor a bargain price for their goods; instead of stimulating them to better in the economy and crafts, purchasing them better ploughs and farming tools, they distribute guns and ammunition to them, or pictures of King Peter and Duke Nikola, with a promise that Russia, which until recently had been a great Orthodox land, will conquer Bosnia for the benefit of Serbia and Montenegro, and that they will throw out all the German carpetbaggers, and all the beys and aghas, that they will distribute the land only among those who are Orthodox, and that likewise all the civil servants will only be of the Orthodox faith; that taxes will be low or none, and all people everywhere will be Orthodox Serbs— in one word, a true Serbian heaven on earth. Everyone, and particularly one who is poor and uneducated, likes to hear such sweet and dear words, promising them good things – even more so if they come from the lips of some leader, proprietor or rich man, who from day to day informs himself from the press about what the rulers and their ministers think and dream about. When these people say that Bosnia will be only Serbian, then it must be so. Believing in that, the Orthodox poor, who often change places and have nothing but a heap of stones covered by straw, cannot wait to hear a rifle and go to war, more merrily than to a wedding. He who does not have his own home cannot know what a homeland is, and he does not have at all and cannot have family love or social inclination in the European sense of that concept: his faithful girlfriend is his rifle, and his best blood-brother is a sharp scimitar. Perhaps they can be courageous all the way to desperation, but those are not the conditions or elements upon which a homeland or state can be built, as it is required in the European cultural centres” (p. 56-57).

Such a description of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims and Orthodox believers was convenient for Radić in order for him to achieve a bigger contrast against the local Catholics, whose artificially infused Croatianhood he enthusiastically idealised, as follows: “Let us have a look at our Croats now. Even in those times when all the authority was in Turkish hands, against which the Orthodox believers either publicly rebelled or secretly plotted; even in those times, with marvellous perseverance, the Croats were setting the foundation for the strength they have today: family, ethics and respect for Christian teachings. Such lessons were given to us by the Franciscan monks visiting villages and little houses, plainly dressed, with a moustache and beard, as our kings, as our ‘uncles’. These bearded ‘uncles’ with long moustaches, who knew how to successfully defend their flock against the most cruel forces, were Franciscans, and they used to be and are today the kind of educators that are hard to find in our European history. As soon as the Turkish force gave in, new comrades started to arrive and are still arriving to these educators, and not only from the clerical ranks. To them arrived craftsmen and small entrepreneurs from all ranks of business activity, clerics of different walks of life, private and public civil servants of all kinds. Simultaneously, following this example and their own needs, the Croats themselves swarmed in the schools, and created such an intelligentsia of today, which with its character and knowledge inspires the greatest confidence and respect. In all this the Croats became complementary with all their Slavic brothers in the Monarchy, albeit all Slavs, as it has already been said, were predominantly Serbophiles, particularly when they set foot in Bosnia for the first time. Thus, the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Croats created a true society of nations, that



is, a complete national whole, particularly taking care that the peasantry that lives in their land be as educated as possible. As a result, among the Croats there are the greatest number of peasants who are land owners, the most entrepreneurs, the most excellent factory and forestry workers, the most civil servants and clerks of all occupations, and the most university educated intelligentsia. In one word, the Croats are the most organised and culturally the most forceful element in Bosnia” (p. 57-58).

Thanks to the Roman Catholic priests, the Croatianisation of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Catholics was systematically restored during the several decades of the occupation, although it was opposed by the official Hungarian factors, aware of the risk of the abruptly increased power of the Croatian national body. Their political alignment and increasingly more consolidated organisation were cause for Stjepan Radić’s delight, thus he outlines their further engagement in the following ways, although his fundamental and basic concern of some allegedly “living” Croatian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina was left without any sensible response. He concluded his discussion as follows: “Now we shall understand why Kallay could not destroy Croatianhood, although before 1895, he did not allow the name of Croatia to be mentioned in Bosnia. I experienced that myself, because in 1891, in Mostar I was imprisoned and was afterwards chased away to Metković, only because in an inn, even though I was alone, I objected to a whole troop of Serbs when they called ‘a handful of Croats’ thieves, and for having mentioned the marvellous contemporary Croatian exhibition in Zagreb as delightful evidence of the Croatian cultural force. Kallay did not succeed, and it was also all in vane for Burijan, who had already lifted up all Serbs, thus the best administrators, the Croats, and also the other Slaves prepared to leave Bosnia, because their lives became unbearable and insecure. Consequently, the Croatian national community in one year, as by miracle, cut off Bosnia and Herzegovina, leaving it without almost any help from Croatia Proper and Dalmatian Croatia. As a result, the birth rate of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 1.7% annually, for the Serbs it is 1.1%, and 0.9% for the Muslims. Therefore, currently Bosnia and Herzegovina is an organic part of the rest of Croatia according to the living right, and it will be, God willing, according to the actual state of affairs” (p. 58-59).

To achieve this, definitely and completely, Radić offers an instant recipe. “It is only necessary that all of us Croats – and particularly the Croats in Bosnian Croatia – in relation to the issue of unification – be Europeans, therefore, the most enthusiastic defenders of the right of the Habsburg Empire; to be Slavs, therefore, the most friendly brothers towards the Muslims and towards the Orthodox and towards all the Slavic cultural workers from all over the Empire; not for a moment should we be quibblers among parties, i.e. we should not transfer contemporary parties from Croatia Proper and Dalmatia to Bosnia; and above all, we should not be, not for our life, not in a dream, the same as the Serbian Ustashas, that which they have been and what they will be, i.e. we should not be Frank’s vultures. Let us stand before Pest with Jelačić’s blade in our hands: the Croatian state right and an organic tie with the remaining empire; let us hoist high the flame of our revival before Belgrade: the Slavic and national cultural and economic organisation. With all these conditions, Bosnia and Herzegovina must become an integral part of a united Croatia. Or, shall we believe that Italian irredentism, the *Magyaronian* adherence to Koshut’s ideas, and Greater Serbian agitation will break up the Habsburg Empire, and destroy the contemporary Croatian state and the whole Croatian nation? However, who will, with sound mind and in a dream, count on this

‘fact’, when the Habsburg Empire with Russia stood against Napoleon and when Croatia is living proof of how truthful the great Frenchmen Michellet’s words are: ‘there is no sole of a nation which can be killed’” (p. 59-60).

### **m) The Unity under Stjepan Radić’s Conditions**

For a decade and a half before World War I, Radić had been incessantly preaching Serbo-Croatian national unity and solidarity, but always on the condition that all the territory west of the Drina was called Croatian, and east of that river, Serbian. As he mentioned in a pamphlet *How Are We to Go From Our Evil to Good*, published in Zagreb in 1902: “The truth is that our people judge with a sound mind that the Croat and Serb are two siblings, two brothers, and that they speak one language, believe in the Christian faith and live in one homeland, which from the Drava and Danube, beyond the Sava, Kupa and Una, must carry our dear and glorious name of Croatia, as in the neighbourhood, among the Sava and Drina, Danube and Timok, it is our other national home that carries the sweet and honourable name of Serbia. That is why our nation, not so long ago, fraternized and entered into a relation of close kinship, without regard to religion and name, following our national saying: ‘he is a good brother, whether he is of my religion or not, if he acts like a good brother’” (Stjepan Radić: *Selected Political Papers*, “Menorah”, Opatija 1995, p. 60). However, it seemed that earlier sporadic quarrels and differences all of a sudden grew into open hatred and intolerance, often reaching a level of savagery and animalistic rage. Radić blamed the irrational and imprudent behaviour of the Croatian and Serbian gentry who are not aware that only national concord would be reasonable and to the benefit of both parties. “Let us only remember the fact that in our Krajina, people got along very well as long as all the Orthodox believers were saying that they were Vlachs, and that such a blissful harmony existed in Slavonic Croatia as long as the Catholics called themselves *Šokci*. Nowadays, all over the Croatian Krajina, almost every Vlach knows that that was not his national name and that he should be proud with his Serbian name. Likewise, in Slavonic Croatia there are more and more Catholic peasants who already know that the name *Šokac* is nonsense and an offence, the same as the name Vlach, so the elderly and the young men and women start to pride themselves on their real national name, the Croatian one” (p. 61-62).

Radić’s perfidiousness is expressed here in artificial parallelisms in the observation of the national identity of the Vlachs and *Šokci*. The Vlachs from Krajina brought that name as they fled from the territories under Turkish rule, where, in the beginning it was a name of a particular social status of free cattlemen, then military troops, and in the end it served as a synonym for a Christian, regardless of his nationality. The Serbian national consciousness of the Vlachs in Krajina was always very sound and constant, the evidence of which are their national traditions in general, especially the national poetry. Contrary to them, the *Šokci* from Slavonia are unquestionably Serbs who became Catholics, whose national consciousness was systematically suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church, in order to separate them as quickly as possible from their Orthodox compatriots, who had been developing their church for centuries.

The Croatian national consciousness was artificially imposed upon the *Šokci* in Slavonia, mostly through Rački’s and Strossmayer’s engagements, as well as by the overall structure of Roman Catholic Church, by the constant repetition of the slogan that

Serbs and Croats were one nation with two names, in which case “Croatian” meant Roman Catholic, and Serbian meant Orthodox religious affiliation. Radić understood this as a process of the development of a genuine national consciousness; however, he found the side-effects a nuisance. “If we listen to what a Serb from the Kraijna has to say about a Croat, and what a Croat from Slavonia or Srem thinks of a Serb, we shall be convinced that we have not progressed for these twenty year at all, but regressed. Instead of a Kraijna Serb, precisely because he has been reborn, embracing the Croat and Croatia with all the might of his young consciousness: and instead of a Croat from Slavonia or Srem, with all his enthusiasm of a reborn man, understanding the value and power of brotherhood with the Serbs and Serbia; we can see how both of them pound their fists on a table in some pub, while one of them shouts, ‘Thank God that Starčević reproached us, now we will show the Croats how many of us there are,’ and the other heroically swears that he would rather hold a Hungarian flag than the Serbian one. All that is the fruit of German and Hungarian seeds, all that is the work of a foreign mind that our gentlemen imbibe in pubs and taverns, where there is no true speech and talk, because there is no national feeling nor national thought” (p. 62).

#### **n) Zagreb’s Crystal Night and Radić’s Instruction for the Persecution of Serbs**

In a time of massive anti-Serbian demonstrations and persecution in Zagreb, in that same year, 1902, late in August, Radić published his article *Everyone to His Own* in the magazine *The Horizon*, in which he himself vented out his, until then, skilfully concealed anti-Serbian hatred. He sends the following message to the teeming masses of Croats: “Let us change our tactics too, we should not moan as we have moaned before, and with our force strengthened an element which, as we see, has risen against us worse than any other foreign and unfriendly nation. We must see to weaken that element; once it is stronger, it will be more dangerous for us, and it will be hard for us to resist it. If we do not see to weakening that element, the opinion of other nations of us may be twofold: either that we have fallen so low that we really do not care for our national pride; or that we are a fool who warms a viper his in bosoms, while it prepares a poison to inject in our veins. On the contrary, Croats, do we have anything to lose if we completely alienate ourselves from that element? Where have they supported us? Where have they joined us in our fight, in the case of any political right or cultural inheritance of ours? Where? Nowhere! On the contrary! They are everywhere against us – everywhere! Here with the *Mađaroni*, in Slavonia with the *Mađaroni* and with the Germans, and in Dalmatia with the Italians. Let every union we have with them cease; we have nothing to lose – on the contrary: we can only gain” (p. 136). A motive for all that anti-Serbian hysteria, to which Radić adhered afterwards, was only one article by Nikola Stojanović, a student from Belgrade, which was reprinted in the Zagreb *The Serbian Defender*.

Radić was likely one of the first Croatian politicians who, following Starčević’s example, openly and publicly engaged in propaganda to boycott Serbian shops and the propaganda of general social discrimination against the Serbs. He provoked it with the following words: “In Zagreb, and everywhere in the Croatian territories, there are many Serbian merchants, entrepreneurs and workers who in number surpass even us, the Croats. I myself have been buying from a shop of one Orthodox merchant in Zagreb for many years, where I regularly spent over 30 forints every month. As of 1 September, I

will not shop there anymore, as I think all Croats will do so who have any pride of their own. Let us rise as one, to not provide jobs, wages, or merits to any Serb at all! Let us not be ashamed of it, they have slapped us a long time now, and we have supported them: now they have raised a knife at us – strike that shameful hand that wants to kill its brothers! Support your Croats – everyone keep to his own! We cannot say that Serbs are our relatives – and even if that is so: what miserable relatives they are! ‘He is a good brother, whether he is of my religion or not, if he acts like a good brother’. We do not have to feel ashamed before anyone if we try to weaken this element, shuddering at destruction. They storm at us – our duty is to defend ourselves. As long as they feel and think like this, our political and economic situation will be increasingly more at risk, as they are stronger than we are. We must try, then, to alienate ourselves from them – or we should grow stronger by ourselves, supporting our Croatian shop owners, industries and workers. If we do not alienate ourselves, if we do not reinforce ourselves – they, as you know, do not hide that they will first weaken us – then devour us. He who does not want to turn his back on them after every outbreak of their hatred towards us – he should not preach of any patriotism; let him take a distaff and sit in the background” (p. 136-137).

Radić was explicit in his assessment that all Serbs were guilty, and not only some individuals, even if they were only guilty of buying and reading *The Serbian Defender*. He urged that it was not good that some of his compatriots should find excuses such as saying that among the Serbs “. . . only the enraged individuals are guilty. *The Serbian Defender* in the very centre of Zagreb could not publish such articles (and even without that it offends us bitterly in almost every issue!) if its subscribers did not agree with that which is published in it – and the subscribers are the Serbs in Croatia. They agree with the articles in it, and as a result maintain it. When you say to them that you will no longer buy in their shops (there is however, no need to tell them, one should simply not go there anymore), before you, they will pretend that they do not agree with *The Serbian Defender*. Do not believe them until they withhold their support of that paper, until that newspaper ceases to insult us, provoke and instigate fanatical hatred against us. The Serbian merchants live off our accounts, so if you want to be their customers, let them learn how to respect our greatest holy things. There are those who say that they are tied to Serbian shops by debt. These could be helped by Croatian merchants who could take over the debts, which will be at least paid out in the smallest instalments by the owing parties. Let us organise, let us support the Croatian merchants. Let us take this step as soon as possible – immediately. In the matter of trade, the Serbs who live with us have for a long time been firmly organised against the Croats, their hosts. Where will you find in their shop any scientist or assistant who is Croatian? He will be a rare bird! If you find the like, believe that such an assistant is an excellent one who cannot be replaced by a Serb. Until now, I was optimistic concerning the Serbo-Croatian dispute, thinking how I for myself would live to see the end of this war and then look at the recent past in which the two brothers were two fools. They have displayed in their trade organisations a lot of skill and practical knowledge; and our Croatian money, I thought, stayed in our country. Now I can see that it is such an element with which it is not possible to live whatsoever, let alone live in brotherhood. So, let us do it! The vile and unruly brother should be brought to his senses at last; therefore, Croats, you whose heart beats for your nation, support our Croatian merchants, entrepreneurs and workers. Everyone to his own!” (p. 137-138).

## o) Odes to the Croatian Crimes in the World War I

Sound and impressive historical facts showed that Stjepan Radić had many reasons to be proud of the Croatians, who as Austro-Hungarian soldiers had fought on the Serbian frontline. First of all, in practice, all the Serbian illusions of the honesty of earlier Croatian and pan-Slavic verbal outpours of enthusiasm, commitments to Serbo-Croatian national unity, etc. dispelled. “Although they constituted a big majority in the corps which rushed across the Drina (save one, a Czech corps), the South Slavs from the Dual Monarchy did not think to massively turn their backs to the imperial flags, and with arms in their hands go over to the Serbian side. When the first shot was heard, instead of them hurrying over to their brothers in Serbia, to their embrace – which was expected by many Serbs, not only by Pašić – the Croats, Muslims and Slovenians, primarily threw themselves like tigers at the Serbian positions, thereby surpassing – and also by their insolence for the Serbian soldiers (both the wounded and civilians) – very often the Germans and Hungarians themselves. At the outset of the War in 1914, this was how the South Slavs dressed in the Austro-Hungarian uniforms behaved, and this was how they behaved in Serbia to the very end of this world bloodshed” (Vasa Kazimirović: *Serbia and Yugoslavia 1914-1945.*, “Prism” Kragujevac – “Centre Film” Belgrade, Kragujevac, 1995, Vol. I, p. 35). The Croats especially distinguished themselves in their soldierly ardour, the proof for which was the multitude of awarded medals, as well as promotions into higher officer and non-commissioned officer ranks. “In comparison to the Czechs, deployed as the Eight Corps (of Prague), the South Slavs mostly fought to the last bullet and many times refused to surrender to the Serbian soldiers, even when they were only left with side arms. Such demeanour of theirs, particularly of the Croats, was also the result of a planned instigation and dissemination of hatred towards Serbia” (p. 62).

As Nikola Djurević witnessed after the War, “Great masses of the Croatian people, as well as great masses of the Hungarian and German people, went with the same enthusiasm into a ‘holy’ war for the destruction of the Serbian nation. With the same cruelty, they killed Serbian women and children, burnt Serbian villages and looted Serbian property. Cries and moans of the Serbian poor did not sadden and could not have saddened a stone – the hearts of their fiendish enemies, and a deaf ear was turned to these cries and moans by those parties, the members of which were people who in their veins had the blood of their blood, but which supported the politics of the enemies of the Serbian nation, although before that moment they had been loyal to the idea of national unity” (p. 63). Many facts on the savage acts committed by the alleged national brothers were published in *The Politics* and other newspapers during the war and immediately after its end, until it was officially prohibited to do so by the government. “How full of hatred the South Slavs in the Austro-Hungarian army, save the Serbs, stormed the positions of the Serbian army, how they attacked the Serbian soldiers, as a rule never feeling sorry, could be seen everywhere, in all places where battles were fought in 1914. Only when they were completely destroyed, and when they had to choose between death and surrender did they hold up their hands. That was the case before Belgrade, in December 1914, in those fierce battles on Torlak, where most of the 79<sup>th</sup> Jelačić’s Regiment of the Austro-Hungarian army was killed. This regiment, comprised mostly of Croats, and which was left to protect the main part of the Austro-Hungarian army while retreating from Belgrade, consisted predominantly of inhabitants

from Lika. Under constant shelling from the artillery, they decided to surrender only when there were just a couple hundred of them standing on their two legs” (p. 64).

Everywhere, the Croats distinguished themselves the most, and particularly in committing crimes against civilians. Mačva suffered most from the Croatian Roman Catholic mercy. “Invading villages like the soldiers of Genghis Khan, they expelled from their houses whole families, regardless of the age and health condition of their members, to take them tied up in ropes, which they carried with them, sending them before them whenever they attacked the positions of the Serbian army. This is what they did, among other things, in the village of Lešnica, where they had previously killed many villagers, men, women and children. According to the report of the Honourable Joneić, a teacher, there were also many women with toddlers among the locals of Lešnica, who were used as a living protective wall” (p. 64).

Also, Josip Broz and Vlatko Maček distinguished themselves in the battles on the Serbian front. As Kazimirović wrote regarding that matter, “. . . among the troops of the Austro-Hungarian army that particularly fiercely attacked the Serbian soldiers was the 42<sup>nd</sup> Home Guard Division from Zagreb. On 2 September 1914, on the occasion of the second crossing of the Drina, it stormed, as though completely under some fanatic spell, for a whole three days, the trenches of the Serbian army in the Ada Krujačica, attempting to go across the Drina and land on its right bank to, by action in the Jadro Valley, offer support to the troops positioned south of Loznica and north of Lešnica. It produced great casualties for the troops of the Drina Division, call-up II, that confronted it. On the Serbian side, 9 officers fell, 6 non-commissioned officers, and 550 soldiers. Within this Austro-Hungarian division, Josip Broz, later nicknamed Tito, at that time a member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Guard of the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, stormed the Serbian positions. He had never wanted to speak about all that he experienced and managed to survive at that time, not even to Vladimir Dedijer, his biographer . . . however, Dedijer mentioned (in the *New Appendices for the Biography of Josip Broz Tito* Vol. II), that he had held in his hands three autobiographic texts by Tito, from 1935, 1945 and 1952, and that only in one of them, in the one from 1935, did Tito write about his participation in the war against Serbia from August through December 1914. When he wanted, on the basis of the first autobiographic text from 1935, to write on Tito’s involvement in the operations in the Srem Front, he, allegedly, was strictly ordered by Milovan Djilas to the contrary. As Tito in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Home Guard Division (the “Devils’ Division”, as it was called), a leader of the Croatian Peasant Party, Vlatko Maček also fought against the Serbs in the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment” (p. 65-66).

Systematic animosity and intolerance towards the Serbs, who had been forced to be mobilised, was expressed in all the Austro-Hungarian units. “Anyone who hesitated to fire at his brothers or fired into the air would be shot in his back. For mistakes, omissions, violation of discipline or regulations in general, for failing to carry out an order to the smallest detail, the Serbs in the Austro-Hungarian army were very harshly punished. . . Sometimes, the most serious punishments were carried out in the most severe manner, and only by the decision of the officers, without prior court proceedings” (p. 71). The Roman Catholic Church, political parties (mostly Josip Frank’s Party of Rights and the Croatian Peasant Party), and the Croatian press were the implementers of the ultimately anti-Serbian indoctrination of the Croatian soldiers and the systematic instigation to mass and bloodthirsty crimes against Serbian civilians in World War I. “In addition to the government bodies and officer corps, those three factors were the major

disseminators of hatred towards Serbia, and were major war-mongers in general” (p. 80). However, Church organisation had a leading role. “Its highest-ranking officials, but lower-level clergy too, were untiring agitators for the Habsburgs’ cause. All of that was in every way in compliance with the views of the Vatican at the time. . . . Unquestionably obedient to the Vatican, those high-level and the highest-ranking officials of the Catholic Church in the South Slavic countries almost competed over who would be harsher in his expressions used in their epistles and speeches against Serbia and its people” (p. 84-85). The Party of Rights and the Croatian Peasant Party simply competed between themselves over which one would spill out more anti-Serbian poison in the public appearances of its officials, and in the case of the press, “in the Radić brothers’ newspaper *Dom*, one could read all that which the Austro-Hungarian officers were telling their soldiers about the Serbs – that Serbs are ‘savage and cruel’, that they are ‘animals’ and that they everywhere and always show ‘their unchristian and savage nature and hatred’, that they ‘torture and mutilate our wounded soldiers beyond any description’” (p. 88). All these were, of course, the most base lies and fabrications.

For the Croats, WWI was a dress rehearsal for the crimes of the systematic genocide against the Serbian nation in WWII. That means that it is not fascism and Nazism that are the real causes of the mass slaughter, but the traditional Roman Catholic hatred towards the “schismatic” Orthodox believers, embodied in one artificial nation of infatuated religious fanatics, brain-washed and susceptible to total manipulation and instrumentalisation. As they were a large part of the pro-Austro-Hungarian invasion forces, the Croatianised Roman Catholics, in addition to warlike rapture on the battlefield, displayed ultimate savagery and cruelty to their opponents. Imprisoned Serbian soldiers were often executed on the spot or killed after long-lasting torture. The wounded Serbs were slain on the spot. Serbian women were raped and hanged. Serbian children were cut to pieces. Old men were massacred. After the occupation of Serbia, the majority of the occupational administration also consisted of Croats. They looted and seized wherever they could. Tens of thousands of people were taken to internment from which few returned alive. For even the tiniest disobedience to the occupying forces in the Serbian towns and villages, draconian sanctions were imposed after a short procedure. It was not any easier for the Serbs who inhabited territories across the Sava and Danube, in Vojvodina. In addition to having been forcefully mobilized and systematically exposed to mass killings and the most dangerous frontlines, Bosnian, Vojvodina, Slavonian and other occupied Serbs were exposed to constant maltreatment and bullying. The most distinguished were slain, sent to camps, with their property expropriated, etc. There is a vast number of documents, and also high quality historiographic studies to testify of this. Croats had always treated Serbs in the same way, regardless of whether they were organised into Austro-Hungarian Home Guard troops, battle troops of the Ustahas or Communist troops.

When they saw that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was beyond salvation, many Croats started to approach the Serbs, seeking national unity. The carelessness with which the Serbian officials of the time pardoned crimes committed against their own nation, appointing them responsible office holders, is shocking. Very soon it became clear that the Croats had not sincerely wanted Yugoslavia. They accepted it as one of the means of protection from Italian and Hungarian territorial aspirations. As soon as the danger died away, they organised themselves into a united resistance front against the Yugoslav state in Belgrade, from its first days led by Stjepan Radić with his party. The

new state did not have a chance to consolidate due to the continuous subversive activities of Croatian civil servants and officers. Many were secretly recruited to work intensively for foreign intelligence services. As Kazimirović indicates, “. . . in the summer of 1923, something occurred that in a full scale showed how fragile the historical reconciliation was and how the large scale inclusion of the Croatian officers from ex-Austro-Hungarian army into the Yugoslav army was fraught with many risks. Namely, at that time, one powerful secret organisation comprised of ex-Austro-Hungarian officers, Croats, was disclosed, who were preparing to strike a deadly blow to the new state, under whose flag they had joined. The centre of this organisation was in Zagreb, while its ‘affiliates’ were in Varaždin, Virovitica, Skoplje, Bitolj, and Debar (which were linked further to Albania, to Tirana). . . This anti-state organisation was traced after the apprehension of a certain Danica Androlić, who was a secretary of Stjepan Radić, the leader of the Croatian Peasant Party. She was caught at the Yugoslav-Italian border near Rakek. She had on her person a number of compromising documents, which, above all, were related to a secret organisation of ex-Austro-Hungarian officers in the Yugoslav army. Among the arrested officers, and also the figures who occupied high positions in the state administration, banking and industry, was one who had received a medal from King Aleksandar – Slavko Kvaternik. Also, his study of the situation on the Yugoslav borders was disclosed, which was to be handed over to the Italians. As he explained in one of his articles published in the Hungarian newspapers *Pester Lloyd*, issue 177 from 8 August 1923, Stjepan Sarkotić, once a head of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and after 1918 an individual who gathered Croats in Austria – opponents of Yugoslavia, in the first place, Ustashas – it was the nineteenth spy affair in Croatia for the four and a half years of the existence of the Yugoslav state” (p. 205-206).

In September 1917, in *Dom* and in *Croatia*, Radić published an article *The Croatian State Right as a Roommate of the Anti-Slavic Serbian Politics*, which are, according to him, “. . . anti-Croatian politics, because, for our Serbian politicians, the Croatian state has not existed and it does not exist, which is the reason why all our Serbs have been and to this day remain *Mađaroni*. It is anti-Slavic, because Serbian politicians all over our coastal Croatia have always managed to go along with Italian politics that, here, in these two years have been fighting the eleventh January battle in order to forever close off a path to the Adriatic Sea not only to the Croats and Slovenians, but also to the Czechs and Slovaks, as the Adriatic Sea is a main European trade and traffic hub” (p. 194). However, two years earlier, in the speech he delivered in the Croatian Parliament on 23 June 1915, Stjepan Radić openly ostentatiously boasted of the merits Croatia had gained fighting together with the Central Forces, stating, “The Croats have never given more to this Monarchy than which they are now giving and will give after the end of this war. All we have done for the Monarchy until now cannot compare with that which we are giving now. That which whole empires used to build, the Kingdom of Croatia is building alone. We know that in some districts, as for example in mine, eighty-seven percent of the adult male population is in the army. Our Croatian military force numbers even hundreds of thousands. The quality of such a force is such that we are all moved witnesses of the greatest recognition, for which I have not heard in all of history” (Stjepan Radić: *Selected Political Speeches*, “Menorah”, Opatija 1995, p. 144-145).

Praise sent directly from the ruling family, the Habsburgs, to the Croatian soldiers evokes the utmost pride. “I cannot imagine a greater thing than that which happened on Saturday’s session, when the wire from Archduke Freidrich was read. True, our rights



and our better future are not mentioned once in that wire. The highest military commander will not and cannot manage any politics because it is not his mandate; but that is why we are here. We know, or we should know, that that wire is in fact just one half of it. When we gave everything to Monarchy, when we gave and are still giving more than anyone has ever expected from us, when we get such recognition beyond any words, when we are told that we were fear and terror for our enemies, Russia and Serbia, what does that mean? Can it be said that it is just an empty word, when it is said by the one who sees and knows, as the highest military commander of our army; when hundreds of thousands of soldiers confirm that? Our soldiers proudly underline that they would rather shoot themselves than surrender. . . We Croats are not people who do their job according to negotiations. We have never negotiated. We always went to war on the first call of the King, because we have always known that we do not fight for anybody else and under anybody else, but under the flag of the most respectful and honourable dynasty in Europe” (p. 145).

The following day, in a new speech to the Parliament, that is in 1915. Stjepan delivered true panegyrics to the Croatian peasant, the warrior, and to his criminal mission in Serbia. On that occasion he underlined, “A war broke out that showed in an unusually way in the whole of Europe, and mostly in Croatia, that the greatest value and primarily extraordinary force of any nation and any state lies in its peasantry. Immediately at the onset of the war, all our newspapers interestingly published a report of a military expert on the effect the ‘Devil’s Division’ had on him when on Crni Vrh, and elsewhere on the battlefield in Serbia. In peaceful times, when we were not under fire – as the report goes – we know that our people are too loose, almost lazy and obtuse; they do not possess a necessary level of vibrancy, cheerfulness and flexibility in their characters; in one word, they give the impression of an unintelligent multitude. However, when it was necessary to go to the frontline, the situation changed completely. Every man of ours was a trained military leader, every one of them knew to think on his own, did things on his own, always cared for others, always felt and knew that the others did the same. In such occasions our man is thoughtful and persistent in his deeds and relentless until he fulfils its purpose” (p. 151).

#### **p) A Resentful Opponent of the Unification with Serbia**

On the night session of the National Council of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs, held on 24 November 1918, Radić forcefully opposed the unification with Serbia, coming down on the Slovenians, Serbs from Vojvodina and particularly the Dalmatians as its most ardent advocates. Feeling a helpless rage on account of the balance of power that was not to his advantage, he sent the following message to the Dalmatians: “From the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the overall political history of Dalmatia was purely Croatian. Dalmatia at that time consisted of a couple of cities and islands; as you all know, all of contemporary Dalmatia and beyond, to the river Kupa, has always been real, true Croatia. But, look, for the last fifty years a Dalmatian Croat has not even once sighed politically for the unification of Croatia Proper into one state and homeland of Croatia. However, now, when an opportunity presented itself to have that national Croatian-Dalmatian programme put in practice, you, gentlemen, have separated yourselves from Croatia, without asking the people anything and contrary to them, and now without

asking them, you want to put yourself under the rule of Belgrade, under a centralistic state union with the Kingdom of Serbia” (p. 233-234).

He mostly objected to the Serbs for their wish to restore Dušan’s Empire of old times, thus reproaching them: “You Serbs from Croatia and Hungary and Bosnia, you are in essence only the admirers of Dušan, you are for a great Serbian state, for a powerful and glorious empire, for the ‘pledged thought’, for revenge on every side, for the nine Jugović brothers, for Prince Marko, and so on, and so on. We Croats are not for that” (p. 234). As for the Croats, saying this he grossly renounced loyalty to Habsburg Dynasty, representing the Croatian peasant as someone who had always been a sworn republican. Following this train of thought he explained, “You do not have, or do not want to have any idea of the fact that all our nation, primarily the Croatian one, wants, desires, asks and demands that the blood they shed brings them that true and full republican freedom seen and felt by every man of ours in the USA, and all those innumerable drops of tears that have innocently fallen down to ensure the justice they have been fighting for – and which will be achieved – by their peasant brothers in Russia” (p. 235).

### **q) Radić’s Post-war Separatism and Open Continuation of Starčević’s Anti-Serbian Politics**

In the first days after the war, separatism was the only ideology, conquering the Croatian masses with lightning speed, and it represented the core of the political programme of Radić’s Croatian Peasant Party. “During the war, from 1914 to 1918, a fervent opponent of Serbia and its Yugoslav programme, an ode-monger and hymn-maker to the glory of the Habsburgs, Radić, as early as November 1918, stated that he would rather see three Croatian counties be constituted as an independent state of Croatia than a Yugoslav union with Belgrade as its capital city. He stayed true to that attitude of his, even after the pronouncement of the Yugoslav state. In January and February 1919, he organised a collection of signatures on a memorandum for the President of the USA, Wilson, in which he demanded the establishment of “. . . a peacekeeping peasant Croatian republic. Thanks to, most likely, Radić and his party, the separatist mood spread rapidly to all the corners of Croatia. It took Dalmatia as well, which had in November 1918 wholeheartedly cheered to the Serbian army, as the liberating army, and blessed every step of it took” (Kazimirović, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 362-363). However, such a political chameleon as Radić was nevertheless not equal to Aleksandar Karadjorđević. “Once sweeping Radić off his feet, inducing him to declare that he is for Yugoslavia as a monarchy and to recognise the Vidovdan Constitution against which he had fought so much, being committed to ‘a neutral Croatian republic’, King Aleksandar, in order to reward him, but also wishing to offer to the parties in Serbia proof that he could rule without them, even entrusted Radić with forming a government. Doing this, King Aleksandar was correct in his assessment that, concerning the task to form a government, the ‘leader of the Croats’ would do anything just to get his hands on power, and would even make political solutions reached outside the Parliament. When he failed to form a government, and when he was forced to return the delegated power, Radić was the one who proposed the formation of a government headed by a neutral person, which in practical terms meant that the government should

be formed without the involvement of political parties, namely, without their approval” (p. 443).

Radić had never been interested in any ideological or political principles. “Stjepan Radić, a descendent of the Serbian refugees from Bosnia, who were Croatianised after they accepted the Catholic faith, almost miraculously reached unthought-of political positions and became the *de facto* leader of the Croatian nation. Partly by skill, and partly by demagoguery, he first gathered peasants around himself and practically mobilised them towards the realisation of the goals of Croatian national politics. Denying the Serbs, he stirred the anti-Serbian sentiment up even more, which had existed for hundreds of years among the Croatian peasants. . . . Often himself full of extremes, sometimes on completely different ends of the spectrum and proud that, as he used to say for himself, he is ‘the most skilful acrobat in politics’, Radić, on the one hand kept shouting, ‘Down with the priest, the thieves’, and on the other hand still making arrangements with the Catholic clergy, for whom the only thing important was that he, Radić, was ‘a rebel against Orthodox Belgrade’” (p. 501).

In 1923, Stjepan Radić came down on the Negroes, reproaching the Serbs in a racist manner for having been their allies. That is how he replied to the complaints from the Serbian side for the Croats’ involvement in the war on the side of Austro-Hungary. Concerning this matter, Radić said, “They reproach us, saying, ‘You were allied with the Germans and Hungarians, and with nobody’. But you were allied with the French and even the Negroes. We only had Europeans as our allies, if we allow ourselves to think of them as allies. That which the Serbian side has been saying is unreasonable, because no matter how glorious the goals it fought for were – to achieve the right to national self-determination – the Entente made one mistake which history will shed full light on, on what it meant – and I rejoice because of it – bringing the Negroes to the Rhine, it meant perhaps, that we shall live to see even that the whites will have to leave Africa” (p. 263).

Nevertheless, Radić’s mindset and political concept remained clear to the end if one takes a look at the content of his speech on Ante Starčević’s grave, which he delivered in Šestine on 11 June 1922. On that occasion, Stjepan Radić spoke even the following words: “Croatian people! We are on a holy place, which is like a real temple. Every one of these graves is like a small sacrificial altar, and this big grave, around which we have gathered today as people and as Croats, is a big sacrificial altar of that immortal and magnificent idea that gives real content and real value to our Croatianhood. That is the idea of the right, which is more powerful than any force, the idea of national self-determination against every tyranny” (p. 241).

For Radić, Starčević was a true son and true representative of the Croatian nation, and he spoke to him rhetorically: “Great, persistent son of little, rocky Lika! When you set the foundations of the party of national self-determination, the rulers mocked you, saying that they would be able to carry all your adherents in one basket across the Sljeme in Zagreb. But look here: today all Croats are proponents of the state right, i.e. adherents of the humane politics of peace and work. And now your handshake with the immortal Strossmayer in Krapinske Toplice starts to receive its full value. The relentless and always rebellious Upper Croatia, a political Croatia in the first place, never conquered by anyone or oppressed, connected and blended with the Lower, Slavonic Croatia of a mild soul and a soft song; it blended with Coastal (Croatia) all the way up to Lovćen, and in that Croatian block today we have not only Ivančica, Papuk, and Fruška Gora, but Triglav, Dinara and all the way further. Also, your great and immortal merit

for which we Croats are today, inside, spiritually thus as one, and in such internal concord thus strong and unconquerable. Glory to Anti Starčević!” (p. 242-243). All earlier personal and conceptual differences, which periodically led to polemical discussions with Starčević and his adherents, Radić completely put aside, as early as during WWI, in order to link himself completely to the adherents of the idea of the state right regarding the implementation of anti-Serbian politics.

### **r) Stjepan Radić Completely Revealed Before the Court of History**

Kazimirović’s interpretation of Stjepan Sarkotić’s views may be very useful for the final judgement on the historical role in the political action of Stjepan Radić, who, availing himself of all his demagogical stunts, in certain moments was ready to recite true eulogies to Aleksandar Karadjordjević and Nikola Pašić, and even to commit himself to secession of the Roman Catholic Church in Yugoslavia from the Vatican, and its unification with the Serbian Orthodox Church into one Yugoslav Christian Church. Kazimirović says, “Stjepan Sarkotić spoke and wrote about Stjepan Radić most disastrously, but that was after Radić’s arrangement with King Alexander and Nikola Pašić. Stjepan Sarkotić was once the leader of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and after 1918, the leading advocate among the Croats for the secession of Croatia from Yugoslavia and its inclusion into one trans-Danubian federation under the aegis of the Habsburgs. In the Hungarian paper *Pester Lloyd*, from 9 and 11 August 1925, regarding Radić, Sarkotić said that ‘he is insane’. ‘I cannot think of him as of a sane person, who from a glorifier of Maria Theresa, Franc Joseph – in one word, an admirer of the Habsburgs – transformed into one who wanted to devour the Habsburgs and who supported the Karadjordjević Dynasty,’ Sarkotić wrote. ‘The man who accepts the purest Croatian programme from Dr. Ante Starčević, mixes it with a couple of drops of socialist oil and then claims it to be his own, going on to make an oath on Starčević’s grave, there and everywhere at congregations delivering ultra-Croatian speeches, speeches for ‘holy Croatia’, and over night rejects it all together with the ‘holy Croatia’ and sacrifices it on the altar of great Serbdom, cannot be called a sane man” (p. 507).

It was obvious that Stjepan Radić had never been sincere to anyone, and that he always spoke in a way that was agreeable to the person from whom he expected some advantage. “Also as a proof for Radić’s ‘abnormality’, Sarkotić mentioned that on the occasion of the coronation of King Petar, he had said that, ‘for Croats it will not be better until they for ever stop all relations with the Pope’, and in Bjelovar, ‘on the occasion of the consecration of one Serbian flag’, that ‘everyone who does not respect the Serbian flag deserves to be a head shorter’. Stressing that Radić had prepared himself to ‘land at the Serbian airport, indeed, if not a single other flight succeeded’, in the mentioned articles in the Hungarian newspaper, Sarkotić also wrote the following about Radić: ‘His constant change of thought and mood is without a doubt abnormal. He reached his highest point in fervent patriotism in the fight for the independence of ‘holy Croatia’. The change from monarchism via republicanism to Sovietism and from Sovietism over to republicanism to monarchism, in such a short time span, shows that here we have a political clown of a rare, abnormal kind’. Forgetting that in the same Hungarian newspaper, *Pester Lloyd*, two years earlier, on 8 August 1923, he had lifted him up to heights, seeing in him ‘the incarnation of the Croatian nation’, in August 1925, Sarkotić simply pronounced Radić as not only a traitor of his own nation, but of all

those dissatisfied on the Balkans who are not Serbs, and who put all their hopes into the fight of the Croats” (p. 507-508). All the clerical circles reasoned in exactly the same way as Sarkotić, and Radić’s political prospects and destiny were soon judged once and for all.

### **5. Maček’s Banate as a Preparation for the Founding of an Ustasha State**

After Radić’s death, Vlatko Maček became the unequivocal leader of the Croatian Peasant Party and the overall Croatian nation, although he had never been officially appointed as the party’s president. Without any intellectual reputation, and a poor speaker, he was a good party organiser and skilful negotiator. In an agreement with Duke Pavle, he succeeded in the formation of Croatia Proper, which had a 20 percent Serbian population, which was how he initiated the process of the dissolution of Yugoslav state. He had never been interested in any democracy whatsoever, which was the case with all other Croatian politicians. Their one and only goal was to achieve Croatian independence, while the nationalist ideology they preached was fraught with prejudices and intolerance. In fact, it was the expression of their “inferiority complex – more precisely, a type of Croatian inferiority complex” (Kazimirović, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 529). Maček was capable of harnessing most Serbian opposition parties to drag his cart, and of manipulating their senseless leaderships, and he even succeeded in putting himself at the top of the polling list of candidates. “In order to marry for the second time, Maček left the Catholic Church and joined the Old Catholic Church. That produced many difficulties with the high-level officials of the Catholic Church in Croatia, but only temporarily – until he became the leader of the Croatian Peasant Party. At that moment everything changed. Consequently, the archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Šarić, a renowned admirer of Frank and clericalism, started to praise him loudly. In a statement for *The Morning Newspaper*, Šarić said that he admired the ‘sagacity and strength of Dr. Maček’s spirit’. Maček won over Archbishop Šarić, as well as the other high-level officials of the Catholic Church, the moment he declared that he, ‘not just as a Catholic, but as statesmen, must support the Holy See’. This statement gained great publicity in all the newspapers inclined to Catholic Church, while the famous Swiss magazine *Journal de Genève*, in issue no. 5 from 5 August 1935, wrote on that occasion that Maček as a politician relies on both Croatian nationalism and Catholicism” (p. 531-532).

However, although Maček, in real terms, achieved much through an agreement with Cvetković, the aspirations of the leading Croatian political structures were not fulfilled with the borders of the newly established Banate, which is why those structures continued to claim ownership over other territories. “However, the clerical circles in Croatia also had aspirations to other territories. Therefore, they were not satisfied with the borders Maček had effectively arranged with the court and the President of the Yugoslav Government, Dragiša Cvetković. They wanted the Banate of Croatia to be established with other borders, wider borders. In fact, the clerical circles in Croatia in 1939 were founding their position on the views of the 1st Croatian Catholic Congress, organised in Zagreb in 1900. According to them, the borders of Croatia had to be to the east, up to a line which would be drawn from Kotor, along the Drina, all the way to Zemun. Essentially, it was not anything new, because there had been similar concepts on

Croatian ethnic borders before. Also, Strossmayer's National Party had its own idea concerning the borders of Croatia, arising from the opinion that in addition to Croatia Proper and Slavonia, it should comprise Dalmatia, Istria up to the river Rapa, Novo Mesto, Černomelj and Metlika in the Slovenian territory, as well as one part of western Bosnia up to the river Vrbas. The borders for which the 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Catholic Congress from 1900 pleaded were allegedly 'historical and natural borders'. Highlighting this, it was also emphasised that they were not just separation lines between Croats and Serbs, but simultaneously between two completely different civilisations. Generally, neither were the Croatian extreme nationalistic circles nor the Ustashas and others satisfied with the Banate of Croatia. The Ustasha leader, Mile Budak, who had returned to the country at the pleadings of Milan Stojadinović, bitterly and severely attacked Vlatko Maček in the magazine *The Croatian Nation*, for the agreement made with Duke Pavle and Dragiša Cvetković, emphasising that the agreement had been reached in order to save Yugoslavia, and that it represented nothing else than 'the sale of the Croatian nation'" (p. 592-593).

### **a) The Persecution of the Serbs in the Banate of Croatia and the Fascist Character of Maček's Paramilitary Party Units**

The Banate of Croatia was formally governed by Ban Ivan Šubašić, but the real authority was in Maček's hands. The Serbs were systematically and gradually deprived of their civil rights, and many were bullied, maltreated, battered, prosecuted or killed. It would become obvious that Maček's formation of the Croatian Peasant Protection and the Croatian Civil Protection would have a critical impact. These were the paramilitary "squads of the Croatian Peasant Party, charging squads, something like Hitler's SS squads in Germany, as on one occasion a commander of both formations, Djuro Kempfelja had stated. Maček personally, as the leader of the Croatian Peasant Party, paid great attention to both organisations, particularly after the establishment of the Banate of Croatia, both to the Croatian Civil Protection and the Croatian Peasant Protection, stressing that 'the order and organisation of the state must be maintained'. Pursuant to 'The Bylaws of the Croatian Peasant Protection', adopted in January 1940, its task was to 'preserve the constitutional rights of Croatia, combat any action which is subversive and contrary to the Croatian peasant movement, or illegal and destructive in general'. As it was mentioned in these bylaws, the Croatian Peasant Protection was organised by districts. Its 'special departments' in cities were represented in the Croatian Civil Protection. In the beginning, when they acted more or less just as an unofficial and self-tolerated party formation, both the Croatian Peasant Protection and Croatian Civil Protection provided weapons for their members, mostly clubs. However, after the establishment of the Banate of Croatia, the weapons that were supplied included all types of light weapons, from rifles to machine guns. At that time, special units were set up – a storm squad, motor 'unit', and a cavalry squadron. In one word, a real (home guard – *domobran*) army was being rapidly established, starting from a party army, all in the spirit of the statements of individual leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party that 'there is no freedom to Croats unless the Croat has his rifle on his shoulder'" (p. 618-619).

As a real party army was organised, completely indoctrinated in the spirit of anti-serbdom and religious fanaticism, the next step was to open its schools for officers, while many active Yugoslav officers of the Croatian nationality were recruited secretly.

They organised themselves and were prepared to follow strictly political instructions and orders in certain situations. By late 1939, the Croatian Peasant Party had among its members about two hundred thousand people. “The Croatian Peasant Protection and Croatian Civil Protection had already displayed its force and preparedness publicly and to the full extent, and the degree of its armament, on the occasion of Duke Pavle and Duchess Olga’s visit to Zagreb in 1940. Over 15 thousand ‘guards’, including members of the cavalry and motor troops, protected the guests from Belgrade. It was done in the best possible manner, namely, in a spectacular way. Duke Pavle was so impressed by the guards demeanour, that immediately after his return to Belgrade, he decorated their whole command with high and the highest medals and thus, as it could be heard rightfully in Belgrade at the time, he *de facto* recognised the Protection as a legal army of the Banate of Croatia. Among those who received decoration were mostly men who, just couple of months later, in April 1941, led all the actions of protection against the Yugoslav army, while the German troops advanced into the country. They were the ones who practically enabled a handful of Ustashes, headed by Ante Pavelić, to institute their government and regime without any difficulties, not only in Croatia but in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well” (p. 619-620).

Neither the German and Italian occupying forces nor the installed Ustasha regime, imposed the fascist character on the Croatian paramilitary organisation. Long before the onset of the war and the occupation, the Croatian Peasant Protection and Croatian Civil Protection “. showed their fascist face. The real ‘cudgels’ in the hands of both the Banate authorities and leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party, where representatives of the fascist movement progressively increased their influence, their members ruled the roost across the Banate of Croatia, coming down on all those who would dare oppose them, or who were labelled as adversaries of Croatianhood, primarily the Serbs. As early as 1939, in many towns, such as in Gospić, the leadership of the Protection drew up lists of Serbs who ‘needed to be killed’. Stressing that terror and murders were the basic method of action of both the Civil and Peasant Protection, a Croatian historian Ljubo Boban said that the members of the Protection were not just initiators, but also direct perpetrators of the largest number of crimes in the Banate of Croatia. However, in most cases the victims of those crimes were, as it may be easily assumed, distinguished Serbs – in the beginning those who were not members of the Independent Democratic Party but other Serbian parties, and even the Yugoslav Radical Union itself. According to a classified report from April 1940, at that time the members of the Citizen and Peasant Protection were allowed to do whatever they wanted, because neither a political nor administrative apparatus were in their way. On the contrary, it identified with them and offered any assistance, even when it was more than obvious that the law was being violated. In the case of the prosecutions of Serbs and retaliations, the administrative authorities were themselves actively involved in them” (p. 620-621). Nevertheless, massive numbers of once Austro-Hungarian civil servants were recruited again to work for bureaucratic establishment.

As Velimir Terzić showed, which has been documented, “. . . there were many Ustasha elements among the officials of the Croatian Protection, such as Zvonko Kovačević, the commander of the Civil Protection and Kvaternik’s collaborator, who as early as 21 April 1941 became an Ustasha colonel, and Kvaternik himself gave instructions to Maček on the methods according to which the Protection was organised and its structure developed. The establishment of the Croatian Peasant and Civil

Protection was to some extent a joint enterprise of the Croatian Peasant Party and the Ustashas. The Ustashas came to the idea of having it set up, as a result of their inefficient terrorist activity in the country (e.g. the unsuccessful political assassinations in railway facilities, which were organised by Gustav Perčec, and “the uprising of Velebit”, organised by Vjekoslav Servaci and Artuković). In 1932, when Slavko Kvaternik from Zagreb and Perčević from Vienna visited Pavelić (who was in Italy), they discussed the need to create some semi-military organisation in the country. Maček accepted their suggestions to form such an organisation, as his intentions were complementary to theirs” (Velimir Terzić, *The Collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1941 – Causes and Consequences of the Defeat*, Narodna Knjiga, Belgrade; Partizanska Knjiga, Ljubljana and Belgrade; Pobjeda, Podgorica, Belgrade, 1982, Vol. I, p. 177). Immediately before the war, the Civil and Peasant Protection already had about two hundred thousand people in their ranks, which were well organised and partially armed and uniformed. All in all, a mobilisation of the regular units of the Yugoslav army in Maček’s banate was never again possible in any significant percent when the Croatian population was in question.

### **b) Maček’s Invitation to Sincere Cooperation with the Ustasha Regime**

In 1941, the mobilisation in the territory of the Banate of Croatia mostly failed, but Maček's paramilitary organisation was all set up, and was patrolling in cities and villages, curbing the efforts of the central government towards defence, regardless of Maček’s position in a putschist government. “After Kvaternik’s proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia and Maček’s invitation to the Croatian Peasant Party to sincerely cooperate with the new government, the Civil Protection in Zagreb secured, jointly with the police forces, the roads, streets, postal service and communications facilities, railway stations, water-works, power stations, public administration buildings and offices. Simultaneously, it was disarming the members of the Yugoslav military on their way through Zagreb. According to Kvaternik, on 10 April, about 100 officers, a couple of generals and the staff headquarters of the Protection was placed in the ‘Milinov’ Hotel by Kovačević, who later gave them over to Germans. The Croatian Peasant Protection was put in effect as of 10 April in some parts of Croatia. It disarmed some units of the Yugoslav army, collected equipment and secured order. The Peasant Protection specially distinguished itself on the roads: Zagreb-St. Ivan, Zelina-Varaždin, Zagreb-Osijek, and Zagreb-Sisak-Slavnonski Brod. On 10 April, as the commander of the Civil Protection in Zagreb, Zvonko Kovačević was officially sworn in by Kvaternik, who promoted him to the Colonel of the Public Security Corps. The commander of the ground forces, General Štancer, in his order from 12 April, addressed ‘all Croatian guard organisations to immediately start collecting all weapons and war supplies’. Under the command of Zvonko Kovačević, the Protection was Kvaternik’s single central support in the establishment of the new authority and the maintenance of order and peace in Zagreb” (p. 179).

On the same day, when Kvaternik proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia, on 10 April 1941, the radio station of Zagreb transmitted a statement of the Vice President of the Yugoslav government at the time and President of the Croatian Peasant Party, Vlatko Maček, in which it was written: “Croatian people! Today, Colonel Slavko



Kvaternik, leader of the nationalist movement in the country, has proclaimed a free and independent state of Croatia in the overall territory of Croatia, and has taken over power. I invite the overall Croatian nation to submit itself to this power. I call on all the adherents of the Peasant Party who occupy administrative positions, and all district councillors, etc., to sincerely cooperate with the new government” (Vol. II, p. 373). The Croats followed that with great excitement. All over, Croatian flags were hoisted and a cordial and ceremonial welcome was organised for the German occupying troops. “This proclamation was accepted in the towns and villages by the Ustasha groups and clerical and fascist organisations prepared in advance, as well as pro-Maček’s ‘guards’. In numerous towns in Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, they immediately took over power, considering that the previous authorities massively joined them. The fifth-column campaign, which had for many years been developed by counter-Yugoslav fascist elements in the country, showed its true character in those days. Catholic priests, particularly in the villages and smaller towns, were among those who had a leading role in the organisation of the new Ustasha government. It is unbelievable how high-level officials in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia were so deaf and blind to the Ustasha and clerical-fascist fifth-column elements even in high positions, of which some did not even much hide their anti-Yugoslav and pro-fascist inclination” (p. 373).

As Terzić explains in a special appendix, “German agents in Zagreb concluded that the situation is favourable for the proclamation, because they had known that the German troops would arrive in Zagreb in the course of that day. As they counted on Maček to take over power as the most suitable person for such an act, they tried to persuade him to proclaim the Independent State of Croatia personally. However, in order to avoid such intense exposure in so little time, Maček refused such an offer and agreed to assist Slavko Kvaternik” (p. 719). For the Germans, Pavelić was not the most suitable person, as they regarded him as an adherent of the Italians, while Maček calculated, awaiting the further developments. Here Terzić transmitted the words of Jakov Blažević from 1980, who analysed the behaviour of both Maček and Stepinac in the first days of the war, saying, “When direct agreement was not reached between Maček and Hitler via the spy Weesenmayer, another, less conspicuous but nevertheless the same solution was sought. They found it in Pavelić. However, with Maček’s help, Pavelić needed authorisation to take over power because the Croatian people had not provided any. This authorisation was only available from Maček and Stepinac. On the same day, 10 April 1941, Maček provided it. Without any hesitation, he elaborated with Košutić a Declaration in which he calls on the Croatian people to give support to the new government, after previous consultations with the mentioned German spy Weesenmayer, who was with him” (p 724). Maček’s proclamation had extensive political implications, and they have been a subject of extensive discussions in historiography. Many attempts were made at various explanations, “. . . mostly with a view to justify Maček from a political point of view and to present his attitude as it would be most suitable to the current political interests of his supporters in emigration. He himself, in his memoirs, . . . left out all that might be inconvenient, and drew attention to what he found more favourable for him. He stated that one German envoy (whose name he did not remember any more) had been the main factor and negotiator, that on his demand he submitted the proclamation and that under his control he had prepared and signed it” (p 724-725).

Terzić explains in detail that “. . . with such a proclamation, Maček had not just ‘noted’ the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, but approved the act. As a

representative of the Croatian Peasant Party, he stressed that Kvaternik proclaimed a 'free, independent Croatian state'. How did a 'free, independent state' appear, when in the beginning of the edited proclamation he had stressed that the German army 'surrendered power' to Colonel Kvaternik?! Did Maček by that not express approval of the act of occupation, and moreover 'in the overall historical territory where the Croatian nation lived', although the borders of the 'Independent State of Croatia' had not yet been known? Did that not mean that he simultaneously expressed the cease of the existence of the Banate of Croatia and the destruction of the joint Yugoslav state and the accepted quartering of Yugoslavia by the Axis forces, although he was still Vice President of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the President of the Croatian Peasant Party? Besides, his call for 'all Croatian people to submit to the new authority' meant that he supported the Ustasha regime and that he perceived the occupying forces' creation of the Independent State of Croatia as that 'new authority', to which 'the whole Croatian nation' was to submit to. Simultaneously, Maček's invitation signified the recognition of the occupying forces' power over this satellite design, and confirmation that the occupying authority had at the same time removed the previous legitimate state authority in the Banate of Croatia. However, when Maček called for 'the whole Croatian nation' to support that 'new authority', and 'all supporters of the Croatian Peasant Party, who hold administrative positions, and district councillors to stay in their positions', then he ensured for the 'Independent State of Croatia' a more than necessary apparatus for the exercise of that authority. Finally, how we are to understand his call for all officials and 'the whole Croatian nation' to cooperate 'sincerely' with the 'new government'? Maček was not entitled whatsoever to transfer power to Kvaternik, because no one can transfer to anybody else that which he does not have. However, on this 'transfer of power' of his, the Ustasha elite developed their political orientation, just as the Axis propaganda based its assumption on the alleged legal establishment of the 'Independent State of Croatia'. When he drew up the text of the proclamation, Maček did not have authority, or had transferred any authority to change the legal status of the Banate of Croatia into the 'Independent State of Croatia', because he did not have any authority whatsoever to do it. His party had not vested in him any such authority, nor could it have given it to him. Moreover, Maček did not have any similar mandate in reference to the Banate of Croatia, because he was not its official. Therefore, he was not entitled to the 'transfer of authority' as the first Vice President of the Government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as the government did not have any such mandate" (p. 725-726).

### **c) The Critical Role of Maček and Stepinac in the Establishment of the Independent State of Croatia**

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the role of Maček's "guards" was of critical importance for the establishment of the Ustasha state. A handful of Ustasha emigrants, who appeared following the occupying troops, would have been helpless without Maček's support. "In fact, all the existing authority – from the village, municipality and district authority, to the Banate administration – upon Maček's request was made available to anyone who decided to create the Independent State of Croatia, and to a great extent facilitated the realization of their design. That means that in spring 1941, the state police apparatus of the Banate, built by Maček, was itself made available to both Pavelić and the Germans, so that Pavelić came after 'all had been set' to finish and

‘crown that deed’. In the moment when Pavelić victoriously ushered in Croatia in the shadows of German tanks and air-forces, Maček’s state and police establishment was prepared and ready to welcome its new master” (p. 728). Therefore, the first massacre of the Serbian population, as the one in Gudovac near Bjelovar, was the deed of the “guards”, before they had officially transformed into Ustashas. They disarmed in an organised manner, and gave the Yugoslav soldiers of Serbian nationality over to the Germans or killed them, pillaged the warehouses and in all possible ways undermined the defence efforts.

Interpreting Vladimir Dedijer’s views from 1981 and his understanding based upon the memoirs by Jakov Blažević, Terzić insisted that Maček and Stepinac had extremely important roles in the establishment and consolidation of the Ustasha state. “Stepinac as well, together with Maček, contributed the Independent State of Croatia’s strengthening in terms of ideology, propaganda and its organisation. Had Maček and Stepinac not prepared constitutive documents, without them there would have not been Pavelić. The ISC would not have its basis. With only the few hundreds of Ustashas that Pavelić brought with him from Italy, he would not have consolidated his power to such a degree. Stepinac immediately issued a circular letter, in which he noted the Church programme, its policy and support to the foundations of Pavelić’s regime. Long before the war, the Church had helped to create a crusaders’ organisation in Croatia, whose members were fanaticised students and members of the lower middle class. Upon Stepinac’s order, this crusaders’ organisation joined the Ustasha movement, and many became the most fanatical slaughterers. I think that we did not perceive all this in 1946 during Stepinac’s trial. At that time, we saw just some of it. The ISC is really a creation, in the first place, of Maček and Stepinac. The old social classes, its forces, embodied in the Church and Maček, enabled the Germans to legalise a quisling creation like the ISC. Only with this help could Pavelić surge into the foreground, while Maček and Stepinac were trying to conceal themselves during the war. Periodically, they would slap Pavelić on the palms of his hands and instruct him how to be smarter in his actions.

“At the end of the war, when it became obvious that Pavelić must go *via facti*, Maček and Stepinac made a joint appearance with the exposed leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party, claiming that they had not been compromised during the war. They sent a joint appeal to the Western Allies, asking them to wipe out the war programme of the Allies for the Federative Yugoslavia under the rule of Tito, and that, in essence, they should take over the power, stating that the final form of that state should be decided at free elections after the war. Stepinac organised a special bishops’ conference in March 1945, at which they openly offered such a platform: the Croatian nation had its own state, regardless of the ISC. The Croatian state was an international entity. Pavelić did not have any power whatsoever, and Maček and Stepinac, as people who had not compromised themselves during the war, shall create one Croatian state completely in the spirit of the Western Allies. Jakov Blažević emphasised that he had come across a report made by Pavelić’s diplomat, Židovec, written in prison, which corroborates this thesis” (p. 374).

## **6. Ante Pavelić and the Ideology of the Croatian Ustasha Movement**

In the extremely advantageous historical circumstances, Ante Pavelić and his Ustasha movement via the project of the “Independent State of Croatia” brought the

Croatian national ideology of Ljudevit Guj, Josip Strossmayer, Mihovil Pavlinović, Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik and the Radić brothers to the ultimate consequences, and are the direct followers of Vlatko Maček's political concept. After the WWI, an insignificant politician, the leader of one small Croatian Party of Rights and City Councillor in Zagreb, Pavelić, linked himself with the leaders of the Croatian political emigration, Austro-Hungarian General-Baron Stjepan Sarkotić and President of Pure Party of Rights, Ivica Frank, who had already had strong relations with the Italian and Hungarian secret services, planning to destroy Yugoslavia. At that time in the country, Pavelić had already forged strong ties with the Croatian Block, the Croatian Federalist Peasant Party of Ante Trumbić and the well-organised clerical-fascist Croatian Hawk. He cooperated in secret with Radović's party, as mutual sympathies were the product of mutual goals, which they skilfully hid by occasional public debates and sparks of propaganda. In 1927, Pavelić himself instituted a conspiratorial bond with the highest level of Mussolini's regime.

### **a) Pavelić's Terrorist Activity in Collusion with the Fascist Forces**

In the parliamentary elections of 1927, Ante Pavelić and Ante Trumbić, as candidates of the Croatian Block, were elected MPs of National Parliament. Stjepan Radić, since he had made a pact with the King and Pašić, on that occasion lost almost one-third of the votes; the Roman Catholic circles had not forgotten his anti-clerical appearances, and those separatist objected him for making the Peasant-Democratic Coalition with Svetozar Pribičević, when the Belgrade political circles tricked him on the occasion of forming a new government. In a parliamentary polemic on 5 March 1928, Pavelić said about Stjepan Radić that he was not always a responsible person, and that he was not responsible for what he spoke. Radić provoked even greater rage against himself when he accepted a mandate from the King in the same year, to form an even broader concentration government. His attempt failed due to radical opposition, but from that moment, the Croatian separatist and clericals definitively struck him off their lists. After the political assassination in the Parliament on 23 June, the wounded Radić, even in his written message that was read at the funeral of his most close associates, expressed his complete trust in the King. The King once again offered Radić a mandate to establish the concentration government. However, Radić, although openly enthusiastic at the King's visit, thought that in those circumstances it was not possible to form such a government, and that the best option was to have new elections. He thought that his personal martyrdom and the death of his associates would recapture the lost voters.

However, Radić started to loose control, and six days before his death, Ante Pavelić and Ante Trumbić announced that they were joining the parliamentary group of the Croatian Peasant Party. At Radić's funeral, Ante Trumbić held the main farewell speech, calling for the resurrection of Croatia in his pathetic elation. Early in October, Pavelić set up a paramilitary organisation in Zagreb, the "Croatian Home Guard (*Domobran*)", under the mask of a sports society. In agreement with Pavelić, at the end of October, Trumbić went to Vienna to strike a deal with the leaders of the emigration, Stjepan Sarkotić and Ivan Perčević. From there, he sent a letter to Pavelić and asked him to communicate the enclosed report to Maček. From that report it was obvious that a strong political bond had already been forged between Maček, Trumbić and Pavelić, and that

they jointly invested their efforts and were active in the internationalisation of the Croatian cause, particularly relying on the Italian and German factor, and in cooperation with the Hungarian and Bulgarian ones. Apart from that, the tone of the letter showed impatience and suspicion of Maček's coalition partner Svetozar Pribičević. A small public squabble happened concerning the nature of Trumbić's travels aboard, because Pribičević had distanced himself from him, while Maček supported him and confirmed that it was related to a political mission, which had previously been agreed on with him. Trumbić also sent the next several reports to Pavelić, with the instruction to forward them to Maček after he read them. After the King's personal dictatorship was instituted, Pavelić himself, in an agreement with Maček, emigrated on 19 January 1929, to organise anti-Yugoslav activities.

On 7 February 1947, Slavko Kvaternik confirmed in his statement to the investigation authorities in Zagreb that Pavelić's leave was really organised in consultation with Maček. Kvaternik stated, "I do not remember exactly in which year it happened, but certainly it was after Stjepan Radić's death and the onset of the absolutist regime of King Aleksandar, when he (A. Pavelić) came to me to my office (in the Parcelanska Bank) and told me that he would go abroad in agreement with the Peasant Party of Dr. Maček, to inform the foreign politicians and statesmen about the true state of affairs in Yugoslavia, and particularly to shed light on the death of Stjepan Radić, which had been organised as an attack in the Parliament and which King Aleksandar had known about, because those who were abroad were not correctly informed about everything that was being done and what was going on in Croatia. I think that is why Pavelić came to me, because I was one of the most distinguished members of the Party of Rights and because I had the best relations with the Peasant Party of Dr. Maček. I do not know if Pavelić left abroad legally or not. Pavelić said that firstly he would go to Austria to make an agreement with Colonel Sarkotić, and then to Germany, because he mostly wanted Germany to be informed, because they were the least informed about our situation. He did not say that he would definitely go, and I think that it was not his intention at all, because he left his family here, but he decided so later, I suppose, when bad things started to happen in the country – that is, when the persecutions started with Maček and Pribičević" (cit. according to Bogdan Krizman: *Ante Pavelić and the Ustasha*, "Globus", Zagreb 1986, p. 51). With reference to this data, Krizman stressed that from the historical aspect, "the legend that Pavelić had established the Ustasha movement before he emigrated was not sustainable" (p. 51).

In emigration, Pavelić had most reliable relations with the Italian secret police, and close ties with Macedonian emigrants who were supporters of pro-Bulgarian politics. After a while, he supported terrorist activities over political action. The first victim of the organised Ustasha terrorism was a distinguished Croatian intellectual of Yugoslav orientation, Anton Šlegel, who was treacherously murdered in March 1929, in Zagreb, at the doorstep of his apartment. Diversions on the central thoroughfares followed, of which the most significant was the one organised on the road to Brezovice and on the railway tracks near Velika Gorica. In August the same year, the police barracks armoury in Zagreb was blown up. On the occasion of the failed arrest of the assassins of Šlegel, one police officer was wounded, and another was killed. The investigation revealed that the weapons were supplied to the terrorists via the organisational network of the Croatian Party of Rights. Moreover, the Ustasha terrorist centre in Vienna organised the planting of explosives in the trains headed for Yugoslavia, which in 1930, caused

explosions near Zemun, Zidani Bridge and Vinkovci. The terrorist network was extended across many European countries, and propaganda activities were not left out. Pavelić met with Maček as well on his journey to Czechoslovakia in October 1930. In addition to that, as his first brochure published in emigration, the Ustasha leader published his essay *The Establishment of the Croatian State – Sustainable Peace in the Balkans*, in which he gave a very naive overview of Croatian history, even stating that the Croats had settled in the Balkans one century earlier, in the 6th century, and from the very start set up their own state, “duly” organised in compliance with the European pattern from those times. It was easy to find audiences among the Croats for that kind of writing.

In 1929, with a special memorandum, Pavelić sent messages to the League of Nations, demanding the recognition of the right to self-determination to Croatia. Not long after that, the leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party, Juraj Krnjević and Anton Košutić, sent their messages with the same request in the form of two memoranda to the same international organisation, which is a sound indicator that they acted in synchronisation.

### **b) A Knife, Revolver, and Oath to the Roman Catholic Faith**

In February 1932, the magazine *Ustasha*, which was designated as “a herald of the Croatian revolutionaries”, Pavelić prepared an editorial in which he, in the form of political directives, among other things, sent the following message: “He who thinks that it is shameful that the Croatian people, in their fight against the Belgrade tyranny, use the most bloodthirsty and savage means, does not think seriously about freedom and does not know that against villains, one cannot fight using a nice word and a compliment, but only using a vile and blood-stained weapon. . . A knife, revolver, bomb and an infernal machine – stressed Pavelić – are the idols that were to regain to the peasant the crops from his fields, bread to the worker, and freedom to Croatia. These are the only arguments that can make Europe realize that Croats have the right to freedom, to life. These are the gusle<sup>31</sup> on which the Croatian nation is to play a funeral march to the aggressors’ rule. The knife, revolver, machinegun and infernal machine – those are the bells which will toll in honour of the dawn and resurrection of the independent Croatian state” (Krizman, op. cit., p. 85). All Pavelić’s brochures and newspaper articles that he wrote while in emigration, in addition to the usual phrases about the Croatian state right, civilisation role and oaths to the Roman Catholic faith, were fraught with such bloodthirsty slogans. As Pavelić wrote in the same magazine in May 1932, a Croatian revolutionary and Ustasha “. . . must be relentless and merciless, without mercy and pardon, because his duty is to use iron, fire and blood to end the pains of the Croatian nation, to use force to break the neck of the aggressor who imposes himself, and thus liberate his homeland” (p. 86).

In September 1932, Pavelić’s Ustasha, using weapons supplied from the Italian territory, attacked a police barracks in Brušani near Gospić, and after causing explosions and gun fire, retreated into the woods of Velebit, shouting, “Long live Pavelić!” In the attack, one Ustasha was killed, and the rest, wearing uniforms and with the weapons in their hands, ran away to Zadar, to the Italian territory. The behaviour of the police

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<sup>31</sup> A gusle is a South Slavic stringed folk instrument.

prefect of Zadar and his police troops proved that the Ustasha “uprising” in Lika had been organised in close relation with the Italian fascist authorities. Moreover, in Italy and Hungary (Janko Pusta) there were legal Ustasha paramilitary camps, equipped with various arms and with assault courses. The Italian and Hungarian press blew out of proportion and dramatised the Ustasha attack on the facility that, in the first place, was only defended by two policemen, as if in Yugoslavia an alleged civil war had broken out. As recognition of the success of this operetta-like “uprising”, Pavelić promoted Andrija Artuković to the commander of all the Ustasha units in Italy. In December 1933, in Zagreb, the Ustashes organised the political assassination of King Aleksandar, but the police were faster and arrested all the ill-fated assassins. On the occasion of the arrest, one of the policemen was killed, and two were wounded. In 1934, together with the leader of the Macedonian pro-Bulgarian terrorists, Vančo Mihajlov, Pavelić planned and organised the assassination of King Aleksander in Marseille. The investigation revealed that Vladimir, Stjepan Radić’s son, who, by the way, was known as a writer of a variety of the most extreme texts in numerous Ustasha papers that were published in the emigration, had very close relations to the organisers of the plot.

To pacify the international community and at least in one part dispel doubts of his involvement in the Marseille assassination, the regime of Mussolini arrested Pavelić, a couple hundred Ustashes were displaced, and their camp closed down. In the spring of 1936, Pavelić was released from the prison sanatorium to immediately continue with terrorist activities, although in France he had been sentenced to death in absentia.

### **c) The Deployment of Germany for Catholic Needs**

By the end of that year, he communicated to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs an extensive, detailed report on the Croatian cause, with a proposal to have his requests included into the Nazi revisionist politics. In this report, among other things, he attempted to prove that “. . . the Croats are not of Slavic origin whatsoever, but of Gothic origin” (p. 237). In the expectation of wider European war developments, Pavelić said that “. . . it will not be insignificant which side the Croatian people will take in the war, and it will doubtlessly and naturally be on the side of the enemy of Serbia” (p. 238). Urging for the destruction of Yugoslavia and the establishment of a Croatian state in the territory of Croatia, Slavonia, Srem, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, he claimed that “. . . Croatianhood has not just a historical right to these provinces, but a living right of today, because in these territories, the Croatian people have been living in national continuity and as ancient population are in the significant majority. Non-Croatian national groups, which in these individual provinces we find as national minorities, slowly invaded the closed Croatian territories as dispersed groups, partly in the time of the Turks, and partly in contemporary times, on one politically calculated colonising basis. By a great majority, the population from all these provinces in everyday politics proved their affiliation to Croatianhood and their will for unification into one independent state of Croatia” (p. 239). According to Pavelić, the major Croatian enemies are Serbs, freemasons, Jews and Communists.

In this memorandum, Pavelić represented Yugoslavia as a bare product of the Masonic plot, and Serbia as a traditional enemy of Germany. True to the anti-Semitic orientation of Strossmayer, Rački and the Radić brothers, as well as many other distinguished intellectuals, Pavelić came down on the Jews, for whom he said that they

were most opposing the realisation of the Croatian national interests. As he states, “. . . their activity was focused mostly and exclusively against the movement for complete independence, which is not Masonic or democratic, but which is fighting for the liberation of Croatia and for the building of an internal order on sound nationalistic principles by the aid of which every influence of Jewish-Masonic democracy would be rooted out for ever. In Croatia today – notes Pavelić – almost all banking and all trade is in the hands of the Jews. That was possible only because the state gives them preferential treatment, because it saw in that the weakening of Croatian national power. The Jewry, with great excitement, welcomed the establishment of the so-called Yugoslav state, because a Croatian national state would have never been as convenient for them as Yugoslavia – a state of various nations! In the national confusion – writes Pavelić – lies Jude’s empire; there the Jewry, as a financially powerful and seemingly loyal element to the state authority, may insinuate itself and gain the sympathies of the rulers. The Croatian people’s state was not to the liking of the Jewry, because the founder of modern nationalism, Dr. Ante Starčević, was an open opponent to Jewry (an anti-Semite). And true, Yugoslavia developed exactly as the Jews had foreseen, into a real El Dorado of the Jewry, because of the corruption of the public life in Serbia. It was very thankful to Belgrade for such protection that it provided, therefore it used the capital stolen from the Croatian people for the fight against the Croatian liberation movement. At every opportunity, the Jewry expressed in its characteristic and noisy manner its loyalty to Yugoslavism and state unity, in order to create an impression abroad that the Croats were satisfied with such a destiny. The press in Croatia is completely in the hands of the Jews. This Jewish-Masonic journalism incessantly attacks Germany, the German people and national socialism, after which representatives from Belgrade appear and explain that journalism from Croatia is in question, deriving conclusions as if the Croats were hostile to Germans” (p. 241).

Deprecation of the quality and capability of the Yugoslav army was for Pavelić a convenient overture to express the Croatian attitude towards the defensive efforts of the complete state. “In a serious case, the Croats, Macedonians and Albanians would not only not fight for that state but, what is more, they would use the weapons given to them to fight against it. Due to such circumstances, not once could a mobilisation be carried out in Croatia. Dissolution would have happen the moment a mobilisation was ordered. As for the officer corps, first of all, its members are exclusively Serbs; therefore it cannot have the unified spirit of a national army. . . Moreover, in recent years, due to the marriages of overly-in-debt officers to Jewish girls, the officer corps has been ‘dangerously turned Jewish’: one third of the young officers from the corps is married to Jewish girls, which is fertile soil for the growth of Communism in the army” (p. 243). Pavelić particularly stressed the fact that the Croats, in line with their ancient tradition, cast hopeful glances at “. . . the German people as a whole, the centre of which is the German Reich, and which today is embodied in the national-socialist movement under the leadership of their greatest and best son, Adolph Hitler. In the fight for freedom and independence, that Croatian people has been fighting against the oppression imposed upon them by means of a peace dictatorship; it strives for the sympathies of Hitler’s Germany, in which it sees its most powerful fighter for the natural right, true culture and higher education (civilisation)” (p. 245).

The sudden improvement of Italian-Yugoslav interstate relations and the conclusion of a political agreement led Mussolini’s government to disband all Ustasha camps in



Italy in March 1937, and to confine Pavelić and his proponents to various locations, where they were isolated one from another. Resignation and chaos started to spread among the Ustasha ranks, resulting in their differentiation into those who supported Frank and those who supported Maček. Many decided to return to Yugoslavia. In 1938, Pavelić's commander, Mile Budak, remorsefully returned to Yugoslavia, sending a message to Milan Stojadinović that he was ready to maximally engage himself in the destruction of the Croatian political emigration on the European and American continents. According to Bogdan Krizman's evaluation, Budak's return was beneficial for the revival of the Ustasha fraction inside the Croatian Peasant Party. "Thus the focus of the Ustasha pro-Frank campaign returned from abroad to the homeland, because the circumstances abroad were no longer beneficial for Ustashas whatsoever" (p. 310). Since it was not possible to renew the Croatian Party of Rights, Budak himself encouraged all Ustasha elements to rapidly join the Croatian Peasant Party. He even started a newspaper, *The Croatian Nation*, which soon gained a great number of supporters, while simultaneously, in the humanitarian association "Support", he gathered the most extreme Ustashas. Coupled with him, Slavko Kvaternik spread the network of sympathisers and Ustasha activists among the Yugoslav officers of Croatian nationality. Early in 1940, Italy returned to the game with the Ustasha card in its hand, which is why Pavelić and the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Ciano, embarked upon the preparation of the plans how to tailor Yugoslavia. Moreover, Pavelić establish a correspondence with Mile Budak in Zagreb, and occasionally with Slavko Kvaternik. Before his leave for Zagreb, on two occasions: 29 March and 11 April, Benito Mussolini received Pavelić.

#### **d) Pavelić's Myth and His Triumphant Return to Zagreb**

For the twelve years of Pavelić's emigrant life, a true myth was formed about him among the Croats in Yugoslavia. That myth could not have been created by Pavelić's political actions before his leaving to emigration. It could not have been the product of about twenty terrorist actions organised from abroad, including the murder of a couple of Yugoslav-oriented Croats, and the planting of the explosives. It could not have been the product of Pavelić's brochures and leaflets with proclamations, imported into the country in very small circulations. The myth of Ante Pavelić among Croats was exclusively the result of the main role he had in the organisation of the assassination of King Aleksander Karadjordjević I. In fact, Pavelić's myth was created by the endless Croatian hatred of Serbs. It was a concentrated expression of all the anti-Serbian animosities, intolerance and ill-will. Over the radio station *Velebit*, whose program was aired as directed by the Italian secrete services on 8 April 1941, Ante Pavelić sent a message to the Croatian people in the form of a proclamation, full with excitement that the Serbian people and its army had been defeated, which ended by an invitation to a ceremonious welcome of the German and Italian occupying armies. Thus, Pavelić sent the following message: "Welcome everywhere and at all places the brave soldiers of our friends and protectors with joy, enthusiasm, respect and brotherly love. Decorate the houses with the Croatian tricoloured flags and emblems of the friendly nations and army. These soldiers know that they pass through friendly territories, but let them see for themselves on the spot that Croats in the friendly Croatian lands have received them so brotherly and lovingly, as only the honest, grateful and true hearts of the Croatian people

can. Croatian people, with them come your sons with rifles in their hands; bravely fighting comes the Croatian Ustasha army too! The enemy force falls apart, and the Croatian people are experiencing their resurrection!” (p. 391). The Nazi armada were welcomed by the Croats of Zagreb with such enthusiasm that, as German officers witnessed, it could only be compared with the welcome organised for Hitler in his hometown in Austria.

On 14 April 1941, a witness of Pavelić’s triumphant return, SS *Brigadeführer* Edmund Weesenmayer, reported to the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joachim von Ribbentrop, that Pavelić was extremely grateful to Hitler and wanted the Reich to recognize Croatia its independence as soon as possible. Then he added, “Pavelić does not intend to have any foreign politics at all – that is the job of the Fuhrer – while Pavelić only wants to lead his people into a better future and to prove how the Croats are not Slavs, but that they, from a racial point of view, belong to Germanhood. It was a moving encounter of Pavelić with his supporters. His capacity to lead is not dubious, due to the discipline of his followers and love of his people. Pavelić is a guarantor for the fact that the Fuhrer will not have any disappointments with him whatsoever” (p. 422). Vlatko Maček himself was astonished at the scale of Pavelić’s popularity with the Croatian nation in general, and also with the members of the Croatian Peasant Party, which was the central motive of his political passiveness and constant evasion of leadership rivalry. The Ustasha regime immediately put a ban on all political parties and civil organisations, and political life in general was stiffly moulded into the institutional structure of a totalitarian state.

### **e) The Construction of the Ustasha State According to the Vatican’s Blueprint**

In addition to the Ustasha state, there was only one other relatively independent institutional structure, which was represented by the Roman Catholic Church. However, all their bishops more or less openly supported the main Ustasha goals, and the masses of lower-level priests were actively involved in the concrete activities of the Ustasha movement, many of which with unsheathed knives in their hands.

The Roman Catholic Church often supported the newly established Croatian regime, and many of its priests were actively engaged in the Ustasha movement, even as famous slaughterers. The Independent State of Croatia was completely tailored to a clerical-fascist concept, but the Vatican found itself at pains deciding what kind of official relations to establish with it. The diplomatic mission of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was still active at the Holy See, and pursuant to international public law, the Vatican could not recognise newly established states while the war was ongoing. The King's deputy Niko Mirošević Zorgo, by birth from the isle of Korčula, therefore a Catholic Serb from Dubrovnik, urged the Vatican to publicly condemn all the crimes committed by the Ustashas. However, the first real temptation came in May 1941, when Pavelić visited Rome, where he arrived with a big entourage, ready to sign interstate agreements with Italy and to offer the Croatian crown to a prince from the royal family of Savoy. Krizman concisely describes the solution that Pope Pius XII presented on that occasion: “The Italian Embassy to the Vatican urged the Holy See to allow Pavelić an audience with the Pope, as well the Duke of Spoleto – the designated future King of Croatia. The Bishop of Ljubljana warmly recommended the Ustasha state to the Vatican for its

Catholicism, and Monsignore Domenico Tardini, as the ‘first officer’ of the State Secretariat, concluded that the audience should be approved, after which, in the morning of 17 May, Pope Pius XII reached a decision: he consented to the audiences, however private and personal ones. The Duke of Spoleto would be received as Prince of the House of Savoy before his designation as the King of Croatia; Pavelić would be received without any ceremony, as a regular Catholic. There would be no visit to the State Secretary in order to eliminate any political character of the visits. The Pope’s decision was immediately communicated to the Advisor of the Italian Embassy to the Vatican. On that occasion, Tardini told him how, during the war the Holy See wanted to distance itself from everything that could have the mark of any political pleading, and also from any political decision-making. The same evening, the Pope received Duke Aimone and confided that it was not possible to recognize him as the King of Croatia until a set of issues related to the new state (ISC) was settled by a peace agreement. The next day, in the evening, the Pope received Pavelić as well; to him, Pius XII said that the customs of the Holy See still did not allow him to plead for the Croatian state, adding that there were Catholics on all sides for whom the Holy See must display mildness. On the same day and the following day (18 and 19 May), the State Secretariat of the Vatican communicated to the nuncios and apostolic delegates a circular letter in which he explained in detail the reasons and character of these audiences” (Bogdan Krizman: *The ISC Between Hitler and Mussolini*, “Globus”, Zagreb 1986, p. 139).

The most ceremonial welcome was arranged for Pavelić in the Roman College of St. Jerome, where, in his honour, Croatian flags were raised, albeit according to an interstate agreement, the college itself was under the protection of the Yugoslav government. As early as 6 June, an official Italian press agency stated that, on the request of the Croatian government, the Vatican would refer its representative of diplomacy to Zagreb. The Yugoslav deputy Mirošević reacted sharply and energetically to that. “Tardini replied to Mirošević how it was contrary to the customs of the Holy See to open diplomatic representations or to (officially) recognize new states during the war, but, how the Vatican had always reserved the right to refer, according to its own judgment, priests to missions of an exclusively religious character. Irritated by Mirošević’s insisting, Tardini angrily mentioned the general attitude of the Yugoslav government and advised the deputy to remain calm and to refrain from exposing himself to any inconvenience, because it would be better if he could save himself for future action, and not to loose himself with such unnecessary and risky, belligerent speech. Tardini soon calmed down, and in a reply from 14 May, the Vatican stressed how the Holy See’s obligation was to be interested in the spiritual well-being of the Catholic congregation, regardless of the state they lived in. It was entitled to assess the means and persons most appropriate for that; the Holy See would, in addition, ensure that everything that could be interpreted as an assent to political goals of this or that state would be avoided. Mirošević got the impression that the Vatican intended to refer to Zagreb its representative and that it would be – regardless of what form it would take – the first step towards the recognition of the Ustasha regime” (p. 139).

On 11 June 1941, the Pope decided to refer to Zagreb the abbot Giuseppe Ramiro Marcone in the capacity of a permanent apostolic inspector to the Croatian bishop. As Ustasha minister Mladen Lorković announced to the German deputy Kašea, the Vatican informed Pavelić that it was sending the apostolic inspector “. . . to make a certain gesture to the Croatian state, which, however, does not represent any recognition, but

**Comment [Z28]:** Translator’s note. The English spelling of this name could not be found or confirmed in any of the available sources

nevertheless takes into account in a certain sense the fact of the establishment of a new state” (p. 141). Pavelić was disappointed, which is why he referred Duke Ervin Lobkovic to the Pope, who was very influential in the Catholic circles and a holder of the title of the Pope’s secret chamberlain, to try to produce a new decision and eventually obtain the full recognition of the independence of the Croatian Ustasha state, which would imply that the headman was to accredit a permanent Croatian deputy in the Vatican. “On 20 July, the Pope received Lobkovic in a private audience, and the chamberlain mentioned in the course of the conversation Pavelić’s wish for the ISC to establish regular diplomatic relations with the Holy See. The following day, at the premises of Cardinal Maglione, Lobkovic was less uptight in a diplomatic sense. . . . Namely, he told the State Secretary that Pavelić was in a rage because of the referral of the apostolic inspector. What he wished for was that the Vatican recognized the ISC as a Catholic state, and that such a recognition implied true diplomatic representation. In order not to further disturb the Ustasha regime, the Vatican relented, gave up on the title ‘inspector’ that had infuriated Pavelić so much, and sought another title for the priest in the mission, which was why on 23 July, Cardinal Moglione called Lobkovic, thus implicitly recognising a certain quality of communication with the new authorities in Croatia. Therefore, Abbot Marcone was eventually sent to Zagreb without any title, albeit the documents of the Holy See referred to him as an apostolic inspector” (p. 141).

#### **f) The Beginning of the Forced Catholicisation in the Independent State of Croatia**

The Benedictine Abbot Marcone and his secretary Giuseppe Masucci, who kept preserved journal entries, arrived in Zagreb on 3 August, and the next day visited Pavelić. According to Masucci’s entries, Pavelić told them that he was “. . . glad to have them there and that he was grateful to the Pope” (p. 142). Among the multitude of various receptions, Masucci noted down that on 22 September 1941, the papal representative was visited by the recently designated Assistant-bishop Lah. “He put forth various questions, which pertained to the conversion of the schismatics. In his opinion, they should not be prevented to embrace the Catholic religion, if their wish is sincere, but the greatest attention should be paid to it, because many accept Catholicism just to avoid the measures of the civil authorities, which, not recognising the Orthodox Church, are often persistent in having the Orthodox believers embrace one of the recognised religions (Catholic, Protestant or Muslim)” (p. 142). As Krizman points out, “. . . these are the first traces in Abbot Marcone’s journal – very innocent in their expression – of the new form of Ustasha terror: the action of conversion (Catholicisation), which brought Stepinac closer to Pavelić. . . . “To avoid the measures of the civil authorities” – as Marsucci put it unctuously – for Serbs in the ISC, conversion to the Roman Catholic religion is an opportunity to somehow protect themselves. For the individuals – faced with terror that threatened immediate physical liquidation or, on the other hand, healing – it seems that such conversion to the Catholic religion is conducive to their gaining a status as equal citizens, which is why by the late summer of 1941, there appeared an increasing number of applications submitted by the ‘Greek-Eastern believers’ to convert to the Catholic religion and thus try to save their lives and property” (p. 143).

Bringing this issue to its final stage, Krizman quotes the data from the book *The Ustashes and the Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945*, (Zagreb, 1977) by Fikreta

Jelić-Butić, who wrote, “From October 1941, the campaign of forced conversion of the Serbs increasingly started to become a large-scale campaign. In certain areas, mass conversions took place, which Ustasha authorities started to accelerate, ceasing to pay attention to the mentioned formalities. The Ministry of Interior Affairs of the ISC, in its special circular letter, noted that in the field, it was occurring that ‘certain offices hinder conversion either by requiring superfluous formalities to be addressed, or stalling the issuance of proscribed certificates’, which is why it asked that ‘the activities concerning religious and statutory conversions be completed as a matter of urgency and without delays’. To this end, a new Directorate for Conversion was set up at the Religious Department, which was responsible for activities related to the conversion from the Orthodox religion to the Catholic, Protestant and Muslim religions. Therefore, the campaign of conversion was progressively taking the form of real system, and to the fact that its scale should have been huge most convincingly testified the number ‘one million converts’, which was foreseen in the Serbian population conversion agenda. The practice of conversion itself, however, reached its largest scale in the fall and winter of 1941-1942 when the forced conversion of complete villages and areas was being carried out. It is sure that it could not have reached such a goal of the wished-for ‘one million converts’; however, by the great number of forced conversions it achieved, it significantly marked the politics of the Ustasha terror. According to the data available, it is counted that the forced conversion in the ISC, in the period of 1941-1942, the time during which it was mostly carried out, covered about 240,000 Serbs” (p. 143).

#### **g) Maček as a Reserve Ustasha Option**

As Jozef Frank was of Jewish origin, Pavelić, following the Nazi anti-Semitic prejudices, avoided referring to his personal ideological and political heritage. Moreover, he declared himself as the direct continuer and successor of the work of Ante Starčević and Stjepan Radić. Thus on 28 February 1942, in the introductory part of the speech he delivered at the final parliamentary session, Ante Pavelić, on the occasion of the anniversary of the death of “the father and teacher” Ante Starčević, stated, “To you, members of the Croatian National Parliament, it becomes the greatest right and duty to recall in your memory on this day that great Croatian father, who is at the same time the father of the Croatian Parliament sessions, because in the Croatian Parliament, in the past, in his time, he was the one who marked the aspirations and will of the Croatian people, that Parliament should not be a tool, but a true Croatian Parliament. It was he who in the Croatian Parliament gave the most remarkable signature to the desires and aspirations, struggle and work of the Croatian people towards the establishment of a complete, autonomous and independent state of Croatia, and for a complete designation of the Croatian people as independent, unique, ethical (“ethical” – as rendered in the original, this it is not my typing error – note V.Š.) unit. In the Croatian Parliament, he, with his God-given providence and prediction, at one difficult and great moment pronounced that great slogan, that in Croatia and among the Croatian people, no one should rule but God and the Croats! (Excited shouts of approval). Therefore, I will ask the Speaker to propose to the Parliament at the end of this session that all of us members of the Croatian Parliament, after today’s session go cooperatively to visit the graves of two titans of the Croatian nation – to the graves of Stjepan Radić and Ante Starčević!”

(Ante Pavelić: *The Headman of the Parliament and Nation*, DMPU, Zagreb, 1942, p. 5-6).

Continuing his speech, accompanied by applause and loud approval, the Ustasha headman defined the fundamental content of the spiritual legacy of Ante Starčević and Stjepan Radić. He says, “We, the Croatian people, had two great huge capitals. One great, huge capital created by Ante Starčević, and, stemming from it, another great, huge capital of the people, created by Stjepan Radić. In its time, the Croatian people had great benefit from the first great capital,. However, I admit that many of Ante Starčević’s heirs gambled away this great capital, and I tell you that if in 1918, the people from the Justice Party and the followers of Starčević had been what they had been 40 years before, Serbia would not have taken rule over us in 1918. What the reasons were, what led to that is of no importance today; we should just state the fact that in 1918, as we all know, there was Croatia, but no Croatians were in place to take it. That was history. And then another great man came along, who did not topple the work of Starčević, but built on it, developing that work, expanding it – both in terms of territory, as well as in terms of ideas – and he gave this great thought of Croatian state independence great internal and social importance, importance of human and peasant rights and humanity. He made an enormous capital. A wise man, capable, hard-working as a bee, industrious and willing to sacrifice himself for his cause, to his people’s cause. We know how the entire Croatian people, how the Croatian peasant people gathered in a firm phalanx around one goal, one programme: the Croatian people, the Croatian state, or, as it was referred to back then, a Croatian peasant republic. We know that he gave his life for that. What I said about the capital of Ante Starčević, if you will – and I am sure you all share the same conviction – goes for the capital of Stjepan Radić as well” (p. 19-20).

Pavelić holds against Maček the fact that he did not find his bearings in 1941 when an opportunity presented itself to renew the Croatian state under the occupation of fascist powers, and the fact that he maintained relations with his party colleagues within the Yugoslav emigrant government. As he further states, “. . . I could not, I dared not allow that, and therefore I designated a forced stay for him, for the purpose of disabling this and that contact, in his own interest, in the interest of the people and in the interest of the state; an isolation that is cultured, befitting a man, befitting a former president, and generally befitting us all” (p. 24). Thus Pavelić reserved, just in case, an alternative option, expecting the Western Allies to win, just like he reserved a communist option, personified by Andrija Hebrang and Vladimir Bakarić, for the case of Soviet prevalence. Pavelić removed Maček as a personal competitor as well, but he completely took over his party, official and paramilitary apparatus. Rejecting in principle the multi-party political system as a Jewish and capitalist product, Pavelić stressed that the Croatian national individuality is best represented by the Croatian Ustasha Liberation Movement, with its ideas and principles. At the same time, he gives credit to two of the ‘old and only’ Croatian parties for their previous activity, the Croatian Party of Rights (or Justice Party) and the Croatian Peasant Party, whose representatives directly entered the Croatian Ustasha assembly, as well as the representatives elected before the war, even those elected in the Austro-Hungarian times. To the objection that the basic principles of parliamentarism were being violated in an authoritative way, Pavelić replied that the Croatians had deleted the very word ‘democracy’ “. . . from our vocabulary, so as to delete the shameful memories left by democracy, when the most enlightened, best and most powerful nations also deleted it” (p. 11). Besides, “. . . is democracy the only way

in which each nation can express its will? Is it the only way for the people to perform national affairs and reach decisions regarding them?” (p. 10). His key argument was that neither kings Tomislav and Zvonimir, nor the Zrinski noble family had been democrats, but they had known how to resolve national and state matters.

On this occasion, Pavelić proclaimed the creation of “the Croatian Orthodox Church” and the purification of the “Croatian” language from Serbian linguistic influences. Claiming that in the Croatian territory there had been a Greek-Eastern church, which was named Serbian when it was subjected to the Serbian patriarchate by a parliament decision, Pavelić declares, “No one is attacking Orthodoxy, but in a Croatian state there can be no Serbian Orthodox church. (Enthusiastic applause. Everyone stands and approves in delight – editor’s comment: This means that among those who got on their feet in delight and applauded were Abbot Marcone as a papal legate, and the Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac – note V.Š.). I say once again: there can be no Serbian church, and there can be no Greek Orthodox church either! Why? Because everywhere in the world, the Orthodox churches are national churches. The Serbian Orthodox Church is an integral part of the Serbian state, Serbia. In terms of hierarchy, the Serbian Orthodox Church is led by the state authorities of Serbia. Serbia, its state representatives, appoint the patriarch or at least have a major say in his appointment, and he is in charge of the entire state hierarchy, from the priests to the chaplains. All of this depends on the state authorities of the Kingdom of Serbia. This can be in Serbia, perhaps it could have been in the former unfortunate Yugoslavia, but in the Croatian state this can not be, and this will not be! (Delighted approval). In the Croatian state there can be an international church organisation, which is independent from any state authority, because there are such organisations, but if a church organisation is not international, if it is particular, then it can only be Croatian – only that kind of organisation can be a church organisation, which exercises and enjoys in its spiritual life a complete spiritual freedom, freedom of conscience; but in every other matter, it has to be under the supervision of the Croatian state and its departments. (Approval). We shall in no way allow for any church to become a means of politics, a means primarily directed against the survival of the Croatian people and the Croatian state. (Everyone stands on their feet and applauds in delight). That is why intelligent people, people who hold the national progress dear, and who hold religious progress dear, will know their way around this; they will know to put their heads together and study, scrutinise and resolve this issue to the satisfaction of Orthodoxy, to the satisfaction of the people and for the benefit of the Croatian state” (p. 35-39).

As for the issue of language, Pavelić says that throughout history, the “Croatian” language suffered the most damage precisely in the Yugoslav state – the most wrongdoing and violence. “The most vulgar, the ugliest, the filthiest Balkan words became a part of the Croatian language – in words, in meaning and in form – as they were brought in and pronounced. Our beautiful language, our sonorous language, our cultured language, a language of gentlemen in the true sense of the word – because the entire Croatian people, the peasant and worker alike, are a nation of gentlemen (approval and applause) – this language has become a mere slang, belonging to the conversation of the sludge of human society in night bars. . . . When we have established our state, and when we have had our independence and national individuality, we must also establish our language – pure, as it really is” (p. 41-42).

## h) A Secret Vatican Circular Letter Opens the Rat Lines

Before fleeing Zagreb, at that end of April 1945, Pavelić killed his political opponents, led by Mladen Lorković and Ante Vokić. “He relieved his old opponent of Ustasha custody in his family home in Prilaz no. 9, and did everything to make his escape from Zagreb possible, which was suitable to him (Pavelić). He initiated that Maček be among the first to be visited by Archbishop Stepinac, who certainly did not advise him to stay and wait for the Partisans, and Maček himself saw his chance to flee to the West in order to gather his men there. At the day of withdrawal (6 May 1945), they placed the diplomatic archives of the Independent State of Croatia in safe hands, the hands of Archbishop Stepinac, believing that they would soon return with the aid of the British. That is why they did not burnt it, but placed it in temporary custody” (Bogdan Krizman: Pavelić on the Run, Globus, Zagreb, 1986, p. 9-10). They took with them gold, foreign currency and other valuables from bank vaults. In the ranks of the Ustasha and the Home Guard there was chaos, and the leaders of the Ustasha regime tried to reach the Anglo-American occupation zone in Austrian territory, expecting the Vatican to provide the protection of the Western Allies. They also counted on Maček’s support, since the Ustasha had politically saved him by interning him. Pavelić ordered Ustasha ministers Edo Bulat and Mehmed Alajbegović “. . . to go to Archbishop Stepinac and ask him to go to Prilaz to see Maček and talk to him. Stepinac went to Maček, and when he returned he said, ‘Maček is a great man; he has forgotten everything that has been done to him; he only has Croatia before his gaze,’ but he first wanted to speak to his men, which is something that, according to Stepinac, should be urgently made possible. Pavelić then gave the order to the chief of the military police, J. Rukavina, to facilitate an unobstructed arrival of Maček’s people to his flat; and an order to ‘Zdraviša’, i.e. Erih Lisak, to release Maček’s men who were still held in prison. General Moskov took Maček to Tuškanac to see Pavelić for a ‘talk over some drinks’; Pavelić granted him 1000 gold coins to be of assistance, and gave him use of two cars for the trip” (p. 37).

Throughout Austria, Roman Catholic priests and all the male and female convents enthusiastically and cordially took in, concealed, and aided the refugee Ustashes with food, money and clothes; not hesitating even when exposed to personal harm. As Ustasha General Vladimir Kren testified, his group, in their penetration through the Allied-occupied zone, simply went from the arms of one priest to another. He specifies, “On the day of May 14, in the morning, we set off through the forest from Freisack and reached the village of Feistritz on the way to the village of Oberhoff, staying the night at the local priest’s. He took us in and fed us well. On the 15th, we reached the village of Oberhoff. For more than half of the journey, we were personally escorted by the very kind priest of the village Feistritz, who also found a village cart to transport our goods. There we stayed at a priest’s, and some of us with a familiar forester’s family. This place for us was like a station for prolonged holiday and catching up with our people. Thanks to extraordinary kindness of the local priest Alexander Mots and the local population, we stayed there the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th of May. This priest told our priest, in confidence, of the existence of a secret circular letter from the Holy See to all Austrian priests, telling them to receive the refugees with the utmost cordiality, and to aid them with all possible means (p. 132).

**Comment [K.B.29]:** Translator’s note. We were unable to find the author of this name in the available sources. Therefore, the suggested spelling was given here



Immediately after crossing the Yugoslav-Austrian border, Pavelić left his army and, not being interested in its fate, changed into civilian clothes and tried only to save himself. “Having a highly developed sense of conspiracy, Pavelić was gone without a trace. Discreetly connected with a few priests and monks who fled the country with him, they found refuge in Austria, where they soon developed a lively ‘charity’ activity of providing immediate assistance to Ustasha refugees and were seen in the clerical circles as ‘persona grata’; and being armed with warm support from the Archbishop of Sarajevo, I.E. Šarić (himself a refugee), Pavelić began hiding in certain Austrian convents. He felt protected there, because, as a rule, the Allied patrols did not enter them; but he also camouflaged himself very well: he grew a beard and a moustache, wore glasses and, if needed, also wore monk’s attire to look convincing in his role of ‘a pious monk’. Certainly, there were only a few of those who knew where the Ustasha headman was hiding, perhaps not even the members of his immediate family knew” (p. 146).

Ustasha minister Mehmed Alajbegović told the investigators a few things about the role of Archbishop Šarić in hiding the Ustasha headman, and his assistants and followers. From his statement, Krizman derives two fragments pertaining to Šarić and Vilim Cecelja: “I think it was in the middle of May when I visited Archbishop Šarić in Klagenfurt, escorted by Mrs. Sušić, who wanted to talk to him regarding what her husband should do in that difficult situation, given his prominence in the ranks of the Ustasha on one hand, and given the secretive position of the English toward the refugees of the Independent State of Croatia on the other hand. Šarić expressed a belief that the Pope would help the Croats, and said that he was preparing to go to Rome, and that he himself would work on behalf of the Croatian emigrants; that was in May 1945 in Klagenfurt. . . Before the arrest, the only other spiritual figure I saw was the priest Cecelja, who wanted my reference in order to get some money, which Dr. Oskar Turina had. However, I did not want to get involved in that. Cecelja wanted to have the money for the Croatian Red Cross in Salzburg, and use it to help the Ustasha camp there. This activity of Cecelja’s was apparently denounced by the Serbs, i.e. the Yugoslav committee with the Americans, by accusing Cecelja that he is using the Red Cross as an organisational base, which later led to Cecelja’s arrest” (p. 164).

### **i) Terrorist Activities in the Roman Catholic Church Organisation**

On the matter of the post-war, crusader campaigns of inserting Ustashes into Yugoslavia and operation ‘Guardian’, Krizman quotes Goran Vuković, who wrote, “The part of the clergy that was fascistically oriented also concealed many prominent war criminals in monastery convents and even in private houses. The main role in that affair was certainly played by the priest Slavko Krunić, who supplied permits to many Ustashes, hiding away the most vulnerable ones in monastery convents, and feeding them in the convents and in the canteen of the St. Jerome society in Rome. Krunić also supplied money to war criminals, and sent some of them, in coordination with Ustasha Colonel Špiro, to the country to obtain intelligence data” (p. 166). By the way, ‘Slavko Krunić’ is an alias of Krunoslav Draganović. The Ustasha officer Mate Frković describes in his emigration memoirs how he crossed from Austria into Italy with Josip Balen, saying, “Professor Balen had with him an excellent reference from Archbishop Dr. A. Stepinac, and it was supposed to clear his way to the Vatican, and also further on,

depending on the circumstances and situation; whereas I was tasked with attempting to save at least part of the state property (around 500 kilograms of gold) which certain spineless individuals from the headman's immediate escort had stolen, subsequently divided and then disappeared from Europe" (p. 167).

In one of the Ustasha terrorist groups which were inserted into the country and arrested in Operation Guardian was the Roman Catholic priest Želimir Leko. Their main leader Božidar Kavran ". . . met with several more prominent Ustashas in Rome: among others, the priest Jolo Bujanović, the great zhupan in Gospić during the time of the Independent State of Croatia. Bujanović informed him at length about the situation in Italy. He talked about his activities; he confided in him that he had established contact with the Franciscans regarding the newspaper 'Danica' in Chicago and asked them for financial aid for the refugees in Italy, and, giving his remarks on certain individuals in Italy, he stressed that he thought Dr. Krunoslav Draganović was the most influential person in their ranks. Draganović has approval from some South American countries to send refugees from Europe there! Bujanović informed him in detail about Draganović and his position towards sending people to the homeland. He confided to Kavran that Draganović is in favour of sending them, but was insulted that things are going ahead without him. He is, actually, rather ambitious and likes to stand out. He tried to insert people across the Yugoslav border himself, but he failed. Almost all those who he inserted into the country with the help of Colonel Štir, Drago Žubrinić and others, were arrested by the Yugoslav authorities. When he found out that a connection with the homeland had been established without him, it was almost as if he were hurt by it. Still, it has been noticed – according to Bujanović – that lately he has been providing financial aid to those who are moving from Italy to Austria in order to go to the country. Kavran agreed with him on the matter of Draganović, because, whenever Drago Jilek asked him to extract a refugee from the camp in Lipari, he would do it. Therefore, Lovro Sušić had already written him a letter, thanking him for providing assistance and asking him to keep supporting their campaign against the 'Serbo-communist regime' in the country. Speaking about the others, Bujanović mentioned Friar Dominik Mandić, a financial manager from the Franciscan order in Rome, who donated a printing press to the refugees in the Fermo camp, where they print the newspaper Croatia: but one day he remembered, and took the printing press right in front of them" (p. 189).

Kavran recounted all these details to the Zagreb investigators, after having been arrested in Yugoslavia, and Krizman takes them from the book of Goran Vuković, which is based on original police and court documents. "Kavran enquired of Bujanović whether he wished to be transferred into the country, and he replied that he would have to talk to his church elders first, because, in order to leave, he would require their special permission" (p.189). Kavran gave detailed information to priest Bujanović on the functioning of the Ustasha resistance movement, and asked him to influence, together with Krunoslav Draganović, as many Ustasha officers as possible to return from overseas and make themselves available to the movement. Bujanović arranged for Kavran to meet with many prominent Ustashas, with whom he had not had any contact with since he had fled the country. "Through Bujanović, Kavran also met with Zvonimir Fržop, the Ustasha staff officer in Šibenik. Fržop was hidden away in the Grongaferat monastery, where he worked as a financial manager. . . The most important for Kavran, however, were the talks he had in Rome with Krunoslav Draganović, the central figure among the refugees" (p. 190).

The content of these conversations is particularly interesting, because Krunoslav Draganović, being the key Vatican figure among the Ustasha emigrants, elaborated there the strategic projection of Vatican endeavours and the role of the Croatians in them as a military-political instrument. He expected a conflict between the Western powers and the Soviet Union, and was convinced that America will win in that conflict; therefore, Croatian intentions should be timely adjusted to Americas policy. “In that case, the Croatian state would be established, but not in its original form, but rather as a part of a trans-Danube federation. He was personally pleased with such a solution, because he believes Croatia will fare better in such an arrangement than it would have as an independent state. It directed its activities at introducing the Croatian problem to official American circles. Given the war atrocities, he thought it best if the Croatian refugees were outside of Europe” (p. 190-191). Draganović did not dispute the usefulness of Kavran’s attempts to insert Ustasha terrorists into Yugoslavia, but thought that, “. . . the main role in that struggle will be played by Croatian troops who will come to the country as a part of the American military. That is why a large part of the refugees went to America. Official American circles recognise the position of the Croatian state, and he believes that the Croatian refugees, in the case of a conflict, will be organised into special legions. He stressed that he was familiar with the fact that the Americans were already preparing such legions for Poland, Hungary and other Eastern countries that war would be waged against” (p. 191).

#### **j) The Practical Activities of the Ustasha Theorist Dominik Mandić**

Along with priest Dr. Krunoslav Draganović, Krizman particularly emphasises the role of Franciscan Dr. Dominik Mandić. “Most of the diverse aid to the Ustasha emigration, in the form of money, interventions, hiding them in monastery convents, acquiring passports and visas and facilitating their departure overseas, was given by Dominik Mandić and Krunoslav Draganović in Rome” (p.194). On that matter, prominent Ustasha Marko Sinovčić, in the forward of one of Mandić’s numerous brochures, confirms, “After the terrible tragedy that struck the Croatian people in May 1945, Father Mandić heartedly supported the surviving Croatian refugees in Austria and Italy, particularly the vulnerable Croatian officers and political men. Along with his many deeds, ripe with Christian and Croatian self-sacrifice, he established a boarding school for Croatian university students in Groteferat, and, in Grotemare, a Croatian secondary school for Croatian refugee boys. He sent over fifty refugee Croatian priests to North and South America to work among the Croatian immigrants. He took particular care of sick people and those who had gotten married in the camps. With his contribution, a Croatian printing house was set up in the Fermo camp, where newspapers and books for Croatian refugees were printed. When a hunt for respectable Croatians in Italy began in 1946 and 1947, Father Mandić, using the Order’s funds, enabled dozens of the most prominent and most vulnerable Croatian officers and intellectuals to be saved from persecution and extradition overseas, particularly to Argentina” (p. 194).

In an interview with one of the most prominent Ustasha publicists in emigration, Vinko Nikolić, which he published in 1966, Dominik Mandić boasts that during the war, in the Vatican, he and his associates did everything they could “. . . to show Croatia in its best light and rectify the mistakes that had happened there. . . The Vatican rejoiced in every good thing and felt sorry about the troubles that had happened in Croatia during

**Comment [Z30]:** Translator’s note. The correct spelling of this city could not be found

the turbulence of war. It had various complaints against the Independent State of Croatia. We tried to deny the incorrect complaints, and explain the real mistakes” (p. 195). Apart from these wartime justifications of the moves of Ustasha regime, more important is its post-war activity. Mandić’s confession goes into much more detail here: “As soon as I found out about the deportations of our people to Italy, I attempted through the Vatican to limit their number, and to treat the prisoners humanely. Through the Vatican, we sent medicine and small financial aid to camps. When the number of prisoners increased, I invested an effort with the late Augustin Juretić to making the aid activity be run under the name of the Red Cross in Geneva. In the Croatian College of St. Jerome in Rome, we established two boards: a broader one and a narrower one. The members of the latter were: Ivica Elijaš, as a representative of the Zagreb Archbishop Stepinac; Reverend Kučan; and my secretary Friar V. Naletilić. I liaised with the Red Cross and the Vatican, whereas the narrower board packed and sent aid to the camps. We received financial aid from London, food was sent by the Zagreb Archbishop, and from the Vatican I received 43,000 metres of various fabrics. In two years, 38,000 packages were sent to the camp, and when the prisoners were to be sent home, 45,000 meals were issued and 1,600,000 lira was issued in currency. In May 1944, some time before the fall of Rome, when the Vatican’s connections with London were severed, I lent the Red Cross 2,250,000 lira to aid the prisoners, from the funds for the construction of a new General Court and with the approval of the Reverend Father General, being the general financial manager of the Order” (p. 195).

Nikolić’s particular issue had to do with Mandić’s attempts, through Vatican circles, to preserve the Independent State of Croatia at the end of World War II, by changing its regime and, instead of Ustashes, bringing to rule a group more suited to the taste of the Western Allies. “Before the war, I supported the Croatian Peasant Party’s developmental procedure with the Croatian Banate, as the first step towards the independence of the Croatian people. . . . But when it created its state in 1941, I wished and worked for its survival. From the very beginning, I vigorously recommended that the Croatians should streamline their efforts in such a way that would allow them to preserve their state after the war. As early as the first half of 1942, I began working on the severance of the government of the Independent State of Croatia’s ties to the Axis, and the establishment of cooperation with the Allies. I did this through the Križevac Vladika Dr. Šimrak, Herzegovinian Provincijal Pandžić and my friend Žarko Vlah, whom I invited to come from Zagreb to Rome, for this reason, close to the end of March 1943. Unfortunately, these endeavours failed. I also liaised with the Croatian Peasant Party in the homeland, and with its ministers in London. I advised both to take all the necessary steps in a timely manner, so that the Croatian people would be protected at the end of the war. I also vigorously recommended to Dr. Šubašić, on his way to the homeland at the end of 1944, to see if he could prevent a bloody conflict between the Serbs and the Croatians, because I was seriously afraid, even back then. . . . I experienced the apocalyptic tragedy of the Croatian people at the end of the war with great torment in my soul. With the Croatian priests in Rome, through the Fraternity of St. Jerome, and I myself did everything possible to save the refugee Croatians, to help them throughout their stay in Italy and to send them overseas as soon as possible to start a new life. For those who were particularly vulnerable, we tried to find them refuge in the Order’s convents, and church houses. I lent large sums of money to many of them from the Order’s funds, so they could travel overseas. Along with the work through the Fraternity of St. Jerome, for

the purposes of aiding refugee Croatians and supporting various institutions, I spent more than 100,000 US dollars from the Order's funds. And now, I am here as a mere pauper, who expects, even for printing his historical works, a charitable hand from patriotic Croatians" (p. 195-196).

This was the opportunity, at the end of interview, for Dominik Mandić to present his fundamental programmatic-political position. To that respect, he says, "Ever since 1945, when I saw what had been done to the Croatians at the end of war, and heard from the mouths of prominent Serbs what kind of revenge and destruction they wished for and were preparing for the Croatians . . ., I became deeply convinced that the Croatians and the Serbs would never live together peacefully and happily; consequently, the Croatians must have their own state, separate from the Serbian state, if they wish to survive as a nation. I still think that. Indeed, no nation can live in accordance with its spirit and develop its own national culture unless it is independent. State sovereignty is a natural requirement for each nation, a condition and the crown of its living. That is why the Anglo-Saxon nations equalise nation and state; in their language, the state is called the 'nation'. Dozens of backward peoples in Asia and in Africa have recently achieved their sovereignty, so how could not the cultured Croatian nation achieve that – the nation who lived that national life for 1300 years, from the year 626 to 1918. In that period, the Serbs and the Croatians never had a common state that encompassed the majority of both nations. The unbearable life during the 45 years in both Yugoslavias proves that this community cannot survive in the future. The Croatians will achieve their state – sooner or later – they just cannot allow themselves to lose faith in themselves, they should persistently wish for their state independence and work towards it. I pray to dear God for only one thing, and that is for our separation from the Serbs to be peaceful and without any bloodshed. I further wish for Croats and Serbs to reach an agreement on exchanging the population, so that the territory of each state is ethnically pure: Croatians from the Serb state, Catholic and Muslim, should move to Croatia, and Serbs from the Croatian state to Serbia. Only then will good human and neighbourly relations arise among them, such as were the relations between Croatians and Serbs in the old times, when each of the two nations had their own state" (p. 196-197).

In 1963, in his newspaper *Drina*, which he printed in Madrid, one of the worst butchers during World War II, and the most prominent leader of the Ustasha emigration after the death of Pavelić, Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, promotes Dominik Mandić as the leading Ustasha ideologist. Krizman calls this text of Luburić's a true ode to the Franciscan Mandić, under the title *Father Dominik Mandić Fortifies the Border on the Drina River*, saying that Luburić ". . . thinks very highly of his scientific work – along with the political one – regarding the two published books of *The History of Bosnia and Herzegovina*" (p. 197). When he describes the fundamental contribution by Mandić to the Ustasha ideology that had thus far been developed, Luburić stresses, "The fourth dimension was missing. It is not enough to tell the foreign world about our national right and the doctrine of the Father of the homeland. It is not enough to tell the atheist world about Allah's blessing on the Bunker on the Drina. It is not enough to only move the masses with rifles in their hands, under the leadership of the decision and the will of the Croatian national headman. It should have been proved that what we are fighting for is truly ours. There you have it, Father Dominik Mandić has done that now. For fifty long years, Father Dominik, like a bee, collected evidence, documents, records, opinions of others, went through the collections of all neighbours and all interested parties; and

**Comment [Z31]:** Translator's note. In the original text, this was written as 100,00 (actually 100.00 but the period is used in Serbia as the comma is used in the UK, for numbers). It appears to be a typo

already in a extremely old age, level-headed, peaceful, without great gesture and humbly, in a Franciscan manner, said, ‘The border is on the Drina River and here is the proof!’ This proof is, among others, like the crown of efforts and legions of the research that he has thus far performed – his *The History of Bosnia and Herzegovina*” (p. 197).

### **k) The Main Organiser of the Rat Lines, Krunoslav Draganović**

Krizman says for Krunoslav Draganović that he is cunning, a go-getter and very effective, “. . . but in his internal build, he is a more complex type than Mandić” (p.197). As a prominent Zagreb theologian and university professor, in 1943, Draganović was “. . . appointed to the Independent State of Croatia’s mission to the Holy See, and he was also tasked with helping the charity institution of the Zagreb Archbishopric Caritas and the Croatian Red Cross regarding interned Croatians in Italian prisons and concentration camps. In doing that, he had a warm referral from Archbishop Stepinac” (p.197). In this capacity, in February 1944, Draganović made and delivered a political memorandum regarding the fate of the Independent State of Croatia to the British mission to the Vatican, given that the victory of Western Allies already seemed imminent. “The memorandum advocates the preservation of the independence of the Croatian state, and, if that is impossible, its inclusion into a trans-Danube federation of Central European nations” (p. 198). In this memorandum, Draganović argues the alleged Croatian nation-building as early as the 7th century, affiliation to the Western spirit and culture (unlike the Byzantine-oriented Serbs), the lack of common political interests of the Serbs and Croatians, the basic elements of the theory of the Croatian state and historical right, as well as the statement that the Croatians had been discriminated against in the Yugoslav state. According to Draganović, when he reached the year 1941 in this historical review, “. . . the establishment of the State of Croatia, a centuries-long dream come true, was greeted with delight by 99 percent of Croatians. In spite of all the difficult tests that a mass of people had been subjected to, this truth nevertheless remains after almost three years of the existence of Croatia as an independent state. The state, and the intentional testimony of its existence by the Croatians, must not be confused (seen equal) as some form of loyalty to the Ustasha movement. Even though the democratic soul of the Croatians is against the dictatorial and German-ophile Ustashes, (still) the existence of a Croatian state remains the highest goal for all Croatians” (p. 199).

Speaking of the wartime tests of the Croatian Ustasha state, Krunoslav Draganović insists that its problems have not been properly evaluated by the world. “The Croatian anger against the Serbs, subdued by force for 23 years, led to unfortunate excesses. It is almost impossible to decide who would need to be reprimanded on principle. The fact remains, that hundreds of thousands of Croatians and Serbs paid with their lives for political mistakes. It should also be noted that more Croatians were executed than Serbs. Chetniks, under the leadership of Draža Mihajlović, played a particularly important role in the excesses against the Croatians... In the closest possible cooperation with the Italians, under the guise of anti-communist activity, they literally exterminated the Croatians in many areas of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Sandžak. Evidence has been recently discovered which shows that Mihajlović had an agreement with the Germans regarding cooperation. . . Many Partisans belong to Maček’s Peasant Party and they, in spite of their decisive opposition to the Ustashes, are by no means communists, and they want to see the preservation of the State of Croatia. . . Today, in the third year since the

demise of Yugoslavia, a substantial and unexpected change in the situation can be felt. While the Serbs and Slovenians cooperate more and more closely with the Germans, an aversion among the Croats towards German policies is increasing, even in the government circles. The fact that this situation did not present itself in a more tangible form, (thus) producing far-reaching consequences, has to be attributed to the fear of losing national identity. This is also the principal reason why all Croats are not opposed to the regime. They fear losing this greater good – the national state. The revival of Yugoslavia, whether in a communist or South Slav national form, would be a grave mistake, which would certainly contain a seed for a new war. Several hundred thousand graves, which lie between the Croats and the Serbs, would constitute an eternal reason for a permanent, bloody revenge” (p. 200).

At the end of the memorandum, in order to substantiate his basic position of the absurdity of the restoration of the Yugoslav state, and quoting the democratic principle of self-determination, Draganović emphasizes, “A plebiscite, carried out with every possible precaution, would convincingly demonstrate that a large majority of Croats are against uniting with the Serbs. If Croatia can no longer be fully independent, it should certainly not become a part of a Balkan union, whether communist- or nationalist-based; Croatia should be part of a Western, trans-Danube federation. That would be the only way to secure peace in the most delicate part of Europe. These observations are the true expression of the existence of the belief of all the positive elements in contemporary Croatia, and particularly the church circles led by the Archbishop of Zagreb (Alojzije Stepinac). Identical views are also held by the representatives of a large Croatian political party, which is, under the leadership of Dr. Maček, definitively in favour of the sustained existence of the Croatian state. This is fully in accordance with the rigid, anti-communist and anti-Serbian attitude of the Croats” (p. 201).

### **I) Evidence of the Key Role of the Roman Catholic Church in Rescuing the Ustashas**

On the occasion of delivering the memorandum, Krunoslav Draganović met with the advisor in the British diplomatic mission to Vatican, Hugh Montgomery, and Bogdan Krizman obtained Montgomery’s official notes concerning the meeting. Montgomery reports to his superiors, among other things, about the following: “Professor Draganović also showed me a request from the Archbishop of Zagreb, addressed to the Pope, where Monsignor Stepinac elaborates the crimes allegedly committed against the Croats by both the Communist Partisans and the Serbian Chetniks. This letter accuses General Mihailović and his friends of having the intention of establishing a ‘Greater Serbia’, which would include Bosnia and a large part of Croatia, and where the Catholic and Muslim population would be ‘eliminated’. Only about a tenth of what Croatia is now would be allowed to exist independently (‘probably as much as can be seen from the Zagreb Cathedral’), and would be completely cut off from the sea. The ‘extermination’ would be carried out in three ways: by slaughter, expulsion, and forced conversion to the Orthodox faith. Among the ones slaughtered would be all the intellectuals and members of the well-off classes of society. The ones spared would be demanded to join the Orthodox Church – mostly farmers and craftsmen – and it was hoped that they would become ‘true Serbs’. The Archbishop’s letter accentuates the hatred of the pan-Serbs for

Catholicism – the hatred, says he, clearly expressed in the Chetnik manifestos. This hatred, it is said, took its practical form through crimes that even exceed those committed by the Partisans. A list of such crimes ‘would fill volumes – it is said’, but the letter only mentions some of the worst ones: included there are murders of priests, whose names are listed and who had been – it seems – subjected to the most horrible kinds of torture; but also the deed committed against five nuns of the Pale monastery near Sarajevo, who jumped out of windows to their deaths, just to avoid being violated by their captors (i.e. Chetniks). It is also stated that hundreds and thousands of Catholic lay-people were killed, as well as a large number of priests” (p. 201).

Therefore, Stepinac transforms the entire Ustasha genocide programme against the Serbian people, with one move of his pen, attributing it to the Serbs and presenting the ‘innocent’ Croats as the main victims. “The letter further emphasises the Catholic traditions of Croatia, once known as ‘the bulwark of Christianity’, and the stress is on the alleged discrimination against the Catholics during Belgrade’s 23-year rule, while the victory of pan-Serbian ideal would mean, it is said, the end of Catholicism in the Balkans, with consequences that would be felt far out in the field. The Archbishop pleads with the Pope to think of ‘the horrible circumstances of the young State of Croatia’, desperately struggling for its national survival, only wishing to remain faithful to its excellent Catholic traditions and to secure a better future for Catholicism in South-Eastern Europe. He (Stepinac) says that thousands of Croats, priests and lay-people, would be happy to sacrifice their lives in order to prevent that horrible possibility from happening, namely, the possibility of not only a quarter of a million converts to Catholicism, but the entire Catholic population, with all its (Croatian) churches and monasteries possibly being destroyed, if the so-called Greater Serbia were to come to life. He concludes the letter to the Pope by saying that, in human terms, the progress of Catholicism in the Balkans is closely connected with the continued existence of the State of Croatia” (p. 201-202).

Montgomery, on his part, confirms the fact that Croatia is, “. . . the only Catholic state in the Balkans, therefore it is natural that the Vatican should be deeply concerned with its fate. But this issue, as far as I know, has never been initiated by the secretary of the Vatican state with this mission, and the fact that the Holy See has diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia (i.e. the Yugoslav Government in London), while with the State of Croatia it only has unofficial contacts, will certainly make it cautious in terms of issuing any sort of opinion regarding the future of Croatia. (Further), the fact that Monsignor Montini sent Professor Draganović to see this mission may still be important; I doubt that the Pope would not agree with the conclusions given in both the memorandum (of Professor Draganović) and the letter of the Archbishop (Stepinac), namely, that Croatia should be forced to join, against its will, any kind of union with Serbia or with the Yugoslav state, dominated by Serbs” (p. 202).

In the *Croatian Review*, published in Buenos Aires in 1964, Ivan Tomas published a biography of Krunoslav Draganović. In that biography, he particularly emphasises Draganović’s role in rescuing exiled Ustashas after World War II. As he writes, “Thousands of Croatian refugees were transferred from Austria to Italy. Rome is filled with our men, women and children, hungry and crazed. Everyone instinctively flees to Rome, because, apart from the Pope being the supreme moral authority, in Rome there is a century-old Croatian institution, the College of St. Jerome, fully at the disposal of the afflicted people. A man of God, the Jesuit O. S. Sakač, proposes the restoration of the



ancient Croatian Fraternity of St. Jerome. The Rector of the College, Monsignor Mađarec, embraces the idea and accepts the position as president of the fraternity, while the vice president is Friar Dr. D. Mandić, the secretary is Dr. Draganović, the treasurer is V. Naletilić, the members of the board are laypeople: Kljaković, Rusko, Elijaš, Spalatin, Bošnjak; the chancellor is the quiet and tireless Monsignor Golik. For ten or twelve years, the fraternity has taken the burden of caring for the aid and relocation of Croatian refugees. No living or dead soul should feel wronged if we say that the main burden of operating the fraternity fell upon Dr. Draganović, who is always on the move, day and night, in all four seasons, using all means of transportation, speaking, writing, making telephone calls, translating acts and documents, comforting, helping, medically treating, extracting from prisons, dungeons, barbed wire that often had to be cut and torn; pestering the Americans, English, French and Dutch, church, military and civilian authorities of any kind and level; without ever halting under the enormous burden of Croatian misery, nothingness, sorrow, distress, despair, hopelessness, inability of being resourceful, and defeat. What was needed was to save the people who were declared 'war criminals', who did having anything to do either with war or crime in most of the cases. What was needed was to provide shelter to the persecuted and request urgent relocation overseas" (p. 202-203).

Tomas describes the difficult situation in the prisoner-of-war camps regarding the basic living conditions and talks about the alleged brutal abuse of imprisoned Ustashas. He especially stresses the atmosphere of mutual spying and denunciations, the lack of resourcefulness of formerly powerful Ustasha headmen and the permanent risk of being extradited to the Yugoslav authorities. "Draganović was almost immaterial in those days and years: nobody could catch up with him, his home and bed were unknown, or the place where he ate, but he was always there in the most terrible situations when people needed rescuing. He did not hesitate when faced with life-threatening perils, he went to camps and dungeons, he did not mind the barbed wire, nor the Anglo-Saxon military guards; when needed, he carried vulnerable individuals on his back; and immediately after such enterprises, he would stand before the highest civil and church authorities, and present, in proper formulae, the Croatian troubles, appealing to humanity and Christianity, justice, democracy and freedom, seeking protection for his humiliated people. Who ever came to the Anglo-Saxon and Communist claws, his life was not worth anything: there are familiar cases of our victims, who had been extradited to Belgrade and executed, with the most cynical abuse. And without Draganović, these sacrifices would have been even worse.

"At that time, Draganović united in his person a priest and a layman, a diplomat and a soldier, an architect and a mason, and the heavens multiplied his force by a hundredfold; and he, with his historical education, knowledge of the Croatian lands, people and tribes; his tirelessness and foresight, experience and understanding of international life, church, culture, science and charity; distributed his versatile endeavours, motivated other associates, encouraged our fugitives, made it at the very last minute to the most endangered territories of Croatian misery, brought solutions, discovered points to re-open the cases already doomed to fail. While many of us – faced with the enormous distress of Croatia and with endless needs – nearly despaired, Draganović did not know the meaning of fatigue, depression, despair, failure; from his clergyman's, Croatian, and humane soul, a volcanic enthusiasm erupted, which eliminated any despair, gave new strength to the tired to help the defeated, made ugly,

humiliated and despised Croatia! His contribution was such, that none of us would even think of what would happen, had Providence not given us Draganović, or if, God forbid, something were to happen to him, to disable his activities. If vulnerable Croats felt any close danger, their first thought would be to inform Draganović: his powerful thought and tireless hand reached from the bottom of Sicily to Hamburg, from Austria and Italy to France and England; he stepped before cardinals and admirals, before bishops and generals, abbots and governors, before cultured citizens and all kinds of Anglo-Saxon rough soldiers, before pathetic European servants of the wanton and victorious occupying forces, telling them of the violence and injustice against the persecuted Croats; and the most ferocious and most cruel enemy of Croatia would somehow be small and timid before Draganović, acquiescent and perhaps somewhat humane, and Draganović should take the credit for forcing these non-humans to the humanity they would not normally have, given their formation, treatment and experience” (p. 203-204).

Draganović deserves the most credit, but Tomas also praises his numerous associates, clergymen and Catholic intellectuals. In his memoir prose, published in 1964, but written on the occasion of Pavelić’s death, the leader of the Ustasha emigration, Branimir Jelić, confirms that, in rescuing, caring for and sending fugitive Ustashes overseas, the most important role was played by Roman Catholic charity organisations, and, in his pinion, the key role was that of Krunoslav Draganović and the St. Jerome College. Through his activities, Draganović developed versatile ties with western intelligence services. Prominent Croatian emigrant Ante Ciliga wrote in 1964 that Draganović, “. . . also transferred Pavelić to Argentina, preparing and delivering to him a false passport, with which Pavelić travelled and entered Argentina. This is recognised by the official Ustasha-Pavelićans,<sup>32</sup> in spite of all their controversy and accusations against Draganović” (p. 208). However, Krunoslav Draganović was also the mediator used by the Roman Catholic Church when they tried to persuade Ante Pavelić to withdraw from politics and leave the management of the Croatian emigration to somebody else, since he had been too compromised in the Western public opinion. He was supported by the Catholic-oriented intellectuals, so more and more open requests to that end started appearing in the emigration publications. One of those intellectuals was Vinko Nikolić, a prominent Ustasha, who was disappointed by his headman’s selfishness. In 1984, he described these events as follows: “There have been people who, even in the early days of our sad emigration, warned Dr. Pavelić of the harm his re-entry into Croatian politics would cause, but all these warnings were to no avail. Thus, for example, the wise and meritorious Croatian public worker, Prof. Krunoslav Draganović (without getting into his mysterious transfer from emigration to the homeland), warned Dr. Pavelić in Naples as early as early October 1948. When doing that, in a conversation with him in an Italian monastery, he pointed out his merits, admitting that Dr. Pavelić was ‘the most meritorious for the establishment of the Croatian state after 800 years’, and stressed that the ‘Croatian people would never forget that’. He did not avoid also stressing that, in the four years of that state, ‘he had done much good and much evil’, but he leaves it to the Croatian people and history to be the judges of that” (p. 206).

From Nikolić’s book *Tragedy Happened in May*, Vol. 1, Krizman takes several fragments related to that conversation between Draganović and Pavelić, where it is interpreted as follows: “As Prof. Draganović continued, ‘The life of the Croatian state

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<sup>32</sup> Proponents of Ante Pavelić.

has been violently interrupted. It could have continued its natural life. It drowned in the sea. But what has not drowned is the firm will and decision of the Croatian people to re-establish its freedom and its state. The Croats will, therefore, invest all their forces and suffer all the victims, but for the achievement of the national goal', as Prof. Draganović's elaboration continues, 'the Croats must lean on someone. We have had the misfortune so far, of always having leaned on those who lost the war'. Explaining at that point who the potential options for this inclination of ours are, he concluded the only ones left are the Western Allies; '. . . the Croats must go with them, in order to attain their freedom and state . . . But,' he spoke directly to Dr. Pavelić, 'those Western Allies, my dear doctor, do not want you. They reject you, and you are on their blacklists. Every struggle for Croatia, led under the name of Pavelić, is rejected and condemned in advance. And you are today – I regret saying this – an obstacle to the Croatian national struggle. Therefore, once you have been rescued and reach Argentina, first thank God for your salvation, and then give up on Croatian politics.' That is the request, via Prof. Draganović, to Dr. Pavelić 'by the bloodied, martyred Croatian people. One more thing,' added Prof. Draganović, 'to avoid misunderstanding. This does not mean that your followers, the Ustashas, many of them being the most righteous Croatian patriots, should desist from fighting for Croatia. Moreover, issue an order to them to fight until the last drop of blood, but no longer under your hat and under your name'" (p. 206-207).

Pavelić was deeply struck and insulted, but did not react until he reached Argentina. This conversation took place in October 1948 in Naples, and, as early as 6 November, Pavelić reached Buenos Aires, via the "rat lines". "Pavelić could not forgive Draganović's 'scolding' of the Ustasha headman and the criticism of his policy, so, once in Argentina, he started incessantly accusing Draganović of trying to extradite him to the English in Rome or Naples, which is why he would not come to the airport where Draganović waited for him, as agreed, but rather boarded the steamship 'Ostriere' under cover and reached Argentina using an alias. Pavelić's people also incessantly spread the worst kind of rumours about K. Draganović. They accused him, amongst other things, that he had kept for himself most of the gold, Pavelić's loot, which he had furtively taken from Austria, where it had been buried, to Rome" (p. 207). Ante Ciliga openly suspected Draganović of ties with the Yugoslav secret police. During the sixties, when Tito established cordial ties with the Vatican and Pope Paul VI, Krunoslav Draganović was amnestied for his criminal activity during and after the war, so he returned to Yugoslavia and lived peacefully in Sarajevo until his death. This is when accusations started appearing among the ranks of the Croatian emigration that Draganović had helped organise an assassination of Pavelić. Apparently, the case of Stjepan Radić was being repeated. Pavelić was very much in the way of the Catholic clerics, so the most suitable thing was to have him killed by the "Serbo-Communist" hand.

The Ustasha Air Force commander, General Vladimir Kren, was arrested by the British army while attempting to flee Genoa to Argentina by boat, and was soon extradited to the Yugoslav authorities. In the investigation, he related personal experiences regarding the comprehensive engagement of the Vatican in providing assistance to the Ustasha prisoners of war in the Allied camps. For the most prominent among them, the priests themselves organised escape from the camp fences and put them away in more secure places. When he escaped from the railway transport as a prisoner, following Draganović's instructions, Kren hid in the ". . . Cento Cele convent near Rome. This is a Croatian and Slovenian nunnery. . . There were more than 30

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Croatian and Slovenian nuns there, most of whom had fled Yugoslavia. . . During the time I spent there, there were also Minister Bešlagić, deputy Gaj, deputy Stjepan (incorrect: Josip) Berković with his wife, Aleksandar Sajc with his wife, Vlaho Raić with his wife, deputy Židovec with his wife and child, priest Đuro Baloković. . . All the emigrants placed in the convent had their own living quarters” (p. 208-209). As Kren was informed there, “. . . the Italian police, under the orders of their government, which has close ties with the Vatican, were not at all allowed to enter or search monasteries” (p. 209). After a certain period, Draganović transferred Kren to the “Three Fountains” Trapistian monastery near Rome.

Kren further recounted his visit to the College of St. Jerome: “There I found the priests Dragutin Marjanović and Beluhan. I learned from them that the Vatican was organising a transfer of emigrants to Argentina, and that special boats were provided for that purpose. However, to those who did not wish to travel on these boats together with others, but rather individually, the Franciscans in Rome would lend money, and particularly Dominik Mandić. I then decided to borrow the money and go to Argentina with my wife, to look for a job, which, I am told, can easily be found there. During this conversation, I also learned that Draganović had earlier sent Vjekoslav Vrančić and another priest to survey the environment, and that he would also send Beluhan and Kamber to Spain. The Vatican set up a special office in Rome to deal with the departure to Argentina. I was told it would be best if I left for Argentina too, and that the documents would be easily obtained via the Red Cross. That is exactly what I did. I later learned in prison that a large number of emigrants had left for Argentina on the papal boat and also many individuals on other boats” (p. 210).

The emigrants who had enough money thought it safest to flee individually, using false documents, in the acquisition of which they had also been assisted by Roman Catholic priests. “Those who do not have money are advised by priests, probably under the Vatican’s directive, to go to Argentina, where the emigrants will group together and where they can earn wages, so they are referred to the papal office for free transportation. . . This papal office also mediates in acquiring passports, and for the matter of Argentinean visas, in the Argentinean consulate, there are the mediators Dr. Perović and the engineer Mavrak, who is also a delegate of the Red Cross. For those who obtain documents, the papal office also sets the departure date” (p. 210). Kren then recounted how Draganović bribed the way out of prison for the well-known Ustasha leaders Balen and Frković. Before arriving to Italy, they had been in an Austrian monastery with Kulenović, Artuković, Kavran and Blaškov. “He also listed the persons placed in various monasteries: in the monasteries San Paolo and Rehala in Rome, there are V. Nikolić, Eterović and a about dozen others, with Draganović himself, Fedor Dragojlov, Frković and, prior to his departure for America, Feliks Poljanić too. In Viterbo, there was Rubčić, and he heard there were several others with him. In the Dominican monastery in Rome, there was General Čanić with a few others, while in the Cento Cele Seic monastery and in a hospital near the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, there are Minister St. Perić and Ćiril Ćudina. In the Franciscan monastery in Rome, there are several Ustashas from Herzegovina” (p. 212).

Summing up the aid given to fugitive Ustashas, Kren explains, “Morally, this activity is supported by Vatican, Italian and also Allied authorities. . . Materially, a lot has been given by the Vatican’s Assistenza Pontifice; the Vatican itself gave millions, then the International Red Cross, immigrants from North and South America, through

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the Franciscans in Chicago and Buenos Aires; some funds were deposited with Draganović even before the demise of the Independent State of Croatia, some funds were given to him by Pečnikar, and, as far as I know, some funds were deposited by private individuals, such as Perić, Tot, Frković, Kavran from Austria etc. Mandić also has large sums belonging to the Franciscan Order at his disposal, because he is the financial manager of that Order, which is rather wealthy. Both of them certainly have large sums of money at their disposal. Draganović also obtained several hundred thousand Argentinean pesos, certainly as a down payment for business, should he go there as well. Almost all who succeeded in leaving Italy so far managed to do that with their (Draganović's and Mandić's) moral and material assistance, except for a few rare individuals who either had money or received it from their families in America" (p. 216-217).

### **m) Pavelić's Escape to Argentina and Death in Spain**

The Franciscan friars were also the main drivers of reorganising the political activities of the Ustasha emigration. "The main factor in keeping up the emigrants' spirits is their propaganda, because if it were to be only political and not priestly, the emigration would not be an organised whole" (p. 217). The Franciscans worked among the Ustasha masses, while the Jesuits concentrated exclusively on instructing the leading political and military figures. According to Kren's testimony, ". . . the Jesuits were against the entire emigration moving to America, because the emigration would play a significant role in determining Italian policy towards Yugoslavia. It is known in Rome that the Jesuits are well-informed, and they are considered the most elite order of the Catholic Church, which also runs Church policy. Among the Jesuits of our nationality, I know that friars Sakač and Marković are in Rome. They do not get involved with the petty issues of aiding the emigration, except when it concerns their personal friends, but they are a sort of a priest general headquarters, which only concerns itself with major and important general issues" (p. 220-221). According to Krizman's data, in Argentina alone, thirteen thousand hardened Ustashes found refuge through the Vatican channels, who were gladly accepted by the pro-fascist dictator Juan Peron. Pavelić's organisation the "Croatian Home Guard (Domobran)" had been active there even before and it was headed by the Roman Catholic priest Stefanić, as a personal representative of Pavelić.

In Argentina, Pavelić controlled the newspaper Croatia and published a large number of articles in it. He collaborated with other emigration newspapers, writing at great length about his views of the Balkan political events in the first half of the twentieth century. Instead of the term "headman", he launched a new title for himself, "supreme leader" (vrhovnik), that was supposed to designate a "sovereign" and it was very close and dear to his only true political heir, Franjo Tuđman. Apart from that, Ante Pavelić established the Croatian Nation-Building Party and a Croatian emigration government. In the anthology of texts Croatia in 1949, he published a comprehensive essayistic treatise of a political-memoir character, titled The State of Croatia Lives. There, among other things, he discusses the following in detail: "The Croatian state still exists today! Is there not a Republic of Croatia even today; have not the Western powers, by recognising the so-called Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia under certain circumstances, also recognised the existence of the Republic of Croatia, which is in that federation now? And is this republic less of a state than Ukraine or Belarus?"

When this is discussed, there is no question about the regime there today. The regime is here today, gone tomorrow, like all regimes anywhere in the world; and, when the regime is once ousted, will the existence of this republic cease because of that? And though this republic is momentarily in a certain relationship with a certain number of other republics, can it not, in a given hour and under given circumstances, say that it does not wish to be in that relationship any longer? The State of Croatia was established in 1941, and in 1945 it was erased nor did it disappear, it was only given a different insignia and a different regime: while it was formerly known as the Independent State of Croatia, it is now called the People's Republic of Croatia. Therefore, why negate the existence of the State of Croatia when it exists; and why make an issue of something that is not an issue? Or, could the Western powers have recognised a federation of states without recognising the existence of the states – republics in this case – and also the Republic of Croatia, which are integral parts of this federation now? . . . The Croatian people are certainly not fighting today in the homeland, nor are its sons doing so abroad, against the Republic of Croatia, but against the Bolshevik rule that exists there – which put it in a federative relationship with certain other republics, which is an unwanted relationship – the rule that changed the borders of this Croatian republic to its detriment and to the detriment of the Croatian people” (p. 228-229).

For the first few post-war years, it might have seemed that Pavelić had positioned himself firmly as the political leader of the Croatian emigration, but the Franciscan friars had already made up their minds to dethrone him. They gradually separated the intellectuals from him, and instrumentalised first Eugen Dido Kvaternik, who had had an earlier conflict with the headman, and then Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, who had, during the fifties in his newspaper *Drina*, from one issue to the next, been accusing Pavelić for all the harm that had befallen the Croatian people. The main headquarters of the Croatian Franciscans was in Chicago, from where all the strings were pulled. When Pavelić survived an assassination attempt on 10 April 1957 in Argentina, keeping two bullets in his body; and when his long-time protector General Juan Peron had already been ousted from power by a military coup, the new Argentinean authorities found themselves under pressure from the international public opinion to extradite this war criminal of the highest stature to Yugoslavia. He was given a hint to leave the country, so Pavelić fled to Spain, through Chile. In fear of a threatening extradition, the Roman Catholic friars again started helping and hiding him in an organised manner. Due to an infection of his wounds, Pavelić's health took a sudden turn for the worse in Madrid and, just before he died, he wrote a will, appointing Stjepan Hefer, a prominent activist of the Croatian Peasant Party, to be his “authorised” political heir. Roman Catholic priests flocked around Pavelić's death bed, and Pope John XXIII personally “gave him his special blessing” (p. 437). Hefer was unable to attain political authority in the ranks of the Ustashes, so Luburić would come into the spotlight as the most influential Croatian emigration leader.

It is also important to mention here the fact that the basis for the request for Pavelić's extradition was an indictment that the district public prosecutor Dragutin Desput raised in Zagreb on 7 May 1956, which is actually a compelling piece of evidence that the Communists systematically covered up the crimes of the Ustashes. In the indictment, Pavelić is accused of the murder of 3,055 children, 6,315 women and 479 elderly people in Jasenovac and Nova Gradiška. It then lists the names of 40 Croats that the Ustashes killed in the three villages of the Krapina district, and describes 22

cases of robbery and destruction of property, where only Croats were harmed, and that is all. A similar procedure was followed some thirty years later in the trial against Andrija Artuković.

### **n) The Rehabilitation of Pavelić in Tudjman's Independent State of Croatia**

With the establishment of the Tudjman regime, the conditions were created for the gradual public rehabilitation of Ante Pavelić and for a kind of affirmation through the printing of his books and speeches. The repeated edition of the book 'Horrors of Delusion' (Kroacijaprojekt, Zagreb, 2000) contains, in the form of an afterword, an article by Vinko Nikolić from the emigration publication *Croatian Review* from 1960, which posthumously criticises the headman for fleeing Zagreb before the Communists in 1945, instead of putting up a decisive resistance and "gloriously" dying, consistent with the ideas he had fought for. Nikolić thought that Pavelić's activities had stood in the way of the activities of the Croatian political organisation, but he unconditionally justifies Croatia's collaboration with the fascist powers in 1941 and the betrayal of Yugoslavia. "The Croats could not defend Yugoslavia. No one could have requested from us, not even the Allies, to defend, for the sake of anyone's strategy, a state that had been our dungeon from the moment it had been founded, while the dungeon-keepers were, unfortunately, helped by these very Allies. We had to join those who showed, at that moment, their willingness to help our centuries-old aspiration for national independence and freedom – those who were destroying Yugoslavia. Thus we had no choice. Our place between the warring parties was pre-determined, without our choosing, and we found ourselves on the side of Germans and Italians" (p. 275).

It is important to the author of the preface and the editor of this publication, Franjo Letić, that Pavelić had never been indicted for war crimes, and he considers the Serbs responsible for causing reprisals against themselves by opposing the newly established Ustasha state. He then equates the Ustasha crimes to those committed by the Partisans and Chetniks. "On the territory of Croatia, a bloody war broke out between the Croatian nationalists, the Serbian Chetnik movement and Partisans; among them, only the Croatian nationalists fought for a Croatian state. In that war, no one was innocent. Crimes were committed on all three sides, and also by the occupying forces (the Germans and Italians). But the Chetniks timely sided with the Partisan movement, which was on the side of the Allies, who won the war. Only those who fought for Croatia as an independent state stayed on the losing side until the end of the war, the side of the Axis forces, and were thus, together with them, designated as the only war criminals and losers, even though the whole time they had fought a defensive, and not an offensive war" (p. 18). Letić sees no essential difference between Pavelić and Tudjman, because their goals were identical; but for Tudjman, the general historical circumstances were also more favourable. After a tragic attempt to establish an independent Croatian state under the wing of the fascist powers, ". . . it took half a century to recreate, on the ruins of Communism and the self-governing socialist Yugoslavia – but, unfortunately, again by war – the Croatian dream: an independent, democratic Croatian republic, but this time by its own strength, without the need to be patronised or subjected – to spite Yugoslavhood and Greater-Serbdom" (p. 19). Powerful patrons were nonetheless present, but the Croats were not won over and overpowered on a global scale.

It is interesting how Letić, in the preface, makes a historic parallel and congruity of the leaders' fate of the three greatest Croats of the twentieth century – Ante Pavelić, Josip Broz Tito and Franjo Tuđman. In his opinion, “The Croats are a particular nation. They have a tendency of greeting every new ‘leader’ who is imposed upon them or elected by them as a saviour, bowing to him without reservation, expressing utmost loyalty and submission and stoically suffering all his whims, thievery and even crimes ‘for the greater good’. And that layer of the critical intelligentsia, small in numbers, who sees and warns that ‘the emperor is naked’, and every critic of the ‘headman’, even the most harmless one, are not only declared internal enemies of the state or mercenaries of foreign powers inimical to Croatia, but also enemies of the entire Croat nation (here diminished to a mere population), and are then denounced, belittled, often threatened by execution; or they are at least declared ignorant or charlatans, who do not understand the trends of historic reality and the forces of world trends. That is how the ‘official history’ of this country begins with the arrival of each new power-holder, each new authority, which further shamelessly proclaims itself democratic. And when such a ‘headman’ leaves power, usually due to his physical wear and tear or due to a higher power, the picture radically changes. Those who worshiped him the most are his greatest opponents. They spit on him, they drag him through mud, their cheek still wet from tears they had for him, they throw sticks and stones at him, as if he were the worst beast and vagabond who ever lived here, not even hesitating to name him a criminal and degenerate of the Croatian people. And then a new ‘headman’, a new ‘leader’, a new saviour is found, and the comedy starts over again. This was the case in recent Croatian history with Ante Pavelić, Josip Broz and now with Franjo Tuđman as well” (p. 5-6). However, the main strings are regularly being pulled from the Vatican, whose basic policy is constant, while its immediate executors are treated as expendable human material with the motto: “use and throw away”.

Pavelić was an indisputable fascist, Tito a Communist, while Tuđman is a synthesis of their characters, ideologies and methods of political action, and very often also a ridiculous figure, in terms of his public appearance.

### **o) Fascism as Pavelić’s Original Ideological Orientation**

The fact that Pavelić was not created by the German or Italian occupation, but that fascism was his original ideological orientation, is testified by this book of his, written before World War II and first published in Italy in 1938, and in Zagreb three years later. In it, Pavelić, obviously in the role of a semi-skilled compiler, relates the key thesis of the Western critics of Marxism, i.e. Communism and its Bolshevik model of practical implementation, and finally justifies fascism. Pavelić called fascism the new nation-based organisation of state and society, saying that it had appeared as the successor of democracy and an antithesis of Communism. In his opinion, “. . . fascism rose in the West on the ruins of democracy, which did not have the capacity to stand up to Bolshevism in its attempt to penetrate from Russia to the West. Democracy’s system, its manner of operation and the means it may have at its disposal could not match, let alone suppress and defeat the Bolshevism way of operation and its means of fighting, just like a fishing boat is unable to stand up to a warship. Something new had to come, something stronger and more capable of fighting Bolshevism, capable of defeating it. And that resulted in fascism. Of course, fascism firstly had to remove democracy, which proved



to be incapable and incompetent of that struggle, to avoid having it at its feet while wrestling Bolshevism, and thus creating a clean and flat ground for the wrestle. In order to be able to achieve its full strength for that struggle, fascism naturally had to remove everything that had been instituted by democracy, if it could at all obstruct the struggle or even make the enemy stronger or help him. This is firstly liberalism, of course; the liberalism of the so-called Western democracies, or what is called liberalism there, which is nothing more than the complete neglect of national values; because, according to this liberalism, everyone who so wishes must be allowed to destroy and devastate these values, and drag the national name, honour and pride through the mud and trample it; all of this unpunished, and often even rewarded. You cannot fight Bolshevism with liberalism, because Bolshevism is not familiar with, and does not allow liberalism on its soil; and on the adversary's soil they use precisely liberalism as their strongest weapon in creating the adversary's weakness, just like you cannot fight crime by singing 'litanies', but with criminal law and dungeons" (p. 245-246).

Pavelić particularly holds against modern democracies their inclination to mutual understanding and reaching compromises with the Communists, which is a typical form of the manifestation of their weakness and incompetence, but also of their inclination to self-deception by negating the "peril and abhorrence" of Communism. Democratic regimes bring themselves down because, ". . . now, after the World War, in which the states of Western democracy looted to the point of saturation, they have no other wish or aspiration, except for the situation created by the peace 'order' never to change. This change can naturally only be achieved by means of war, because they would not allow it otherwise, and therefore there can never be war again. Because of that alone, and regardless of the horrors of war as such, who can be more hated in the eyes of the nations of Western democracy but he who endangers peace and prepares for war? There, that is why the Bolsheviks, in their propaganda among the nations of Western democracy, permanently and closely tie the name of fascism with the name of war" (p. 247). The fear of war is, therefore, the main trait of democratic societies. Pavelić adds that democracy has not been in the hands of the people for a very long time, and it is not a national achievement the people are ready to fight for. "And fascism, the true one, as given by Italy and Germany, is a reflection of the will of the people, its broadest layers, that should be differentiated from the calculating deliberateness (speculative schemes) that only serves the purpose of maintaining power in dying democracies. . . Democracies corrode the people, just like the Bolsheviks want to, and Bolshevism is only possible within one nation, united by blood, feeling and a single will; thus, that is a fortress that Bolshevism cannot conquer, and a force before which it has to retreat. Fascism cannot be created from above, by the government, like certain parties of certain governments are being created in semi-democracy and pseudo-fascism; indeed, it rises from below, from the people, and comes to power with a natural force and holds itself there permanently with the very force it derives from the broad layers of the people; while those other mentioned governments hold the state authority in their hands until the next new 'scheme' or 'coalition', that has been called in to introduce new confusion and further new 'schemes' and 'permutations' in the national and state life" (p. 248-249).

Pavelić considers fascism a political movement "which Providence intended to carry out the role of the saviour of mankind in this most perilous period, which, for humanity and its highest achievements, is represented by Bolshevism in terms of its content, its manner and the significance of those who created it, who are leading it and who want to

impose it on the entire world” (p. 250) According to Pavelić, the entire Italian culture and civilisation on the Roman legacy had to stand up to Marxism. “The land of Cato, Cicero and Caesar also had to produce a Mussolini” (p. 250). It had been an expression of law and justice, based on honesty, morality and protection of private property, but also of the pinnacle of art and literature, and particularly of family values. According to Pavelić, Mussolini was a leader the people gave birth to in order to protect those values, shaping at the same time the fascist movement in accordance with his personal traits. “The German people also gave from itself, from its broad layers, a leader who very quickly renewed the great power and value of its people, lifting it even stronger and more conscious, more powerful and readier than ever before against the shackles of the imposed peace ‘order’ and against the Bolshevik invasion. The old German armies that secure the homeland for the German people were brought back to life, and the national socialist, racial Germany got rid of the infectious Bolshevik racial ‘mixture’, and wrestled with the venomous Bolshevik dragon that had begun spreading its wings over the entire Europe. And it will crush its head. It is futile to attempt to limit fascism only to the two said people. It is also futile to say that fascism is not goods for export. Bolshevism is generally evil and wishes to rule everywhere. Fascism is in a struggle for life or death with it, therefore, it has to defeat it everywhere, in every corner of the globe, and the inevitable consequence of that is that it will also become general, ‘universal’; and it will spread even to places it is not being exported to, because it is an integral part of the people’s struggle for life and against the death that Bolshevism brings. Perhaps that is the meaning of Mussolini’s words that this century is a century of fascism. The cannons in Spain speak about this today, where the history of struggle between the two worlds is being written in blood” (p. 254-255).

#### **p) Pavelić’s Manipulation of the Bogomils**

In 1968 in Madrid, Pavelić’s daughter Višnja began publishing the Works of her father in a private production. The first volume is a book of memoir prose, *Experiences*, in which Pavelić selectively looks back at some political issues too. He demonstrates a solid level of literacy in doing that, but also a lack of general education, while his historical knowledge is disastrously poor and at the level of village story-tellers, who recount the contents of the historiographic pamphlets of Dominik Mandić. In a series of laments over the sad historical fate of the Croatian people, Ante Pavelić glorifies here the heroism of Duke Hrvoje Vukčić and, neglecting the fact that he was mostly to blame for bringing Turks into Bosnia, laments over Hrvoje’s untimely death, without leaving any descendants. “Who knows whether Croatian history would have taken a completely different direction, had his groundwork been realised. The Turks probably could not have taken the Bosniak part of Croatia had the entire kingdom come together, but this part would have resisted, just like the north-western part resisted. All the difficult consequences of the lasting Turkish occupation of Bosnia would have been avoided; not as many inhabitants would have left these areas and migrated outside the Croatian borders to Bačka, Banat, Gradište in Austria, and even South Italy, as was the case with those Croats who settled in the Italian province of Abruzzi. That Croatian population would not have moved out, nor would their hearths, still warm, be settled by the *Armatoles*, consisting of various Balkan elements who followed the Turkish army and

carried out looting on their behalf in order to provide food for the soldiers and harem slaves for the Turkish pashas and other dignitaries“(p. 98).

Thus Pavelić writes about the Serbs, avoiding even the mention of their name, and negating that they are even ethnically Serbs. He claims that the Turkish army had at one time dragged behind them “. . . the collected remnants of the Roman population throughout the Balkans, who were left behind from the times of the Roman Empire, as their family names demonstrate: Mamula, Zacula, Drakula, Djerman, Suput, Bilbija, Princip and so many others; who plundered and set fires, and who took away and sold to the Turks small children, who were later to fill harems and the ranks of the infamous Janissary army. After the war, these Armatoles no longer returned to where they had come from, but stayed on the plundered territory, and later, up until the present day, served every foreigner seeking to impose – in any way – his will upon the Croatian people” (p. 98). Otherwise, Pavelić mostly holds against Duke Hrvoje the fact that he stayed a loyal Bogomil until the end of his life, because – he believes – had he agreed to be Catholicised, he could have taken over the “throne of the entire Croatian kingdom” (p.99). Elaborating on this thesis, he says that, at the time, “. . . the Roman Pope was considered to be not only the supreme spiritual head of the entire Christian faith, but he also stood above all kings and other rulers in secular matters as well, so no one could be considered to be a true ruler, equal to others, if he had not been given a crown and other insignia of royal power by the Pope – that is, if he had not been crowned either by the Pope himself or an envoy of his. Those weaklings at the Bosniak throne were also Bogomils – all of them – but each and every one of them, when they would take over the throne, would go under the wing of the Catholic Church in order to obtain papal approval. Naturally, they did not really become Catholics, nor did they ever get papal approval. Hrvoje was a firm character and could not have pretended or begged for the crown, and the Pope, of course, would never have agreed to have the throne of the Croatian kingdom taken over by a heretic, which the Bogomils were considered to be, even more so because the ones who wore on their heads the crown of the Apostolic King Saint Stephen would thereby have to leave the Croatian throne for good. There lay the motive why the apostolic kings repeatedly pressured the Bosniak kings to eradicate the Bogomil ‘godlessness’” (p. 99).

As for the Bogomil faith, Pavelić claims that it carried over directly from Bulgaria to Croatia, while it had never been present in Serbia. In his words, “. . . it is certain that the Bogomil faith has been widely spread both in Bulgaria and in Croatia, the best proof of which is the appearance of Islam among the Bulgarians and the Croats, i.e. the conversion of a part of the Bulgarians and a part of the Croats to Islam, namely the so-called Pomaks in Bulgaria and the Croat Muslims in the eastern Croatian counties, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among other Balkan nations, among the Greeks, Serbs and Romanians, there has been no Bogomil faith, so it is understandable why among them there have been no conversions to Islam either. A particular phenomenon is the appearance of the conversion to Islam in the Novi Pazar sandžak, from which it can be concluded that the Bogomil faith had been widely spread there as well; certainly not among the Serb, but among the Croat population, which was probably there, in the areas populated by the Muslims today; and, it appears, they belonged to a certain upper layer of the population” (p. 101).

Since the Bogomils allegedly had, after converting to the Turkish faith, become fanatical Muslims, as Pavelić continues to piece it together, they started to “. . . force

their [Catholic compatriots] to accept Islam, i.e. they set off consciously destroying everything not inclined to converting to Islam. There is also another interesting motive of the Bosniak Croats for this activity here. The time had come when they instinctively felt the need to liberate their compatriots, not only politically, but also religiously.

“Just like they had earlier dreamed of liberating Croatia from the foreign dynasty and thus saving it politically, so having become believing Muslims, firmly believing that only the faith of the prophet holds sure salvation for the next life, life after death, they now wanted to liberate them from Christianity and bring them to Islam, so that they could find salvation in eternity as well. When the attacks of the Turkish army were added to this, followed by the Vlach Armatoles and harami, who plundered and set fire, snatching women and children in the footsteps of the army; the horror of the population was so great that they fled their hearth and everything they had, leaving without a second thought as far away as possible from the reach of this curse of God. It so happened, that in these areas, the population that stayed was mainly the converts to Islam, while most of the other population fled to the north and east. In place of the population who had fled, different population settled over time, in two ways. In one way, the said Vlach haramis took over the vacant hearths, and in another way, owners of large estates acquired from the Balkans a new labour force to farm the deserted fields, they usually being of the same origin as those who followed the Turkish army; and the land owners inhabited the settlements using them. All these newcomers from the Balkans belonged, of course, to the Eastern Church, just like the rest of the Balkan population, thus they brought Orthodoxy to our country, which fell under the Greek Orthodox Church” (p.113).

Pavelić attributes the Bosniaks for having preserved the pure ‘Croatian’ language. “The purest form of the Croatian language has been preserved in Muslim houses and families (as well as the purest race), because for reasons of religion and tradition, they were mostly separated from outside influences and mixings” (p.117-118).

### **q) A Caricature of the Serbian and Croatian Ethnic Genesis**

For the end of the nineteenth century, at the time when the Hungarian exponent Khuen Hedervary was the ban, Pavelić says that the “. . . entire Croatian people, all the peasants and citizens, were imbued with the ideas of Ante Starčević, the great leader and teacher of the people, who had established the Party of Rights<sup>33</sup> on the programme of Croatian national autonomy and independence of the Croatian state, who summarised his programme in one of his parliament speeches in two short sentences: ‘God and the Croats’ and ‘Croatia to Croats’, i.e. in Croatia there shall be no other ruler but God and the Croats themselves, and Croatia shall not belong to anyone other than the Croatian people. He based his programme on the Croatian national right, i.e. on the historical and, from time immemorial, legitimate right of the Independent State of Croatia that formerly existed, so he named his party the Party of the Croatian National Right, or Party of Rights for short” (p. 185). In order to fracture the Croatian national unison and rule more easily, Khuen Hedervary, as Pavelić states, primarily relied on Orthodoxy, so he was the one who proclaimed them Serbs, which means between 1885 and 1903. “Given the fact that this part of the population belonged to the Orthodox Church, just like the Serbian

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<sup>33</sup> This party is also sometimes referred to as the Justice Party.

people in Serbia belong to Orthodoxy, Khuen thought it would be easiest to discern it from the rest of the Croatian population if they were proclaimed to be not Croats, but Serbs. Those who, as mentioned above, immediately stood by Khuen for their self-serving reasons embraced this, so they immediately began great propaganda and an effort on winning over this population for the newly invented theory; and Khuen made all the power he held available for this purpose, as well as all the financial and other means that he had at his disposal as the ban. At first, this population did not care much about this new theory, so the people declared themselves and called themselves Orthodox Croats, just as before; but when Khuen got the assistance of various intellectuals (educated people), who had also been under the influence of certain propaganda, particularly the Orthodox priests and primary school teachers, then the propaganda of Serbianisation really started spreading among the population as well. The work on that was not only of a folk-propaganda nature: it was also systematic, and was based on giving great benefits and personal and material profit to everyone who participated in that work, and supported this policy of Khuen's" (p. 190).

What bothers Pavelić the most, of course, are the Serbian intellectuals, who did the most to strengthen Serbian national awareness. He tries to impute that these intellectuals had been bribed to spread the foreign ideology, and says, "Thus instituted was a system that benefited all intellectuals, who got the best positions and appointments in public services, and the tradesmen, craftsmen and other Orthodox people in free professions were given various permissions and concessions that other citizens could not get. All these people naturally started greatly intriguing among the people, and slowly started winning over the Orthodox population to that effort. Moreover, a law was later passed that removed the Orthodox population from the jurisdiction of the Greek Eastern Church, subjecting it to the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchy, thus finally opening the road for the Serbianisation of that part of the population in Croatia. Khuen thus succeeded in his intention, thereby doing the most harm to the Croatian people, because he – and later any other enemy of the Croatian people, whoever he was and wherever he came from – could use this population, once it had been led astray in this way, and manipulate it as a means against the Croatian people and its national and state benefits" (p. 190-191).

Neglecting the fact that all the Orthodox people in Croatia and Slavonia have for centuries called themselves Rasci or Rašani, and even the Roman Catholics in Slavonia have called themselves Rasci Šokci; writing about his stay in the Novi Pazar sandžak, Pavelić states that, "Raša is the original former Serbian state. . . Through this land runs the river Raša, or as the Romans used to call it during the time of the Roman Empire, which once included this land: Rascia. This is why the Serbs were generally known as Rasci before. Of the name Rasci there remains only a distant memory in the name Raci, still used today in Vojvodina to name the Serbs who fled before the Turks and settled there, under the leadership of Bishop Crnojevic, and who were then still known as Rasci, because their country was Raša" (p.195). So, he would tie the Rasci exclusively to Vojvodina, namely to Bačka and Banat, negating their migration to Croatia, Slavonia and Srem. The Orthodox population there are not Serbs for him, they are Vlachs, regardless of the fact that they had always spoken exclusively in the Serb language and had an enormous linguistic influence on the remaining chakavians and kajkavians.

As regards the Croatian ethnic genesis, Ante Pavelić displays it in such a way that it must resemble a caricature to any even slightly informed intellectual. He explains, "Where from and how the Croatian people originated is interpreted in different ways,

but today it is difficult to establish this accurately and reliably. The fact is, however, that in this territory there are three or maybe even four kinds of people found, namely, the Goths, who had already been settled here during the migration of the peoples, which had already begun at the time, and who were not necessarily numerous; the Slavs, who were numerous, particularly in the Pannonian area, i.e. the plains by the rivers Sava, Drava and Danube, and who mainly worked the land; the remainder of the Roman Latin population, particularly by the coast and under Dinara; and, finally, perhaps also a small remnant of the native Illyrian population, particularly in Doclea, today's Montenegro. The Croats have, as can obviously be seen in retrospect, completely melted and assimilated this mixture of different people, giving them their name and included them in their state: in one word, they Croatianised them, ethnically and politically, so these distinct foreign ethnic factors disappeared, and the Croatian factor remained, not only as the ruling one, but as the only one. This indicates the great strength and organisational and assimilating power of the arriving Croats. Naturally, even if these nations had been completely Croatianised, the traces of their ethnic characteristics could not have completely disappeared even today, thus they can still be noticed in the population in certain areas. Hence, the Slavic traits can unequivocally be perceived, both physical and mental, to a large extent in the population of the Pannonian area, particularly in the area of the kajkavian dialect between the rivers Sava and Drava, where there is a prevalence of the blond type, the peaceful, farming Slavic element; the traits of a tall, organising and combative original Croat population, with somewhat darker hair, in the areas of Kapela, Velebit, the Dinara plain and all the areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and a small remnant of the typically Roman population in the Imotska Krajina, particularly in Gornji and Donji Dolac, which largely preserved both the somatological and mental traits of the Roman-Vlach population" (p.284-285).

For Pavelić, all kinds of thought-up speculations have the value of facts. When they are in conflict with irrefutable facts, it is the facts that lose the battle if they do not fit the national ideology. And he is in a dilemma himself, when he is supposed to pinpoint the remains of the ancient Slavic population in real or imagined Croatian ethnic territory. "Of course it is difficult to locate these remains today, except in the mentioned typical case of Dolac, since with the passage of time and particularly during the Turkish incursions, the internal migrations of the population completely disrupted these neighbouring borders; so today, for example, the population of Slavonia and Srem is mainly of Croatian origins, being that these lands have, after the Asiatic incursions, followed by Turkish incursions, again lost their population, which was replaced by a population arriving from other territories, where they had been forced out of by an enemy. Whether the original Croats were of Gothic or Iranian origins, whether they had learned the Slavic language even in their earlier native countries, or they had accepted it from the Slavic Croatianised population in the new homeland, I claim that it will never be established with any certainty, because there is a lack of abundant and reliable sources. Besides, as regards the language, it seems to me that the Croatian language, along with Lithuanian and the vanished Eastern Prussian language, is, of all the indo-European languages, the closest to the source language, or the original group of the indo-European language tree, because many of its words are preserved almost in their original form, while, on the other hand, almost all the words of the Croatian language keep in them the root, and very often the suffixes of all languages, which can be brought down to the indo-European language base, and in their very original form" (p. 285).

Pavelić simultaneously gives the Roman Catholic Church great credit for the historic survival of the Croatian people, but also reprimands it for often neglecting Croatia's national interests in its quest for expanding and strengthening Catholicism. He is convinced that one thousand years of tradition of preserving the nation-making awareness is the highest Croatian value, and the legend of the former state and royal glory is a permanent inspiration for the people. "In the Croatian people permanently lived a memory of those times, and supported in it the awareness of their own value, capacity and life strength. This awareness has, in every century, as well as in recent times, not only supported the spirit of the Croatian people, but has always encouraged it, to preserve its distinctiveness, to defend its statehood, and to raise their heads high after every adversity and misfortune; to spring up to their feet and finally, never to leave the thought of their complete national and state independence, not even when it was repeatedly virtually crushed; and when, according to every external sign, it would have to have been completely destroyed and vanished. I am convinced that the Croatian people, given the circumstances it later lived under, really would have vanished as an ethnic notion, had it not founded its strong unified states and had it not been maintained by the high and aware consciousness of the history of its own statehood, particularly given the fact that since the beginning, since it accepted the Christian faith, it has belonged to the Roman Church; that it has never sided with the Eastern Church, and that it has not established its own national church. All the nations who had their own national church, particularly those in the Balkans, had, even in the most difficult times and in the moments when they faced extinction, the largest and sometimes the only tool for their survival in their own national church. In the past, when national awareness – in today's sense of the word – did not exist in nations, it was indeed the church who preserved these peoples' distinctiveness. The Croatian people had no such support. Furthermore, its affiliation with the Western Roman Church has always been detrimental to its national and state aspirations. The Roman Popes, heirs of the secular authority of the Roman Empire, could not look at the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, by the nature of things, with eyes other than the eyes of Latins, so they named us in the Latin language and by the Latin mentality, beginning with the times of Croatian princes, along with whose names they wrote 'Dux Sclavorum' (Slavic prince), and through the times of 'Regni Hungaria' (Hungarian Kingdom), with whom we had been identified even during the rule of Saint Stephen; and through being Nerentans, Morlachs, and Šćavians, through the Venetian Lion of St. Marc and the Catholicism of the Austrian emperors, all the way to the honourable name of 'Yugoslavs', under which label the Croats had (by the Vatican's mistakes) to serve for the proliferation of Catholicism in the Balkans" (p. 291-292).

Conspicuously tendentiously interpreting the contents of an old lyrical song, at one time translated from the Latin original by Pavao Riter Vitezović, Pavelić even explains the annexation of Croatia to Hungary as a result of a conflict between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox political factor among the Croatian land owners and the prevalence of those loyal to the interests of the Roman Church. "But there are some signs that these two opposing parties existed in a mutual struggle even during the life of King Zvonimir. It is thought that Zvonimir was too attached to the Roman policy, which was opposed by the so-called Svačić's party; and if it is true that Zvonimir had been killed, who knows whether this party had anything to do with it; perhaps it thought to end the influence of the Papal Rome in Croatia. It is not out of the question that this had

been a struggle between Rome and Byzantium, and that the policy of the Byzantine Empire had some connections with this party – that is, it supported its opposition to Rome. If Rome could not have prevented Zvonimir's death, it certainly did everything to stop the opposing party from taking rule in Croatia, and to stop any of its supporters from becoming the king, which would signify not only an increasing political distance from Rome, but also probably a religious, or Church distancing. It is easily possible that Rome considered it the best guarantee of its influence over Croatia if the dynasty of Arpad were to come to the throne, whose kings wear on their heads the crown of Saint Stephen, the apostolic founder of the Arpad dynasty. No one claims that the Croats would have signed that agreement out of fear before the Hungarian military, but for higher political reasons, because they were in a peril that threatened both Croatia and Hungary from the Byzantine Empire. It is, therefore, more understandable and probable that it was Rome that played the main role in the matter of that agreement, and that the tribes under its influence and pressure conceded to have a Hungarian come to the Croatian throne. Rome easily found an external justification in the fact that Zvonimir's widow was the Hungarian king's sister. From this type of question it is easily concluded why, with the passage of time, the heirs of Coloman as Croatian kings no longer crowned themselves with the Croatian crown of Zvonimir on Croatian soil, but only with the Hungarian crown of Saint Stephen, no longer coming for coronation to the Croatian coronation town of Biograd by the sea. At that time, the coronation was only performed by the papal envoy, and it was not considered valid (in the West, of course) unless it was performed by him, and it was impossible to do it any other way. Evidently, in accordance with the wishes of the Hungarian kings, the popes no longer sent their coronation envoy to Croatia, but only to Hungary, which suited their wishes that the crown of Saint Stephen became the Croatian crown as well, so the crown of Zvonimir fell into oblivion and vanished" (p.294-295).

#### **r) The Ustasha State Founded on Starčević's Hatred**

As a follower of Ante Starčević and a prominent political activist of the Croatian Party of Rights, which he later transformed into the Ustasha movement, Pavelić credits his ideological leader and teacher with being the first to have openly, precisely and completely expressed the true political disposition of the Croatian people, basing it on the historical right and the thesis of supreme nation-building continuity. "The science of Ante Starčević can be briefly summarised in these words: The Croatian people is a distinct and independent ethnic unit. Every ethnic mix of the Croatian people with any other people is an ethnic-historic fallacy, harmful to the people's benefits. The Croatian people have a historical right to its state independence. Since the establishment of the independent Croatian state in the ancient historical times until the recent times, all the political acts of the Croatian people have been the emanation of its Croatian statehood, and all the laws created by the Croatian people during the centuries, and all the agreements it has concluded with other nations and states, are the sources of its state right, and the expression of the sovereignty of the Croatian state and the Croatian national leadership in it. Based on that historical right, the Croatian people has the right to live a free national life in its own independent and sovereign state of Croatia. This science applied in the political program of Starčević's party means that each foreign political influence must be removed, that only the Croatian people shall rule it, that it



should achieve full state independence towards the exterior, towards all other nations and states, as well as towards Austria and Hungary, and that every state-legal tie with the latter two should stop; and that the Croatian people even has the right to determine its position towards the Habsburg dynasty – and with the same right, used once to elect and elevate that dynasty to the Croatian throne, it can annul this election and oust the dynasty from the throne. Consistent with this historical-legal foundation of Starčević's science, his party was named the 'Party of the Croatian state Right' or, shortened in use, the 'Party of Rights'" (p. 348-349).

Ante Pavelić spares no praise when he describes Starčević's personal traits. In his words, "Ante Starčević was not only a great Croatian patriot and of the most iron significance, the strongest ever given by the Croatian people; but he was also a learned man, so he gave scientific foundations to his science, basing it on scientific tenets and existing legal and state-legal facts and acts. He elaborated this science of his in countless writings and speeches, and no one ever succeeded, not even the most learned and most furious opponents, nor the most hardened crooks, to contest it in any way or in any matter. Ante Starčević was not a demagogue, and actually, not a party organiser, or, using an ugly expression of today, 'an organiser of the masses' either; he was a catonian teacher of national policy, a national genius, an ideal national leader, and a far-sighted political prophet; and yet the entire Croatian people huddled under his flag, approved of his science and followed his policy; and they gathered in his party. Through several decades, there has not been a person in the broad layers of the Croatian people who would not support Starčević and the Party of Rights, let alone be against him or his science. That is understandable, because only the people only its broad layers – the peasants, workers and the so-called little people, unspoiled by unhealthy sciences and foreign ideas, have a true and reliable sense of what is right and righteous, what is unconditionally good and salutary and what is their own and in accordance with their wishes. He who listens to the pulse of the people in politics will never be able to make a mistake. And Starčević, a genuine man of the people, sprung up directly from the people, knowing the pulse of the people well: through his mouth the people spoke, and in his work, the genuine will of the people was reflected" (p. 349-350).

Pavelić accuses the Serbs and Serbia of being a mere instrument of the Russian policy in the Balkans. For Petar Karadjordjević he says that from the day he ascended to power, ". . . the foreign policy of Serbia has been run by the Russian mission to Belgrade, and that was the policy of Russian expansion into the Balkans. For this policy, Orthodox Russia selected Orthodox Serbia. The Russian Balkans policy was nothing else but a Russian attempt at obtaining an important influence on the Mediterranean Sea, and that, of course, first meant eliminating any Austrian influence in the Balkans, and then completely pushing Austria away from the Adriatic Sea. Since Austria was a naval state only through the Croatian lands, these lands had to be severed from it and merged with a Balkan state under Russian influence, i.e. Serbia. But since that firstly required winning over the Croats, whether peacefully or by force, or by deceit, that was Serbia's role, and in doing so, Serbia used the so-called Serbs in Croatia, their Pribičević's party and the naïve Croatian intellectuals, who were spineless and depraved of Croatian national pride. That was a weapon in the hands of Serbia, or Russia, that would tear away the Croatian lands from the Monarchy and annex them to Serbia when it came to an armed conflict between Russia and Austria-Hungary, because the Croats, seduced in that manner, will themselves require annexation to Serbia once they are free from

Austria-Hungary, so that their country will be an integral part of Serbia, which will, in turn, become great and strong, the largest and strongest country in the Balkans, and the Croats will have become Serbs” (p. 358).

Concerning the deep split in the ranks of the Croatian Party of Rights before the end of World War I, Pavelić condemns the positions and behaviour of Mile Starčević and the dentist Ante Pavelić for accepting the Yugoslav option and compromising in regards to the Serbian issue in general. “The core of the party remains loyal to the science of Ante Starčević, that there cannot be two political nations in Croatia, i.e. Croatian and Serbian, when there is no Serbian people in it at all; that is only the enemy politics trying to create a Serbian people from the migrant Vlach Orthodox population, and particularly, the core of the party says that there cannot and must not be any forsaking of Croatian national distinctiveness (individuality), and it must keep up a fierce struggle against the so-called Serbo-Croatian national unity and Yugoslavhood” (p. 364).

In emigration, the Ustasha Croatian headman continued justifying the former Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the infamous anti-Serbian trial for grand treason in Zagreb. “Serbia, that it to say Greater Serbian policies and propaganda, caused Austria to hurry with the annexation and declare it in 1908. After the rise of the Karadjordjević dynasty to the Serbian throne, an unrestrained Greater Serbian propaganda began immediately, not only in Serbia, but in Croatia as well, and particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that propaganda proclaiming these latter two provinces as Serbian lands and openly requesting their annexation to Serbia. Not only the various private societies in Serbia, but the official ones as well, “. . . whether public or secret, in which the most responsible factors in the state took part, developed a frenzied propaganda of the Serbianhood of Bosnia, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, they carried out organising the Orthodox population into Serbian organisations and Serbian societies. Austrian policies and the administrative occupation regions in Bosnia and Herzegovina allowed this propaganda for a long time, moreover, they supported it, not wanting to fall out with Serbia and hoping constantly that Karadjordjević’s Serbia would eventually take the path of friendship with Austria and become its satellite” (p. 365-366). Pavelić calls such Austrian policies ludicrous, claiming that in the entire country, the government supported an option planted by external factors in inter-ethnic relations, at the detriment of the loyal nations. “This ludicrous policy of Austrian and Hungarian statesmen had its best expression in Bosnia, where they supported Serbian propaganda and created Serbianhood themselves, giving it a leading role, while they frowned at any Croatian activity. They themselves declared all the Orthodox population Serbs, but the Catholics and Muslims, in accordance with their great statesman wisdom, could not be allowed to belong to any nationality: they were simply Catholics and Muslims, or, as the latter were known, ‘Mohammedans’, as they were wrongly named” (p. 366-367).

### **s) Pavelić’s Threat of Conversion to the Orthodox Faith**

From such a distance in time, it appears more an anecdote than a fact, that Ante Pavelić also belonged to a group of students of the Zagreb University who publicly threatened to convert to the Orthodox faith if the area of Rijeka was, in a church sense, separated from the Senj Roman Catholic Bishopric, and if it formed its own. As he states, “. . . we were the first ones to act, the members of the Senj-Rijeka Bishopric, as it

was officially known. After several meetings and agreements – there were about a hundred of us from this bishopric – we reached a conclusion: protesting against the intended secession of Rijeka and calling upon all relevant political and Church factors to decisively stand up to this violence aimed against Croatia and the Croatian people. Together, we signed a statement and an obligation that, in case Rijeka actually secedes, we would all convert to the Orthodox faith and support the entire population of this bishopric in doing the same thing. When, on the next day, this conclusion of ours was published in the newspapers, there was a general uproar, and the entire Croatian student body came close to a boiling point, organising large manifestations of their solidarity with us. A general assembly of the entire student body was convened, and it came out in the strongest possible terms not only against Hungary, but against the Croatian government as well, and against the indifferent Church districts in Croatia, and against the Vatican and the Pope. After the assembly, the entire student body set off in a procession to Kaptol, in front of the archbishop's residence, to demonstrate against the archbishop and against the indifferent position of the Church authorities. As there had been a seminary at Kaptol at the time, all the students of divinity stood at their windows, and joined the demonstration, giving vent to their dissatisfaction and disagreement with the intended secession. The entire issue received a very serious character, so the Church districts probably had the impression that the secession of Rijeka could have far-reaching consequences on the religious field, and this is why the execution of this intention came to a halt, and then, step by step, the entire issue started falling into oblivion, until it was completely taken off the agenda. The Vatican was forced to ask the Hungarians to give up on their request, for the time being" (p. 397-398).

All of this took place in 1911, and it was used by Pavelić in his emigration meditations, not only for new anti-Serbian barbs, but for a return to his failed attempt to establish a "Croatian" Orthodox Church. As he discusses in detail, ". . . the decision to convert to the Orthodox faith hit the Serbs the most. They were the ones who most protested against this conclusion at the University and did nothing to hide their open discontent. And this was understandable. The Serbian politics in Croatia were based on the Orthodox faith, i.e. those politics declared the Orthodox population that arrived in migration as Serbs, even though this population was of Vlachian, not Serbian, descent. If, at the time of their migration, there had been a Croatian Orthodox Church, all this population would have naturally joined that Church and would never have been given a chance to be distinct from the other Croats. As there was no Orthodox Church in Croatia at the time, this population remained religiously split from the rest of the people. These migrants were eventually Croatianised, and declared themselves Orthodox Croats until the middle of the nineteenth century, but religiously they were under the Greek-Eastern Church, and no one in Croatia had ever thought of creating a national church for them – a Croatian Orthodox Church – like all the other Orthodox churches are national. Later, when under Hungarian influence, the Orthodox population of Croatia was subjected to the Serbian Patriarchate, it automatically entered, in a religious sense, the Serbian National Orthodox Church. This gave grounds to the Serbian politics to declare all this Orthodox population of Croatia, both the one of Vlachian and the one of Greek ethnic origin, Serbs. As it is known, the Serbian Orthodox Church has always been the largest lever of the Serbian national policies, and its founder St. Sava (Sava Nemanjić), as the second-born royal son, gave his church clear national-political traits. Thus Serbian politics, through the Orthodox Church and Orthodox clergy, began the greatest

propaganda for the Serbianisation of the Orthodox population in Croatia, and this activity particularly peaked during Khuen's rule, which had, for reasons already mentioned, most generously supported this Serbianisation" (p. 399-400).

As regards this specific case of an alleged Serbian opposition to the political threat of Croatian Catholic students to convert to the Orthodox faith, Pavelić explains it as follows: "On this occasion, when we took upon us an obligation to convert to the Orthodox faith, and to take into it the population of the Senj-Rijeka Bishopric, the Serbian politics felt all the peril that was contained there, for itself and its propaganda, because it was known that we had been exclusively proponents of Starčević's ideology, and that we would not convert to the Serbian Orthodox faith, but that we were intending to establish our own Croatian Orthodox Church. This peril for Serbian politics was even greater, because it concerned the Senj-Rijeka Bishopric, which covers the entire territory of Lika, i.e. the entire territory of the then Lika-Krbava county and the entire Modruško-Rijeka county of the time; therefore, the areas where there had already been large numbers of an Orthodox population. Establishing a Croatian Orthodox Church in that area and among the existing Orthodox population would mean closing the doors forever to any Serbian propaganda, because it would have erased the religious difference between the nations of this large part of Croatia, the population that had been Orthodox up until then would have found itself, by the nature of things, right in the middle of the Croatian Orthodox faith, and certainly and virtually unnoticeably would have become an integral part of the Croatian Orthodox Church. Over night, it would have been a failure of all the political-propaganda work that the Serbian propaganda had carried out for more than half a century, and in which work a particularly prominent position was held by Khuen's associate and, for many years, the grand zhupan of the Lika-Krbava county, Bude Budisavljević, who had been creating Serbianhood in those areas, and who rightfully considered himself to be its father. This was the source of the great concern of the Serbian politics due to that event, and it would not be completely wrong to conclude that this concern greatly contributed to the secession of Rijeka from the Senj Bishopric not happening, because the Serbian part of the Croatian-Serbian coalition also invested their influence with the Hungarians to withdraw their request and to let the issue fall into oblivion, for the time being" (p. 400-401).

#### **t) The Interpretation of the Sarajevo Assassination as an Anti-Croatian Act**

Accusing Serbia of having organised the Sarajevo assassination and the murder of Franz Ferdinand in order to prevent the trialist re-arrangement of Austria-Hungary, Pavelić claims, "Serbia had no intention of causing the war then, but preventing certain events that the Greater Serbian politics saw coming, which would eternally and finally disable any further Greater Serbian propaganda in Croatian lands; which would mean a complete breakdown of the Greater Serbian hope that the Croatian lands would sometime belong to Serbia, when the Habsburg empire disintegrates, or when it is destroyed in a European war, sooner or later" (p.416). This is why he interprets the assassination as a primarily anti-Croatian act, to hinder the effort of equalising the nation-building rights of the Croats with that of the Germans or Hungarians. "Here in Croatia, this request for equality was expressed with the word 'trialism', i.e. the request from the Croatian side was to institute a tri-partite system in place of the dual system,

which would establish Croatia as the third factor, along with Austria and Hungary, naturally, with the simultaneous unification of all the Croatian lands: Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Istria, into the Kingdom of Croatia. In that manner, as far as we are concerned, the problem of the independence and unification of Croatia would have been resolved ‘within the framework of the Habsburg monarchy’, as expressed in the programme of the Party of Rights in 1893” (p. 417-418). It was openly attributed to Franz Ferdinand that he was preparing for such a re-arrangement as soon as he took over the royal throne, and it was known that he had great pro-Croatian sympathy.

In these facts Ante Pavelić tries to see the reasons why the “Greater Serbian politics”, as he says, tried to prevent, in every conceivable way, the pro-Croatian oriented Austro-Hungarian Archduke from coming to the Habsburg throne. “They counted on the Croats being fully satisfied with the new position that Croatia would assume in the transformed empire, and that would have two disastrous consequences for them: firstly, after that, in the Croatian lands, the Greater Serbian propaganda could yield no success, because there would be nothing left to promise in order to deceive the Croats, i.e. the intellectual layers; and secondly, after the cessation of any Hungarian influence on the internal political situation in Croatia, i.e. when the Hungarian power-holders would no longer have influence over the appointment of the ban and the government, it would mean a complete failure of the possibility of parties supported and assisted artificially and against the will of the Croatian people coming to power in Croatia, that were based on the Greater Serbian policies of the Kingdom of Serbia, the parties of Serbo-Croatianism and Yugoslavism, such as those gathered in the Croatian-Serbian coalition; and it would mean the failure of the Serbianisation of the minority Orthodox population, which had always, under the directives from Serbia, served the Hungarians and any other enemy of the Croatian people, just so that it could be in power and use it against Croatia and for the benefit of Greater Serbian goals of the power-holders in the Kingdom of Serbia and the Karadjordjević dynasty. There would no longer be a possibility in Croatia of creating politics that would directly aim to worsen the political and economic situation, which were to make the Croatian people as miserable as possible, to make it, on one hand, weak and powerless, and on the other hand, more discontented and thus more susceptible to the Serbian propaganda; and to put it in such a mental disposition that it does not care what happens to it next, as long as it is out of the Habsburg monarchy. It was certainly needed to prevent this from happening, and that is why the Archduke Franz Ferdinand had to be removed, because he was considered as somebody who would have carried that out. So lacking other means, the old means, used successfully so many times in Serbia on their own rulers, were used: taking his life away. That was done in Sarajevo, on the first opportunity, on the day of 28 June, i.e. St. Vitus’ Day, the day of the Serbian pledged vengeful thought. Serbia did not, therefore, wish to set off a world war with this assassination: it primarily wanted to eliminate a peril that threatened its political goals, which were timed for a later date and in circumstances thought to be more conducive to their realisation” (p. 422-423).

## **Part Five**

### **The Roman Catholic Character of the Ustasha Genocide Against the Serbian People**

#### **1. The Capital Study of Viktor Novak on Croatian Clericalism**

Professor Dr. Viktor Novak, one of the greatest Croatian scientists of the twentieth century, published the book *Magnum Crimen: Half a Century of Clericalism in Croatia*, in Zagreb, in 1948.. The author, being an excellent historian, had at one time been a scientific associate of the Vatican Archive, previously raised as a convinced Catholic, but deeply disappointed and distressed with the domination of clerical fascism in the church he belonged to. Immediately after its publication, the intellectual public suppressed Novak's book, and soon it was withdrawn from bookshop windows and burnt, systematically forced into oblivion. The second edition was published almost four decades later (*Nova Knjiga*, Belgrade, 1986). Novak had planned for an even more ambitious endeavour in three enormous volumes, which would pertain to all the recent Croatian history from the aspect of the role of the Church, classifying it in three periods: the time of the Illyrian Movement, the activity of Strossmayer, and the first half of the twentieth century. He did not succeed in realising his intention to the end, but he did elaborate in detail the third period of organised clericalism, beginning with the First Croatian Catholic Congress in 1900.

#### **a) Clerical Fascism in the Fertile Soil of Occupation**

That was a period of Roman Catholic clerical fascism, and “. . . its fundamental means will always be secrecy, theft, untruth, forgery and mystification – camouflaged with the concern for the salvation of Croatian souls, with the concern for the Church and

faith, which has always been persecuted. All of this just to serve the interests of the greatest and most persistent enemies of the people” (p. xi). The clerical fascists initiated, through Church sermons and their own press, a broad offensive against everything progressive, democratic and libertarian. “Clerical fascism skilfully assumed its position in the so-called Croatian national movement, striking the most intimate ‘agreement’ with V. Maček. It could be seen, ever since Munich, that clerical fascism would play the complete role given to it by its supreme commander. For, the breakdown of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of clerical fascist Slovakia caused among the clericals in Croatia delighted approval and agreement with the first move of Hitler’s aggression. This Slavic misfortune was designated in newspapers and clericals’ sermons as ‘a victory for Catholic and religious thought over godless materialism’. Everything that had been taking place under the regime of the Cvetković-Maček ‘agreement’ hinted at a preparation of the greatest treason. And it happened as soon as the aggressor laid his plundering hand on Yugoslavia” (p. xi-xii).

During World War II, “. . . all this Ustasha terror, protected and inflamed in a planned manner by both occupying forces, would never even nearly reach such momentum and scope, had it not been aided and inflamed by the most combative enemy of anything that was freedom-loving in the Independent State of Croatia – Catholic clericalism, the real, monstrous clerical fascism. As more time passed by, with it multiplied the horrors of occupation, and there was a conviction that in the infernal policies of the occupying forces and their Ustasha mercenaries, there was the participation of not only the higher and lower ‘representatives of heaven’, but the entire ramified clerical fascist apparatus, as much of it as had been nurtured in the first Yugoslavia. In the horrors of the medieval, inquisition phenomena, which blazed up as vampires in the many concentration camps in the Independent State of Croatia, particularly in the most horrible one, in Jasenovac, where alongside the Ustasha beasts, there were, in the roles of active executors of all these inhumane acts, also the representatives of the strongest organisation, the Catholic Action, the crusaders, and their former educators and guides – the priests” (p. xii). The clerical fascist idea, having been developed for decades, reached its peak under the conditions of the occupation. “If the ‘First Croatian Catholic Congress’, in a politically calculated manner identified Catholicism with Croatianhood (certainly in Croatia), then the terrorist Catholicisation in the Independent State of Croatia was a joint endeavour of Ustashas and the clerical fascists. A racist-Ustasha Independent State of Croatia was created, and at the same time, a fold of sheep with one shepherd, the clerical fascist ‘Civitas Dei’ – even with the help of Jasenovac and other concentration camps. The Ustashas, as well as the occupying forces, had to serve the clerical fascists in this purpose – the whole apparatus of a modern inquisition – which even the sadist, the great inquisitor Torquemada, could not have dreamed of. All these means were there to justify and realise the goal, which was set a long time ago. And its attainment seemed so close. Hence the intimate symbiosis of the Ustashas and clerical fascists. Hence the help of both Romes. Both their Drang nach Osten, and the fascist Propagande fidei” (p. xiii).

### **b) Austria-Hungary, the Bulwark of Catholicism**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the ideology of Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik and Josip Frank, based on chauvinist exclusivity, completed the creation of its anti-Serbian concept and Croatian Catholic exclusivity. Even though Starčević was

explicitly anti-clerical, Frank brought his political programme into symbiosis with clerical intentions, where a specific breed of Croatian fascism would develop – clerical-fascism. “The clericals passed over in silence everything Starčević had said or written about them using his hatred of Serbdom and Yugoslavhood, forgiving him of insults for that purpose, insults he had added to their lack of honor more than once” (p. 5). In the middle of the nineteenth century, the pressure increased to bring the Jesuits back to Croatia, as an extremely fanatical and unscrupulous Catholic order, but they encountered significant resistance, particularly from the intelligentsia. Still, in 1901, a foundation stone for a Jesuit home and church was laid. “Certainly, the terrain for the Jesuits had already been prepared, through earlier efforts of the clericals and their leaders in Croatia and Bosnia, who, in order to achieve their intentions, had to seek skilful and tested leaders of militant clericalism in the struggle against the hateful progressive liberal-mindedness” (p. 8). Rome and Vienna crushed all resistance to the arrival of the Jesuits, and “. . . they arrived to Croatia and starting acting, with their tested methods, in all fields of public life in Croatia, stamping their black seal visibly and covertly on many political moves” (p. 8).

At the Pan-Croatian Catholic Congress, in 1900, the spokesman was Archbishop Štadler, who also held a programmatic speech on identifying Croatianhood with Catholicism. This congress even declared itself in favour of the restoration of the papal state. A large number of clerical publications was launched, and the most prominent in terms of over-zealousness and extremism were *Croatianhood, the Day, the Croatian Guard, Vrhbosna, the Catholic Gazette* and others. In time, the resistance from Yugoslav-oriented intellectuals died out, whereas the clericals made a firm and thick network of political power and influence, enjoying full support of Austria and the Vatican. “All the sediment of a decade of fanatical hatred and national chauvinism re-surfaced in a horrible form in the months of June and July 1914, following the Sarajevo assassination. The black-and-yellow clericalism was having an orgy, convinced that the time had come for the first harvest in a decade and a half. That is why there are too many documents, spread throughout a large number of clerical publications, but also in the memories of contemporaries who survived this misfortune and shame” (p. 20).

Following the Sarajevo assassination, a fierce anti-Serbian campaign was initiated in the entire Austria-Hungary, with bloody looting pogroms in Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. “Numerous articles in clerical and Frankian publications, in inflammatory language, demanded revenge for the murdered heir to the throne – ‘this hope and mainstay of Croats and Slovenians’, as they mourned him back then. The clerical dailies and weeklies, and even some church pastoral newspaper, introduced into the anti-Serbian uproar a large number of their contributions. The Croatian-Serbian coalition was denounced everywhere, as well as similar revolutionary youth parties, for grand treason. Day in, day out. In newspapers, churches, at processions, at meetings, demonstrations and demolitions, arsons and destructions, where ever they would find Serbian property. Horrible and barbaric outburst of raging terror. There is no doubt that all these expressions of an incomprehensible revolt had to have a background. And they did. In Vienna, and also in Rome. . . The policies of Vienna and the clerical Roman propaganda went hand in hand for decades, in a systematically executed plan. Not only in Austria-Hungary, but also in all those countries, that fell under their sphere of interest. There can be no more eloquent or more convincing evidence of that, other than that given by the highest representatives of the Roman Curia” (p. 21). It is the firm Vienna-



Vatican coalition that caused World War I. “The Austrian Emperor, who declared war on Serbia in the name of God, certainly because he was the most Catholic of all Catholic rulers and the apostolic king of Hungary, wanted to have full support of the Holy See for that war. And he received it in the full extent” (p. 21).

On 29 July 1914, immediately after the Kingdom of Serbia agreed on a concordat with the Vatican, the Austro-Hungarian envoy in the Vatican, Moritz Palfi, reports to his headquarters on what the cardinal state secretary told him in a conversation: “He, indeed, said the note sent to Serbia had been very sharp, but he approved it with no reservation and expressed, at the same time, in an indirect fashion, the hope that the Monarchy would go all the way. Of course, the cardinal thought it was a shame that Serbia had not been ‘made smaller’ before, because, if so, today’s effort would possibly be less dangerous than it is today. This statement corresponds with the Pope’s opinion, because, in the recent years, His Holiness expressed his regret, on a number of occasions, that Austria-Hungary failed to punish its dangerous Danube neighbour. The question may be asked, for what reason is the Catholic Church so combative, at the time it is being headed by the true saint, overwhelmed with truly apostolic ideas? The answer is very simple. The Pope and Curia see in Serbia a devastating disease, which is slowly eating away the core of the Monarchy, and that will, eventually, eat it away. Apart from all the attempts undertaken by the Curia during the past few decades, Austria-Hungary is and remains the Catholic state par excellence, the strongest bulwark remaining to the Church of Christ in this century. The destruction of that bulwark would mean that the Church would lose its mainstay; in the struggle against the Orthodox faith, it would lose its strongest proponent. For these reasons, therefore, just like it is necessary for Austria to immediately release its organism of the evil eating it away, for reasons of self-preservation, with the use of force if necessary, it is also indirectly necessary for the Catholic Church to do, or approve, everything that can serve the attainment of that goal. If we look at things in this light, we can very easily discover the connection between the Pope’s feelings and combative mood” (p. 22).

This Vatican Secretary of State was Cardinal Meri del Val. Similar to Palfi, the Bavarian plenipotentiary in the Vatican, Baron Ritter, on 26 July 1914, also reported to his bosses in Munich: “The Pope approves Austria’s sharp stand towards Serbia. He does not highly appreciate the Russian and French armies in case of a war against Germany. The cardinal secretary of state hopes that Austria would not give in this time, even if it crushes with its armies the foreign agitation that led to the murder of the heir to the throne, and which, finally, seriously threatens, in the current circumstances, the survival of Austria. All of this proves the size of the fear of the Curia from pan-Slavism” (p. 22). Since the Roman Catholic circles later tried to present the Pope in a completely different light by the usual falsifying of historical facts, to be an alleged supporter of peaceful policies and a decisive opponent of war, Count Sforza proved that this is a false legend, from the beginning to the end, in his book *Builders of Contemporary Europe*. The entire Croatian and Slovenian episcopate followed the Pope’s war-mongering politics with great enthusiasm, while it was believed that Germany and Austria-Hungary would win World War I. As one of the most prominent proponents of Austro-Hungarian anti-Serbian policies, the Archbishop of Zagreb Dr. Ante Bauer, for the purposes of war propaganda, publicly “. . . gave his blessing to Croatian home guardsmen, to whom an enemy had given rifles and bayonets to go and kill their brothers, or when he leads large

processions, with Franko-furtimaš encouraging of the gathered masses to pray to the Mother of God for victory over the enemy, i.e. the Serbs” (p. 23).

In a speech held in Černomerac near Zagreb, on 31 July 1914, at a military ceremony on the occasion of joining the war and the units leaving to the Serbian front, Archbishop Bauer, among other things, said, “Croatian heroes, your beloved king invites you to battle. You go, with hearted delight, because a Croatian would never stay deaf to the voice of his king. During the most difficult of times, your grandfathers stood faithfully by the throne, so you will also, in old faithfulness, give your blood and your life for the king. . . The homeland calls you to fight . . . and the Croatian always knew how to die for his dear home. Croatian heroes! God calls you to fight. God, Eternal Justice, calls upon you to be vengeance in his hands for that crime in Sarajevo, that took away from our king a firm support in his old day, and intended to snatch from his faithful people the hope of great future. . . Go to the battle bravely and know that in the most difficult hours of yours, hands of millions will be raised to the Lord in pious prayer. May it give good fortune to you and to your weapons” (p. 23). An even longer explication of the justification of the war against the Serbian people, a month later, Bauer gave in his speech to the lined up troops in Remete, near Zagreb, praying to God “. . . to humiliate the pride of our enemies and their resilience, with the force of his right hand” (p. 25).

The highest Croatian Roman Catholic dignitary set an example, and this manner of his was a way in which, in the Roman Catholic Church “. . . from the pulpit it was told to the ignorant and seduced people, that the war against Serbia is just, that the world, and even more importantly, Croatia, is in peril, that the people are in danger to lose their name and nationality, and that the Church is suffering great temptations. Finally, all this conviction brings them before God and the Mother of God, for them to help the Emperor and his offensive army to jointly win in the righteous and holy battle. Thus it was falsely presented to the masses, in fratricidal allusions and intentions, in the shape of prayers, that the Croats have been challenged by the Serbs, and that, in that war, Croatia was in the centre of events. Just so that the masses would volunteer more for the military conscription. This undoubtedly war propaganda in its blasphemous manner masked with prayers to the Mother of God, turned the temples of the Christian God of love into temples of the pagan God Mars. After that, following the example of the supreme arch-shepherd, legions of poisoned clericals went to the pulpits and instigated in the Masses the war elation and war mood, in their way. . . The notion of challenge and forcing the Croats to go to war repeated throughout the clerical press. That was also the purpose of the official prayers, tailored to that purpose in the style and spirit of the Archbishop’s speech” (p. 25).

Two basic integral parts of all those prayers were lies and hatred, as the background for the war-mongering clerical propaganda. In these combative propaganda intentions, Bauer was equal to Ljubljana Bishop Dr. Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, who, on 11 August, addresses the mobilised Slovenian soldiers in the following way: “Men! The Emperor calls upon you to avenge with weapons in your hands the unfair intention to break up and destroy our glorious Austria, which has been going on for several years now, under the sceptre of our ancient Habsburg imperial family. The Emperor calls upon you to avenge the cunning seduction of our youth to betray the fatherland and the Emperor, yes, to commit black, shameful treachery. Men! The Emperor calls upon you to defend with weapons in your hands Catholic Austria, our Catholic royal family from the sworn enemies of Jesus himself, present in the sacrament of love. . . Men! How sublime, how

holy, how dear to God is the battle you have been invited to! Justice is with you, God is with you, the Lord of military companies! Men! In the middle ages, an echo could be heard throughout Europe, ‘This is God’s will!’ And thousands left their homes and went to liberate Jerusalem from the infidels’ hands. The war cry ‘This is God’s will!’ raised you to the holy war for the generous King, in the punitive battle against conscienceless criminals” (p. 26). He, therefore, called upon a sublime, holy and God-pleasing crusade to punish the Serbs as enemies of Christ. Under Jeglič’s orders, clericals intensely denounced all Slovenian war opponents, who were arrested and systematically tortured. Following the Bishop, the Slovenian People’s Party, in a circular letter, attacked the criminal Serbian conspiracy, aimed at “. . . the destruction of the Christian faith and the nation, and at poisoning with Greater Serbian nationalism against Austrian nationalism. It is a conspiracy against the survival of the Catholic, Slavic nation!” (p. 27). On that occasion, Marko Natlačen, the future ban of the Dravska *Banate*, made the song *Serbs from Willow Trees*, first published in the *Slovenac* newspaper, on 27 July 1914.

Such anti-Serbian and war-mongering Roman Catholic politics were manifested in Sarajevo in its bare form. “The most monstrous form of pro-Austrian and Franko-furtimaš orgy took place in the very place of the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne. The faithful proponents of Archbishop Štadler led the seduced, both Catholic and Muslim, masses, to destroy and burn Serbian property in order to give expression to their political upbringing, so carefully nurtured and carried out in a manner planned for decades” (p. 29). It has only been a final expression of systematic favouritism of Roman Catholics in the previous period, and Benjamin von Kállay, “. . . fearing the pan-Slavic idea, that the Orthodox people incline to, believed that by favouring Catholics, he will have found the flood-gate against this Austrian and Hungarian spectre. Catholicism, well organised, will be able to proselytise in two opposing directions, and towards the same goal, Catholicisation, towards the Muslim as well as the Orthodox population” (p. 29). As earlier in 1914, all masks were off and the earlier perfidious game of the Jesuits now turned into an open pogrom of the Serbs. As Albert Mose noticed, “. . . a rather strong rivalry could be noticed between the domestic Franciscans and foreign Jesuits; it had repercussions on the fate of the two Croatian groups. But, during the World War, both proved to be both Frankian and anti-Serbian” (p. 30).

The Frankian-clerical Zagreb newspaper *Croatia*, on 29 June 1914, openly called for extinction of Serbs. “In our circle, on our body there is a huge number of ticks in the shape of Serbs and Slavo-Serbs, who are selling our land and sea, and they also killed the King! We must get even with them once and for all and destroy them. That should be our goal as of today. . . Murderer, thy name is Serbian! And you are a Serbian, damn your seed and your tribe, that the wind scattered on our Croatian soil, to give birth to crime and malice, harbour disharmony and spill blood in a villainous manner.” And this same newspaper, on 3 July, is rather more specific in its message: “The people are announcing to the Serbs a battle for life or death and expulsion from Bosnia and Herzegovina” (p. 31). The high-ranking official of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Provincial Government, Kosta Herman, publicly said, immediately after the Sarajevo assassination, “Hundreds of gallows would not be able to pay for the precious murdered heads” (p. 31).

As regards the pogrom demonstrations of 29 July, one month after the assassination, Novak says they “. . . would be simply impossible in any state ruled by law and in any cultured state, had it not been for the incitement of the destructive rage of suburban

scum, everywhere and by all main factors in the pro-Austrian political life. The declaration by the municipality regarding the declaration of war was a spark that set the powder on fire. Horrible crimes were inevitable. Both Muslim and Catholic scum gathered in from of the cathedral of Archbishop Štadler and, after singing the imperial anthem, tried to destroy and burn the Serbian institutions. The police calmly watched everywhere and in certain places even participated. No wonder, given that the declaration 'invites the population and people to exterminate from their communities the elements committing such crimes (assassinations). It will be the sacred duty of the population to wash away this disgrace'. These demonstrations, which began on the day of the assassination, and reached their full swing the following day, were fully supported by the clerical press and the Archbishop's Curia itself. There are witnesses who claim that certain demonstration leaders, after the demonstrations on the night of 28 June, attended a meeting at Archbishop Štadler's, also attended by several political leaders. It is thought that at that meeting a plan was made for the next day's and later persecution" (p. 31-32).

Štadler's bishop-coadjutor, Dr. Ivan Šarić, incited the anti-Serbian pogrom with his song *Archduke the Martyr*, that he made on the very day of the assassination, openly calling for revenge, and it has been published in newspapers and as a separate edition, and dished out in large quantities in front of Roman Catholic churches. In Novak's opinion, Šarić's call for revenge raised ". . . many stones in these demonstrations, and many flames of hatred burst out of poisoned hearts, thanks to this song. Not to mention the sermons, held in churches on the occasion of a Mass for the dead, for the murdered heir to the throne, which were actually not only the horrible inflammation of fratricidal rage and hatred, but also a skilfully executed propaganda plan" (p. 32). With his anti-Serbian zealotry, Šarić exceeded even Štadler himself. "Bishop Šarić, later author of hymns to the Emperor Franz Joseph, Dr. Vladimir Maček and Ante Pavelić, always remaining on the same line of content, was a particularly combative speech maker when blessing the weapons of Catholic and Muslim soldiers in Sarajevo. He and his brothers in other clerical centres encouraged the combat spirit and prayed to God for help in the holy and just war against the enemies of the Emperor and the King, the Catholic faith and civil authority in Bosnia. Immediately after the announced mobilisation, Šarić is in his element and does not hide his combat elation, believing the time has come to exterminate the enemies of Catholicism" (p. 33).

As regards Štadler himself, his *Croatian Diary* is full of material that speaks of one and the same spirit of hatred and poison, meaning to separate forever the Catholic Croats from the Orthodox Serbs. Truly, with true sadism, this newspaper publishes all the details of the Sarajevo demonstrations, and the ones throughout the country, designating this truly bestial destructive instinct as "an important act of national heroism". Nowhere, not in one word, not with one gesture, did he show a spirit of evangelical forgiveness, peacefulness or human feeling for the fellow citizens who were truly placed outside the law" (p. 33-34). Štadler was, anyway, a prominent member of Frank's Croatian Party of Rights. Concerned for the survival of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, after the death of the heir to the throne, Ferdinand, killed by "godless and infidel Christians", a Franciscan from Široki Brijeg, Friar Didak Buntić, addressed to his Zagreb sympathisers a proposal to dissolve all parliaments and establish a dictatorship and proclaim national unity in all Austrian lands, which would mean in the case of Croatia, ". . . since there is one people, it should have one name, the Croatian name, the Croatian land, one parliament, one

script, one flag, one and only one training. Cyrillic, the Serbian flag and confessional schools should be done away with for all times. In services, particularly, give more room only to the Croats, great Croats, as the Croats were called before that propaganda. If the Croatian population were strengthened this way, if Croatia were strengthened in this way, the gentlemen in Vienna could be calm and not feel sorrow” (p. 35).

The editorial *Long Live the War* in the paper *Croatia*, from 26 July 1914, can serve as an additional illustration of the writing of the entire clerical and Frankian press; it reads as follows: “The decision has been made, and it is – war! War with Serbia, so that this land of bombers and assassins, this land of king killers, is once and for all tangibly, heavily punished. The patience of the Monarchy was tested to the point of bursting, when the Serbian impertinence went too far. Long live the war! – reverberates throughout the Monarchy today, as if a heavy incubus fell on that voice, which pressed everyone’s chest. Long live the war! – reverberated last night throughout the Croatian Zagreb, and will reverberate in all Croatian lands, which were affected by the Great-Serbian propaganda, that cried in a fierce voice: retaliation, retaliation! Down with the oppressors! Down with the conspirators! Down with Serbia! Long live the war! For this has to be a single-minded cry of all the faithful subjects of this monarchy today, particularly the Croats. The decision has been made, the retaliation has come. The war will finally decide whether the Greater Serbian propaganda will forever stop in our Croatian territories. Long live the war! . . . Long live Croatia!” (p. 37). In that same edition, there is also an article in which the author praises the Austrian emperor for protecting the Croatian people and its lands: “Today the monarchy rises to defend the property of the Croatian people in the south, and the Croatian people can only make itself available to the responsible factors and contribute every sacrifice to preserve the land of its grandfathers, to stop the cruel and morally decayed Serbia from carrying out her loathsome intentions, under whoever’s wing it may be. . . Croatian people! This war is just and honest! It is a war that must bring a better life for you! Let us go in delight against the enemy, who is threatening to destroy us. Let us go in delight, for the King and Monarchy and our dear Croatia!” (p. 37).

The Church papers even quote Saint Augustine in an attempt to justify the Austro-Hungarian war raid against Serbia. “Through the views of clerical leaders in the time of World War I, particularly in its first half, is illuminated all rational and instinctive, psychological and political complex connected with two centres, in Vienna and in Rome. In the entire enormous clerical and Frankian publicist writing, which is, in fact, one and undividable in the methods and in the goals of its politics, through the most profane and most vulgar expressions of their understanding and argumentation, there is a red thread of true, almost pathological blasphemy, when the Church and the pulpit, altar and procession, God and the Mother of God are mobilised for the war propaganda. Through the speeches of Bauer, Štadler, Šarić, Jeglič and so many other Church dignitaries emanates the spirit of the god Mars, not the carpenter from Nazareth. This has been equally initiated by Vienna and Rome. The Viennese Cardinal Pifl is not himself free of such outbursts” (p. 38). Viktor Novak stresses there that anyone who had given it serious and sober thought, “. . . that all contemporary patriots, who had not been infected with the black-and-yellow clericalism, felt and foresaw the perils of the fruit that will once be brought to life by this venomous sowing of hatred and building of the gap between the nations, split by religions. It was felt that such venomous sowing will have an equally venomous and perhaps a bloody harvest, after the nurturing and ripening

**Comment [Z36]:** Translator’s note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed

of the sowed venom. It was seen that, during World War I, the earlier sowing of hatred and separation of similar peoples, only a decade later, gave the fruit of a monstrous shape” (p. 39).

### **c) Re-alignment of Vatican on the eve of the fall of Austria-Hungary**

Since Pope Pius X died in August 1914, and it soon became certain that the central powers would suffer a difficult war defeat, the Croatian and Slovenian clericals gradually begin their political re-alignment. The basic goal before them then, was to try to avoid at all cost Zagreb and Ljubljana sharing in the bitter fruit of defeat with Vienna and Budapest. The new pope Benedictus XV begins a peace diplomatic activity, trying to preserve Austria at all costs, even through the trialist re-arrangement. The Croatian and Slovenian epigones of the Vatican strategy accept the idea of Yugoslavianism, but locate it under the Habsburg sceptre, which also represented the main concept of the so-called May declaration, read in the parliament in Vienna by Anton Korošec, near the end of May 1917; this represented a form of direct Vatican opposition to the Corfu declaration. This moves were undertaken in hope of creating better conditions for “the Yugoslavs of Austria to join together in a monarchy, because the favourable circumstances will then affect the possibilities not only of bringing Catholicism closer to Orthodoxy, but also returning the Orthodox Church back to Rome!” (p. 52). There is no doubt that “. . . the immediate cause of this persistent position of defending Austria and the interests of the Habsburg Empire should be sought out in the greater guarantees that Catholicism found in the apostolic empire, compared to those it would find in Yugoslavia, where the majority of the population would be Orthodox. Or, the Vatican-Vienna axis, in the most desperate times for the Habsburg Monarchy, remains permanent and unchanged for the Austro-Hungarian clericals, and, consequently for their Croatian and Slovenian allies, as well” (p. 54). In accordance with that idea, Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina would unite in a single state-political entity, which would form a tri-partite monarchy, together with Austria and Hungary.

Bishop Maknič and his *Croatian Guard* takes the lead in advocating “the idea of the Croatian people’s mission in the Balkans”, and what this actually means in practice is openly explicated by the *Dan* newspaper, delighted with Maknič’s opinions: “The Serbs are generally an Orthodox nation. Their faith is a set of formalities, pagan superstition, without much practising faith and without a life truly in accordance with the principles of the Christian faith. Even their own representatives are not religious” (p. 62). The *Croatian Guard* itself adds to this advocating for proselytistic missionary activity, convinced that “. . . the Catholic Croats and Slovenians would become ‘a bridge for the Balkan union’, in order to mend ‘what human malice and bad politics have broken’. Both the Slovenians and the Croats should stand for this ideal, so that they would take part in saving their brothers, to make Jesus’ wish come true and become, together with them, one flock of Jesus” (p. 62). The editor of the newspaper, Alifarević, leaves no room for doubt regarding the goals and methods of the planned Serbian Uniatism. “The hour has come, when this calling (i.e. propaganda and mission, Roman and proselytistic) should be emphasised. Later, the Balkans stood under the influence of powerful Russia. Serbia and Montenegro had virtually been the vassals of Russia, and in Bulgaria, even the heir to the throne converted to the Orthodox Church, for Russia. The Catholic

Church only expanded in Macedonia and Albania, during the Turkish rule, and in Bulgaria as of late. Russia was the protector of the 'sacred Orthodox faith' in the Balkans, certainly for political purposes. Now this chain had fallen (reference to the October revolution!) and the Balkan nations are free, to become again what they had once been – Catholics. The Croats Christianised the Serbs in the ninth century (!?), and it is therefore convenient if they were to bring them to Catholicism now. The Bulgarians, admittedly, received the Christian faith from the East in the ninth century, but it is now schismatic, so we, the Croatian Catholics, are now their neighbours, via the Serbs. It is us then, and our Slovenian brothers, that Providence has intended to work out a union with them. . . The new Serbia will be glad to let the Catholic missionaries come there, particularly to Belgrade” (p. 63).

This is how the clericals acted in 1918, immediately before the breakdown of Austria-Hungary. And they undertook specific planning regarding the question of which friar order would act in which Orthodox area. In that sense, they adjusted in accordance with the Entente powers politics, and these held the position of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The leading clericals and former ardent protagonists of anti-Serbian hatred now became ardent Yugoslavians, and even the formerly over-zealous Austrophiles among the Frankian *pravaši*. Even the Croatian episcopate, by means of a circular letter from November 1918, delighting in the idea of national unity, inviting the priests not to use the churches and sermons for political speeches and manifestations, banning, at the same time, everyone from speaking on behalf of the Church on the issue of the optimal form of rule, whether monarchist or republican. The bishop conference held at the end of the same month in Zagreb, in its greeting to the Pope, reports that “. . . the gathered Yugoslav Catholic episcopate greets with joy the unification of all Slovenians, Croats and Serbs in one single independent state; it recognises the National Council as the supreme provisional authority and it will also recognise the definitive authority that will be created by the will of the people, following the Constitutional Assembly” (p. 74). On that occasion, they requested from the Pope, among other things, that the Old Slavonic language be introduced in the Church services in all Roman Catholic churches in the Yugoslav territory. “For the first, and probably only time, the Church dignitaries stood in such solidarity to defend the sacred thing, oppressed by the Germanisation policies of the Austrian court and the anti-Slavic sentiment of the Roma Curia. Just like the symbolic name of Yugoslavia will fade in the political moves of the Yugoslav episcopate, so will this truly extraordinary historic and almost unexpected gesture of the Yugoslav episcopate become in the near future only a memory of the great days of national solidarity in October and November 1918” (p. 75).

Immediately after the unification, the Jesuits and the Frankians initiated a wide-ranging separatist activity, beginning with the dissemination of pamphlets, in which they claimed that “. . . the Catholic Church is in danger from the Serbs, from the Belgrade government, as well as from the new state, where both Christian marriage and religious teaching in schools are being threatened” (p. 77). Other Roman Catholic clericals, feeling that their war-shattered positions are now rather stable again, went along “. . . the old paths of Great-Croatian and Slovenian separatism and exclusiveness, but in accordance with the directives coming in from the Vatican, unhappy with a state where the Orthodox population would outvote the Catholics. And now that Yugoslavia has become a reality, and when it is required to . . . create Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia, the clericals will be the most consequential and the most persistent opponents. Well, again,

in the first days of Yugoslavia they were the loudest self-applauders that they were the very and only ones who brought down the Austrian double-headed eagle!” (p. 80)

Immediately after the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians had been created, the Vatican began supporting the Croatian and Slovenian separatism, making various combinations with the block of Roman Catholic Central European countries. “It is certain that the Vatican regretted the dissolution of Austria the most, and that it had not been happy with the establishment of Yugoslavia. Unification of Catholic countries of Croatia and Slovenia outside Yugoslavia, rather than within, was politically more convenient for the Vatican” (p. 124). At the same time, from the Vatican side, there was a whole-hearted support for Italian national interests, even when they were directly opposed to the Slovenian and Croatian national interests. The Croats and Slovenians are the Vatican’s pets only when they are instrumental against the Serbs, but in all other cases they are second to the Italians or Austrians, even Hungarians. It was demonstrated, anyway, that all the forces of Yugoslav destruction were “. . . consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly in the service of the Vatican, helping the interests of the fascist Italy, the enemy not only of the consolidation, but of the very survival of Yugoslavia” (p. 127).

On one hand, the Vatican completely sided with the Mussolini’s fascist policies and its strategic objectives, but, on the other hand, it had never given up on its idea of Catholicising the Serbs. In that respect, a highly illustrative example of the way of thinking of Roman Catholic ideologists can be seen in the secretly recorded conversation between a Zagreb theology professor, Dr. Frano Barac, and the Ljubljana bishop, Dr. Antun Jeglič, on 2 June 1919 in a hotel in Paris, where Barac stated that “. . . from the noblest Serbs he heard and was given statements of extreme religious tolerance, that for the Serbs religion was a formality, and that the national sentiment was everything for any Serbian; that the Serbian priests, even though at a lower level in terms of education and morality (lower than the Catholic priests), were still greatly patriotic and that their strength was in the great national sentiment. He then added: the Catholics must keep all of this in mind, and the Holy Father must be notified, because now all Catholics in the new state must become missionaries; all that is the best, the most active and the strongest among the Catholic clergy should be in Belgrade, carrying out and fulfilling their mission, not only a national one, but also the religious a moral one. All of this should be carried out in such a manner that the Serbs would sense the most pleasant scent coming from Belgrade, which slowly intoxicates everyone, but it can never be seen where it is coming from and how” (p. 128).

Very soon the protagonist of the plan for the Uniatism of the entire Serbian nation would realise that they got carried away in their utopian phantasmagorias, but the clerical national deputies in the Constitutional Assembly opened a very lively debate, opposing the provisions from the proposed draft of the constitutional text, which forbade the misuse of religion for political purposes, particularly political agitation in churches. “Clericalism, being identified with the Catholicism, felt seriously jeopardised. Hence such a single-minded and rebellious resistance, which was demonstrated not only in their press, but also in church sermons, and in other agitations, particularly among the uneducated peasant masses. The slogan, ‘The faith is in danger!’ was introduced in the masses. In the villages, the priests expressed regret that the ruler is not of the Catholic faith, like the Austrian Emperor had been. Particularly active were the Dalmatian clericals, with whom, in the month of April of that year (1919 – note V.Š.), Dr. Korošec



came in touch with. During his visit to Sinj, there had been not only the demonstrative shouts against Pašić and Pribičević, but also the shouts ‘Down with Serbia!’, ‘Long live the sacred faith!’, ‘Down with Yugoslavia’, ‘Down with King Peter’, ‘Long live Emperor Carl!’. Moreover, the demonstrators sang the still-remembered old Austrian imperial anthem” (p. 139). Korošec added fuel to the fire by stating in some places that the *Obznana*<sup>34</sup> had been brought against the Croatian people, and not against the Communists, even though he himself had been one of its main creators. Since their demands did not receive support, the clericals decide to leave the session of the Constitutional Assembly.

#### **d) The Crisis of Catholicism and Radić’s Anti-Clericalism**

The Catholic Church continued its combative activities even after the *Vidovdan*<sup>35</sup> Constitution had been passed. As Viktor Novak notices, its “. . . discontent was related not only to the specific reasons imposed by the prepared projects of agrarian reform, school laws, particularly the so-called laicisation, pointing out the inequalities in granting budgetary credits, especially in comparison with the Orthodox Church, which was preferred, according to the claims of the Catholic Church, whereas the Catholic Church had deliberately not been given its due. The discontent also had to do with the resolution of political issues, because the clericals advocated broad autonomies, because of their fundamental separatist concept, to keep the Catholic parts as far apart from the Orthodox parts as possible. However, this discontent also had psychological grounds, stemming from the fear that the great moral and intellectual power, represented by the Catholic Church in the Habsburg Monarchy, would gradually be reduced to a secondary role in Yugoslavia, which it stood up against with all its internal – and even more – with its external, Vatican force” (p. 151). At the relevant parliamentary board in 1921, a lengthy discussion began on the potential need for agreeing on a concordat of the Yugoslav state with the Vatican, which had an echo in the public opinion, because the Vatican hesitated for a year before recognising the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, and created a large scandal by appointing a new bishop in Đakovo, without informing the government in Belgrade prior to that.

Even though the clericals increasingly held their heads high and developed their political activities, the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia was torn by an internal crisis, caused with the discontent of a rather large number of priests with the poor social condition, the moral hypocrisy of Church dignitaries, the insistence on celibacy etc. A large number of priests were suspended by Archbishop Bauer, and some were excommunicated, in order to nip this reformist movement in the bud within the Church circles, especially since the rebellious priests started holding public Mass outside and in the national language. Immediately afterwards, in 1922, the rebels got to establishing the Croatian Catholic National Church, and gathered around them, in a very short period, several thousands believers. At the request of Archbishop Bauer, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Milorad Drašković, and, following his death, the new minister, Vojislav Marinković, as well, warded off the religious activity of the new church organisation,

<sup>34</sup> On the night between 29 and 30 December 1920, the government issued the *Obznana* (literally "announcement") decree, which prohibited all Communist activities until the adoption of the new constitution, excluding only the Communist deputies involvement in the Constitutional Assembly.

<sup>35</sup> St. Vitus’ Day.

using repressive police measures, while the Minister of Religious Issues, Ljuba Jovanović, officially banned this church, threatening prison sentences for the participants of their religious ceremonies. Thus, it happened that three Serbian ministers gave great contribution to sustaining clericalism and its power. Archbishop Bauer himself quickly persecuted all public and conscientious opponents of celibacy, but, at the same time, had a very lenient relation towards the priests who practically trampled on celibacy by acts of paedophilia or homosexuality, and who even went to prison for crimes of sexual deviancy. Upon receiving the news of the official prohibition, the Roman Catholic reformers addressed the issue with the representatives of the Old Catholics in Vienna, who parted with the Roman Catholic Church in 1870, not being able to accept the new dogma of the Vatican Council on the infallibility of the Pope. At the end of 1923, a new request was sent to the Minister of Religious Issues to allow the work of the Croatian Old Catholic Church, since the Old Catholic faith had already been recognised by the *Vidovdan* Constitution. The minister had no choice but to recognise the Croatian Old Catholic Church. In January 1924, the first synod of that church was held, where the former canon and parish priest of Split, don Marko Kalodera, was elected the bishop.

It is interesting that the most prominent Croatian political leader of the time, Stjepan Radić, and his entire Croatian Peasant Party, maintained, until the end of Radić's life, a consistent anti-clerical and anti-Jesuit position, even though, in all other political matters, Radić was ready for sudden ideological adventures; thus he had been a fighter for national unity and an ardent Yugoslav, a Croatian separatist or federalist, and then a unitarianist; a convinced republican and then a monarchist; for a time he had even been very close to the Russian Bolsheviks. Perhaps his speech in Krašić in 1924 best illustrates the background for Radić's opposition to identifying Croatianhood with Catholicism. There, among other things, he attacks the Roman Catholic bishops who, with their religious exclusivity, "... kept out from the ranks of the Croatian nation about eight hundred thousand Muslim Croats, out of which six hundred and fifty thousand live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and approximately one hundred and fifty thousand in Novi Pazar and Macedonia. All these Muslims of ours believe in one God, just like us Catholics, all of them also believe in Jesus; only to them Jesus is a lesser prophet than Mohammed. But the main thing is that this Muslim population of ours is so honest, just like us Catholics – even several times more honest than the Catholics. And all of you know well the precept of the Peasant Party that says: do not ask how you cross yourself: whether you cross yourself with three fingers or the whole hand, or perhaps you do not cross yourself at all, because you are not Christian; ask how you live and what kind of man you are. Only this makes our religion enlightened; only this Christian love for every neighbour makes man truly the noblest of God's creatures on earth. Our bishops do not care for any of this; with one stroke of their pens, they diminish the Croatian people by a quarter, making us, the Croats in Bosnia, an insignificant minority and surrendering Bosnia and Herzegovina to Pašić's Radicals and Pribičević's thugs to choke and strangle it at will. If there had been nothing else in this letter, but only the obstinate stupidity, repeating in five or six places that we, the Croats, are a Catholic nation, that alone would be enough to forever reject these pagan politics of the bishop" (p. 225).

As early as in the middle of 1925, when Radić suddenly started to love the Monarchy and made an agreement with Nikola Pašić on entering the government, Stjepan Radić, in an interview for *Politika*, stressing the danger of Roman Catholic clericalism, also

stated, “It is a great danger. Look, Korošec is there, and he is a patriot and a Slovenian nationalist, but his head – his head is in Rome. You know, in my opinion, clericalism is so dangerous that our Croatian people will never become one with the Serbian people, until the time when the Croats are free from Rome, completely free. The Croats cannot convert to the Orthodox faith – that is not necessary, because there would immediately be a great and mighty counter-activity. But I always thought that there should be a Croatian church, independent from Rome, a national church, which would easily merge with the Serbian Orthodox Church in time. It requires, of course, a lot of work, because it will not suffice to win over the intelligentsia; the masses would have to accept it, too. And that is very sensitive – peasants and faith; that requires a lot of tactfulness and a lot of care, unless you want to make a mess. Perhaps in time it will be possible to use the Old Catholic Croatian Church for that purpose – it is only my opinion, I still do not know whether it is possible, but it may be. But, certainly, it can only be implemented by a broad-based and strong organisation, such as, for example, this peasant HSS<sup>36</sup> of ours” (p. 232-233). Along with all of that, he thinks that “. . . there is no complete national unity without religious unity. This is why every great nation created its own church. It was easy with Orthodoxy. It did not have the circumstances of Catholicism, and it was easy for the Orthodox religion to become de-centralised, separate and nationalised. But with Catholicism it is difficult. There is Rome, the Pope, a great culture and a huge tradition. There the struggle is difficult, almost hopeless. Because of Rome, Catholicism is increasingly Romanised, making it the natural faith for the Roman nations. But not for the other nations. . . Therefore, we, who want to build, or at least create the pre-conditions for a full spiritual Serbo-Croatian unity, must create a single religion of our own. Naturally, this is not topical now; generations will pass. However, our generation would at least have to fulfil one requirement, and that is to rid the Croats of Rome. It will happen in a couple of years if we, the Croats and the Serbs, are unanimous and if we put our country in order, thus gaining time and an opportunity to well prepare the Croatian masses, even for the Croatian Old Catholic Church” (p. 233).

In this anti-clerical struggle, Radić did not give up, and his additional motive was the behaviour of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Croats who found themselves under the Italian state. With particular vehemence, he came down on Bosnia-Herzegovina Franciscans, because they sided on a massive scale with Radical Croatianism and separatism. “When the Franciscans came to him with the request for aid in building the extension of the grammar school in Široki Brijeg, Radić came down vehemently on that Franciscan secondary school, as unnecessary and useless, and even harmful to the people. As if Radić had seen in a distant perspective the devastating activity of this school, which later raised the most furious clerical-fascists and Ustashas” (p. 240). In a speech to the parliament in 1926, Stjepan Radić says, “I used to think highly of the cultural and national work of the Bosnia-Herzegovinian Franciscans, but I finally grew disappointed and realised they were dishonest, lying people. All their lives and national and cultural work is nothing but deception and stultifying the people, with the tendency to make them more susceptible to extortion and robbery. If the people are still not enlightened, if they are distrustful and backward, that is only the Franciscans’ merit, because that is how they have taught them. The Church, the pulpit and the confessional they only used, and are still using, for their own low, self-serving interests.

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<sup>36</sup> Croatian Peasant Party.

They are a kind of usurers, who extort money from the people; they have their banks and lend money to the poor, with usurers' interest rates. They are only lying to the state about not being able to complete an extension of their school; my intention will be not to help it, but to close it down. My main concern is keeping the people apart from them. Friar Didak Buntić was a liar and a cheat, and least of all the friend of the people. Besides, I am against the Franciscans, and not against the priests" (p. 240).

Apart from all the stings against the Roman Catholic Church organisation and devastating criticism of its methods, the clericals particularly took to heart Radić's several-times-repeated statement that the Croatian people would not find their happiness until they are cursed by the Pope. Further salt on their wound was Radić's opinion that ". . . according to our history and culture, we belong to the West, but according to our feeling and our ideals, we belong to the East, and we will only stay anchored in the West until the Russian system again expands to the Danube" (p. 248). The Croatian clericals found allies in their struggle against Radić in the form of the Belgrade political circles, particularly the Prime Minister Velja Vukićević and the court minister Janković, who found Radić's permanent speaking in favour of establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union unbearable. As Viktor Novak reports, only four days prior to the parliament assassination, don Kerubin Šegvić wrote, on 16 June 1928, in the Osijek-based *Croatian Newspaper*, "Radić stressed several times that there are intentions of removing him from the public life. In doing so, he is trying to gain the condolence and sympathy of the public. . . . And if somebody was to actually be successful in removing from the public life the leader of the seduced, blinded and drunk, he would be doing the greatest act that Croatian history remembers. He would be removing the constant danger for public order and international peace in the world" (p. 249).

The same don Kerubin Šegvić, as well as ". . . his partners in the clerical and Frankian circles, will use the death of Radić to pave the way for bloodthirsty and all-devastating clerical-fascism and Pavelić's Ustasha movement" (p. 249). In spite of the fact that, even on his death bed, Radić did not agree to receive the last rites from Archbishop Bauer, the Roman Catholic Church organised, on the occasion of Radić's death, such funeral honours as if the Pope himself had died. As Novak comments, ". . . clericalism mobilised all its forces, all its means and all its skills to 'mend the religious indifferentism and practical atheism' that Radić, according to the claims of the clericalists, had introduced into the people. And with this 'mending' to take him across to their own, Frankian and clerical-fascist camp. With skilful and cunning adjustment tactics in situations created after the death of Stjepan Radić in the Croatian movement, led by Radić's not-up-to-par successor, Dr. Vladimir Maček, it will play a perfectly organised, devastating role. And with all its organisations, who, in the joint front of the so-called Croatian movement, went into the service of an anti-Belgrade, anti-Serbian and for them an anti-Orthodox combative position. This contains the posthumous tragedy of Radić's life struggle and his all-human ideals. It was amplified and brought to a paroxysm by his small and insignificant successors, who, in accordance with the Bible saying, buried the inherited talent, for Radić's greatest enemy – the Croatian clericalism, to take it out and yield interest from it" (p. 252).

### e) The Restoration of Catholic Societies

In the 1920s, the Vatican intensified the activities of the Catholic Action, aimed at the internal restoration of Catholic societies. In the case of Yugoslavia, as Novak emphasises, “. . . this institution taught and demanded that every Catholic citizen has to unconditionally subject himself to his Church elders, and only with their approbation and consent, to his state’s laws as well” (p. 285). The clerical circles easily gave up on the request to introduce the Old Slavic or national language into the Church service, rejecting thus the Glagolitic traditions; and the front role was assumed by the latent discontent with the Yugoslav state in general. All political activities of the clergy were adjusted to the fundamental concept of the Catholic Action on the restoration of the pontificate through the strive to create “a universal secular authority, led by the Roman pontiff” (p. 285). The Catholic Action itself was intended to be a “. . . sort of school for building the political leaders in the nation. It is not tied to this or that political party, but it does want and intends to take in their hands the entire social and political life of the nation” (p. 286). This really meant the transformation of the Roman Catholic Church into a sort of political party, fascist in its character, according to the ideas of its main creator, Pope Pius XI. “Therefore, it is clear why there had been a conflict in Italy between fascism and the Vatican regarding the Catholic Action. Because, simply said, in Italy there was no room for two fascisms – for Mussolini’s fascism and the Vatican one, that of Pope Pius XI. There could be only one – before, as well as after the Lateran Treaty. And, in the end, Mussolini’s won, and the Vatican one merged with it completely, remaining one and single, apart from all the miserable existence of the Catholic Action; under the control of uncompromising fascism, which did not allow the Catholic Action to be independent from its authority” (p. 286).

The Catholic Action in Yugoslavia manifested in the full extent the fact that it is based “on the principles of the infallibility of one man and the authority of the same man, the apostolate of the hierarchy” (p. 286). Citing the results of a serious and pedantic research of an English publicist, Pointer, in the interpretation of Jovan M. Jovanović, Novak places in the spotlight the fact that “. . . one man, with all the constitutional traits of a living soul, determines what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong. The head of the Catholic Church determines whether the laws of a country are binding for the Catholics or not; he determines until when they are going to abide by them in their country and live up to them. Every Catholic should consider the laws of his country – unless the head of their church approves them – to be nothing more than a necessary evil. Freedom of press, consciousness and conscience are a good thing only if they are approved by the Church; if not, the freedom of the public confession of faith and thought is considered a crime. The head of the Catholic Church does not grant the people the ability to run and rule itself. The foundation for this understanding of social and political life is complete clerical rule, with full sanctions prescribed by the faith. The full submission of Catholics can only be to the spiritual authorities, and submission to the state authorities only if approved by the spiritual authority” (p. 286-287). At the same time it was proclaimed that the Catholic Action acts outside and above political parties, and among the Croats, its most numerous and the most aggressive organisation was represented by the crusaders.

In 1925, the Pope introduced a distinct cult of Christ the King, with a day dedicated to his celebration, and, with it “. . . Pius XI returned to the old aspirations for the

universal power of the Catholic Church, under the single authority of Christ the King, whose regent on earth is the Roman pontiff. The Empire of Christ is actually the Empire of the Roman Pope. To Christ, as a man, the authority of a king in the world should be recognised in the full meaning of the word. Namely, it is said there that the kingdom of Christ is a spiritual one, but it is also added that, 'anyone disputing the authority of Christ as a man over all civil matters, would be making a shameful mistake'. Therefore, this holiday should warn the state authorities each year that they, just like the rulers of states, have the duty of publicly respecting Christ and being docile to him, because his royal dignity demands that the entire state, in terms of legislation, justice and upbringing of the youth, is governed by Christian principles. It is, therefore, clear that the Catholic Action and the cult of Christ the King are one and the same entirety, serving the great goal of the universal domination of the Roman popes, after they lost their state" (p. 287). The crusaders, with their chief role in the mobilisation of the Croats, inherited, in this respect, the clerical organisation the *Eagles*, formed as a counterpart to the pan-Slavic *Hawk*. One of the instruments was the Croatian People's Party, which, at the time of Stjepan Radić and his Croatian Peasant Party, never achieved any serious election results; but soon, with the help of the *Croatian Guard* and the *Croatian Voice* newspapers, it transformed itself into, as Novak says, "a true Ustasha clerical-fascist organisation".

Even though there had been a lot of mutual animosity and conflict among the actors of the Catholic Action and the crusader organisation, and there had even been public expressions of intolerance between the Zagreb Archbishop Stepinac and the Sarajevo Archbishop Šarić, gradually almost all religious, political and social organisations concentrated around Maček, who had been unofficially, but convincingly, promoted by the leading circle of the clericals to be the leader of the Croatian National Movement and the mainstay of all anti-Belgrade separatism. The structure of the clerical movement started more openly assuming basic fascist traits. It is no wonder, bearing in mind the intimate friendship between the Italian fascist leader Benito Mussolini and Pope Pius XI. The fascist regime fully instrumentalised the Catholic Church for its imperial objectives, while the Church circles publicly referred to Mussolini as the executor of the will of divine Providence. Cardinals and bishops simply raced to throw as much flattering praise and fawning at the Duce as possible. Thus the Vatican state secretary, Cardinal Pacelli, later Pope Pius XII, in 1936, justifying the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, said the following words: "To destroy Mussolini, that is the objective of the enemy, because that would mean hitting the heart of Rome, the head of Christianity, destroying the saints and killing God. And how can the Church, then, be asked not to support its great crusader, Mussolini?" (p. 332-333). Though there had been occasional sparks in the relations between Rome and the Vatican, and Mussolini often publicly made it known that the Pope is actually his subaltern, the Catholic Action in Italy fully subjected itself to the control of the fascist regime. "Fascism succeeded in its aspirations, because the people who were previously proponents of anti-fascist parties and who carried out two-faced politics would be removed from the Catholic Action. There would no longer be any Catholic syndicates, there would only be fascist ones. Apart from that, the Catholic youth organisations, after the agreement, would no longer be allowed to be brought in opposition towards the programme of fascism and the directions of the fascist regime" (p. 335).

One of the prominent fascist leaders, Carlo Scorza, calls the fascist idea religious, calling on the hatred of all its opponents, claiming that “. . . fascism is the most original phenomenon, typically Italian, so it cannot look upon any other movement from the past; it can only take instruction from another great Roman phenomenon, and that is the Catholic Church. But, we need to understand, . . . fascism does not take into account that part of the Church history, where there is an abundance of humble and modest figures who, with all their indubitable holiness, brought the Church to the phases of great decadence, because love and sweetness serve no purpose. . . Fascism looks upon the constructive side of Catholicism, in the age of the great pillars of the Church, the great popes, great bishops, politicians and warriors, who knew how to take up the sword as well as the cross, and they knew how to use the stake and excommunication, as well as torture chambers and poison. Those were proud and wonderful phenomena, delights the modern fascist, before which the heresies hid in libraries and distant hills, princes and kings bent their knees before Rome. All of those are fascist role models, all of them were fighters and, importantly, ‘haters’; some of whom deservedly went from the throne of Saint Peter to the ranks of the heavenly saints. That is exactly why the Church lasted two thousand years, claims this fascist, because it had ‘haters’ among its leaders. That is why fascism should look up to this school of implacability and hatred. Therefore, firstly, the young generations should be inspired with this spirit, if they are to become the army of the new religion” (p. 36-337). On the other hand, a huge number of cardinals, archbishops and bishops gave their blessing for the invasion of Ethiopia, following in the footsteps of Pius XI, who stated that Italy is waging a just war there. So, for example, the Milan Cardinal Schuster said that “. . . the Italian flag triumphantly bears the crusaders’ cross, taking the shackles off the slaves and opening the door to the missionaries, preaching the gospels. God will reward his good will with victorious peace, thanks to the brave army, who, subjecting itself to the orders of the homeland, opens, at a bloody price, the doors of Abyssinia to the Catholic faith and the Roman civilisation” (p. 340).

This crusade was supported by the Roman Catholic bishops from other countries as well. “All the Catholic world had to, in accordance with the instructions skilfully orchestrated and disseminated everywhere from the Vatican, take the view that this aggressive war is a just war, so, accordingly, this service of the Catholic Church to the interest of fascism and its imperialism had to be given the character of Catholic legitimacy and, thus, justification for this fascist assault on the liberty of an insufficiently civilised world. Certainly, all under the guise of Roman civilisation and dissemination of the true gospel, because the one that reached the Abyssinians with the Coptic Church was a heresy, which the war effort had to remove, with airplanes and poisonous gasses, thus forever saving the Ethiopian proponents of monophysitic Christianity” (p. 341). After Ethiopia, it was Spain’s turn. “It was clear to the entire world that Pius XI approved in advance Mussolini’s intervention in the Spanish civil war. It was clear to the entire world that the Pope and the high-ranking clergy in Italy, and in the rest of the world, granted privileges to and protected the side on whose behalf Mussolini militarily intervened. Salvemini quite correctly reminds us that this collaboration was so loud, that it is still in the eyes and in the minds of all those who followed it at the time of that bloody struggle of the Spanish people for its freedom” (p. 344). When, in the beginning of 1938, Mussolini ceremoniously received 600 archbishops and bishops, as well as about two thousand priests, Nogare the Archbishop

of Udine, said, in his welcoming address, "Duce! You have attained so many victories. . . The Lord is with you! We pray to him and we will pray to him to let you win all the battles you wisely and energetically wage for the benefit, greatness and glory of Christian Italy, this Rome, which is the centre of Christianity, this Rome, which is the capital of imperial Italy" (p. 344).

As early as in September 1940, Pope Pius XII began publicly giving his blessing to Mussolini's entering World War II on the side of Hitler, and then occasionally received large numbers of Italian and German soldiers, showing his heartfelt support to their conquering campaigns. In that manner, on 18 May 1941, the Pope ceremoniously received the Croatian Ustasha delegation, led by Ante Pavelić. In his speeches over the radio, he incessantly called for peace, while in the meetings with fascist combatants he praised their heroism. The Pope's vileness and hypocrisy were endless. "While the Pope, between 1940 and 1942, spoke for and encouraged the performance of military duties and celebrated the heroism of those who died for their homeland, in his speeches to the English, the Americans, the French, the Polish, the Senegali and who knows who else, in 1944 and later, he talks only of peace, justice, love and the necessity for the war to lead to a just peace. No word now of any heroism, no celebrating of military virtues" (p. 346).

The struggle regarding the potential successor of the aging Archbishop Bauer lasted a full eight years, and, in May 1934, the Pope appointed Alojzije Stepinac to be the coadjutor Archbishop of Zagreb; he was favoured by the Jesuits, but also suited King Aleksandar, because he had been known in the public as a Thessalonica volunteer, though he had come to Macedonia as an Italian prisoner-of-war, only after the penetration to the Thessalonica front. The following year, Bauer issued the anti-St. Sava pastoral letter, banning the Roman Catholic youth from participating in the festivities on the occasion of the seven-hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Sava. On the occasion of Pope's Day, Stepinac held a fiery clerical-crusader speech in Zagreb, calling for a spiritual war, turning the platform into a field for demonstrating infinite hatred against Belgrade, the Serbian people and the Orthodox faith. "The entire press gave the widest possible publicity to the Archbishop's speech. Just as the speech of Archbishop Stepinac was interpreted in the hall of the Zagreb choir on Pope's Day, it was identically understood in the extended ranks of clericals outside Zagreb. This was demonstrated by the case of a peasants' rebellion in Sabinje near Brod, on 20 February 1935, who were led to a 'spiritual war' by Mihajlo Praskić, the parish priest from Podcrkavlje, near Slavonski Brod. A large number of victims among these peasants rests on the soul of this clerical, whose life is otherwise filled with the most heinous and criminal obscenities. Formerly sentenced for money counterfeiting, banished from the parish by his bishop Akšamović for immoral living and for scandals he committed, he still found work preaching the 'gospel' at the Zagreb dioceses, interpreted in a particular way, of the thoughts expressed on Pope's Day in Zagreb. Still, this filthy person, who heavily sinned against not only the secular, but also the Church authorities, found protection in the clerical press, only because he was a fierce clerical-fascist. It is therefore perfectly consistent that he will be encountered again at the same line in the clerical-fascist Ustasha Independent State of Croatia" (p. 422).



## f) Threats by Pius XI Regarding the Cancellation of the Concordat

During the parliamentary elections in 1935, Archbishop Bauer, with the whole-hearted help of Stepinac, developed a wide-ranging political activity within the Croatian Peasant Party, aimed at breaking Radić's original anti-clerical course and bringing the practically open supporters of Ante Pavelić to influential positions. Considering this political direction as opportune, Vlatko Maček fully adapted himself to it. "Clericalism constantly supports all the forces strengthening the disputes between the Croats and the Serbs, and systematically stirs up dissension in every possible sector. That is why clericalism, which complicates religious antagonism, was used for this purpose, in order to make the disagreement more sharpened and profound. Employing skilful tactics, adapted to the situation, it is, at one moment, wrapped up in church-religious actions, and, at the next moment, in political actions, with the objective of clericalism taking the control over all political activities into its hands" (p. 423). The Catholic Action, led by the Jesuits, became the fundamental political subject of Croatianhood, giving it a fundamental, clericalist expression. Just at that time, in July 1935, the agreement on the concordat was concluded between Yugoslavia and the Vatican, after Stjepan Radić had stopped the negotiations eleven years earlier, in 1925, considering the intentions of the Vatican too clerical.

The Serbian Orthodox Church energetically opposed the concordat, estimating that it would favour the Roman Catholics, so its ratification was delayed for a long time. The Croatian clericals seemed to have welcomed this as additional proof of their thesis on the irreconcilable nature of the Western and Eastern outlook. "Clearly stirred were the innermost instincts of hurt national feelings, and the symptoms of a relentless religious-cultural struggle could be discerned; a struggle which the clerical side carried to a highly political terrain. From that side, from the pulpit, emphasis was placed on the injustice against Catholics, as they were not granted the same rights acquired by the Orthodox population by their law on the Serbian Church. The terrain – psychologically prepared in advance – easily inflamed passions related to the separatist understanding of extreme exclusivity in Frankianism, and, together with it, in clericalism, making, along with some true recriminations, also the most monstrous recriminations, invented by the sick fantasy of political corruption. All of this under the guise of the violation of religious rights. On the opposite side, the concordat warned the entire nation, more than once, of what clericalism is and what kind of danger it can represent. The relevant authorities, not having prepared the public opinion of the need to conclude a concordat prior to the publication of the text, now had no power to use their means and their otherwise dubious and compromised authority to stop the billowing flood, or at least to channel it properly" (p. 445-446).

Pope Pius XI was simply enraged upon hearing the news that the concordat remained un-ratified and finally put on the shelf with the full capitulation of Stojadinović's government before the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church. In his speech at the Vatican consistorium on the occasion of the promotion of new cardinals, at the end of 1937, the Pope referred to that issue as well, and *Osservatore Romano* reports on this: "The day will come, continued His Holiness, and he did not want to say it, but he is quite sure about this, when there will be more than a few who will dearly regret that they did not embrace with generosity the good thing offered by the representative of Jesus Christ to their country. The issue did not concern only the Church and the religious side

of the national consolidation, but also the social and political side, even though he resolutely detests making politics his issue and his work” (p. 464). As Viktor Novak comments, “. . . this threat that Yugoslavia would regret this had a deep meaning in its revival in the breakdown of Yugoslavia, in April 1941. The fascist press also expressed full support for these thoughts of Pius XI, reflecting, without a doubt, the same views of their boss, Mussolini.” As an illustration, Novak quotes the Roman fascist newspaper *La Tribuna*, from 17 December 1937: “No less expressive and significant were the words that the Pope dedicated to Yugoslavia in his speech yesterday. His words related, in part, to the concordat and its ratification, which had not yet taken place. The words of the Pope, if they expressed a pain, were not directed at the Yugoslav government, which he particularly credited, because he encountered good will in Yugoslavia, in all matters, but the allusion to the government itself was more than transparent. His words were aimed at irreconcilability of the truly pathetic Orthodox Church, which did not know how to rise to the heights of true patriotism, but completely subjected the interest of the country to its own interests and the traditional narrow-mindedness, when it comes to ideas. It should be said that the concordat between the Vatican and Yugoslavia was a dying wish of King Aleksandar. This ruler had prepared the concordat on the eve of his murder in Marseille. He saw, with the breadth of his views and the nobility of his heart, that religious peace would be greatly beneficial to his country. That is why he personally studied the issue, personally led the negotiations with Rome, examined things, studied them at great depth and thus determined all the items contained in the concordat. Therefore, this came to the regency government as a sort of a sacred legacy, which needed to be preserved and developed in accordance with its logical development. The Orthodox Church, instead of embracing all ideas with an open mind, equated them to its own pathetic interests and played a role of a force totally foreign to the state, above which it wanted to be placed, and paralyse it in its sincere effort for the general good” (p. 464).

Viktor Novak, further quoting the political reactions of the Yugoslav Catholic episcopate, considers the December threat from the Pope with a later pastoral letter to the believers: “. . . in perspective of the events that will take place, with dreadful rudeness, on the field of Croatian clerical aspirations, in fact, a tacit declaration of war, which was to follow in various shapes, and under various mobilisations, when the time is right. In Yugoslavia, as well as in Italy. The ultimate character of these two very significant documents basically coincides with a similar occurrence in July 1914. The horrible reality of 1941 and later years shows how these two significant threats were a command for Croatian clericalism, and what had been the instructions and aspirations for its activity prior to the emergence of the Independent State of Croatia. In fact, these thoughts of the Holy Father were only a paraphrase from the speech of the cardinal at the time – State Secretary Pacelli, who, at a formal dinner on 25 July 1935, said in his speech that Yugoslavia needed the concordat ‘for the progress and internal peace of the people’. The rejection of the concordat, consequently, had to lead to the decay and internal unrest of the peoples of Yugoslavia. And really, the plan and the threat were consistently implemented and carried out, with the use of all means. The Vatican clerical army in Yugoslavia was put on alert. And its main headquarters, the Yugoslav Catholic episcopate, only remained loyal to their pastoral letter, ‘not resting until such time as its rights are recognised and secured’ – in Pavelić’s Independent State of Croatia. There is no doubt that the concordat-o-mania of Pius XI . . . with such a conclusion to the

concordat struggle, received a heavy, defeating blow. And under none other than Cardinal Secretary E. Pacelli, the future Pius XII, this pronounced representative of militant Vatican diplomacy. However, it would be wrong to think that Vatican diplomacy and the Roman Curia abandoned further struggle. On the contrary. It continued, with all the old, tested means and weapons, which did not withdraw from the Yugoslav terrain after the end of the concordat struggle. The foreign '*Divide et impera*' still used its endless supply of poison, hatred and dissent, which had to continue dividing the religiously split Serbs and Croats. The inextinguishable fire of clerical hatred, was increasingly stirred up, threatening any attempt of resistance against this Roman *Divide*' (p. 467-468).

### **g) Preparations of the Clerical-Fascists for World War II**

The clerical-fascist-oriented bishops, such as Šarić, Stepinac, Srebrnič and Burić, were strengthened in 1938 with the appointment of Pavao Butorac as the bishop of Kotor, otherwise an over-zealous Jesuit, completely intolerant towards the Orthodox population. Even his first public appearances, which made Bishop Pavao Butorac famous, were, as Novak points out, ". . . a product of a sick separatism and chauvinist imperialism, hatred of Orthodoxy and the aspiration of a full Drang, Roman, of course, that, one day, only fascism and its Yugoslav clerical-fascist associate will be able to perform" (p. 484). But, this did not seem to bother the King's regency government, which decorated Butorac with the Order of Saint Sava of the first degree. On his side, Vlatko Maček, now fully in the embrace of clerical-fascists, did not satisfy himself with the huge concessions of the Belgrade regime regarding the establishment of the Banate of Croatia, but, together with the Mussolinians, forged plans for a full Croatian secession and its transfer under the protectorate of Italy in a confederative form. "There is no doubt that the curtain has not yet been fully lifted, but even the events that soon followed the agreement on the Banate of Croatia speak in an indirect language, not only of Dr. Maček's hesitancy, but of a true Janus face of a wily pettifogger, striving for the same goal as Pavelić, but through stages, and using other means and methods. For, there is no difference between Pavelić and Maček in these aspirations of theirs. On the contrary, they complement each other, both when they are different and when they are the same. Both when Maček negotiates with the United Opposition, and when he negotiates with Prince Pavle. Because Maček's speeches, and those of his main associates, Krnjević, Košutić, Pernar, Torbar and others, explaining to the supporters the political situation and the aspiration of the people, in the same language that Pavelić used to illegally approach the people from Italy, through underground, mainly clerical channels. Maček resembles there the physiognomy of Archbishop Stepinac, and Pavelić: that of Šarić" (p. 487).

The Banate of Croatia certainly did not satisfy all clerical-fascist and separatist appetites, so their protagonists saw a new chance in the approaching war storm. Political differences between Maček and Pavelić grew smaller, and, in the end, came down to only personal differences. The entire clerical press in World War II, which had just begun, firmly sided with Hitler and Mussolini. "The Peasant Protection and the Civil Protection increasingly resembled military formations, that would openly, on the first days of the Independent State of Croatia, step forward as Ustasha organisations, while between 6 and 10 April they carried out all the commands of Ante Pavelić, transmitted

to Croatia by radio” (p. 489). The Peasant and Civil Protection were formed by the Croatian Peasant Party, as a contour of its own paramilitary or para-police organisation, as a party army modelled after the German SS or Italian Black Shirts. “The clerical-fascists equally accepted the Ustasha way of working out the notion of complete Croatian freedom, by pointing out the common enemy of the Church and Croatianhood” (p. 489). The King’s minister and one of Maček’s closest associates, Josip Torbar, confirmed at the Congress of Croatian Catholic Press, in May 1939, in Zagreb, “. . . that the life of the Croatian people is inseparable from the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is the greatest strength, which has helped us survive so far; it is also the greatest guarantee of our continued survival. Through twelve centuries, the Croatian people and the Catholic Church had the same enemies on the same side. The Catholic Church gave strength to the Croatian people to ward off the enemies. On the side of the Croatian people today there is the entire Catholic Church, almost in unison, and all the enemies are on the opposing side. I have travelled through all the Croatian territories and in places where the people are closer and loyal to the Catholic Church, there we are the strongest and we have nothing to fear. The Catholic Church, as long as it continues being to the people what it is now, also has nothing to fear. The clergy gave an extraordinary contribution in the restoration of Croatianhood” (p. 489).

The clerical circles and the Croatian political parties formed the Croatian National Movement, in order to coordinate their separatist activities and pave the way for the expansion of fascist ideology; and Maček himself signed as “the leader of the Croatian people” in his epistle, read before Pope Pius XII at the end of 1939, during the pilgrimage of a delegation of Croatian bishops and political leaders. The entire 1940 went by in a sign of accelerated spreading of fascism among the social consciousness, with the use of all propaganda means, while 1941 was declared a jubilee year, marking thirteen centuries of Christianisation of the Croatian people. Historical facts were relentlessly falsified to prove that which cannot be proven, but the mass hysteria and ardent zeal constantly gained in intensity, thus a huge number of priests openly appeared on the stage not only on the positions of the Ustasha ideology, but also publicly declared affiliation with the Ustasha movement. All the press declaimed in unison a false historical vision, masterminded by the bishops. “Everything is arranged in a tone of writing the history of the glorious past. The bishops know that the Croats had come to the Balkans, somewhere between 630 and 640 A.D. from the upper Visla ‘as a great organised army’ and that they took the old Roman Dalmatia from the Avars, with parts of Iliricum and Pannonia, and ‘as a free nation under its ruler, apparently the grandfather or father of the later Croatian leader Borko, settled where the Croats still live today’. Entirely in the spirit of the old romanticist school, these Croatian ancestors from the seventh century are represented as mild-tempered people, who ‘ever since the beginning (i.e. ever since they started their attacks on the Avars in Dalmatia) did not act in a hostile manner towards the Christians, and everything led to the most pleasant attitude towards Christianity spreading among them. In spite of the fact that archaeology incontestably proved that all Christian churches of the sixth and early seventh century had been destroyed, and had not been repaired until the end of the eighth century, these Croatian bishop ‘historians’ know how it had been done nicely, harmoniously and peacefully in this sector, while in any other, wherever the Christianity expanded, it had been preceded by the sword. So, as soon as they had arrived and destroyed everything before them together with the Avars, they restored all of that and psychologically prepared to

abandon the old Slavic gods, whose names are still present in some Dalmatian peaks, and approached Saint Peter and Holy Father the Pope. Having prepared everything so neatly, the compilers say that is when the Christianisation of the Croatian people began” (p. 509-510).

The sober voice of the Old Catholics could not have imperilled the red-faced ideological euphoria of the clericals, who celebrated the inviolable unity of the Pope and Croatianhood. Still, their pastoral letter remains as a historical testimony of the existence of those who understood the balefulness of clerical-fascist policies and tried to withstand them. In the *Message to the Croatian People*, which the Old Catholics adopted at their Zagreb congress in May 1939, it is said, “It is rightful and appropriate for the Croatian people to celebrate the 1,300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of accepting the faith of Jesus Christ and his divine teachings, but it should reject the attempts of those who want to equate that celebration with celebrating the submission of the Croatian people to the Roman Pope. On the contrary, on the very occasion of the 1,300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Croatian people should be made aware of these historical truths and facts: 1) From the very beginning of the Croatian Christianisation, the Roman popes aspired for the Croats to accept the Latin spirit together with Christianity and to betray their national spirit and language; 2) The efforts of the Roman popes and their priests to strengthen the position of the Roman Catholic Church and its spiritual authority in the Croatian people aspired, first and foremost, for the Croatian people to be the servant and the slave of the papal policies, aimed at expanding the secular authority of the Roman Church and its leaders over all Christianised nations and their rulers, and ensuring here Latin supremacy over the Croats, in their own state; 3) The Croatian people, having created their own independent national state, ruled by the members of the Croatian national dynasty, could not enjoy peace and prosperity, because it was forced, from the very beginning, to struggle with the Roman Pope and his Latin priests, to save the sacred Church service in the living national language from them, which it received as a legacy of the true followers of Christ, the Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius, and to save and preserve the right to choose its own bishops and priests, who would serve to disseminate the pure teachings of Jesus and the interests of the Croatian people, and not the Roman popes and their interests; 4) In that struggle of the Croatian people against the Roman popes and their servants, who played the role of corrodors in the Croatian state from the very beginning, and who finally, for the destruction of the Croatian kingdom, joined forces with the Hungarians – the Croatian Prince Zdeslav, the glorious Croatian King Dimitrije Zvonimir, the last uncrowned King Petar Svačić and then thousands of persecuted and ill-used Glagolitic priests, who remained loyal to the Croatian national church and church service in the national language fell as victims; finally, the Croatian state and Croatian national freedom fell” (p. 521).

The proclamation attracted too little attention in the public. “The voice of clerical-fascists was louder and more attractive. It mobilised and incited all instincts of hate and intolerance of clerical chauvinism, which made such a harmonious attachment to the general political turmoil, the billowing war psychosis, which made its supporters crazy, inspiring in them hopes of an independent state, which would be given to them by the outcome of world events, without any particular difficulty. From the clerical-fascist press, particularly Stepinac’s *Croatian Voice* and Šarić’s *Catholic Weekly*, emanated a true opium scent, which intoxicated and conjured up the earthly heaven of the future ‘Independent State of Croatia’. Really, the clericalism in March 1941 was in a particular

rise. With that force it will await 25 and 27 March, 6 April and, above all else, 10 April! Clerical-fascism and all its collaborators were ready for the harvest. Those who had sowed seemed happy with the outlook. The crop was nearly ripe. They only awaited the moment to begin the grand task of harvesting, for which the sown seeds had been nurtured for such a long time and with such great efforts. It is now ripe” (p. 522). Maček filled all the camps with anti-fascists of various political orientation, and then, in the first days of the occupation, his police handed them over to the Germans and Ustashas. He also issued a proclamation calling on all the members of the Croatian Peasant Party and his political supporters to accept the new authority, cooperate with it and put themselves in its service. As Viktor Novak comments, “This is how the ‘leader’ greeted the worst enemy of all Slavs. This is how the ‘leader’ inaugurated the final stage of the most shameful deed, the betrayal of one’s own people. He will be followed along the same path by his most faithful ally, Archbishop Stepinac” (p. 523).

The followers obeyed Maček. “Organised members of the Civil and Peasant Protection, these two exceptional Croatian Peasant Party institutions, were, indeed many of them conscious and many subconscious pillars of the future Ustasha regime, setting it up with their maximum demands in the psychosis of establishing the agreement-based Banate of Croatia” (p. 527). The content of Pavelić’s speeches in the first days of April 1941, via the Vienna Ustasha radio, testifies that he had a detailed knowledge of the upcoming fascist aggression against Yugoslavia, and his instructions were strictly followed by the masses of his ideological followers. “Frankianism – which had become like a vampire – in cooperation with offended clerical-fascism, which had, after the rejection of the concordat, put itself almost openly in the service of their country’s enemies, thus made an instant victory, stabbing their own country and state in the back, betraying it in the most abject way. All that will follow will be a repeated, expressed in the more horrible form, a summary of the events and intentions in the first months of 1914, which will translate here into four horrible years of Ustasha and clerical-fascist terror. Finally, the long-awaited moment of clerical-fascist retaliation had come. When the German Stuka were destroying Belgrade and turning it into a horrendous torch, Headman Pavelić addressed the Croatian soldiers, who he mystified with calculated propaganda. . . Most of the clergy, secular and monastic, was inimical to Yugoslavia, from the first moments, and certainly represented the most reliable fifth column and collaborator in the conquering entry of Germans and Italians – and a few Italian Ustasha – into the Croatian territories. The fifth column, made up of clerical-fascists, Frankians of all colours, together with Ustashas and the Croatian Peasant Party’s Civil and Peasant Protection, obeyed the emigrant traitor and followed his orders, not only in terms of demoralising the army, but also in disarming it” (p. 537).

One of the closest associates of Pavelić’s, the Ustasha second-in-command, Mile Budak, stated, as early as in the middle of 1941, “. . . that it was not a rare case that certain priests played a prominent role in disarming the Yugoslav army officers. Thus, according to Mile Budak, a village chaplain disarmed three generals, fifty officers and a thousand soldiers. Another one, again a priest, joining forces with two finance guards, captured two generals and forty Serbian officers; and one Franciscan, with the help of several young men, disarmed an entire Serbian company. These were the first Ustasha self-admissions of the clerical-fascists and Ustashas concerning the contact and their credits for the Ustasha victory. Another reporter noted Budak’s explanations of how the Frankians and other priests prepared this joint effort.” This is followed by this quote:

“What follows is what you undoubtedly did not understand. All kinds of Ustashas came to villages and towns, who, as friars, had all sorts of things under their robes, and who were preparing the people. We stirred up Ustasha hatred throughout Croatia, so, when the time was right, our German and Italian friends found us not only ready, but also liberated” (p. 537-538).

The Ustashas and the proponents of Maček really stirred up rebellions in many places, got into conflict with the army and the gendarmerie, obstructed mobilisation and caused social chaos. One of the Ustasha ideologists, and earlier established clerical publicist, Ante Oršanić, describes the Croatian fifth-column activities in 1941 in the following way in the *Croatian Magazine*: “The internal, revolutionary, destructive role, i.e. the role that facilitated the breakdown, not from the outside, like the German army, but from the inside, so that, at the moment of struggle and breakdown, nothing was in order, nothing was in place, or in time, nothing was ready to be dispatched at the right time, nothing shot at the right targets, nothing went where it was supposed to and nothing reported as it should have; that was the great, significant and responsible role of the Croats in the breakdown of the Balkan front. In that role, the Croats had given an unprecedented contribution in the Balkan war. And, just like the Croats had, at the time of peace, all voted in unison against Serbia, against Serbian megalomania and hegemony, against terror and exploitation, now, in the time of war, all Croats in unison have refused obedience, not carried out orders, obstructed communication, spread panic, aimed incorrectly, disabled tanks, cars, airplanes and guns, and other machine weapons, disarmed the undisciplined and barbaric Serbian masses” (p. 539).

#### **h) The Independent State of Croatia as the Materialisation of the Vatican Project**

A day after the declaration of the Independent State of Croatia, Radio Zagreb was inviting the Zagreb people to greet the German army ceremoniously and wholeheartedly, and to follow further instructions that would be broadcast over the radio. “The message for the people outside Zagreb was to immediately go to the parish offices, where priests would give them further instructions. Evidently, it is clear that these Ustasha instructions had been given to parish offices and their heads, the parish priests, the heads of parishes and chaplains, even before 10 April, before the declaration of the Independent State of Croatia, in accordance with an earlier agreement. There is no doubt because all of them had been ready before to be their collaborators and confidants in the great Ustasha crime, the creation of the Independent State of Croatia. It is the most evident sign that the entire Church institution in Croatia put itself in the service of a grand-treason movement and in the service of the newly created situation; that the Church institutions, particularly parish offices, became an instrument of the Ustasha system and the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia, obviously prepared in advance for such an event. Because, who would dare recommend to the citizens to go to the institutions for all, even the most confidential communications, if it could not be established with certainty that these institutions would carry out orders so important in the first moment of taking over power? They could only be the most intimate confidants. And these institutions have truly been the most reliable mainstay in the first moments when a certain uncertainty could still have caused the indecisive people to topple” (p. 542).

The main Ustasha headquarters knew very well that they could fully rely on the most part of the Roman Catholic clergy and use it as a tested organisational infrastructure. “The supreme chief of the Catholic Church in Croatia, the Metropolitan Bishop of Zagreb, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, gave to the Croatian clergy a truly inspiring example of the position towards the Ustasha grand treason and the declaration of the Independent State of Croatia. The true link between the Archbishop and the Ustasha leaders was declared ‘*Urbi et orbi!*’ in the very first moments of the Independent State of Croatia. Because, as early as 11 April 1941, Archbishop Stepinac visited his former acquaintances and friends, who now occupied ministerial positions in the first provisional government authority, even before the arrival of Ante Pavelić to Zagreb. One of the bloody terrorists, who will also make the bloodiest regime in Croatia in the past thousand years since King Tomislav infamous with his deeds, was Dr. Milovan Žanić, who had just taken over the Ministry of Police. This is the man Archbishop Stepinac went to see and greet on his own behalf and on behalf of the church that he represented, and have a long conversation with him, as the Ustasha press very gladly reported. This was one of very important propaganda elements, which they used to indirectly speak about and advocate how the rest of the clergy should behave towards the Ustasha regime, not only the part of the clergy spiritually prepared for the moment of the declaration of the Independent State of Croatia, but also the part that had previously been not only a reserved, but also a sceptical observer of the earlier cooperation of the clergy with extreme aspirations of the Ustasha leaders and their executors” (p. 543). What followed were Stepinac’s official visit to the Headman’s deputy and Ustasha Marshal Slavko Kvaternik, a public mourning for the killed Ustasha etc.; all of that was followed by the Church press, in detail and in an apologetic spirit, demonstrating that it was no different from the Ustasha Party press.

On Easter, in the Zagreb cathedral, Archbishop Stepinac, in front of a mass of people, gave his blessing to Slavko Kvaternik, on 16 April he officially visited Pavelić, and then prepared a ceremonious banquet for the Ustasha emigrants who had just arrived, in the Bishop’s residence. “Archbishop Stepinac thus showed the path his activities would take during the Ustasha regime. He truly welcomed and accepted the Independent State of Croatia as one of the ideals he had dreamt about. On the first day of Easter, he held his usual sermon at the Zagreb cathedral, where he announced to the body of believers the great day of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, identifying himself from the pulpit with those who committed grand treason and destroyed Yugoslavia” (p. 545). Reporting in detail on Pavelić’s oath-taking and the inauguration of the Ustasha government, the *Catholic Newspaper*, edited under Stepinac’s strict control, emphasised in an editorial: “The state of Croatia is, therefore, a fact. Our ancestors carried it in their souls for centuries, as an ideal, until almighty Providence made it happen in the year of the great national jubilee. The Catholic Church, which has spiritually led the Croatian people for 1,300 years, in all its difficult, painful and joyful days, follows with joy and gladness the Croatian people in the days of its advancement and restoration of national independence. It is convinced that it, with the annunciation of Christ’s religious and moral teachings, preserved the Croatian people’s life force and resilient endurance. That it had given it the moral strength to be able to resist the difficult temptations, which finally led to the restoration of national independence. Just like it stood in its spiritual service, faithfully, with its clergy, in the difficult days of temptation, it will also faithfully stand by its side in the new period of national independence, to strengthen it



and invigorate it, to make it possible to achieve, in its national state, to the full extent, the justice, general prosperity and versatile progress. It prays to God that all members of the Croatian people, in mutual harmony, find in the state of Croatia the realisation of their justified aspirations. For the entire people, with its responsible leadership, to be the true nation of God. It is convinced that there are objective and subjective pre-requirements, and the words of God will come true, 'Blessed are the people whose Lord is God!' With these wishes and prayers we enter the Independent State of Croatia" (p. 548-549).

On 28 April 1941, Stepinac himself sent a pastoral letter to the priests and Roman Catholic believers, in which he stressed, among other things, "Honourable brothers! There is no one among you who has not witnessed, in recent times, the most important events in the life of the Croatian people, among whom we act as heralds of the gospel of Christ. These are the events which brought our people closer to the long-yearned-for and dreamed ideal. These are the hours in which it is no longer the tongue that speaks, but the blood, with its mysterious connection with the land in which we saw the light of God, and with the nation that we arose from. Is it necessary to point out that the heart in our chest also started beating more lively? No intelligent person could judge that, and no honest person cannot hold it against anyone, because the love for one's own nation is embedded in the human being with the finger of God, and it is the commandment of God! And who can hold it against us, if we too, as spiritual shepherds, contribute to the joy and exaltation of the people, when we address the divine majesty in deep emotion and warm gratitude? Because, however entangled the knitting of today's fateful events; however heterogenous the factors affecting the course of events, it is still easy to discern the hand of God at work. . . Answer, therefore, readily my call for the sublime work of safeguarding and advancing the Independent State of Croatia. Knowing the men who govern the fate of the Croatian people, at this time, we are deeply convinced that our nation will encounter full understanding and assistance. We believe and expect that, in the resurrected state of Croatia, the Church will be able to teach irrefutable principles of eternal truth and justice, enjoying full liberty. . . May the good God make it so. And to make it so, I call upon you, honourable priests, brothers, never to stop encouraging your believers to pray . . . to fill the Headman of the state of Croatia with the spirit of wisdom, so that he would perform his sublime and responsible duty, in the honour of God, and for the salvation of the people, in justice and truth; for the Croatian people to be the people of God, loyal to Christ and his church, built on Peter's cave!" (p. 550-552).

Viktor Novak comments on the content of the entire pastoral letter, which is only partially quoted here, in the following way: "The Archbishop's circular letter to the clergy of the Zagreb diocese had been read on the radio several times in several days, in full and in part. The microphones carried it in public places in the Independent State of Croatia, announcing, not only to the clergy, but also to the people, that Archbishop Stepinac was fully engaged for the new Ustasha regime in the Independent State of Croatia. And not only him, but also the Catholic Church, on whose behalf he spoke, particularly underlining this thought. Moreover, the Archbishop wanted the Catholic Church to be the base built into the foundations of the Independent State of Croatia. In his chest, too, like in the chests of Ustasha, the heart started beating more lively when the Independent State of Croatia was declared. And as a representative of the Church, he

called upon the priests to do everything in order to safeguard and advance the Independent State of Croatia.

“In order to be more convincing, Archbishop Stepinac quotes the knowledge of Ustasha leadership, which will, in his belief, govern the fate of the Croatian people well, and return the favour to the Church, for everything the Church had done for them, and will do for them. So Archbishop Stepinac wholeheartedly calls upon the clergy, to whom he had explained before that the Independent State of Croatia was, in fact, the work of the hands of God, that those hands affected ‘the course of events’ which led to the Independent State of Croatia. In order to make it clear to everyone, to every priest and, particularly, every believer, that the Church as such did not only acknowledge the created situation; it actually advocated it with all its powers, including spiritual ones; the Archbishop invited the clergy to pray for the greatest butcher of the Croatian and Serbian people, so that God would ‘fill him with the spirit of wisdom’ so that he would perform the sublime and responsible duty, in the honour of God, and for the salvation of the people, in justice and truth; for the Croatian people to be ‘the people of God’, and besides that, for all the priests and the entire nation to show gratitude for the ‘work of the hands of God’, so he ordered a solemn *Te Deum* in all the parish churches, where the priest were supposed to invite not only the authorities, but also the ‘faithful people’. This complete, truly emotional, almost elating, not only assent, but also engagement for the Ustasha regime is demonstrated by the fact that, immediately after this pastoral letter was published, the *Principles of the Ustasha Movement*, published in 1933 by Ante Pavelić, were also published in their complete form in that Church pastoral newspaper! Or, in the words of the *Catholic Newspaper*, for the readers to become familiar with the basic principles, governing the entire life in the Independent State of Croatia” (p. 552).

Filled with intoxicating excitement, the Archbishop of Sarajevo expressed his joy, enlightenment, happiness and awakened hope regarding the establishment of the Ustasha regime with a lyric poem, a true ode to the fascist quasi-state creation, published in his newspaper *Vrhbosna*. As Novak notices, “. . . just like Archbishop Stepinac engaged himself on behalf of Pavelić and the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia in the Croatian territory, he will be followed in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the other Archbishop in the ring of the Croatian episcopate. Moreover, in certain manifestations, and particularly in his method of open pro-Ustasha and Ustasha activity, he will be surpassed. No wonder there, because the Sarajevo Archbishop Dr. Ivan Šarić had an even earlier direct, immediate and intimate friendly and political relationship with Pavelić, as well as with American emigrants, the Ustashes, to whom he gave his blessing in 1934, for their ‘patriotic’ work. . . The Archbishop radiates joy and light, and his soul shines with happiness and hope. Certainly, because the Independent State of Croatia was declared – both his, as well as Archbishop Stepinac’s ‘long-yearned-for and dreamt-of ideal’. . . Awakened in this manner from the golden dreams, the Archbishop will, during the entire period of the terrible, bloody Ustasha regime, which will create numerous and the most horrible victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, have a ‘trembling chest’, in a poetic ecstasy, form the triumphant day of the arrival of Headman Pavelić, until their shameful escape... “Thus, the Archbishop’s initial lyrical-Ustasha reflections and mediations will gradually move to the terrain of pro-Ustasha propaganda and organising everything and everyone ‘to the safeguard and advance the Independent State of Croatia’, at the general satisfaction of himself and his junior friend, outranking him in Zagreb, Archbishop Stepinac! The example of Archbishop Šarić, just like that of

Archbishop Stepinac, will impact both the subordinate clergy and the body of believers who had their own understanding and advised their arch-shepherds on ‘safeguarding and advancing the Independent State of Croatia’. From literary propaganda to the methods of Maccabeus followers – crusaders! In the Church as well as in the Ustasha slaughterer organisations. In battles, with bombs and knives, in the camps of hostages and other unfortunate people, prisoners sentenced to slow or quick deaths, in actions of spiritual murder in cases of forced ‘voluntary’ Catholicisation of Orthodox Serbs. . . Ever since the first days of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia, Archbishop Šarić would join the first ranks of Ustasha fighters. In sermons and in all other Church functions, where his word was directed at the subordinate clergy, whether in newspaper articles or poems, or as the first dignitary of Sarajevo, who receives in his palace the Ustasha, fascist and Nazi dignitaries, politicians and soldiers” (p. 554-555).

Under the occupation, in Sarajevo was established the *New Sarajevo Newspaper*, as a pronouncedly Ustasha publication, in which Archbishop Šarić published his memories of the meeting with Ustashas in Buenos Aires, where he went as a delegate of the Eucharistic congress, together with Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII. Among other things, he wrote, “How many times did I hear Ustashas saying, ‘what would we do without our priests’. . . I sang with our Ustasha, with all my heart and voice, ‘Our Beautiful Homeland’<sup>37</sup>, all of us always with a large tear in our eyes, and with living hope for its beautiful, sweet and golden freedom. With a sigh to God for her, we also prayed to the Almighty for the Headman, Dr. Ante Pavelić; may he mercifully watch over him and escort him to the free Croatia. And the good God heard and granted our cries and sighs. ‘We praise thee, Lord, we confess thee, Lord’. . . And we will always tie the loyalty to homeland with the loyalty to religion. Always Croats. Always Catholics! God and the Croats” (p. 556). During the war, Šarić cordially welcomed Kvaternik and German generals and officers, manifesting openly and in every place his firm affiliation with the Ustasha movement. As shown in the following illustration from the beginning of the war, he acted in the same manner until the very end: “Archbishop Šarić attended, on 30 June, on the day of the death of Zrinski and Frankopan, together with *reis-ul-ulema*, Fehim effendi Spaho, parish priest Bralo, the Headman’s commissioner for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Sarajevo parish priest, Dr. Čelik, the oath-taking of the Ustasha army in Sarajevo, carried out by Colonel-Commander Petar Blašković. The prayer of the oath for the Catholics was performed by Mato Hailo, a military priest, and for the Muslims, *imam* Hasan effendi Šenbić” (p. 556). Šarić also gave vent to his emotion through the poem *Ode to the Headman*, dedicated to Pavelić, on the occasion of Christmas 1941, published in all the press, recited over the radio and in schools, whose last verses read, “You sacrificed yourself fully for the Home. Intrepid as a hero, you live heroically on faith. For the freedom of our home you rose, you wonderful Ustasha” (p. 557).

Archbishop Šarić used every further public appearance, to re-affirm the inseparable unity of the Roman Catholic Church and the Ustasha movement, to give propaganda support to the clerical-fascist rule of terror, and its crimes, mainly against the Serbian people. Pavelić regularly returned the flattering compliments and got back to his slaughterer’s business with even greater zeal. “Šarić did not find one single word of warning or advice to stop this bloodthirsty rage. On the contrary, with his public

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<sup>37</sup> The Croatian national anthem.

appearances and advocating the cause of the Ustasha movement, as well as his blessing and glorifying the Ustasha leaders – and as we will see later – his speeches, held in front of Ustashes and the Home Guardsmen, Archbishop Šarić was, in fact, an intermediary instigator of all the numerous crimes, which had already happened, and whose number would be multiplied an infinite number of times during the four bloody years” (p. 560).

Public enthusiasm for the Ustasha regime was displayed by the Split Bishop Dr. Kvirin Bonefačić, and he wholeheartedly participated in all Ustasha manifestations and turned the church pulpits into political platforms. Under the Italian occupation, “. . . the Split bishop went so far as to send to the police memoranda containing lists of ‘politically suspicious persons’” (p. 564). He also advocated collective punishment for Chetnik and Partisan families; Italian military and police authorities were officially informed of this. As can be seen in one of their original documents, “. . . the bishop of Split, wholeheartedly supporting the request by the Catholic clergy in those areas, as you have already been informed, further proposes that for all crimes and damage that have already taken place, or that will eventually take place, the bandit’s families, living in the places in those areas, are held responsible, considering the return of many bandits to their homes a certain outcome of this measure” (p. 564).

Faithfulness and loyalty to Pavelić and delight with the Ustasha authorities were also expressed by the bishop of Hvar, Miho Pušić, the bishop of Krk, Dr. Josip Srebrnič, the bishop of Senj, Viktor Burić. In Burić’s pastoral letter to the clergy and the believers, published at the end of June 1941, there are the following words, “We have just witnessed great events in our dear homeland, Croatia. It was the will of God’s Providence, that which the long centuries yearned for, which the generations of the people sighed for, came true; the highest earthly ideal of the patriotic clergy and believers in our dioceses, from the ancient times until recent days, came to life. After many struggles and suffering, the irresistible national will for freedom, justice and a satisfied life is finally encircled with the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. Better days are shining for our homeland, and cheerful hope for a happy future was born in every Croatian heart. And while we stand under the impression of the general national delight, our gaze turns inadvertently to the long and arduous past of the Croatian people. In the continuous series of national suffering through the long centuries, we find among the prominent national fighters a good number of altar servicemen, which fills us with special pride; but, besides that, we are also aware of the ever important role that the Church has played in our national history” (p. 565).

Elated and sentimentally adorned greetings to Pavelić were also sent by the Đakovo bishop, Dr. Antun Akšamović, giving at the same time “. . . an example to his clergy how to serve the Independent State of Croatia, how to aid all its treacherous efforts. For that purpose both the altars and the pulpit were to be engaged” (p. 568). With a special “circular letter”, he called Hitler’s raid against the Soviet Union a Crusade, and supported the sending of Home Guard-Ustasha legionnaires to the eastern front. In a “circular letter”, dated 24 September 1941, there are the following lines: “Our great Headman, the hero of the Croatian people, saviour of our freedom in the most difficult of days, when we feared in alarm whether our thousand-year-old Croatia would be deleted from the geographic maps together with Yugoslavia, developed indomitable strength and supernatural wisdom at the very beginning of his rule. He invested superhuman efforts to secure for the Independent State of Croatia a normal development of the political and cultural life. Besides that, sworn enemies dared to cause disturbance

in certain parts of our country with their assaults. Our Croatian sons, our proud and brave army, fully loyal to the Headman, guarantee the good faith of the Independent State of Croatia. According to the high order of the great Headman, the Croatian army shared the chivalrous role. One serves the land defence, while the others partake in the crusade against the Bolsheviks. The great leader of the German Reich joined the companies of all the allies of the peacemaking 'Axis' to the triumphant companies of the German army, not because he felt a lack of strength in the German army, but to show the full solidarity of all large and small allies, to show that they are harmonious and equally willing to sacrifice for the establishment of peace and freedom for every nation on the European continent, in accordance with the guidelines of the great leader of the German Reich. The holy Catholic Church follows these events with full care and love for the soldiers at the frontlines and for the wounded in homes. That is why the Holy Father unites our souls with his message, in a joint prayer campaign" (p. 569).

### **i) The Pope's Public Support for Pavelić**

As Novak particularly points out, ". . . the important thing about the circular letter is that Bishop Akšamović reveals the intentions of the Vatican in that prayer campaign, and what hopes were in the minds of Church dignitaries in the moments when, according to the 'great leader of the Reich with the triumphant companies of the German army' the 'crusade against the Russian Bolsheviks' was to end before Moscow" (p. 570). In the pastoral letter that same bishop, a propagator of Ustasha ideology, sent in the beginning of 1942, he stresses, "The Lord, in his merciful justice, heard our prayers. Last year, 1941, our jubilee year, was filled with triumphant manifestations of general national joy, because of the declaration of the Independent State of Croatia. The great liberator of the Croatian people, joined together with the leader of the German Reich and the Duce of neighbouring Italy, after eight and a half centuries, builds the foundations for the resurrected state of Croatia. The Headman of our young Independent State of Croatia and its armed forces restore the spirit of the Croatian knights in a powerful call: Ready for the home! The Headman of the land leadership restores the spirit of church unity in the contemporary call: Back to the faith of our fathers! Unity is in the Catholic Church! In the Independent State of Croatia, the freedom of the holy Catholic Church is highly respected, and held in particular esteem is the sublime apostolate of this institution, established by Jesus Christ" (p. 571). He also insists on the Catholicisation of the Serbs, in order to de-nationalise them as successfully as possible, so that only a single, Croatian nation would live in the entire country. In that respect, Novak states that Bishop Akšamović, ". . . in the exaltation of the moment, revealed in a pastoral letter his own and the passionate intention of the entire episcopate to Catholicise the Serbs, 'so that there would be one single shepherd and one single fold', and in the Independent State of Croatia, with Catholicised Serbs, only one single Croatian nation. Because, for him, and for the entire episcopate, 'the headman . . . restores the spirit of church unity in the contemporary call: Back to the faith of our fathers! Unity is in the Catholic Church!' Bishop Akšamović was a particularly fervent collaborator in this business, as will be explained in detail in the next chapter. This confession of the full consent of the episcopate in the Independent State of Croatia with the Headman and his Ustashes in the most horrible attack against the freedom of consciousness that history remembers. This entire pastoral letter of 1942 was actually written as an expert and dogmatic apology for

the justification of Catholicisation in the Independent State of Croatia, based on ‘the sublime apostolate of the holy Catholic Church’. And when everything is done in accordance with ‘the Headman’s contemporary call: Back to the faith of our fathers!’, there will be God’s heaven in the Independent State of Croatia, because the Croats and the Serbs will have merged into the Catholic Church, and in the Independent State of Croatia ‘the mercy of spiritual revival’ will rule, under the direction of the Catholic Church, its episcopate and the entire clerical-fascism” (p. 571).

Pope Pius XII, on 18 May 1941, cordially received Ante Pavelić and the entire Ustasha delegation, which came to Rome to agree with Mussolini on the taking over of the Croatian royal throne by the Duke of Spoleto, a member of the royal house of Savoy. All fascist, Ustasha and clerical press greeted that event with delight, even though the Pope gravely violated the principle of neutrality in doing so. Šarić’s *Catholic Weekly* wrote on that occasion that “. . . the Orthodox element, which spilled over the historical territory of Croatia, carried with the Ottoman invasion, will not be able to carry out propaganda in the Independent State of Croatia. It will return to its natural borders, as is the requirement of not only justice, but also of the life interest of the Western civilisation. The Catholic and Muslim religions will have protection and the opportunity to develop freely with the fundamental interests of the Croatian people. In the Vatican, they are aware of the great resurrection of the Independent State of Croatia. It is therefore understandable that this event caused great satisfaction in the Vatican. The Vatican also cares about making the Croatian state as strong as possible” (p. 582).

The Catholic Action, the great Crusader Fraternity, the Jesuit and Franciscan schools and seminaries, as well as all other organisations and institutions of a Croatian national and Roman Catholic character, simply competed among themselves who would express deeper and more convincing loyalty to the Ustasha regime and its clerical-fascist ideology. When the Vatican also publicly and openly supported Pavelić, there was no dilemma anymore regarding the Pope’s idea that Croatia, established under the occupation, represents an outpost or bastion of Catholicism, and that the Orthodox population should be eliminated from its territory, whether by massacre or by forced Catholicisation. “In order to evaluate as correctly as possible and to understand the occurrence of the massive Catholicising of the Orthodox population and the bloody persecution of the Serbs by the Ustasha vanguard, an explanation will be given by certain Ustasha factors who gave directives for that objective. Not only the individuals, but the entire Ustasha formations and agitated supporters, incited with amoral instincts and horrible hatred against the Orthodox faith, and, consequently, against the Serbs, excelled a camp guard equally as a fanatical Franciscan, Jesuit, chaplain, parish priest, canon, and even a bishop or archbishop. All of them competed in that work, and the clerical press called this work the highest ethical and patriotic duty” (p. 602-603).

### **j) The Clerical-Ustasha Catholicisation Campaign**

As regards the key plans and objectives that united the Roman Catholic Church and the Ustasha regime, there could be no dilemma. “In the very first days of the Ustasha regime, it was demonstrated that an unusually harsh, criminal attitude would be taken against the Orthodox faith, or Serbdom, in the Independent State of Croatia. It was clear that the citizens and peasants of the Orthodox religion would be treated not only as second-class citizens, but as outlaws. The first reform measures in the police

demonstrated this in very clear terms. The Orthodox Serbs were ordered in Zagreb, and in other cities, to wear around their arm a blue ribbon, containing only the letter 'P' (P in the Latin alphabet), because it was not desired to acknowledge that the Serbs can exist and live in the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia even by that measure. So, this sign of 'P' = *pravoslavac*,<sup>38</sup> was to serve as a medieval ghetto sign for 1,885,943 denounced Serbs, who were to either rejoin the 'faith of the grandfathers', or to be removed from the Independent State of Croatia, by means of emigrating to Nedić's Serbia, or by being sent to meet God, with saved or unsaved souls. So, this letter 'P', apart from its political significance, had a purely religious one as well, because it was used by the militant clericalism, now dominant in the Ustasha regime, with whom it had established full, intimate cooperation on the first days of the Independent State of Croatia, to designate its crusade against the hated Orthodoxy" (p. 603). Both the Church and the government mobilised all of their potentials to attain these goals as soon as possible.

In a very simple way, the key Roman Catholic and Croatian Ustasha programme regarding the Serbs was expressed by Pavelić's second-in-command, Mile Budak, at the Ustasha assembly in Gospić by these words, "A part of the Serbs will be killed, the other part displaced, and the rest will convert to the Catholic faith, thus assimilated by the Croats" (p. 605). The Ustasha minister, Milovan Žanić, a great friend of Štepinac's, at an Ustasha gathering in Nova Gradiška in June 1941 said, "Ustashas! You should know I speak openly. This land, this homeland of ours, must be Croatian and nobody else's. So, those who came here should be the ones to leave. The events over the centuries, and particularly in the past twenty years, demonstrated that there can be no compromise there. This is to be the land of the Croats and nobody else's and there is no method that we, the Ustashas, will not use to make this land truly Croatian and cleanse it from the Serbs, who imperilled us for hundreds of years and who would imperil us at the first opportunity. We do not keep this a secret; it is the policy of this state and when that is done, only the word of the Ustasha principles will have been done" (p. 606). Such speeches were held throughout the Independent State of Croatia, usually after the open-air mass and in the presence of Roman Catholic priests. Mass slaughter, robbery, arrests and taking people to camps followed.

The priests were equal to Ustasha officials in their rhetoric ardour. "The Catholic priest in Udbina, Mate Moguš, stirring up the crowds with his degenerate Ustasha thoughts, pointed out the need to exterminate the Serbs refusing to be Catholicised. In his Ustasha monstrousness . . . he said, 'So far we have worked for the Catholic faith with a prayer-book and a cross; now the time has come to work with a rifle and a revolver. . . So if you work in this manner, the brave priest advises his believers, you will enjoy the fertility of troubled ponds', i.e. the native soil, settled by the Serbs! However, it will be demonstrated later that the parish priest of Udbina was not alone in this interpretation of the gospel of Christ. Everywhere, in every place, the Ustashas, watch guards and camp guards, civilians and priests, talked of rebellion, which must lead to Croatia being fully conquered for the Croatian people. In this blasphemous and degenerate interpretation of the gospels, the former ideologists from the Catholic Action also tried to bring this into harmony with the true will of God!" (p. 610).

All ideological differences between the Ustasha and the clericals vanished. The Orthodox faith had to be liquidated completely, and that was a work undertaken by ". . .

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<sup>38</sup> Member of the Orthodox faith.

a large number of missionaries, who started this proselytistic work with ardour, whose prospects promised a big and abundant harvest. By hook or by crook. Along with this electrified air and perfectly supported psychosis through the clerical-fascist press, there were also orders of both the Ustasha authorities and the Church ones, pertaining to the Catholicisation and conversion of primarily the Orthodox Serbs. . . In the Independent State of Croatia, industrious students of the fascists decided to erase every trace that would remind them of Serbdom and Orthodoxy. In order to dress this violence in the form of legality, all sorts of orders appeared. Catholicisation was to serve the purpose of Croatianisation, thus achieving a dual result. The Ustashes thought they would thus increase the number of Croats, and the clericals would make a fold with one shepherd. . . The persecution of the Orthodox clergy in every possible expression was to psychologically prepare the Orthodox masses to convert to Catholicism. Those were really the first preparations for this great missionary task, which would bring together, with so much ardour and readiness, a huge number of officials of the Catholic Church, using the most tragic situation of a people devoid of their rights. It all demonstrated, as early as in the first weeks of the Independent State of Croatia, that there was a pre-conceived plan, in the working-out and implementation of which the most diverse factors would collaborate, among them, of course, the servants of the altar of the Catholic Church. Freedom of conscience was under attack as much as the bare lives of the disinherited Serbs. The news coming from all those Independent State of Croatia's territories where the Serbs had lived in larger groups for centuries, either alone or mixed with Catholics, affected all those priests, who resisted leaving their body of believers, willing to share with them their misery. But, the pressure increased, both moral and physical, and the priests increasingly began leaving, by their own will or under persecution, their parishes and parishioners, leaving them to the most tragic fate. Because, as soon as the first churches were closed down, burned and destroyed, there was no survival there for the priests, either. Those who were more persistent were taken to camps, and others were executed immediately" (p. 616-617).

The state and Church authorities synchronised their activities to the most minute detail in order to do the dirty work of religious unification as efficiently as possible. "The atmosphere created by the bigger and more brutal, pathetic pressure by the most merciless of the Ustashes – poisoned even more by the speeches of ministers and chief officials, the articles of the intolerant press, which agitated for the quickest and most efficient cleansing – resembled widespread panic as early as in May. Everyone started thinking they would save their bare lives, if not their property, if they converted – if they accepted Catholicism. And that is what they were told by the missionaries, friars, curates and parish priests, who already felt the situation was ripe for a particular spiritual harvest, immediately followed by a bloody one, which it did not seem to relent. Everyone began, in their own way, the radical cleansing of the Independent State of Croatia. The discharge of the Orthodox civil servants and harassment of the Orthodox population before all the official institutions of Independent State of Croatia were the first measures, followed by more severe ones and, finally, by bloody ones. The missionaries crawled in all directions, firstly whispering and then publicly speaking and advocating that in the Independent State of Croatia, a Catholic country, only Catholics were first-class citizens. A spectrum of means for achieving the desired success was very broad, ranging from threats to the most hypocritical advice" (p. 617-618). The bishops printed pamphlets in their dioceses, agitating for Catholicisation, while the



Office of the Archbishop's spiritual desk in Zagreb issued an official manual on the implementation of religious conversion.

In early 1942, the Croatian Ustasha Government issued an official act, ordering the state institutions to enter all the Serbs who had converted to the Roman Catholic or Muslim faith into the records as Croats. Open support for the Catholicisation of the Serbs was extended by the Vatican, while such a form of Croatianisation of Jews was out of the question, because, as Bishop Akšamović wrote, ". . . the state authorities are resolving the Jewish issue in accordance with the racial principle, not the religious one, so there is no room for further intervention" (p. 624). On behalf of the state, the activity of Catholicisation of the Orthodox population was directly run by the chairman and the director of the Religious Department of the Ustasha government, Friar Dionizije Juričev, who openly declared, "In this country nobody can live but the Croats, because this is the land of Croatia, and we know what to do with those who would not convert. In these areas, up there, I had everybody cleansed, from the chicken to the old men, and, if need be, I will do the same here, because today it is not a sin to kill a small child of seven years of age, if it stands in the way of our Ustasha order. We should all be Croats today and expand, and when we have expanded and gained strength, if need be, we will take more from the others. Do not be fooled by my priest's robe, you should know, when it is needed, I take a machine gun in my hands and kill everyone, all the way to the cradle, everyone who is against the Ustasha state and authority" (p. 627). For the same Friar Dionizije Juričev, Novak says that "the witnesses say that he would change his clothes, put on an Ustasha uniform, always carrying a gun" (p. 627).

The bishops' written instructions and resolutions from bishop conferences, regarding the Ustasha clerical-fascist activity on the Catholicisation of the Serbs, were aimed at giving the entire process the appearance of order and impartiality. "It is clear that the high-ranking Catholic clergy took very much into account the wishes and intentions of the Ustasha government; it only wanted to dress the methods of forced Catholicisation in prettier forms, in expressions that could be defended and justified in front of the foreign public – which is very sensitive to attacks organised against the freedom of conscience – as perfectly innocent, as merely satisfying the request by the free will and conviction of the passer-by. Especially if the conversion to Catholicism saved many lives" (p. 631). Even though some differences could have been noticed earlier between the Jesuits and the Franciscans, they undertook the dirty work in harmony and with enthusiasm, erasing all the visible differences. "A horrible fact was established, that the criminal Ustasha gangs, sent by Pavelić to Bosnia and Herzegovina to cause a fratricidal war, in accordance with his, but also the plans of Hitler and Mussolini, found the most energetic helpers and collaborators among the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Franciscans, with only a few exceptions. Their monasteries had already been Ustasha centres, as they will confess themselves, centres of Ustasha and German espionage, fortresses and lodgings, true arsenals of Ustasha watch guards, camp guards, labour unit guards and other officials, but also of all possible Italian-German officers and soldiers who just happened to be there, Gestapo members and various fascist agitators. . . They are active combatants, an accessory to bloody crime and atrocities! The pulpit had never been desecrated in a more shameful and brutal manner, than in the Ustasha period, wherever these Ustasha propagators appeared. . . It is a horrible fact that, just before the liberation, it could be stated that the 'most villainous murderers, arsonists and looters in the Russian front and in the fronts in our country, were the pupils of the Bosnian and

Herzegovinian friars, and the most cruel Ustasha slaughterers and butchers in Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška, were educated and raised in Bosnian and Herzegovinian monasteries. Ascetic friar robe served these fiends to carry out espionage on behalf of the Gestapo and the Ustasha intelligence service, in a perfidious and furtive manner” (p. 637-638).

**k) The Detailed Synchronisation of the Church and State  
Authorities of the Independent State of Croatia in Carrying Out a  
Genocide**

Examples of mass crimes that the Roman Catholic priests committed against the Serbs are countless. Thus, in the districts of Našice, Slavonska Požega and Podravska Slatina, the most notorious was Friar Sidonije Šalc. As teacher Petar Kovačević from Balevica testifies, it can be seen that, “The Serbs suffered all the evil wrongdoing by the Catholic priests through the Ustashes. . . All the Serbs converted to Catholicism, the only saving faith, under the most horrible terror. Of all the priests, Friar Sidonije Šalc was the thunderer in our district (of Našice). He had our local parish priest, Đorđe Bogić killed in the most atrocious manner. They took him from his apartment in the middle of the night and butchered him (cut off his nose, cut out his tongue, skinned his chin, tore open his stomach and wrapped his bowels around his neck)” (p. 641). Friar Vjekoslav Filipović took the initiative in the crimes against the Serbs of the Banja Luka area, as testified by numerous eye-witnesses. Just for an illustration, I report the statement of Đorđe Gajić regarding one case: “On 8 February 1942, a group of Zagreb Ustashes, led by a Jesuit friar (!) by the name of Filipović from the Petrićevac monastery near Banja Luka went to the Serbian village of Rakovica-Rudnik near Banja Luka. In this village, the Serbs worked in a mine together with Catholic and Muslim workers. Ustasha Friar Filipović determined, based on personal identification documents, which workers were Serbs, and immediately separated them from the Catholic and Muslim workers, and had them killed by the Ustashes on site. The Ustashes used pick-axes to kill these workers. 52 Serbian workers were killed there at that time. After that, the Ustashes, led by Friar Filipović, went to the village of Drakulići near Banja Luka, where the killed miners were from. In this village the Ustashes, again led by Friar Filipović, killed approximately 1,500 Serbs – men, women and children. All the inhabitants of the village were killed, only one woman named Lenka and her five children survived, and another child, whose parents were killed. Lenka later went insane. . . The main initiator of all the persecution and slaughter and the looting of the Serbs in this area was the already mentioned Dr. Viktor Gutić, who always harangued against the Serbs in his speeches. . . Apart from the mentioned Friar Filipović, other friars also came to meet Gutić, but I do not know their names” (p. 646). Testifying on the same events, teacher Dobrila Martinović adds more information, “The peak of barbarism was the massacre of sixty schoolchildren, caught at school, whose heads were cut off before the teacher’s eyes, who went insane from the horror she had endured” (p. 647). The arrival of the Ustashes to the village of Rakovac and later to Drakulići, Friar Vjekoslav Filipović accompanied with the cry, “Kill, and I will absolve you of sin” (p. 648).

Friar Miroslav Filipović, who added the surname Majstorović to his name, became, in the middle of 1942, the commander of the Ustasha concentration camp in Jasenovac. “All sadistic instincts of a monstrous personality developed here to the most horrible

paroxysm. There are witnesses who claim that this beast killed with his own hands a large number of unfortunate inmates” (p. 648). According to the testimony of Dr. Zvonko Tkalec, “. . . just before Christmas 1942, four Jewish inmates escaped the camp, engineer Danon with three of his friends. Having heard of the escape, Majstorović went mad. Returning to the camp in his car, he saw two Jews standing and talking. He jumped out of the vehicle, came to them and asked them what they were talking about. Not waiting for them to answer, he called together all the inmates who were there at the moment. . . He took out his revolver and shot one, and then the other one. This one fell wounded, and when he pulled himself up, Majstorović put another bullet in his head, but he was still not dead. Then he kneeled on his chest, took out a knife and cut his throat. On the same day, in accordance with the principle of ‘collective responsibility’, another 56 Jews working in the village of Bistrica were massacred, and on the next day nine more, in front of a wall, in front of all the inmates. They were shot by Majstorović himself, and, as we established earlier from the holes in their shirts, he did not shoot all nine in the heart, but in the right side of the chest, so that death would not happen immediately. And even this was not enough for Majstorović’s Christmas. In Kula, there were about 600 women and children, brought from some villages in Kozara Mountain. He first left them without water and food for several days, until the women started getting on to the windows and shouting. On the Christmas Eve, the Ustasha killed them. That was the Christmas of 1942” (p. 648).

Another Jasenovac camp inmate, Đorđe Miliša says about Friar Filipović-Majstorović that “. . . in the business of butchering, with his knowledge and cruelty, he was insurmountable. For a long time, he was the main organiser of mass slaughters in Gradina, for which work he would specially dress. In the evenings, he would usually put on a rather strange greenish house cloak, carry out the butchering and return home all bloody the next morning. For a while, he would take with him numerous Ustasha agents, prisoners, who helped him cut throats in Gradina. . . Used to cutting throats all the time, none of the mass slaughterers stayed in that satanic business as long as he did” (p. 648). It best suited him, as a Roman Catholic priest, to “. . . carry out the dirtiest work of killing with a mallet, cutting throats and strangling the prisoners of Jasenovac and Gradiška. . . With hands still soiled with the still warm blood of his victims, he absolved of sin all his accomplices in the cutting of throats. . . Friar Filipović’s associate in Jasenovac was Friar Zvonko Brekalo, for whom the people who know him say that it would fill volumes to describe all the monstrous crimes . . . of Filipović’s assistant in Jasenovac. . . He took part in torture, murder and cutting throats of Serbian prisoners. It did not stop him from performing religious service in churches that had to be attended by all Catholic prisoners” (p. 648).

A third witness, who saw all this horror with his own eyes, Lazar Jankov, “designated as the most bloodthirsty murderers the friars Filipović, Brekalo, Matković and Brkljanić”. As he testifies, “. . . these friar beasts wore uniforms and, as any butcher would do, knives in their boots, which they often used in front of the inmates. So, on one occasion in 1942, in front of a line of 2,000 prisoners, Friar Filipović, with his assistant Matijević, cut the throats of twenty prisoners he selected from the line, and he ordered to the rest: ‘Go to your dwellings’. The prisoners turned and set off for the camp, but Matijević cried, pulling his hair: ‘Give me another throat to cut’. ‘No, twenty is enough’. ‘It is blood, blood that I thirst!’ – cried Matijević madly, and the friar coldly said: ‘Cut all of them, if you want’. The Ustasha beast really threw himself in the crowd of

prisoners and managed to cut the throats of three more prisoners, while the others ran away. On the Catholic Christmas Eve in 1942, in front of a line of prisoners, Filipović shot three men, whom he blamed of having tried to escape. One victim was not killed by the bullet wound, and was howling. The murderer took his knife, put a hand under his victim's throat, cut the poor man's throat and drank a full glass of blood: 'Ah, the sweetness of Partisan blood'. These unprecedented friar criminals did not forget the church service. Once every two or three weeks, they would celebrate Mass in one division of the carpenter's workshop, even with an altar, with the hand of a priest over their blood-soaked uniforms and with knives in their boots. They even held God-pleasing speeches" (p. 649). Their faith and their altar were monstrous and murderous.

When, after the war, Friar Vjekoslav Filipović-Majstorović went on trial, he admitted many of his crimes before the court, as can be discerned from the following fragments of the hearing: "I admit I have personally killed, in public executions, about a hundred prisoners of the Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška camps. I also admit that, during my command of the Jasenovac camp, mass murders took place in Gradina, but I did not take part in them, even though I was aware of these mass killings. I stand corrected, I attended these mass murders, but I did not carry them out. I permitted these mass killings, as a warden, because I had verbal orders from Ljubo Miloš, and even more from Ivica Matković and, sometimes, from Maks Luburić. In Gradina, murders were committed with a mallet; the victim would have to go down into a dug hole, and would then be hit with a mallet from behind. Other than that, murders were committed by shooting and cutting throats. When there were executions of women and girls in Gradina, I know the younger ones were raped. . . . During my time, in accordance with my account, 20,000-30,000 prisoners were executed in the Jasenovac camp (in only four months – note: V.Š.). . . . From Jasenovac (where he had been from the end of June 1942 – note: V.Š.) I came to the Stara Gradiška camp in the end of October 1942 and stayed until 27 April 1943. During that period, mass executions took place in the Stara Gradiška camp, which usually took place outside the camp. . . . On 16 April 1945, I returned to Jasenovac, where I stayed until the end. (He denies having taken part in the horrible mass liquidation of the camp, even though he was the warden until the end!). . . . According to Maks Luburić, who probably kept records of the killed Serbs, in the Independent State of Croatia, in those four years, about half a million Serbs were killed" (p. 649). Even though he admitted many crimes, they are only a fraction of what he really did. According to the statement of Ustasha officer, Josip Matijević, Friar Vjekoslav Filipović-Majstorović was ". . . cruel, he really loved to cut throats. Many and more groups of prisoners were executed during his time as the warden of the camp. When he was transferred to the field as a company commander, he burned many villages and cut the throats of the population, especially in Kozara and the surrounding areas of Bosanska Dubica. In Bosanska Dubica, with Captain Ivan Sudar, known as Jojo, he gathered all the Orthodox population and killed all of them, and threw them in the river Una. During interrogations, he tortured and beat in order to obtain a confession; simply said, he was a great butcher. While he was the commander in Dubica, priests Brekalo, Lipovac and Čulina often visited him in his apartment and stayed all night, drinking and eating, and in these feasts all sorts of dirty women were present, as well. I stress that the very same people, as priests, killed, beat, drank and tortured the prisoners in beastly manners" (p. 650).

As Viktor Novak concludes, “. . . this wonderful Ustasha-priest quartet will resonate for a long time through the history of the Catholic Church in Croatia as the most shameful expression of moral demise, not often witnessed in history. They will remain not only – as an enormous number of other priests – a shamefully humiliating example of both the abuse of church and their positions of priests, but also the prototype of the most horrible butchers in priest’s robes and under priest tonsure, which, in Dante’s vision, pave hell. These witnesses are joined by others who complement the picture of the horrible physiognomy of this friar monstrousness” (p. 650). And there, in such massive crimes, there is no spontaneity, because they have been premeditated and governed by a monstrous proselytistic logic. “The mass murders in one area caused the undoubted, so needed ‘psychological foundation’, which Archbishop Stepinac wanted so much, and which he recommended in the resolutions of 17 November 1941, for the mass Catholicisation in other areas. Or, in simpler and more realistic terms: mass Catholicisation was preceded by mass murders. The voice of terror and horror of torture chambers spread in all directions like frenzied flames of a fire. To fill with its horrors those who remained alive, still kept in the midst of hell by the force of their love for their own hearth” (p. 650-651).

Franciscan Srećko Perić led the massacres in the Livno district. “This friar, born in the Livno district, had a sister married to a Serbian in the Livno district. Before the massacre, on a Sunday, he ordered the gathered Croats, from the altar of the church of Gorica, to begin a slaughter of the Serbs, saying, “Croatian brothers, go and slaughter all the Serbs, slaughter my sister first, she is married to a Serbian, and then all the other Serbs. When you are done with that, come to my church, where I will hear your confession, and all your sins will be absolved!” After that, the slaughter started. Along with massacring Serbs, the Ustashes looted Serbian homes and houses, and then burned them. The Ustasha intended to destroy all the Serbian Orthodox churches in the Livno district after the slaughter, but they were prevented from doing so by the arrival of the Italian army. In the the Livno district, the Serbs have not been forced to convert to Catholicism, because they were doomed to slaughter, each and every one of them. . . By 20 August 1941, in the district of Livno, in accordance with rather precise collected data, approximately 5,600 Serbs were killed and slaughtered, including men, women and children. A particularly prominent role in the persecution of the Serbs was played by Dr. Friar Srećko Perić, who was, for a long time during Yugoslavia, the Roman Catholic priest in Niš. Other friars from this monastery persecuted the Serbs with this friar, about twenty of them, who also acted as Ustashes, but we do not know their names. Along with Friar Perić, other friars of this monastery instigated the Croatian slaughter of Serbs” (p. 651).

The previous description of the crimes of the Ustasha friars from the monastery of Gorica near Livno was given by Marija Bogunović from Livno and Ljubo Crnogorac from Čelebić. The truthfulness of their testimony is corroborated by other sources, such as the following report: “The people in Livno had to wait for 20 August 1941 to experience the reality of the words spoken by Dr. Perić from the pulpit of the Gorica monastery. On that day, a mob of Ustasha slaughterers collected all the Serbs from Livno and took them to the Koprivica forest between Bugojno and Kupres and killed them there in a bestial manner. A few days later, the families of those murdered were taken to the same forest. The Ustasha mob raped the women, cut off their breasts, cut the old people’s hands and legs off, gouged out their eyes, and cut the heads of little

children off and threw them to their mother's laps. The threat of Dr. Perić also caught up with the people from the surroundings of Livno. From 50 Serbian homes in the village of Golinjevo, all the males were thrown alive into a pit at the Tušnica hill, and the Ustashas threw their families, women, children and elderly people into a pit at the Komašnica hill. From the villages of Gornji and Donji Rupnjani, the Ustasha threw 500 men, women and children into a pit in Klanačka forest; in the village of Čaprazlije they slaughtered 200 souls; in the primary school in the village of Čelebić they slaughtered 300 women and children, and threw the men into a pit in the Dikuša forest. Upon Dr. Srećko Perić's invitation, the Ustashas thus took turns in all the villages surrounding Livno, and killed, by 20 August 1941, approximately 5,000 men, women and children in the Livno district" (p. 651-652).

Friar Vjekoslav Šimić was the greatest Ustasha criminal in the Knin district, as testified by Dušan Zelenbaba from Golubić, "All murders of Serbs were carried out under his orders and his guidance. Moreover, he killed Serbs personally with his own hands. He would go with the Ustashas to Bosansko Grahovo, Kijevo and Vrlika, taking the Serbs from those places and killing them" (p. 652). Friar Petar Berković did not lag behind; he led "... the mob of Ustasha butchers through the streets of Knin, dressed as a friar, and with a rifle in his hands. Wherever Friar Petar Berković went, he spread terror and fear. In his area, a large number of people were found with cut throats in their rooms, ambushed in their beds. There is a large number of witnesses who gravely accuse this Franciscan doctor" (p. 653). A prominent role in similar criminal endeavours was played by Friar Alojzije Ćosić from Kotor Varoš, Friar Ante Klarić from Tramošnica, Friar Milo Ilovača from Visoko, etc. It was recorded that Friar Ante Klarić addressed the following words to his believers from the church pulpit, "You are old women, and you should wear skirts, because you have not killed any Serbs yet. We have no weapons and no knives, so we should forge them from old scythes, so wherever you see a Serbian, cut his throat" (p. 654). Neither did the guardian of the monastery in Čuntić, Friar Častimir Herman, lag behind his criminal brethren in the least.

Franciscan friars, led by Friar Jenko Vasilj, organised a big massacre of Orthodox Serbs in Pavelić's birthplace. A testimony about this is given by Zdravko Hamović from Konjic: "The first massacre of Serbs in the Konjic district was carried out by Ustashas in Bradina, the birthplace of Dr. Ante Pavelić. This massacre took place several days after St. Vitus' Day in 1941, following the return of the Ustasha camp guard Jerković from Zagreb with instructions. Prior to every major massacre, the Ustashas held a bigger consultation, and the friars from Konjic always took part in these consultations. Such consultation was held prior to the massacre of the Serbs in Bradina. The Ustashas went to Bradina several times, collected the Serbs there, taking them to Ivan Mountain, where they killed them, and threw their bodies into a ravine. . . One day, when the Ustashas came from Konjic to Borce to collect the Serbs to take to Ivan Mountain, the Serbs resisted, and there was a fight . . . where, among others, Zvonko Jerković, an Ustasha camp guard and his deputy Friar Drago Kamarić were killed..." Describing further Ustasha crimes and the suffering of the Serbs, Zdravko Hamović states how Franciscans from Konjic collaborated with Ustashas in the arrests of Serbs. Friar Drago Kamarić, together with camp guard Jerković, robbed Serbs wherever he could, extorting money from them. "In the summer of 1941, the friars sent a message to the Serbs through their confidants, that it would be best for all Serbs to convert to the Roman Catholic faith, so

that nobody would take them to camps and so they would be equal to the Croats in their rights” (p. 657).

Friar Marko Čamušić, parish priest of Saint Ante in Sivša, as a recognition for the crimes he committed was promoted to the rank of Ustasha captain and decorated with the Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir. Ustasha medals “adorned” many other priests’ chests for “heroic” slaughtering exploits against defenceless Serbs. “The Herzegovinian monastery in Široki Brijeg was indeed a true Ustasha bastion. From the monastery of Friar Didak Buntić stemmed numerous organisers of Ustasha crimes in that area. Aware of their crimes, faced with the triumphant approach of the People’s Liberation Army in the beginning of 1945, the Franciscans from that Ustasha bastion decide to retreat together with the Germans. However, since they were cut off, they had to fight, and they displayed equal persistence with weapons in their hands as they had in Ustasha propaganda and missionary work. The monastery, the secondary school and the Church were transformed into a true military stronghold, from which the friars spread death in all directions. Barbed-wire fences, minefields and a well-built system of bunkers, covers and trenches surrounded this fortress. In every opening there was a machine gun, on the roof of the church, as well as on the church tower there were also machine gun positions. Of course, in that fortress, the main leaders were the German officers and soldiers, who received the strongest support from the Ustasha Franciscans. When all these strongholds were conquered after a few days of fierce struggle, in the monastery and the church, Ustasha friars were found, who fought in their robes at the side of the Ustasha and Germans as machine gunmen and fighters. One war correspondent and eye-witness reported via a radiogram to Belgrade that these friars were the most bitter defenders and that they gave the strongest resistance” (p. 657-658).

As Viktor Novak adds on this occasion, “. . . the discovered documents show that these Franciscans had largely been intellectual patrons of the Ustasha crimes. Moreover, among them there were true Ustasha slaughterers. When this friar fortress was conquered, luggage was found, ready for escape with the Germans and Ustashas. On some dead friars there were also significant amounts of dollars and millions of kunas, as well as Ustasha identification documents. Several friars managed to escape with the defeated Germans and Ustashas. Among them was Friar Berto Dragičević, an active Ustasha and commander of the Ustasha militia. He had recently organised the peasants into an Ustasha militia. . . Friar Didak Čorić particularly excelled as an Ustasha organiser . There is a photograph showing the Franciscan with a helmet on his head, sitting in a tank with Italian soldiers. This same friar was photographed in the company of Ustasha butchers. Friar Čorić, as a parish priest in Tomislavgrad, organised the Ustasha youth, holding lectures glorifying the infamous Ustasha criminal and the head of the Black Legion, Jure Francetić and Headman Pavelić. He also performed the duties of an Ustasha camp guard in north Croatia. . . Witnesses claim that Friar Didak organised the Ustasha massacre in Nevesinje and Berkovići” (p. 658-659). Many Franciscans from Široki Brijeg were active Gestapo spies. “Such a Gestapo-friar was Friar Srećko Granić, professor of the Franciscan secondary school. The guardian of the monastery was Dr. Friar Krešo Pandžić, who spoke German and, together with Friar Rade Vukšić, was always in the company of German officers. Precious are the letters, which the parish priest from Jablanica Friar Nikola Ivanković wrote to guardian Friar Krešo. They show the full extent of the espionage collaboration of this friar traitor. . .

Friar Ivanković was an active Ustasha even before 1941, and he participated in the massacre of Serbs and the battles around Nevesinje in 1941” (p. 659).

In Prozor, the main Ustasha spy was the parish priest Petar Perić, and the Gestapo organisation in the valley of Rama was run by Friar Viktor Slišković, the parish priest from Brajkovići, where he committed many crimes against the Serbs. Friar Emanuel Gajić from Bugojno established, in the beginning of the war, Ustasha rule in Gornji Vakuf and committed many crimes as an Ustasha camp guard. The organiser of a mass slaughter in the Stolac district in 1942 was Friar Bakula from Hrasno. Committing unprecedented crimes, they invoked God’s will and support. “And they were called upon to do that by their great idol, Headman Pavelić, whose pamphlet *Horrors of Delusion* the sons of Saint Francis interpreted from the pulpit, as some sort of a modern-day gospel, a new Ustasha and Franciscan creed” (p. 660).

After the capitulation of Italy, when the not-destined Croatian royal claimant, Savoy Duke of Spoleto, abdicated, Friar Oton Knezović wrote to his Headman that it would be best if Pavelić crowned himself the Croatian king. The catechist of the Vukovar secondary school, Friar Silvester Zubić, spent most of his time in denunciations, but he also publicly supported any shooting of Serbs. “In Dalmatia, the most particular hotbeds of the Ustasha movement were the Franciscan monasteries in Sinj, Šibenik, Makarska and Dubrovnik. A large number of poisonous clerical-fascist agitators originated from these monasteries. Of course, the ones in Knin and on the islands did not lag behind” (p. 663). In a neatly kept diary of Šibenik friars, before the 1943 New Year it was recorded: “If Ustasha Croatia fails, we, the priests, will also fail, and the nuns and anyone feeling honestly and Christian. Only the Ustasha order is something positive, any other is destructive and anarchist” (p. 664). In the Sinj area, the most feared people were Friar Petar Glavaš and Friar Frane Rakić, both parish priests and great agitators of massacre and persecution, and, together with them, Friar Ivan Hrستیć and Friar Stanko Milanović-Mitre. Friar Berto Dragičević was the commander of the Ustasha militia in Rakitno, and among the organisers of crimes, Friar Ante Cvitanović and Friar Andrija Jelčić excelled. They were the actors of the “massacre committed in the villages of Kamešnica, in March 1943, when the German and Ustasha butchers slaughtered 1,800 innocent victims”, and, after the massacre, “the guardian of the Split monastery, Topić, prepared a dinner, and invited to that dinner the German commander as well, who had ordered these crimes. It is interesting to note that a part of the indicted Ustashes were raised in the Sinj monastery” (p. 668). At the same time, “it will be remembered for a long time that the Sinj Friar Ivan Hrستیć was giving the instructions when 82 live Serbs were thrown into a pit” (p. 668).

In Knin, Friar Vjekoslav Simić personally butchered Orthodox Serbs. Friar Stanko Milanović Mitre ordered, in Imotski, the establishment of “. . . an open-air camp for all Orthodox Serbs of the Imotska Krajina. The camp was a site of horrible torture for the numerous women and children, who were destined to endure, in the rainy and cold April days, without food or water, the terrible atrocities this criminal carried out against innocent people” (p. 669). His statement is remembered, that “all the Orthodox Christians should be killed, and not released from the camp” (p. 669). His Roman Catholic sympathiser, Friar Stanko Bradarić, “. . . carried out massacres and arson wherever he could find a Serbian settlement. Thus, in the village of Braćanac, he ordered the burning of all the houses belonging to Orthodox people. Sixteen houses were burnt, and the friar himself killed a Serbian, shouting, ‘One less dog’. This murderous



atmosphere in Imotski was amplified by Friar Krsto Radić, the parish priest of Runović; and the guardian of the Imotski monastery, Friar Ćiro Ujević” (p. 669). There is a huge amount of such information, so I am only quoting a few for the sake of illustration. “Friar Agostino Cievola, guardian of the Saint Francis monastery at the coast in Split, walked around Split, in the early days, at the abhorrence of all patriotic Split people, with a revolver and an umbrella, heading the Ustasha patrols, out to arrest Serbs and Serbophiles. The main Ustasha headquarters were in the monastery in Dobro (near Split), and later in the monastery of Poljud. The Ustashes visited both the monasteries in Makarska, as well as in Dubrovnik, just as they visited their Ustasha headquarters, finding there support for all their horrible exploits. In places where they did not organise massacres or robberies, they found other ways of repaying their debt to the Ustasha movement – as propagators and as informants for the Ustasha, Italian and then the German military and Gestapo departments. Friar Miroslav Buzuk was a true Gestapo spy in Sanski Most, as proven in court. . . The State Commission for establishing the crimes of the occupying forces and their helpers in Belgrade collected a significant amount of data on the collaboration of the Franciscans and other priests, who helped the Ustashes and collaborated with the Italian and German occupying forces. This data, even though it would multiply the numbers, would only repeat the already established fact of the massive Franciscan involvement on the side of the Ustashes and the occupying forces” (p. 670).

In the Travnik area, the organiser of the Ustasha movement was Friar Franjo Udović. “With a rifle in his hand, he led the Ustashes in the looting and burning of Korićani and Imljani, where a large number of Serbs were killed. Friar Udović also organised an Ustasha militia in Korićani and was its commander. When the stolen cattle for Janja were brought to Travnik, Friar Udović had it at his disposal, and mainly distributed it to his Ustashes in Korićani, who faithfully followed him in his Ustasha madness. He made the remaining Orthodox population work for the Ustashes for free” (p. 670). Friar Miroslav Petrivač from Prozor “. . . participated in organising the Ustasha militia in Rama, which was the sentencing for the entire area. . . Friar Silvije Franković from Bugojno could be seen, particularly in 1941, during the massacres of Serbs, in the company of the greatest Ustasha criminals and persecutors of Serbs. He conferred with them all the time, when decisions were made on the expulsion of the Serbs and other patriots. . . To Branko Ustar, the district head in Bugojno, who wanted to appease his blood-stained conscience with a confession to this Ustasha Franciscan by telling him he had killed 14 Serbs, Friar Silvije replied, ‘When you reach 40, I will hear your confession then and absolve you of all sins’. Just like this Franciscan blasphemously instigated murder, using his power to absolve sins, the majority of his brethren abused their clergy privileges in those times of slaughter. Friar Vladislav Ćurić, the parish priest of Bilo, had a prominent role as a denouncer of all patriots and other Serbs, who would not respond to his call for the conversion to Catholicism. . . Friar V. Ćurić , together with, several of his similar priest comrades, signed one such denunciation, addressed to the Headman, . They were Friar Borivoje Mač, the parish priest in Vidoša; Friar Bono Grebenarević, the parish priest in Podhum; Friar Viktor Baltić, the parish priest of Ljubinčić; then the already infamous instigator of Serbian massacres, the parish priest of Livno, Friar Dr. Srećko Perić and Don Božo Šimleša, the parish priest of Sištani” (p. 671).

Particularly enthusiastic about denunciations were Friar Marijan Stašić and Friar Ciprijan Lisica from Split, Dr. Friar Krsto Kržanić from Sinj, Friar Josip Poljak from Perušić and many others. “Friar Velimir Šimić, from Bukovica, district of Duvno, was also very agile in disarming the Yugoslav soldiers in April 1941, when he joined the Ustasha movement. From the altar he agitated for the Ustasha cause and held sermons in which he glorified the Headman and the Independent State of Croatia. In church, he agitated for the people to volunteer for the Ustasha ‘King Tomislav’s Company’, led by the horrible slaughterer Mirko Kaovica. Together with this butcher, terrible massacres of Serbs took place in the Duvanjsko Polje, where not a single child was spared. In the Duvno district, a particularly prominent Ustasha camp guard was Friar Stjepan Naletilić, who had been a sworn Ustasha even before 1941; and from 1941, he entered the Ustasha board in Duvno. He had before his eyes both the glory of the Catholic Church and its victory in the Independent State of Croatia, so he also, like his comrade, Friar Mijo Čujić, pressured the Serbs, by hook or by crook, to convert to Catholicism. Certainly, from the altar he agitated for the Ustasha movement and celebrated Pavelić’s acts on the occasion of any national holiday, Pavelić’s birthday included. Friar Mijo Čujić, the parish priest from Duvno, a notable leader of various deputations to the Headman, is, indeed, as responsible for the physical murder as for the moral murders of Serbs. For, he was equally skilful in organising the extermination of Serbs as in their conversion to Catholicism, in order to achieve the fundamental wish of all clerical-fascists to simultaneously work towards one flock and towards the Independent State of Croatia. . . A large number of witnesses heavily accuse Friar Mijo Čujić of numerous crimes. . . Any of the accounts of the surviving witnesses of his terrorist madness should be read, in order to see the true seamy side of that priest, about whom the Ustasha newspapers wrote with great recognition” (p. 674). Friar Šime Anić behaved similarly in Duvno, Friar Josip Gajić and Friar Anto Ravlić in Bugojno, while Friar Mirko Radoš was “the main Ustasha organiser of the massacre in August 1942, at the village of Malovan, when approximately 80 men, women and children were killed” (p. 674).

Friar Mladen Lutić, the guardian of the monastery in Ščit, in the Prozor district, “said, during a church gathering, that all the Serbs in Vukovsko and Ravno should be killed, and their property seized. Many crimes committed by his friend, Ustasha militia commander Stjepan Sičaj, are also his responsibility” (p. 674). Prominent in the dirty Ustasha crimes were Friar Marijan Brkić from Ščit, Friar Ignacije Penavić from Široki Brijeg and his brethren of the bloody knife, Friar Zdravko Zovko, Friar Marinko Jelić, Friar Čedo Škrabo, Friar Alojzije Ružinski and Friar Trpimir Musa, as well as Friar Julije Kožul in Čapljina. “Friar Tugomir Soldo, born in Široki Brijeg, committed many Ustasha crimes as a parish priest in Čapljina. He organized the massacre of Serbs in Čapljina in 1941. As a member of the board for the extermination of Serbs, he stood out as an ardent missionary, preparing the ‘psychological foundation’ through the terror and murder of all those who would oppose his proselytic efforts in any way. In the church, he harangued the Serbs who had not yet converted to Catholicism. After his inflammatory speeches, cutting the throats of Serbs often took place on a massive scale. This was how the massacre of 600 women and children, thrown into the Šurmanci pit, took place” (p. 675). Soldo was wholeheartedly assisted by Friar Andrija Jelčić and similar criminal work was done by Friar Paško Martinac and Friar Ćiril Ivanković in Čitluk, Čapljina and Gradinci, as well as by Friar Zdenko Zubac in Ružica and Friar Slobodan Lončar in Drinovci, where they had been parish priests. We must not leave out

the cut-throat activity of Friar Petar Besara from Čapljina and Friar Mladen Barbarić from Mostar, while Friar Dane Čelak was an Ustasha captain. Parish priests Friar Marko Livarjzić from Bežalj near Teslić and Friar Bosiljko Gubić from Volare near Prijedor also had the blood of innocent Serbs on their hands, as well as Friar Antun Mladenović from Vrljica monastery and Friar Ljudevit Zloušić, director of the Franciscan grammar school in Visoko. Friar Ivo Brkan from Koraće near Derventa occupied himself with the forced marriage of the widows of about a thousand slaughtered Serbs with Catholics. Viktor Novak continues to list an enormous number of names of Catholic friars who actively took part in the Ustasha movement, who organized and carried out the massacre of Orthodox Serbs.

Friar Vlado Bilobrk, who organized several massacres of Serbs around Metković and Opuzen - even of those who had previously Catholicised - became infamous for his statement that “there are some cowards, who say that it is wrong to force the Serbs to convert and that it is not humane to kill. However, I claim otherwise. Conversion to the Catholic faith must be done, because there can be no other faith and no one will stay alive unless they accept the Catholic faith. It is no sin to kill people; we must kill everyone standing in our way and completely cleanse our country” (p. 679). Roman Catholic priests took part in virtually all the crimes against the Serbs in Herzegovina. “Pits near Međugorje, Humac, Šurmanci, Bivolja Brda, Nevesinje and Sebišna, into which several thousand Serbs were thrown, and the turbid bloody waters of the river Neretva in April and May 1941 and Topola near Opuzen will be remembered as the bloodiest era in the history of these nations, in which, unfortunately and shamefully, those who covered themselves with friar’s and priest’s robes took part” (p. 680).

### **I) Special forms of Vatican Sadism**

The mass slaughter of Orthodox Serbs throughout the Independent State of Croatia was so numerous that lesser forms of persecution, such as arrests, beatings, robbery, expulsion and forced Catholicisation, attracted little attention. Bishop Akšamović most diligently carried out the proselytic policy of converting the Orthodox population in eastern Slavonia and he issued an official order to take over Serbian Orthodox Churches and turn them into Roman Catholic ones. The order specifically insists that “Since there are no Catholic churches, nor any liturgical church items in any of the villages in the Vukovar district to which the father-missionaries were sent, I hereby authorise the father-missionaries who applied for conversion to the Roman Catholic Church, each in their own village, in agreement with the relevant parish office and in cooperation with the inhabitants of the said village with a Greek-Eastern affiliation, to begin alterations of the Greek-Eastern church during religious instruction, making it a Catholic church, so that it is capable of holding Catholic services, especially the celebration of the holy mass. For that purpose, the iconostasis should be removed and, if that is not possible, a provisional altar should be placed in front of the iconostasis for the holy mass service. All items removed from the church should be stored in a suitable place. The church items required for the holy mass service should be given to these missionaries from the parish church, so that they can serve the holy mass every day, in the village where the religious instruction is taking place. Before its use, each church must be blessed with a humble blessing for public places of worship, as specified in the book of rites. The blessed water may be brought from the parish church and kept in a room where it would

not freeze. If, in any of the villages, the adaptation of the church for Catholic rites cannot be done, permission should be obtained from the relevant district authorities to use the premises of the local school” (p. 690).

In the legal act of the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1942, Pavelić established the Croatian Orthodox Church, so that the remaining Serbs would at least be de-nationalised if they would not give up their faith when faced with massacre. The Zagreb Roman Catholic Society of Saint Jerome published a brochure entitled *Return to the faith of the fathers*, which teems with anti-Serbian hatred. Among other things, it reads, “There were unreasonable ones who wanted to impose the shameful and humiliating name of the Serbs on Croats of Greek-Eastern belief. The name Serb is, for our people, shameful and humiliating. Accordingly, no Croat any religion will be called that name. Now that the Great-Serbian Orthodox propaganda through the priests, tradesmen and teachers has failed, the Croatian population of Greek-Eastern affiliation returns to the faith of their ancestors and wants to join the Catholic Church” (p. 692). This was not all. “As earlier advised by Mile Budak, the Ustashas destroyed Serbian churches in many places (the best evidence of which is the Office for the destruction of Greek-Eastern churches), which [churches], for Budak, represented the scarecrow of Serbian penetration into the West, while the more calculated missionaries condemned that, because they wanted to turn Orthodox churches into Catholic ones, following the example of Akšamovic, and thus also resolve the issue of Catholic places of worship for the converts in purely Serbian areas, where there had been no Catholic churches” (p. 696). In the beginning of 1942, the Apostolic Administrator of the Križevac Greek-Catholic faith, Dr Janko Šimrak published a Provision on the conversion of Greek-Eastern believers in Srijem, Slavonija and Bosnia, in which he announces: “For the converts, special church boards should be immediately established to help the parish priest in his entire work, not only in organising conversions, but also in establishing convert parishes. Each parish priest should keep in mind that historic days have come for our mission, which we cannot renounce at any cost, but for which we have to work with all our powers. Now is the time to show in action what we have taught in theory for centuries. On the issue of conversion, we have only done so little so far because we were indecisive and we feared small obstacles and people’s objections. Every great deed has its opponents, but we must not despair, because this is about sacred union, the salvation of souls and the greatest glory of Christ the Lord. Our work is legal in terms of the Holy See... and then in terms of the decision of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church... And, finally, in terms of the Circular Letter of the Government of NDH, dated the 30<sup>th</sup> July 1941, which aims for the Greek-Eastern believers to convert to the Catholic faith” (p. 700). The Provision was printed in the *Herald of the Križevac Diocese*, issue 2/1942.

In October 1942, that same Janko Šimrak wrote a letter to Ante Pavelić, stressing firstly that the “report was compiled not only in the best of faith, but out of enormous love for you, headman, and for the NDH. The evidence of these good intentions is not in words, but in acts”, so he reports “that the Križevac diocese, based on the decisions of the Ministry of Justice and Worship, has taken over all the churches and chapels of the former Greek-Eastern Church and started observing regular church service with their priests and regular cure of souls” (p. 701). The ideological concept of these ruthless, blood-thirsty twentieth-century crusaders was expressed in a substantial manner by the propaganda newspaper of the Bosnian Franciscans *Then and Today*, which, in 1944, explains its loyalty to Ustasha ideology, “Why do we step forward like this? This is

why! In Croatia, there is now a Croatian war going on, a war for our honour and pride, a war for the survival of not only the Croatian state, but also for the survival of the Croatian people as such. It is, therefore, a purely defensive war for the preservation of our proud past and, particularly, for our own permanent future. Our people, organised in the Home Guard and Ustasha units, and the militia only defends its bare life, its bare survival. We are at war against – mainly the Serbs, but also our own scum, who demonstrated that they were nothing more than human sludge, garbage - and anyone supporting them in words or actions is also considered sludge, garbage and scum... we are also in a religious war for the preservation of our Christian culture, for the preservation of the moral and ethic tenets of our Croatian people, at war for the destruction of the roughest materialist and sensualist view of the world - consequently: at war until the extinction of those who translated this science to the last detail in their bandit programme and even more in their lives as garbage and sludge. For centuries, we have been the caretakers of the cure of souls of the Croatian Catholic people alone. It is the sublime legacy of our ancestors. Never did any of our old friars claim differently, in word or in action! This Croatian Catholic people is today assaulted and it wages a defensive war against the scum that had been seeping into its homes over the centuries. It is, therefore, our duty to assist this struggle, in word and in action, because the struggle is for the survival of the people that had been under our pastoral care since ancient times, because this people is at war, not only for its own, but also for our defence, our own survival, at war for the preservation of our Christian civilisation, for the preservation of inherited moral and ethic tenets” (p. 707).

Testifying to the massacre of the Serbs in the Stolac district, Desimir Mihić shows that not even conversion to Catholic faith represented a guarantee of avoiding execution. This is what Mihić says: “It is difficult to remember all those countless victims and it is not possible to describe the horrors they endured before the Ustasha beasts put them to their deaths. But it is presumed that over 4000 completely innocent Serbs were killed in the Stolac district. The Ustasha first killed men over 16 years of age, but in many cases they did not refrain from killing women, and even the small children in cribs. One Croatian nurse in the Stolac hospital told me that, during the fighting in Berkovići, where she had to go on duty, she saw piles of children’ bodies, brutally killed. Why all of that?! Who taught them that terrible hatred? To hate their innocent fellow-citizens, their own brothers? In my opinion, it is those, to the ranks of which belonged the one on whose door I knocked, appealing to Christ (Mihić talks of Don Ilija Tomas, an old acquaintance, to whom he came for refuge and a moment’s shelter when running away from the Ustasha butchers, but he was driven away by this servant of Christ). I stress ‘belonged’ because, as I have heard, the judgment of the surviving fathers, brothers and sons of the murdered women, old people and children from Prebilovci, caught up with him. This servant of Christ made many dozens of the less fortunate brothers from the village of Klepci and other surrounding villages convert to the Catholic Church, gave them communion, and then sent them off to the school, where the Ustashas waited and where they were killed in a beastly manner. Forced Catholicisation also took place in Stolac and the surroundings. It cannot be explained as orders from above, because why then would Don Marko Zovko send a message and a threat to the widows of the killed Serbs, ‘the new believers’, to come to the church for mass and, after the divine service, say the following words to them: “You are wrong if you think our intention was to convert you to the Catholic faith in order to save your property, pensions or wages. It

was not our intention to save your lives, either. History teaches us that nations have vanished before, so will the Serbian nation vanish, too. With the conversion to Catholic faith we had the intention of saving your souls” (p. 714).

### **m) An Archbishop’s Cry for the Salvation of NDH**

When the outcome of World War II could already be anticipated, Archbishop Dr Alojzije Stepinac wrote a memorandum to Pope Pius XII on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1943, in which he begs the Pope to invest all his authority in the preservation of NDH. Because, if this clerical-fascist construction was to vanish, the great results of the conversion of, as he says, two-hundred and forty thousand Serbs from the Orthodox to the Catholic faith would also vanish! In this very fact lies the essence of common interests of the Roman Curia, the Croatian episcopate and the Ustasha movement regarding the Catholicisation/Croatianisation of the Orthodox Serbs... The loyalty to NDH and Pavelić’s system emanates from everywhere; the system in which it was possible for the Catholic Church to win over a quarter of a million of Orthodox Serbs; both would come into question if the NDH ceased to exist. This is the most horrible accusatory comment for the violation of Canon 1351, with the participation of the episcopate in NDH, the delegate of the Holy See, Abbot Marcone, the Holy Congregation of the Eastern Church and, consequently, their highest chief, Pius XII. After all, where is the deep and true belief in the spiritual usefulness of such converts, who make their testimony in the truthfulness of the Catholic Church conditional with the existence of the NDH” (p. 788).

In this memorandum, Stepinac particularly emphasises the following positions: “The progress of the Eastern schism towards the Catholic ranks is seriously threatening to achieve its dark objectives today. The victory of the Great-Serbian idea would mean the destruction of Catholicism in the north-western Balkans, in the State of Croatia. The mentioned documents leave no room for doubt. Moreover, there is no doubt, that such a fateful event would have further repercussions, way beyond the borders of Croatia. Waves of Orthodoxy and offensive Byzantinism would strike the borders of Italy, while now they break against the Croatian bulwark. Even more, because, the work of the Croatian clergy, particularly the Franciscans, laid the foundations for restoring Catholicism in Bulgaria; by converting many Paulinians, the remaining believers were saved in Skenderbey’s Albania; with the destruction of the only Catholic nation in the Balkans, various scattered groups would be hurt in the eternally restless Orthodox and Islamic Balkans. Holy Father, today the eyes of all humanity, bleeding from a thousand wounds, turn to you, the one who, in the sublime significance of his name, brought the pathetic human species what they need – heavenly peace. When bringing peace to the world, think, Holy Father, of the Croatian people, always faithful to Christ and to you. The young Croatian state, forged in more horrible and difficult circumstances than any other country in several centuries and struggling desperately for survival, shows the example of wishing to remain faithful to its Catholic traditions in any situation and to secure better and clearer prospects for the Catholic Church in this part of the world. Contrary to this, loss or fateful shrinking – and thousands of the best Croatian believers and priests would gladly and voluntarily sacrifice their lives to prevent this horrible thing from happening – could destroy 240,000 converts from the Serb-Orthodox faith, but also the entire Catholic population of these areas, with all its churches and monasteries. In the natural order of things, unless God makes a great miracle, the

progress of Catholicism is closely tied with the progress of the Croatian state; the survival of Catholicism depends on the survival of this state; its [Catholicism's] salvation is her [the state's] salvation! Holy Father, we deeply believe in God's mercy and God's justice, whose chosen instrument you represent. I recommend to your fatherly care and to your prayers our Independent State of Croatia, believing that I also recommend, in the best possible way, the sacred faith in my homeland and in the Balkans. In the holiest heart of Jesus, always the most faithful Archbishop and Metropolitan of Zagreb" (p. 788-789).

#### **n) Novak's Analysis of the Clerical-Fascist Ideology**

In the final part of this very comprehensive and thoroughly documented study, Viktor Novak deals with the Ustasha clerical-fascist ideology and propaganda, taking a motto from a statement of a Catholic priest and one of the most infamous Ustashes from Bosnia and Herzegovina named Bozidar Bralo, according to which, "God would not be God, if he would not grant the Croatian people the NDH" (p. 805). It elevates the Ustasha-clerical ideology to the level of theodicea, "which, on the one hand, limits the existence of God and, on the other hand, makes it conditional upon the existence of NDH" (p. 808). The general engagement of virtually all its priests, theological seminaries, clerical organisations, Franciscan and Jesuit monasteries, Canonic Curias, bishops' and archbishops' palaces - "the participation of the Catholic Church in the Ustasha movement gave it, in the eyes of the common masses, a secure appearance of legitimacy, which it would never have attained, even with the help of fascism and Nazism. The direct and indirect increase in closeness between clericalism and the Ustasha movement is constant, powerful and visible in the first ranks of the Ustasha system and in the four years of its reign of terror. There is no doubt, that the Frankians and clericalism gave birth to the Ustashes and that they worked hard together to keep it alive for four full years of horrible occupation. In many insights into the Ustashes, it is often difficult to discern the Ustasha from the clerical. The criminal from the blasphemous and the clerical-fascist from the Catholic" (p. 807). There is no doubt "that, in this NDH, no one, no party, no social order, supported the Ustashes as wholeheartedly and delightedly as the Catholic Church did. Not only with its numerous representatives, but as a whole, as the Catholic Church. The entire clergy greeted the Ustasha success in April 1941 almost ecstatically. This same clergy portrays the success of Pavelić and the Ustashes to their believers as the work of God and as God's reward for the suffering and troubles of the Croats, whose prayers have been heard by both the Mother of God and Christ himself. All the parish offices interpreted to the people that Ante Pavelić was a man of God and the chosen one, to whom God intended the honour and luck of executing his will, and that the NDH was a reward. Around Easter 1941, Ante Pavelić was portrayed as the main figure of resurrection. He was given the highest glory of full gratitude.

All the sermons in the week of Easter 1941 speak of Pavelić. In that week, Christ was indeed behind the curtain and received almost no mention on the day of his resurrection. Instead of Christ, Pavelić is worshipped. The Ustasha propaganda – *promidžba* – has the strongest possible support in the Catholic Church. Not only in the clerical press, but on the very pulpit and the altar, in small village churches and in cathedrals alike, in the seats of archbishops and bishops - all served the Ustasha idea, Pavelić and NDH.

Everywhere within the reach of clerical fascism, there was a conviction that all the events in Croatia at the time were an act of God's providence. It was underlined, not only from the pulpit and the altar, not only in the press and daily clerical activity, but also in pastoral and theological publications. Everywhere, always and in every place. So, every last member of the clerical organisations had to become convinced that, truly, 'the God of justice elevated the tormented Croat people, headed by the headman, and punished the guilty ones (i.e. Serbs) as they deserved'. And this is the propaganda goal that was consciously pursued, in a planned manner. The Ustasha and clericals/clerical fascists – hand in hand" (p. 807-808).

When the delegation of Zagreb theologians, led by the rector of the seminary Dr Franjo Šeper, later a cardinal, visited Ante Pavelić on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1942, Stjepan Krivošić addressed the headman on behalf of the delegation and said, among other things, "Headman! Leader of the Croat people! We are happy and more than happy that we lived to see the day that we can all stand in front of our dear headman and greet him from the depth of our souls and hearts. We are happy that we lived to see this, on the very anniversary of the resurrection of our state independence, to be able to express, from heart to heart and with the entire Croat people, our deep gratitude for the greatest work in the entire thirteen centuries of the history of the Croatian people, for the work never carried out before by a son of a Croat mother: the establishment and restoration of NDH. With this work, you, headman, have saved the Croatian people from certain destruction. We have seen too-obvious examples of what would happen to us, Croats, had it not been for you, headman, for your decisiveness and the strength of the Ustasha muscle that led the Croatian people to its secure and happy future. Thick and dark clouds loomed over our dear Croatia and the enemies sought its destruction, but the good God would not let Croatia be ruined - Croatia, which sacrificed so much for the preservation of the science of his divine son; it was then that He repaid the Croatian people for the thirteen centuries of loyalty to the cross – God Almighty sent you, headman, to the Croatian people, to save them. We believe, headman, that with God's help and your invincible decisiveness, Croatia will shine in all its glory and greatness and successfully continue its historic mission at the crossroads of the East and West, North and South" (p. 809).

When the prime minister of the Croatian government, Dr Nikola 'Knight' Mandić, visited the Sarajevo Roman Catholic seminary in 1944, he said to his professors and students of theology - to his 'Black spiritual legion' - "Be, therefore, happy that you have for professors those who are the pillars of the church. You are the spiritual Ustashes of the Croat people, as valuable as those Ustashes fighting for our freedom and victory. You fight for the freedom and independence of our country with spiritual weapons, which nurtures the soul and defends the divine law - and these weapons are stronger than fighters, machine guns and other material weapons... In a short while, you will be going to the field, to fight... You will find a lot of evil, deceitfulness, fraud and evil intentions that have crawled into our people, as a consequence of this war. It is your foremost calling to dress the wounds of our people with medicinal herbs. And really, who will cure those wounds, if not you, honourable brothers, who know the way to the soul? Your calling is in harmony with the calling of the Ustashes, who fight for the freedom of our people. With your spiritual weapons, you will also defend this freedom and safeguard it. There is another *Black Legion*, similar to that of the late Knight Francetić. This piece of news, that there is another *Black Legion* in Bosnia, fighting for



its people, will give great joy to our headman, given to us by God, who gave him the strength and nerves to persevere and I believe he would never give up, so this piece of news will give him great joy and refresh him even more. I am sure I will not bring him any other news that would be more joyful. He will rejoice in hearing the news that the spirit in Bosnia is still alive, strengthened and tempered. I am happy, honourable theologian brothers, that I can greet you and I wish you luck in your work and your noble endeavour to exterminate evil from the midst of our people. I will be the interpreter of your wishes to our great headman, I will let him know your decisions, that you will always be and remain for the headman and home!” – and the theology students replied in a stentorian voice, ‘Ready!’ (p. 814-815).

### **o) A List of the Most Prominent Ustashas from the Ranks of the Catholic Clergy**

In this book, Viktor Novak lists the names of over two thousand prominent Ustashas from the ranks of the Roman Catholic clergy at various levels of hierarchy, who directly committed murders, organised massacres or supported them with propaganda. But, in all of this, the nuns of almost all orders and congregations also participated: “Basilians, Benedictines, Carmelites de Monte Carmello, Carmelites of the Divine Heart of Jesus, Clarissas, Ursulans, Dominicans, nuns of the Society of Saint Xavier, worshippers of the most precious blood of Jesus, daughters of the Divine Love, daughters of mercy, merciful sisters of Saint Vinko of Paul, sisters of the Heart of Jesus, sisters of Saint Joseph of mystery, sisters of the Holy Cross, servants of little Jesus, servants of mercy, the third-rank of Saint Francis, poor sister teachers de Notre-Dame and maybe some other orders and congregations comprised the true female ancillary army for many clerical activities, in which and with whose help the psychological foundations were created for all possible trespassing of arrogant and militant clericalism, for the true clerical-fascistisation of everything they were entrusted with. Hospitals, almshouses, primary, secondary and vocational schools, nurseries, charity homes and boarding schools run by the honourable and merciful nuns have always reflected the church-political intentions of the episcopate or the largest part of clergy and of those spiritual leaders who were to take care of their spiritual needs, so they familiarised them with everything that was on the agenda in Croatia. The large number of educational institutions, operated by them, largely demonstrated the effect of all these clerical intentions on the female youth entrusted to them for education. It was the female secondary and vocational schools that produced a large number of fierce crusaders who, when the NDH came to life, became the most over-zealous Ustashas. These nuns welcomed the NDH, just like Archbishop Stepinac, as their ‘long dreamed-of ideal’. Therefore, they invest all the zeal of their proselytistic intentions into contributing whatever they can for strengthening this Ustasha and fascist creation. If we only stop for a few moments to consider their work, we will see that they played their part in the preparations for the NDH, spiritually and politically, even though, judging by their calling, they would seem to be far from any thought of political activity. Yet again, their cooperation and pro-Ustasha activity was general and all-encompassing in all sectors of their activity. Before, during and after the demise of NDH” (p. 820-821).

The areas of activity of the Ustasha nuns are very varied. “Everywhere where there were nun’s schools, the Ustasha authorities could rest assured and leave the children to

the education of the nuns, without supervision, because they knew that they would adhere to the spirit of their highest requirements. Not even in the prominent Ustasha institutions could there be better and more intoxicating Ustashism, than there was in those schools run by nuns... *The Oath of the Young Croats* was in the hearts of the Ustasha educators and they transferred it to the innocent children, poisoning them with Ustasha hatred and fratricidal passions, already demonstrated by Ustashes everywhere by that time... However, these and other nun-educators are very active when money and gifts are collected for the Ustashes. Their eloquence and Ustasha conviction affect the entrusted children, who are talked into bringing what they had been asked to bring. Because, woe unto those children who ignored their appeal, because it could be followed by the teachers' retaliation during the final exams!" (p. 822-823). In their zeal, the nuns are often ahead of the Roman Catholic priests. "They delight in the bloody crimes of the worst butcher in Bosnia, commander Jurij Francetić of the *Black Legion*, and glorify these crimes as the greatest acts of heroism for God and Croatia. They leave a paper trail of this in letters sent to that butcher. All of this radiates the true spirit of clerical fascism, which also, following the example of the church dignitaries, engages God for these bloody crimes as if that evangelical God were some sort of pagan freak of war, protecting and blessing criminals and murderers" (p. 823).

There are many testimonies to the horrible 'mercy' of the Croatian Roman Catholic nuns, but the one pointed out by Viktor Novak, is probably the most impressive. "The horrible picture of the 'mercy' of Ustasha nuns is shown by the remaining survivors of the children's camp in Jastrebarsko, which had been entrusted to several nuns. This was mainly a camp for captured children of Partisan fighters. They were to feel there all the 'sensitivity' and 'compassion' of this 'mercy'. Witnesses confirm that there had never been a more inhumane institution than this one, where the poor children, under the supervision of 'merciful' sisters, were exposed to certain death. True living corpses and little skeletons were gathered there to reach the end of their small and young, but horrendously tormented, life of ordeal. When, on the 26<sup>th</sup> August 1942, the Partisans approached this place to liberate the surviving children, they found that, after a month of being there, out of 400 children, 100 were already dead and they learned of horrors that people will find hard to believe. When a starving child would 'steal' an apple, the nuns would give him a beating and, if a horrified child would try to find solace in escaping or attempting to escape, he would be caught and – killed, as happened to little Božo Šarić. All of this served the purpose of forcing the children to submit to Ustasha/nun discipline, using Ustasha terrorist methods. Among them, the most infamous was Sister Mercedes, the mere mention of whose name would horrify the children. Constantly interrogated about their parents and eavesdropped on in case they would reveal something in their memories of Kozara, where they had been brought from, the children trembled, upon seeing this pathological freak - whom *doglavnik* Mile Budak (Translator's note: *doglavnik* – chief assistant) photographed in Jastrebarsko, in order to leave to the descendants a souvenir of this human monster, dressed as a nun. In order to get any sort of confession, they would promise a piece of bread. And when the children ran for the coveted bread, the sisters would beat them up for lack of discipline. All the children had to be re-educated in the Ustasha and Catholic spirit, regardless of whether the parents of these children, between two and 14 years of age, were Orthodox or Muslim. On the day when the Partisans started advancing towards Jastrebarsko, there was excitement in the children's camp, which truly enraged the 'educators'. Especially

as it became clear that the Partisans were approaching, whose rifles and machine guns anticipated the release from hell for these children, where the ‘sacred and honourable’ nuns played the role of raging Cerberus. The nuns wanted to re-instate peace and order with all force. And two children, ‘the most disobedient ones’, experienced the beast’s ‘mercy’. One of the nuns took them behind the camp stables and killed them with a pick-axe” (p. 824-825).

### **p) Papal Guarantees to Pavelić**

All the Ustasha and Home Guard units had their own official priest – caretakers of souls - while, at Kvaternik’s suggestion, Pavelić appointed the parish priest of Ledenice, Stipe Vučetić, as the chief military vicar and Vilim Cecelja as his deputy. “However, the holy father the Pope resolved this church-Ustasha issue differently. The Pope, actually, appointed Archbishop Dr Alojzije Stepinac as the military vicar for the Croatian army! And ‘*sine titulo*’. The Archbishop then concurred with the decision of Pavelić and appointed for his deputies Stipe Vučetić, senior staff caretaker of souls at the Ministry of the Croatian Home Guard and Vilim Cecelja, deputy senior staff caretaker of souls at the same Ministry, and gave them the jurisdiction required for that purpose with all authority given to Archbishop Stepinac by the Holy See. Simultaneously, Archbishop Stepinac, as the military vicar, appointed other Home Guard caretakers of souls and gave them parish priest jurisdiction. But, most importantly, on informing the rest of the NDH episcopate (on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1942) about this decision of the Holy See, Archbishop Stepinac reports that the Holy See extended the decree on the jurisdiction of the military ordinariate for the Italian army to Archbishop Stepinac, i.e. to the Ustasha army, thus recognising an usurping authority and its military force. There is no doubt that this document emanates a particularly intimate connection and true spiritual kinship between clericalism and Ustashism, between the top Ustasha authorities in the NDH and the leadership of the Catholic Church... Besides, the series of significant breaches of the neutrality of the Vatican in its position regarding occupied Yugoslavia, was increased by the appointment of Archbishop Stepinac as the supreme military vicar of the ‘Croatian army’ - the army of the mercenary and traitor Pavelić, organiser of so many crimes... In order to create this support for an undoubtedly treacherous and criminal organisation, which Pavelić’s army was, in line with the style of a fascist hired gun, the Vatican extended to this ‘Croatian army’ the decree on the jurisdiction of the military ordinarius for the Italian fascist army” (p. 857-858).

The Ustasha press was filled with the speeches and sermons of these military caretakers of souls, usually on the occasions of the oath-taking of new Ustashas and Home Guardsmen, religious holidays or Pavelić’s birthday. So, only for the sake of illustration, I take one of these speeches from Novak’s book, which the captain caretaker of souls, Nikola Šabić gave on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1942 to his Ustasha brethren, as ‘brave heroes’, “Today is the day of your solemn decisions. The time has come when you will take a solemn oath, before God, to faithfully serve the headman and homeland. But you all know that every citizen has the duty of serving the homeland and living for the homeland. An Ustasha has a bigger and more serious duty however, and that is to die for the homeland, if need be! When you made the decision to join the ranks of the Ustashas, you must have seriously and maturely thought your actions over, thought about the audacious move you were about to take. And when your glorious headman

summoned the nation under the flag of the Ustashas, you readily and gladly ran to the ranks of Ustasha, followed only by your agonised parents' holy blessing. I believe that you are deeply aware of the gravity of the day in which we are living, the gravity of the time, which means fighting today. Taking the Ustasha oath, you will remain an Ustasha until you die... As the brightest example of keeping the oath to a headman and homeland in the entire history of recent times, the perseverance and readiness of the first tested combatants and heroes, who brought wonderful examples of strength and intrepidity back from Lipar and Janka Pusta will be mentioned ... Be proud of taking the Ustasha oath, because you will become members of a great Ustasha family, you will become associates, fellow-fighters and brethren of our great headman, brethren of the Ustashas who saved the honour of the Croatian parentage and name - who, with rifle, grenade and bayonet, reached places where our enemies never expected them!" Having thus justified the Ustasha assassinations, dressed in priest's robes and holding a crucifix in his hand, he completed his speech in an elevated and intoxicating tone: "Embracing our headman, being proud of the Croatian name, and defending the NDH, listening devotedly to our elders with today's oath, let us pray to God and always be, for the headman and for the home - ready! As a sign of our visible readiness to do what we took oath to do, let us cheer three times from our throats, so that it can be heard in the heavens: Long live our headman Dr Ante Pavelić! - Long live! Long live! Long live!" (p. 865-866)

Standing by the NDH wholeheartedly and supporting all its aspirations and methods of action, the Vatican led diplomatic action behind the scenes in order to preserve it, now that Mussolini had fallen and Hitler was doomed. "This behind-the-scenes diplomatic form, had very pronounced expressions in public as well, making it possible to deduce similar, quite logical and realistic conclusions without any hypothetical guesswork. It is true that, after the end of war, the Vatican started denying the most notorious facts, or giving them a particularly construed interpretation, depending on the situation. These were largely prepared by Archbishop Spellman drawing on the entire background of his broadly-based activities, but it also sheds light on its, if not political, then moral position and enough material for the shapes and needs of the oldest and the most powerful diplomacy in the world. All of that had an undisputed influence on NDH and on the press, propaganda and church, as well as on the Ustashas, in daily and occasional publications, in the church and at meetings of clerical fascists and the Ustasha terrorists. The Ustasha press largely used the affection of the Roman Curia, with or without the permission of the Vatican censors, which achieved its most sumptuous form in the dark of the background and hiding behind the curtains of confidential reports of the ordinariate and private instructions, given in words and secret suggestions rather than open written orders and commands. Between the audience of Pavelić on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1941 and Stepinac's actions in the Vatican in 1942, 1943 and even 1945, as will be shown later, there is an extraordinary entanglement of all-encompassing and mutual interest actions for the NDH to become and remain an international, primarily Catholic-Vatican reality. Suffice it to remind of the plan for the Catholicisation of the Serbs in the NDH - which had been approved in Vatican, as well as in Stepinac's Curia... All the reactionary forces that started gathering around Archbishop Stepinac, in their optimism and criminal hope, expected that the Vatican would succeed in turning the English

against the FNRJ!<sup>39</sup> The Ustasha minister and deputy abroad, Vladimir Košak, stated as a witness in the process against Stepinac, that Pavelić's wife told him when in Austrian emigration "that the Ustasha have guarantees from the Vatican and from the high clergy, that everything will end well" (p. 896).

Even though it was impossible to establish the official diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the NDH for formal reasons, the Pope and Pavelić had a very cordial personal relationship. Besides, "the Pope's envoy at the episcopate of the NDH, in his full public function, was, in fact, the Pope's envoy at Pavelić's. There had been no diplomatic events that this Pope's envoy at the episcopate would not take part in. It was difficult to discern between the episcopate functions and the Ustasha functions, probably because the entire episcopate was connected with the Ustasha regime. There is no other way of interpreting his position. We need only look at the photographs, which always show him in the top diplomatic ranks, not only a guest at events where diplomats also participate, but in the diplomatic lounge in the Croatian house of parliament, along with other diplomats of the Axis. He also takes part in the diplomatic choir's New Year's Eve congratulations to the headman, either personally or through his secretary Giuseppe Masucci, PhD, a loyal friend to many Ustashas, who gives them various support for the NDH and, after its breakdown, for as long as he had been in Zagreb" (p. 903). The papal envoy, Abbott Marconne, often travelled to different parts of the Independent State of Croatia, always expressing the full support of the Pope for the Ustasha authorities, regularly referring to God's will and, like Stepinac, naming God as an accomplice. When the old Bishop Alojzije Mišić of Mostar and Trebinje died, having been the only bishop not in the mercy of the Ustasha regime and the Roman Catholic episcopate, the Pope hurried, and illegally appointed Dr Petar Čulo as the new bishop only three weeks later. Ustasha and Italian soldiers participated in his inaugural ceremony and even the Italian military orchestra played. Archbishops Šarić and Stepinac attended and, on that occasion, the papal envoy Abbott Marconne called upon the Croatian people to remain "faithful to the Holy See, which has been assisting it for centuries against eastern barbarism. He expressed his wish for Croatia to overcome momentary difficulties and blossom under the leadership of its headman, Dr Ante Pavelić" (p. 967). This is how the *Catholic Weekly* of the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1942, reported the event.

## **2. The Collection of Documents of Vladimir Dedijer on the Direct Vatican Responsibility for the Jasenovac Crime**

One of the best Serbian historians of the twentieth century, Vladimir Dedijer, published a collection of documents in 1987 entitled *The Vatican and Jasenovac* (Rad, Belgrade), thus breaking the decades-long conspiracy of silence about direct participation of the Roman Catholic Church in the genocide against the Serbs. In the introductory section, he presents a historical retrospective of the Roman-Catholic crimes of genocide, beginning with the crusades, the inquisitorial persecution of heretics and infidels through to colonising proselytism. "The Vatican gave great moral support to Hitler's Nazi regime, before any other European state. It is true that, in the 30s and 40s, the Vatican had played on multiple positions. It maintained solid relations with the conservative forces in the United States of America, France and, to a certain extent, also

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<sup>39</sup> Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

in Great Britain. Simultaneously, it instigated the crusade against the Soviet Union and the strengthening of clerical-fascist parties in many parts of the world. History still did not have a final say on who brought General Franco to power in Spain - whether it was the Vatican or Hitler and Mussolini - but there is strong evidence that the influence of the Vatican was overwhelming. After 1939, Slovakia is another country where there was full cooperation between Hitler and the Vatican. As the documents printed in this book confirm, Nazi Germany and the Vatican, with support from Mussolini, are jointly responsible for the genocide in Croatia during World War II. The Vatican is still very sensitive today about any mention of the 1933 concordat. As we have witnessed, in recent years, the German cardinals and bishops, referring to Article 166 of the West-German Penal Code, initiated criminal proceedings against many sincere and honest citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany because of their insistence on revealing the whole truth about the historical role of the Vatican and its actions in collusion with Nazi Germany” (p. 36).

### **a) The Vatican as the Main Organiser of the Ustasha Movement**

In the language of the original documents, Dedijer proved that the Vatican had been “preparing for a long time for the attack against Yugoslavia. In the military destruction of Yugoslavia, the Vatican saw an outstanding opportunity for the forced Catholicisation of Serbian Orthodox believers. It had always been the dream of the Vatican foreign policy. In this collection, we documented how, before the war, the Vatican had a ready justification for the genocide. The Franciscan scientists were tasked with writing doctoral thesis on how the Orthodox Serbs had actually been Catholic for centuries, meaning that the forced conversion can be explained with the desire to return the Serbs to their original faith. The Vatican instructed the Catholic Church in Croatia to assist the Ustashas in developing their secret organisation, as confirmed by Ustasha documents published when the German troops occupied Zagreb and when, on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 1941, the Quisling state of Croatia was established” (p. 36-37). Right there in the Catholic Canonical Curia of Zagreb, “the first Ustashas were organised; all of them, even during the former Yugoslavia, not only acted as organisers of the ‘Ustasha movement’ in the country, but acted as terrorists in the territory of our country... In gratitude to the Curia, the Ustashas erected a memorial plaque, which stood until liberation” (p. 37).

Many Catholic monasteries represented Ustasha headquarters and the Roman Catholic priests took part in the formation of the first Ustasha units, sometimes leading them, and they declared Pavelić’s state to be the creation of God. “Many Catholic priests joined the Ustasha state authorities as high-ranking officials. The Pope appointed Archbishop Stepinac as the chief official/vicar in Croatia. He had his priests in every Ustasha unit. Among others, one of the tasks of the priests was to incite Ustasha units to kill Serbian peasants on a massive scale. The dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church and the Ustasha state organised the mass Catholicisation of the Serbian Orthodox population. The Ustashas have been murdering the Serbs and the Catholic priests have been forcing the Serbian population to convert. Hundreds of Serbian Orthodox churches have been robbed and destroyed, three church dignitaries of the highest rank and 200 priests have been killed in cold blood and the rest of the clergy has been expelled. Several Catholic priests commanded the Jasenovac concentration camp, where several hundred thousand Serbs have been killed. The Pope’s special envoy Marconne was in

Croatia at the time and did nothing to prevent the crimes. He even had his picture in the newspapers, together with Pavelić and the German commanders. After the visit to Pope Pius XII in May 1941, he and Pavelić exchanged Christmas and New Year's greeting cards. All of this has been published in the Ustasha press. In the middle of 1986, the government of the United States of America published the documents of its military counter-intelligence service. From those documents, it can be seen that the Vatican transferred Pavelić and 200 of his advisors, in an organised manner, from Europe to Argentina, where they were hiding in monasteries disguised as Franciscan friars. Ante Pavelić was a religious man. In his castle in Zagreb, he built a chapel and had two confessors. Before his death in Madrid in 1959, he received the blessing of Pope John XXIII and held in his hand the prayer beads given to him by Pope Pius XII in 1941" (p. 38-39).

### **b) The Anti-Serb Constant in the Papal Policies**

All the Popes in the twentieth century consistently led a pronouncedly anti-Serb policy. Pius X openly supported the aggressive Austro-Hungarian plans of 1914 and, after World War II, the Vatican beatified him as 'blessed', stating that he was, supposedly, a great fighter for peace. His real role was completely exposed by Count Carlo Sforza, a former Italian minister of foreign affairs and the author of the famous book *Builders of Contemporary Europe*. After comprehensive analysis of Sforza's arguments, Dedijer concludes that Pius X Sarto "was no saint, on the contrary, was a very mean man and very fatal for mankind. It was not the efforts to preserve peace, but the efforts of the intrigues to organise the war that accelerated his death!" (p. 53). This Pope, who wholeheartedly supported the Tri-partite Alliance, died as early as August 1914, thinking that the war operations were beginning to implement his political plans. "But, perhaps just because of that, he was declared a saint and blessed, as were some of his predecessors, because neither they, nor Pius X, considered it a sin to shed blood and kill hundreds of thousands of people. It appears that the leadership of that church does not consider it a sin even today, but a merit. Because, in the end, what are the people in the world, what is humanity in this 'valley of tears', but 'God's ant farm', which can be crushed for the greater glory of God! Inquisitions remained recorded and marked in history with massive bloodshed and the Popes personally directed them in order to exterminate, in a quick and radical way, those who doubt that the Pope is the God-appointed master of the world and of humanity. The Popes/army leaders against the heresies of the Middle Ages, the Popes of the great inquisitorial actions, had no scruples; they did not care that, apart from the proven and unproven heretics, the good believers also fell at the stakes, in arson, under the sword. They said that God would separate the heretics from the believers in the heavens and send the former to hell, while the latter would enjoy the happiness of paradise, while their surviving brethren on Earth, will suffer torment and await the joyous hour of death" (p. 53).

Both these quotes are from a fragment of the book *Secret Documents on the Relations Between the Vatican and the Ustasha NDH*, published in Zagreb in 1952, which Dedijer provides as the first document of this collection. Pope Benedictus XV continued the policies of his predecessor. "The relation between the Vatican and old Yugoslavia was, throughout its existence, marked with tension and hostility, with only insignificant periods of détente and apparent appeasement... It was significant that the Vatican could

not come to terms with the fact that millions of Catholics, Croats and Slovenians had to share, in one state, life, rights and duties with millions of Orthodox Serbs and the fact that the Vatican had not been the highest authority in that country, as it usually was in a Catholic confessional state... In fact, the constant direction of the Vatican was simply the one that aimed at the destruction of Yugoslavia. That is why the Vatican and the high-ranking clergy in our country, for the entire time - even when apparently supporting the Yugoslav regime, and probably by calculated support from the regime (especially during Korošec's cooperation in the regime) - develop lively activity radicalising the separatist nationalistic movements and creating a clerical-nationalist front in Croatia, which soon amalgamated and turned into a pronounced clerical fascism. The so-called Frankian nationalist movement became increasingly clerical in character. The Ustashism is marked with a symbiosis of Frankian and clerical ideas and forces... The clergy quickly became an important pillar and the middle management staff of the Ustashism. The Catholic press is pronouncedly Ustasha in spirit, even though, for demagogic purposes, it steps forward from ostensibly separate positions and represents church and religious interests... There are also close ties between the Vatican and Pavelić. He was a guest of the Vatican institutions and, later, he would publicly credit the Vatican prelates for Ustashism. These ties would become more intensive as the ties between the Vatican and the Mussolini regime became more intensive and when, by means of the Lateran Treaty of 1929, the Vatican publicly identifies its interests with the interests of fascism. Besides, Mussolini's plan on breaking Yugoslavia corresponds in all relevant parts with the plans and intentions of the Vatican. The Nazi factor will agree with this foundation coming from Rome, and the roles and interests will be divided precisely... The Vatican, and the Pope himself, had his followers, the Ustashes, knowing, on several occasions, that his final goal is the break-up of Yugoslavia, so he blesses all the efforts and victims created in order to achieve that" (p. 58-59). That is how Benedictus' successor, Pope Pius XI, proved himself in action.

### **c) Alojzije Stepinac's 'Kingdom of Christ'**

The Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojz Stepinac, kept his personal diary in the third person plural and recorded his first meeting with Pavelić in it on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1941. "In the first days following the headman's return, the Archbishop had his first meeting with him in the former Ban's court... The archbishop wished him God's blessing in his work... When the Archbishop finished, the headman replied that he wanted to support the interests of the Catholic Church in all matters. He said that he would exterminate the old-Catholic sect, which is nothing but a women's divorce society. He further said that he would not be tolerant to the Serbian Orthodox Church because, for him, it is not a church, but a political organisation. From all of this, the archbishop received the impression that the headman is a sincere Catholic and that the church would enjoy freedom in its activities, even though the Archbishop does not give in to the illusion that everything would go smoothly" (p. 92). Giving his blessing to an undisputed criminal on the grandest scale and listening to his intentions of destroying other Christian churches, Stepinac "does not react, either in front of Pavelić, nor intimately, in his diary, with disapproval or criticism of such a position but, furthermore, in relation to the announcement of the harsh persecution of the Serbs, Stepinac describes that "he had the impression that the headman was a sincere Catholic!" As if he was looking forward to



expanding his church over the ruins of the Serbian Orthodox Church with Pavelić's help" (p. 92). Immediately afterwards, Stepinac invested all his efforts for the Vatican to establish diplomatic relations with Pavelić's Ustasha state and he was successful. "Pope Pius XII does not see any obstacles and is not making any objections regarding the possibility or lack thereof of the establishment of diplomatic relations and the recognition of the Ustasha puppet 'state'. The Pope must have already known of the first massacres in Croatia. The Pope, in other words, sends a message to Stepinac to stand against 'too much persecution' of the Serbs but does not condemn the Ustasha practice in principle, nor does he make whether relations with Pavelić would be established conditional upon these persecutions. (The horrible massacre in the Orthodox church in Glina had already taken place and hundreds of Jews have already been slaughtered)" (p. 93). On his side, in the letter, Pavelić demonstrates submissiveness and obedience equal to that of medieval papal vassals. His letter reads, "Holy Father! When the gentle providence of God made it so that I take over the helm of my people and my homeland, I firmly decided and I fervently wish that the Croatian people, faithful to its glorious past, remains faithful in the future to the apostle St. Peter and his successors and that our homeland, imbued with evangelical law, becomes the kingdom of Christ. In this truly grand work, I actively seek the help of Your Holiness. And I consider help to be, first and foremost, that Your Holiness, with his supreme apostolic reputation, recognises our state, then dignifies us by sending an envoy as soon as possible who would help me with Your fatherly advice and, finally, to give an apostolic blessing to me and my people. Kneeling at the feet of Your Holiness, I kiss the sacred right one, as the most obedient son of your holiness" (p. 94).

Pavelić, therefore, openly requests Pope's help to realise his criminal plans, with fatherly advice and diplomatic support, but mainly through the activity of Roman Catholic priests in the field. It was shown that he received the support of the Holy See - maximal and continuous - but "Pavelić did not receive advice from the Vatican that would make the criminal stop his crime. If such positive advice had indeed been given, why did the Pope not stop supporting good relations with Pavelić and why did he never notice that his works are not representative of the traits of 'the most obedient son'? Most probably, the main thing for the Pope was the fact that Pavelić 'kisses his sacred right one', that he 'kneels at his feet' and wants Croatia to be the 'Kingdom of Christ', regardless of the means to achieve that end. Tolerating everything that Pavelić was doing was silent advice, it was silent approval. We can see that only from time to time, hypocritically and in a Jesuit manner, Ustasha crimes were mentioned in relations between Pavelić and the Vatican, but only in one sense: a mild warning not to cause an international scandal, which would compromise the final, common goal of the Vatican and Ustashism. The Vatican is only occasionally concerned that there could be 'too many' Ustasha atrocities for the world public to handle. The Vatican advice never exceeded these limits, as this documentation will demonstrate precisely. Never did the Vatican threaten to cease or rejecting the blessing. And it is the very help that Pavelić requested in his letter that was a constant, until the breakdown of the 'NDH', and the Ustashes and Pavelić enjoy it personally even later" (p. 94). Later, the Pope also received Pavelić and other highest-ranking Ustasha officials personally, and he also supported the arrival of the Savoy Duke of Spoleto on the imaginary Croatian royal throne.

Even though the cited book was published in 1952, by the Society of Journalists of Croatia, Jože Horvat and Zdenko Štambuk published the collection *Documents on the Anti-People Work and the Crimes of a Part of Catholic Clergy* in Zagreb as early as 1946, the first part of which records the data on the participation of Roman Catholic priests in the attacks against the Yugoslav army during the fascist aggression in 1941, as members of Ustasha armed units. These were the actions of Ilija Tomas, Jure Vrdoljak-Biščević, Ivan Miletić, Petar Berković, Velimir Šimić, Radoslav Glavaš, Ante Klarić-Tepeluk, Karlo Grabovac, Emanuel Gajić and many others. Within the ranks of the top Ustasha officials, we find a large number of priests as first *tabornik*, *logornik* (Translator's note: ranks of Ustasha officials), district and state commissioners. All of them made their name with Ustasha work during the time of Yugoslavia, and especially during its break-up, by disarming the Yugoslav army. It is logical that such people should take the political and civil authority in their hands" (p. 100). Some of them, like the curate Dragutin Marjanović, ran police interrogations.

It would be impossible to list all the parish priests and friars who publicly expressed delight over the establishment of the Ustasha authority or sent letters of greeting to the headman. The activists of the Great Crusader Brotherhood, a typical clerical-fascist organisation, led the way. Still, the main role was played by the Archbishop of Zagreb Stepinac and the Archbishop of Vrhbosna, Ivan Šarić, who, inspired by the first Ustasha massacres, wrote an ode for his headman. In his pastoral letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> April 1941, Stepinac stresses that, in the ranks of the Croatian Catholic clergy, there is no one 'who did not witness lately the most important events in the life of the Croatian people, among whom we act as heralds of the gospel of Christ. These are the events that brought our nation closer to the long yearned for and dreamt-of ideal. These are the hours in which it is no longer the tongue talking, but blood with its mysterious connection with the Earth, where we saw the light of God, and with the nation that gave birth to us. Is it necessary to stress that, in our veins, too, the blood started circulating more lively - that, in our chests, too, the heart started beating more lively?... Faithful to God and the church, our Croatia will not only fulfil its duty to advance the transcendental goods of the Croatian people, but will thus set up the most solid foundations for both the healthy development of earthly national values and its national freedom and solidity... Respond, therefore, readily to this appeal of mine for sublime work at preserving and advancing the Independent State of Croatia. Knowing the men who are in charge of the destiny of the Croatian people today, we are deeply convinced that our work would be met with full understanding and assistance" (p. 109-110).

In his diary *In the First Months of NDH Creation*, one of the most prominent clerical-fascist ideologists, Don Kerubin Šegvić, testifies how the Pope sent 'his fatherly apostolic blessing to the headman' (p. 128) and that the Roman *pontifex maximus* received, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1941, 'a hundred Croatian security officers' in a ceremonial audience, as reported by the *Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican publication. This group of 'Croatian security officers' is not a group of some innocent street guards, traffic wardens or anything like that. This is the cream of the Ustasha cut-throats, the hundred handpicked thugs taken to Italy for so-called 'education' by Eugen Kvaternik-Dido himself - the bloody chief of the Ustasha police - and, with him, there was also the infamous Pečnikar. These two headed their gangs in the pilgrimage to Pope and received blessing from him. Even before the blessing and the carabinieri training, Kvaternik and Pečnikar committed massive slaughter in Croatia with their gang and, afterwards, having

returned to Croatia 'educated' and blessed, they continued even more intensive 'cleansing' - i.e. cutting the throats of Serbs, Jews and patriotic Croats. This group of 'a hundred security officers' became the skeleton of the Ustasha police known as UNSA - these are the graduated teachers of camp cut-throats etc. Pope Pius XII was not particularly pedantic in this case either, given his formal position of neutrality. He once again blessed the Ustashes in uniforms, this time especially the Ustasha police that he had already heard horrible information about. When the Pope was giving his blessing to Kvaternik-Dido, he had already personally received several reports about this criminal that mentioned Kvaternik's name. But Pius XII did not refuse this bandit his 'fatherly blessing' (p. 129).

Dedijer publishes in this collection integral texts of the most characteristic general legal acts that represent impressive evidence of the rapid Nazi-fascist totalitarian nature of the Croatian fascist regime. There are the legal provision on the ban of the Cyrillic script, the executive decision of the Ministry of Interior regarding that provision, a legal provision on racial affiliation, a legal provision on the protection of the national and Arian culture of the Croat people, a legal provision on the protection of Arian blood and the honour of the Croatian people, an order on changing Jewish family names and designating Jews and Jewish companies, a ministerial order on the territorial jurisdiction of the mobile court-martial, an order on the organisation and scope of the activities of the racial-political commission, a provision of the Ministry of Justice and Worship of the NDH dated the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1941 that deposited money and valuables cannot be issued to their Serb owners who are emigrating, though they can take the cash and valuables with them to concentration camps, where it will be taken from them. There is a circular letter regarding the conversion of Serbs to the Catholic faith, an instruction regarding the conversions from one faith to another, a legal provision on establishing the institute for colonisation, a legal provision on taking over the property of 'Serbian institutions and establishments' in Hrvatski Karlovci, becoming the property of the Independent State of Croatia, and the Legal provision on the Croatian language, its purity and orthography. What follows are excerpts from court documents on the interrogation and trial of prominent Roman Catholic priests who took part in the work of Pavelić's state apparatus and Ustasha organisations, with the descriptions of their typical activities. Some of them, like the parish priest of Križ, Anton Medven, are Ustasha *tabornici* and superintendents and the others, like parish priest Matija Kranjčić, are Ustasha agitators, propagandists and organisers; some are mere denunciators of their parishioners and merciful nuns, participants in all public Ustasha manifestations. There are also lists of decorated priests, who particularly stood out in their criminal service to the Ustasha regime.

On 20 January 1942, when the Pope had appointed him High Priest of the Croatian Army, Archbishop Stepinac, acting in the capacity of President of the Croatian Bishop Conference, sent a letter to the Archbishop Ordinariate in Sarajevo, starting with the following words: "It is an honour to inform his Honour the that I have been appointed Military Vicar '*sine titulo*' for the Croatian Army by the Holy See. As my deputies, I have appointed the venerable Mr. Stipe Vučetić as the Higher Curator of Souls in the headquarters at the Ministry of the Croatian Home Guard, and the revered Mr. Vilim Cecelja as the deputy of the Higher Curator of Souls in the headquarters at the Ministry of the Croatian Home Guard. For this purpose, I have provided the aforementioned with the required jurisdiction, along with all the authorisations, which I have been given by

the Holy See. Furthermore, I have appointed curators of souls for the Home Guard and given them the parish jurisdiction” (p. 183). Not for one second did Pavelić’s regime attempt to hide its goals concerning the fate of the Serbs, and the Ustasha minister, Milovan Žanić, stated the following in Nova Gradiška on 3 June 1941: “This must be a country of Croats and none others, and there is no method, which we, as Ustashas, won’t use to make this country truly Croatian and cleanse it from the Serbs, who would jeopardize us the first chance they got. This is not a secret; this is the policy of this country, and when we execute it, we will execute what is written in the Croatian principles” (p. 185).

The Orthodox Serbs had been openly placed outside the law, their cruel liquidation planned, and the Ustasha villains were convinced that they were “doing a good deed for the Catholic Church”, and were “counting on the full support of the Catholic Church in their brutal criminal operation of the liquidating the Orthodox population” (p. 185). The ideological concept which served as the basis for the participation of the Vatican in the anti-Serb genocide was most persuasively interpreted by Mile Budak, minister of the Ustashas, on 3 August 1941, with the following words: “One must bear in mind that the Catholic Church, which is not a terrorist organization, nor is it governed by halfwits, lead six Crusades for the liberation of Christ’s grave. They went so far that children were recruited to fight in the Crusades. If this was so in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, we are certain that the Church understands the struggle of the Ustasha” (p. 185). As stipulated in the book *Secret Documents...*, it is indicative that Budak “. . . voiced some of this behind Pavelić’s visit to the Pope, and Budak himself was part of Pavelić’s ‘suite’ in that instance. The murderous cooperation of these two sides during the occupation years proved that the Ustasha movement encountered ‘understanding’ in the Vatican and with the clergy in Croatia. There is an abundance of well-founded documents which support this, and which simply cannot be disputed by anything. This idea was spread from the upper to the lower clergy, stirring it up with religious fanaticism and Ustasha chauvinism” (p. 185). For instance, the Zhupan of Udbina, Mate Moguš, gave the following statement for *Novi list (New Gazette)* on 24 July 1941: “We have thus far administered the Catholic faith with a prayer book and the cross, but now, the time has come to use a rifle and revolver” (p. 186).

The gazette of the Archdiocese of Sarajevo, the *Catholic Weekly*, led the glorification of Pavelić, and, issue after issue, “. . . harangued the Orthodox Serbs, while glorifying ‘the rebelliousness of the Ustaša’, i.e. the criminal practice in the operation against the Serbs, as an occurrence which was completely in line with the standpoint of the Church” (p. 186). Dr. Ivo Guberina, Roman Catholic priest and Ustaša captain on duty in the battalion for the personal protection of the head of the Ustaša movement, in *Hrvatska Smotra (Croatian Review)* in 1943, using “scientific” pretensions, explained the necessity and usefulness of eradication, i.e. murder, and the forced conversion of the Serbs. At the same time, he referred to “Catholic moral theology”!... This means that the Catholic Church, i.e. its hierarchy, approved of eradication, which meant murdering Serbs for the sole reason that they did not wish to assimilate, meaning that they did not wish to convert and become Catholics. Guberina states that because these “elements” wished to retain their faith and their nationality, they deserved to be eradicated. He went on to mention that they had also entered an “armed conflict”, “which is much worse”; but that even if they had not entered in this “armed conflict”, they still had to be eradicated. What else could the latter mean, except that the peaceful population also had

to be slaughtered, the ones that did not fight back, for “preventive” reasons! This peaceful population could one day get the idea to fight; the children in the cribs would grow and could, therefore, become dangerous. Therefore, slaughtering children was “preventive”. All Serbs were to be slaughtered “without waiting for the hour of their attack”. This was all done under the pretence of “defence”. The emphasis was on the “sword”, which was to strike the peaceful Serbian population with “preventive” motives! This was all to be justified by Catholic moral theology... In Guberina’s opinion, the Catholics who condemned the Ustasha movement because of its criminal methods, which he called “decisive operations”, were mistaken (p. 186-187). As it is emphasised in Guberina’s discussion, “. . . these are principles which the very law of nature depends on; therefore, it is a moral obligation of every Catholic to enforce and assist this in order for it to be put into practice. If the Ustasha movement took it upon itself to enforce this in Croatia under the present circumstances, then disrupting it would at the very least mean being oblivious of one’s Catholic calling. . . Under such circumstances, it would be a sin against Our Maker to sit on the sidelines in this fateful struggle, while being on the barricades of the enemy would mean complete betrayal of the divine cause” (p. 187).

Ivo Guberina, with the authority of a priest highly acquainted with the true character of the church he belonged to and completely open when it comes to its centuries-old objectives, warns that “. . . Croatian Catholics have been given an opportunity to prove themselves as soldiers of God. A Catholic is not a professional critic or spiritual pygmy, but someone who, while fighting with courage, takes every opportunity to secure the victory of the divine cause. It is a Catholic’s duty to do all in his power in order to push the important and positive part in the Ustasha movement forward. . . It is his religious duty to support the Ustasha movement. The Church would be much more pleased if its believer was so aware that he would fight in the ranks of the Ustasha movement, which, in its tradition and leadership, and especially programme, strives towards the social and political condition in which the Church could freely perform its holy errand” (p. 187). Everything was hereby said, and the practice of slaughter confirmed the criminal Roman Catholic ideology in practice. “There have been too many priests who murdered, slaughtered and tortured with their own hands, and personally committed the most heinous atrocities. Many of them have been punished for their actions. Guberina was one of these. Not only was he bloodthirsty and active as such, but he was also a compulsive writer, so he left behind this document, which, however, is not characteristic only to his criminal personality, but also to the ranks that he came from and belonged to. He was one of the ideologists of clerical fascism, one of the authoritative figures of that band, a doctor of theology, held in high esteem, with pretensions of becoming a bishop one day. Did any of his Church superiors do anything against the fact that one of their priests advocated the vicious slaughter of innocent people, women, and children in black and white? Did he have to answer for this when they read this ‘essay’, which justified the slaughter through Catholic moral theology and the Vatican’s agenda of higher Church interests? Guberina was too secure, open and resolute in the formulation of his criminal thesis for one to not assume that he had done this with the knowledge and approval of his superiors, or at least with having an intimate insight into the intentions and opinions of those superiors” (p. 187-188).

#### d) Catholic Priests, Ustasha Volunteers

The previous quotes represent fragments from the book *Secret Documents about the Relationship between the Vatican and the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia*, while the following originate from the book *Documents about Anti-national Activities and the Crimes of One Part of the Catholic Clergy*, and they deal with the direct participation of the Vatican's curators of souls in the mass-murdering of Serbs. "During the first days of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, one part of the Catholic clergy undertook the organisation and armament of the Ustasha militia in certain cities and villages, from which military formations of the Ustasha were recruited. This part of the Ustasha-priests voluntarily answered Pavelić's call, taking an active role in boosting the fighting spirit of the Ustasha military units. In their role as military curators of souls, they accompanied units in all positions, supporting them in all their operations of looting and slaughter, while setting an example by their very presence. The public in Yugoslavia and the world were familiar with the horrible crimes committed by the Ustashes and the 'Croatian Home Guard (*domobranci*)' units. Military curators of souls regularly accompanied their troops on such criminal undertakings. However, our public was not aware of even one public protest condemning the actions of military units by the military priests and their Supreme Vicariate. It is also unknown whether the supreme authorities of the Church have ever punished a military priest who was present and who approved of the atrocities committed on our people. All the military curators of souls were subordinate to the 'Military Vicariate', founded in 1941 as part of the 'Ministry of Armed Forces of the Independent State of Croatia'; Pavelić himself appointed them at the proposal of Dr. Alojzija Stepinac, Archbishop and apostolic military vicar. Only priests, case-hardened volunteers of the Ustashes, were selected as curators of souls in the Ustasha armed formations; however, military priests from volunteer ranks were also recruited into the other units of the Independent State of Croatia. The archive of the military curators of souls of the 'Ministry of Armed Forces of the Independent State of Croatia' shows that there were many more applicants for military service than needed" (p. 190).

It was no accident that a large number of those priests were decorated with Ustasha medals. "The leaders of the Independent State of Croatia recognized the great assistance which was being provided by such Catholic priests, so they were issued proper medals of achievement. A great part of the clergy, especially the military spiritual fathers, invested the authority of their priestly rank and the Church in order to support the realisation of the criminal plans of the Ustashes. Military curators of souls held fiery propaganda speeches to lure the peasantry into Ustasha units and to spread both national and religious hatred within the military, primarily towards the Serbs, and later towards the People's Liberation Movement. They especially advocated this in their 'Home Guard' units, persistently instigating soldiers to fight the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army, boosting morale and militancy. In order to set an example to the soldiers, many military priests participated in the battles and looting by the armed forces of the Independent State of Croatia. Military priests persisted in this unto the end, and even at the very end of the Independent State of Croatia, they promoted the fiercest resistance possible by participating in the battles and carrying rifles. Certain Franciscan monasteries had become fortresses, from where a desperate resistance to the units of the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army was made. According to the documents from

Ustasha sources, which are cited in this book, Catholic priests were the pillars of strengthening the defence of the Independent Ustasha State of Croatia.” (p. 197).

### e) Testimonies of Surviving Victims in Dedijer’s Collection of Documents

In this collection, Dedijer includes the personal testimonies of victims – who had survived by chance – concerning the Ustasha massacre and the throwing of Serbs from Herzegovina into the Koritska Jama (sinkhole), the slaughter in the Church in Glina, the mass murder of Serbian civilians at Kozara and Potkozarje, Francetić’s slaughter in the village Urije, the atrocities carried out by the Ustasha in Jajce and the surrounding area, etc. After this, based on original documents from the State Committee for the Verification of Crimes Performed by the Occupying Forces and their Accomplices, he portrays slaughters, sadistic torture and great plunderings – which were directly led by prominent Roman Catholic priests, such as Božidar Bral in Reljevo and on the Alipašin Bridget, Petar Berković in Drniš, Antun Đurić in Dvor on the River Una, Josip Astaloš in Dalje, Eugen Gujić in Gusovača, Mate Moguš at Udbina and Krbavsko Polje, Petar Sivjanović and Jakob Marjanović in Grubišno Polje, Dragutin Kamberra in Doboj, Marko Zovko in Stoce, Ilija Tomas in Čapljina, Ivan Raguž in Stoce, Silvije Franković in Bugojno, Vlado Bilobrk with Raka Ronac and Martin Gudelja in Metković, Ivan Hristić in Sinj, Bože Šimleša in Livno, Mija Čuntić in Duvno, Franjo Udović in Korčani, Mirko Brandić in Gradačac, Ante Klarić in Bosanski Šamac, Marko Čalušić in Sivša, Srećko Perić in Livno, Petar Medved in Cetingrad, Josip Kaurinović in Prijedor, Branimir Županović in Bosanska Gradiška, Branko Bandić in Prnjavor, and Miroslav Filipović in Banjaluka, who went on to become the infamous commandant of the Jasenovac concentration camp, etc. This is a genuine catalogue of the bestial Roman Catholic torture of Orthodox Serbs, of murders by methods inconceivable to a normal person. In parallel with the genocide committed on the Serbs, Roman Catholic priests also ardently participated in the slaughter of Jews and Gypsies (Romanies), as well as the Roman Catholics and Muslims who were suspected of being antifascist or presented as an unreliable element to the Ustasha regime in any other way. Dedijer documented all this along with several fragments of Nikola Nikolić’s book *The Death Camp of Jasenovac* and the three-volume collection by Antun Miletić, entitled *The Jasenovac Concentration Camp 1941-1945*.

At the roundtable concerning Jasenovac on 14 and 15 November 1986, which was organized by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Dragoje Lukić, who had gone through the Jasenovac concentration camp as a child, submitted the report *Genocide on Children in the Independent State of Croatia, With a Special Emphasis on the Ustasha Concentration Camps from 1941-1945*. He writes, “According to personal past research and confirmed data, the Germans, Ustashas, Chetniks, Italians and Hungarians, murdered 16,137 children, from infants to 14-year-olds. While doing it, they used methods inconceivable to common sense. Children were shot, slaughtered with knives, broad axes, axes, burned to death in their own homes and in crematories, boiled alive in cauldrons, tied in sacks and thrown into rivers and wells, forced alive into caves and caverns, suffocated with cyan-potassium and poisoned with caustic soda, and tortured by hunger, thirst and cold. Genocide on children was approved by the top echelons of the Catholic Church immediately upon the establishment of the Independent State of

Croatia” (p. 410-411). Lukić illustrates this with some specific data: “Mass murders of men, women and children were committed in the cruellest possible manner. They were crucified on their doors and burned to death together with their families; they were thrown alive into chasms, caves and caverns. Pits were filled in Lika, Bosanska Krajina and Herzegovina. 860 men, women and children were thrown into the so-called ‘Delića Pit’. It was a natural cave, which was later filled and concreted over by the Italians. The ‘Vučija Pit’ near Cazin also swallowed up several hundreds of lives. 220 women and children were thrown into the 47-meter deep pit ‘Ravni Dolac’ near Livno. The Ustasha ranks from Bileća informed their superiors that over 8,000 persons could be put into the 75 caves and pits located in their area of jurisdiction. The Ustasha slaughtered 60 women and 90 children from Mistra village in the vicinity of Cazin, and they locked one hundred women and children in the house of Ilija Trbojević and burned it down. In the Orthodox church in Velika Kladuša, they killed 300 women and children, and in the house of Pera Drobac, 200 women and children were slaughtered and set on fire. In the villages in the vicinity of Bosanski Petrovac, Krnjeuši, Vrtoč and Brovsko, they slaughtered 260 women and children. In the village Tuk Djevera, they burned 52 mothers with their children in one house. During the summer days of 1941, one of Pavelić’s battalions killed about 6,000 men and women and 668 children in Bosanska Krajina.

The date 7 February 1942 is marked in the annals of the most shocking crimes in Kozara, when the members of Pavelić’s bodyguard battalion killed 2,300 inhabitants of Drakulić, Šargovica and Motika, villages near Banja Luka. The Ustashas showed a culmination of savagery by slaughtering 538 children. Miroslav Filipović, better known as friar Majstorović, a chaplain of the convent in Pertićevac and one of the most notorious slaughterers in the camp in Jasonovac, was the first who slaughtered Djura Glamočanin’s child and shouted: “I am converting the heathens in the name of God and I take all the sins upon my soul”. Crime after crime was committed in Kozara. The witnesses gave such horrible stories that it is hard to believe. “In the house of Mikan Jandrić, they hacked a child in a highchair to death. Dara Banović’s two children, four-year-old Radosavka and two-year-old Boško, were stabbed in her arms. Grozda Adžić, tied to her doorstep, was forced to watch her baby burning together with its cradle, while the Ustashas were suffocating her other child in a pit of slaked lime; six-year-old Miodrag Kecman was forced to watch the death of his grandmother Staka and his mother Radojka, and then an Ustasha cut off the boy’s right hand on a stump used for chopping wood, so that he would not be able to shoot when he grew up; in the village Koturovi, the Ustashas killed two children of Sima and Koviljka Kondić. Blagoje was three and Mara six months old when the criminals bayoneted them and carried them through the village” (p. 411-412).

From Kozara alone, a total of 23,858 children were taken to various Ustasha concentration camps: Cerovljane near Dubica, Jasenovac, Mlaka, Jablanac, Stara Gradiška, Novska, Prijedor and Zemun. “The climax of the children’s cataclysm was reached by the decision of Ante Pavelić, the head of the Independent State of Croatia, and Andrija Artuković, Minister of the Interior, on 12 July 1932, when they set up three separate concentration camps ‘for the education and correction’ of the Partisans’ children in Gornja Rijeka in the vicinity of Križevac, Jastrebarsko and Sisak. Those were the only camps in Europe and perhaps in the world for prisoners in diapers. 400 little janissaries passed through the camp in Gornja Rijeka, in the Jewish castle, and



more than half of them died within a very short time. The Jastrebarsko concentration camp for children was the best organised one, and it was under the authority of the nuns of the 'St. Vinko Paulski' congregation, run by Barta Pulherija, who was notorious for her criminal behaviour towards children. 3,236 children passed through the Jastrebarsko camp, and according to the official data of the Civil Ministry, 449 of them died; based on the diary of Franjo Ilovar, the keeper of the local cemetery in Jasterbarsko, 768 died. The third and the biggest camp for children was in Sisak, which was under the protection of 'Ženska Loza', an Ustasha movement and the Ustasha supervisory service. 6,693 children passed through it, out of which 1,631 died within the first four months, most frequently with numbers around their necks" (p. 413-414).

#### **f) The Preparations of the Catholic Church for Carrying Out a Genocide**

As part of the preparations for that great crime against Serbian people, Archbishop Stepinac, on 14 January 1940, called the Serbs to "come back" to Roman Catholicism, and he himself wrote about this in his diary: "Thus, in the interest of the Catholic Church, we have to do all in our power so that the Croatian people remain healthy and culturally stronger. It has protected them through these twenty years, and it will help us in the future struggle for survival. It would be most ideal if the Serbs were to return to the religion of their forefathers, i.e. to bow their heads before the regent of Christ, the Holy Father. Then, we too could feel relieved in this part of Europe, because Byzantinism has played a horrible role in the history of this part of the world regarding the Turks" (p.453). This is why, immediately after the occupation, the use of Cyrillic was banned, the Orthodox people were forced to wear a blue ribbon on the territory of the Ustasha state, they were being fired from public offices, arrested, murdered. As it is stated in the book *Secret Documents about the Relationship Between the Vatican and the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia*, upon the establishment of Pavelić's government, ". . . the Orthodox priests were first to be arrested, against whom sadistic crimes were often committed. A mass slaughtering of Orthodox people began in the villages, and was often done in Orthodox churches. Some Orthodox churches were blown up by dynamite, others were burned to the ground, and those which remained were desecrated and robbed. A large transport of the Orthodox people was sent to Serbia in agreement with the German occupation authority in Serbia" (p. 454). In order to systematically and completely carry out the extermination of Serbs, ". . . in the so-called 'State Directorate for Revival' in Zagreb, a special 'Religious Department' was established, and its duty was to deal with the liquidation of the Orthodox church municipalities, churches and the conversion of those Serbs who remained in Croatia. The head of that office was a priest, Dionizije Juričev – an Ustasha officer, intimate associate and a confidant of Pavelić himself, later his 'court chaplain' and guardian of his children. . . The task of this office was, apart from the liquidation, also the conversion of the Serbs to the Catholic faith. The plan for conversion came from this office; it was there that the regulations were made, the ones which were later administered by the Catholic Church hierarchy through its church institutions – and all this was done on a 'legal basis'!" (p. 454). When Pavelić "legally" regulated the issue of faith conversion, on 15 May 1941, the Office of the Archdiocesan Spiritual Board in Zagreb issued special instructions on how the conversion was to take place and who was eligible for it.

These instructions were forwarded to all the priests of the Archdiocese of Zagreb, as well as the priests of all the other dioceses, by the mediation of their Episcopal Ordinariates. “It is completely clear that the highest church authority in the so-called ‘Independent State of Croatia’ supported the intentions of the Ustasha to liquidate Orthodoxy in Croatia with terror, and to convert those Serbs who had not been killed or driven out of the country into Catholics and automatically transform them into ‘Croats’ in the shortest timeframe possible. Although certain points of these regulations of the Spiritual Board mention formalities which converts were required to fulfil; and although even the ‘sincerity’ of their requests to be granted the right to join the Catholic religion was questioned, as well as their ‘conviction’, one can still clearly see that the highest church entity in Croatia zealously undertook the Ustasha operation, and put its whole apparatus at the service of mass conversion.

The way the highest Catholic entity in Croatia interpreted conversion, and with what kinds of aspirations it approached it with, can best be seen in the articles published in the *Catholic Gazette*, an agency of the Archdiocese of Zagreb, which wrote about and harangued the Serbs and Orthodoxy. One need not stress that these provisions and comments by official Church figures were in direct conflict with the canonical regulations on converting to Catholicism. Rarely have there been instances in history, even in times of horrible religious wars, when violence over free will was so brutal, and rarely have the most responsible figures of the Catholic Church participated in such crimes” (p. 455). From the plethora of quoted documents in this corpus, it is clear that “. . . intimate cooperation existed between the episcopate and the Ustasha government. In strict confidence, they agreed on the method of liquidation of Orthodoxy, so the Ustasha government set the limits of conversion, which the episcopate respected, in order to make it easier for the Ustasha to enforce further measures envisaged for a cruel liquidation of the Serbs in Croatia – the slaughters. The episcopate received a suggestion to not accept the converts who wished to turn Catholic for fear of death if they belonged to certain marked categories, for which other, more drastic liquidation measures had been foreseen! The fact that conversion was executed under the greatest imaginable terror, and that the episcopate used this terror to increase the number of its followers (excluding those Serbs specially marked by the Ustasha!) can be seen in the circular letter, printed in the episcopate’s printing office in Đakovo, which invited the Orthodox people to ‘join the Catholic Church as soon as possible’ since supposedly, ‘as Catholics, they could remain in their homes’, and ‘freely’ devote themselves to their affairs and raise their children. Orthodox people fearfully read those invitations, which clearly told them what awaited them if they would not convert to the Catholic faith” (p. 456). The Religious Department of the State Directorate for Revival “. . . sent its ‘missionaries’, who propagated conversion to the Catholic faith, to the field. These were priests who, supposedly (using threat and terror, supported by the Ustasha gangs) had to prepare as many Serbs as possible for religious conversion. The missionary priests were subjected to this office” (p. 456).

The Roman Catholic priests joined in the mass murders and conversions of Serbs, showing in practice that it was not possible to differentiate their church from the Ustasha state organization. “The Pope and the remaining Vatican Curia were very well aware of what was happening in the so-called ‘Independent State of Croatia’, and they were also familiar with the procedures intended for Orthodox Serbs, as well as the great conversion operation, i.e. the mass transition from the Orthodox to the Catholic religion.

The Ustasha movement had support from the Vatican. Moreover, the Croatian Episcopate had approval for their cooperation with the Ustasha government. There is ample evidence to support this. On 17 July 1941 (Prot. No. 2116), the Vatican's Holy Congregation of the Eastern Church issued instructions to the head of the Diocesan Conference of Zagreb, Dr. Stepinac, regarding the transition of the Orthodox people to Catholicism. . . This enactment was fashioned in a highly Jesuit manner. It outlines the return to the Eastern rite of the Catholic faith of those who had supposedly been members of the Catholic Church, but had strayed from the Catholic religion under threat and pressure in the past. This was also the thesis of the Ustasha, and it was adhered to by the Catholic Bishops, so they too preached that there had been no Orthodox people in Croatia in the past, but that that they had only been settled there or were forcefully converted Catholics. Using this formula, the Vatican remained within the boundaries of 'correctness', but it also linked its position with that of the Ustashas, indirectly approving of the thesis of the Ustashas. This enactment was actually issued in connection with the wave of the Ustashas' terror and their terrorist movement of conversion, and this is marked in the act in the following manner: "... there is so much hope for the conversion of the disunited" For the Holy Congregation, the Ustasha terror was only "hope for the conversion of the disunited" (p. 457-458).

Based also on the following document of the Holy Apostolic See, dated 16 October 1941, "... the tendency of the Vatican to be at the service of the Ustashas by any means necessary can clearly be seen. The cynicism is actually visible: the Vatican's provision speaks of some 'freedom of acceptance' of the Latin rites, as if the Vatican was unaware of how and why the masses of Orthodox people had converted to Catholicism. The fact that the Vatican agreed with the Ustashas, and supported them with its provisions, can be seen from the classification of the Orthodox people who had converted to Catholicism. The Vatican regarded them as the 'detached, disunited ones'. . . This was completely in line with the Ustasha thesis" (p. 458-459). According to the testimony of a high Ustasha official and Roman Catholic priest, Radoslav Glavaš, "... there was a precise directive from the Vatican concerning conversion – not just the decision of the Congregation for the Eastern Church and the subsequent amendment of this first decision by the Holy See. One truly cannot imagine that the whole Croatian Episcopate would have otherwise cold-bloodedly and unscrupulously entered this criminal operation had there not a been general and concrete directive from the Vatican, had there not been approval from the Pope himself and if Legate Marcone had not been the direct leader of the whole conversion operation" (p. 463).

#### **g) The Vatican's Satisfaction with the Results of the Conversions to Catholicism**

From the report which the Ustasha deputy in the Vatican, Rušinović, sent to Minister Lorković on 26 February 1946, on the occasion of his visit to the Vatican's Secretary of State, Maglione, it can precisely be seen "... that the Pope's first deputy, which means the Pope himself, looked on the operation of the Ustasha mass conversion with satisfaction: this was not only a matter of the Ustasha movement and the Croatian episcopate, but also a matter of the Vatican, because the ancient dream of the Vatican was being realized, i.e. to liquidate the Orthodox Church in at least one part of the Balkans, the Western part, and to spread Catholicism at least to the River Drina. The

Ustasha movement and the Nazi-fascist occupation created the conditions for the realisation of this old dream, which was highly church-imperialistic in nature, completely in line with Mussolini's imperialistic plan. One cannot in any other way comprehend the fact that Cardinal Maglione did not give one word of criticism for the Ustashes' brutality in dealing with the Serbs, or display any scruples related to the violent, inhumane methods of mass conversion. Instead of criticism and objection, the highest representative of the Vatican next to the Pope announced that the news he received from the Ustashes were 'nice announcements' (p. 465).

On 9 February 1942, deputy Rušinović informed Lorković of his visit to Monsignor Sigismund, who was the head of the Croatian Department in the Vatican: "This document is extremely important, because it is related to the head of the Vatican office for Croatia! This is the most competent position in terms of everything that is happening in the Independent State of Croatia, and as we can see, Monsignor Sigismund, just like Maglione, expressed nothing but 'joy' over the mass conversion of the Serbs. Sigismund accurately stated, without hesitation, that 'the Holy See was pleased with all this'. Not him personally, but the Holy See! And he has been informed about the real nature of this mass conversion, i.e. the violence, not only because he monitors the American and English attacks and even reads about them in the Italian press, but he also considers, as if he himself were an Ustasha, this to be 'enemy propaganda'. He did not criticize the methods of the Ustashes; he only advised that these 'enemies' in the world should not be provoked, and that this matter should be 'administered gradually'. As far as the terror over 'converts' was concerned, Sigismund announced that 'The Holy See does not believe' this! However, he listened with satisfaction when the Ustasha deputy explained things 'properly' (!), thus he suggested that this be elaborated in a document and given to Cardinal Maglione. The Ustasha thesis should, therefore, be formulated in such a way that, in terms of the mass conversion of the Serbs, the position of the Holy See would be more justified and firm!" (p.465-466). In any event, in the first report it was clear that ". . . Cardinal Maglione stressed that the criminal gang of the Ustashes had an opportunity to use the mass conversion politically and to their own advantage! The Vatican had their benefits, and the Ustasha movement had their own; a partnership was useful for both sides, but caution was in order, so Maglione advised avoiding that which 'gave the enemy a reason for vilification'. Maglione also considered all those who have branded the Ustashes for their crimes against the Serbs enemies, for the mass conversions, and Maglione considers the protests and accusations towards the Ustashes as 'vilification'! These were all new confirmations of an intimate cooperation in the mass conversions and the strict directive of the Vatican, which the previously quoted friar Glavaš also spoke of. Archbishop Stepinac was, logically, the direct exponent of the Vatican in this great campaign of conversion. In the name of the Ustasha movement, he also advocated a thesis in the Vatican which was appropriate for the Ustashes, even manipulating the Pope himself at some points, whenever there was the least bit of disagreement or indecisiveness on his part" (p. 466).

On 9 May 1942, Rušinović described to Lorković Stepinac's twelve-day stay in Rome, where he displayed himself as a fiery supporter of the Ustasha ideology unto the very end. "During his visit to Rome, Stepinac completely acted in the Ustasha spirit, which can be seen in this letter. Everything that he reported to the Holy See, and to the Pope himself during an hour-long audience, was completely in line with the Ustashes' ideas, as testified by Rušinović, who had an insight into Stepinac's nine-page typed

report. Everything was 'absolutely positive' from the Ustasha standpoint. Stepinac portrayed Pavelić's terror as only an endeavour to 'establish order as soon as possible', portraying him as a God-fearing man, and as can be seen, a man of merit for the Church. Stepinac believed that the attacks towards the 'Independent State of Croatia' should not be allowed – 'so he came to Rome to dispel the lies that had been served to the Holy See'. He even spoke to the Pope about the Serbs in Croatia. The Pope agreed with him, since Stepinac intended to report directly to Pavelić about the good impression which the Ustashes had left on the Holy See and on the Pope himself. It is doubtless that a great favour for the Ustashes was present in the Vatican, and that Stepinac's Ustasha ideals were also strengthened by this, since Stepinac made captivating toasts to the Ustashes at Rušinović's banquet, which the ultra-Ustasha Rušinović himself called 'extremely beautiful'. Had Stepinac encountered a critical or cold attitude towards the Ustasha movement in the Vatican, he would not have attended the banquet with such a great presentation, also in the company of the Nuncio for the Yugoslav government (which the Vatican still formally recognised!) Felicio, and Prettnner-Cipico, officials of the Vatican State Secretary's Office, who were very close to Maglione; and he would not have made toasts to the Ustashes. However the Vatican looked at the mass conversions of the Orthodox people and the tragedy of the Serbs as a positive thing, and approved of them at that moment; hence Stepinac's attitude, for he had no reason to hold back. It can be proven that Stepinac advocated the standpoint of the Ustashes and had talks with the Pope himself. During the occupation, he submitted a number of reports to the Pope, and in all these reports, he referred to the issue of the mass conversions. As the Pope's subordinate, through his reports, Stepinac must have been attempting to tell his supreme commander, the 'infallible' Pope, who did not take kindly to oppositions and separate channels, what he wanted to hear. A special report to the Pope, made on 18 May 1943, shows how Stepinac and the Vatican Curia viewed the mass conversion of the Serbs" (p.467-468). In his report, Stepinac claimed that the Turks had colonised Orthodox people and Vlachs onto Croatian territory, that the Catholics were being persecuted by the Serbs, and that entire Catholic areas were being forcefully converted to the "Oriental schism". In addition, he went on to add that the conversion of Roman Catholics to Orthodoxy was being preached and propagated in Yugoslavia, and that Catholic associations and activities had been forbidden. "With such false arguments and historical forgeries, Stepinac supported to the Pope himself the extermination of Serbs and Orthodoxy by the Ustashes, which entailed liquidations and mass conversions. This was the thesis that the Pope and the whole Vatican Curia personally accepted and approved of. Stepinac's emphasising that Ustasha Croatia was also defending the Pope's Italy from Orthodoxy is especially significant. Not only could this be seen from the Vatican's decrees and reactions, expressed in the 'diplomatic' correspondence quoted here, but it can also be seen in everything else, including the position of the Archbishop of Zagreb – that what the Ustasha enforced was suitable for the Vatican, because their goal was common: to have the strongest possible border of the Catholic Church on the River Drina! This end 'justified' everything, even the sea of blood and tears of hundreds of thousands of victims" (p. 468-469).

## h) German Racial Purity and Croatian Religious Purity

There were certain differences between the Croatian and German, i.e. the Ustasha and the Nazi racist concept. The German master race was founded on the purity of blood, while the Croatian one was founded on religious purity. “While Hitler strove for purity of the ‘Arian blood’, claiming that only the land can be Germanised, not its people, . . . for the Ustasas, it was sufficient for a member of another nationality or faith, as was the case with the Orthodox Serbs, to accept the Roman Catholic religion and declare oneself as Croatian in order to be accepted as such. Since no one wanted to do this peacefully, it needed to be achieved by force” (p. 472). That quote is from the text by Dušan Lj. Kašić, *The Serbian Church in the So-called Independent State of Croatia*, from the book *The Serbian Orthodox Church from 1920 to 1970*, Belgrade, 1971. Immediately upon the occupation, the Ustasha strove to decapitate the Serbian Orthodox Church. Dositej, the Metropolitan of Zagreb, was arrested, tortured and banished to Serbia, where he almost died from the consequences of the cruel Croatian tortures. Platon, the Episcopo of Banja Luka; Petar, the Metropolitan of Dabar-Bosnia; and Sava, the Episcopo of Gornji Karlovci, were killed in a vicious manner. Irinej, the Episcopo of Dalmatia, was deported to Italy; Valerijan, the Episcopo of Srem, died during the first year of the war; while Nektarije, the Episcopo of Zvornik and Tuzla, and Nikolaj, the Episcopo of Zahumlje and Herzegovina, emigrated to Serbia. “Wishing to fulfil the complete liquidation of the Orthodox religion and Church within the Independent State of Croatia, the authorities of the Ustasha directed themselves at the Orthodox clergy with full force. All collections of documents that have been published, especially the Commemorative Document of Orthodox Priests, are filled with fear and horror of unbelievably monstrous crimes, which normal people could not begin to fathom. Many priests had already been arrested in the first days, as well as beaten and tortured, shot with rifles, murdered with knives and mallets on their doorsteps, in camps, mountain ravines and chasms. Mass shootings of priests began in the Danica concentration camp in Koprivnica, where almost all the priests were transported from to Gospić and lost their lives at Velebit in the chasm of Jadovno. Jadovno is a frightening tomb of tens of thousands of Serbs and many priests. The Commemorative Document mentions the names of around fifty of them. Apart from this tomb of Orthodox Serbs and their priests, there are many other such places of horror and pain. Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška, where many priests lost their lives, in addition to numerous Serbs, are certainly the most horrific of all” (p. 477).

Kašić provides the datum that the Croats killed 187 Serbian Orthodox priests on the whole area of the Independent State of Croatia, as well as 30 monks and 2 catechists. Roman Catholic priest very frequently personally participated in these crimes, and the specific examples cited in the book are utterly gruesome. “Five priests of the Driniška Krajina met their deaths, along with hundreds of the members of their parishes, in the desolate pits of the mine under Promina; on 29 June 1941, four priests with over five hundred Serbs from Bojnić and the surrounding area were killed at Kordun in Božića Jarak; three priests were tortured and slaughtered in Rašića Gaj at Vlasenica with the most prominent Serbs of Vlasenica and its surrounding area; two hieromonks, after all the tortures they had suffered together with their parishioners in the church in Velika Kladuša, died a martyr’s death in the place Mejino Stanje, not far from Kladuša; fifteen Herzegovinian priests died a martyr’s death in the pits and chasms of the Herzegovinian

karst as well as in the cold Neretva River. Each and every mass killing of the Serbs (and there were many of them all over the area of the Independent State of Croatia), was accompanied by the martyrdom and death of some priest. One priest, Nikola Zagorac, was killed together with 700 Serbs in Petrovo Selo in the region Lika; Branko Brzin, a priest, met his death with 200 martyrs from Gudovac in the vicinity of Bjelovar; in the Ilinden massacre, among other people from Glamoc, a priest, Simo Banjac, was cut up in the town centre; while in the chasms between Livno and Glamoč, a priest from Glamoč, Mirko Stojisavljević, died a horrible death together with his parishioners. Along with 500 Serbs from Veljun, Cvijanović Brdo and Poloj, a priest, Dimitrije Skorupan, and protopope, Branko Dobrosavljević, who had to give the funeral rite for his living son, also met their deaths. During the great massacre of the Serbs in Kulen Vakuf, a priest, Rodoljub Samardžić, was killed, after his wife and children had been killed in front of him by the Ustashas.

“A young priest, Miloš Vujić, died a martyr’s death together with many Serbs from the nearby areas of Slunj. ‘After they had massacred the men, the Ustasha continued with a massacre of the women. They captured them on 5 August 1941, and killed them all on the hill of Bakica Glavica, in the vicinity of the Lepušnjak woods, two kilometers away from Cetingrad in the direction of Krstinja. That was the place where the priest Vujić’s wife, Danica, was killed after her womb was cut open while she was still alive and her baby was taken out, as her other child, a two-year-old, was also killed’. Ljubica, the wife of the young murdered priest Spasa Lavnja, from Suvaja near Donji Lapac, shared the same destiny. She was due to deliver. The Ustashe cut her womb open and took the live baby out and killed it, and then they wounded her four-year-old son with a gun shot, after which they slaughtered him with a knife. The priest Andrej Semilucki was locked together with people from Kukunjevac in Slavonia in a church, and he was forced to give each of them the funeral rite and was forced to watch ‘as they were taken out of the church and killed with a mallet and cut with knives at the edge of a dug out grave, after which the priest, Andrej Semilucki, was killed last. The blind priest Vukosav Milanovic from Kulen Vakuf was forced to listen while the Ustashas slaughtered his children and made him slaughter his daughter himself. So it went on, one after the other, each event bleaker than the previous, worse than the worst” (p. 477-478).

The Croatian Catholic clergy eagerly accepted the Ustasha inter-confessional legislation, taking part in the implementation of conversions with great enthusiasm, not even hesitating to commit the cruelest crimes in that filthy job. During that period, they had the direct support of the Vatican, and the papal legate, Abbot Marcone, commented on that as follows: “The Church legislation of the Croatian country is very good, and the government supports the Catholic Church and fully respects it” (p. 529). That statement was published in the *Croatian Nation*, on 12 March 1944. As Sima Simić writes in the book *The Conversion of the Serbs During World War II*: “. . . when this praiseworthy appraisal of the Ustasha ‘religious legislation’ by Abbot Marcone is taken into consideration, and then his recognition of the ‘Croatian state’ and the Ustasha ‘authorities that support the struggles of the Catholic Church’, then it is completely clear how interested the Vatican was in issuing and implementing the ‘religious legislation’. On the other hand, this statement by Abbot Marcone, as a Vatican representative, was also a public tribute to Mirko Puha, who announced in front of the Ustasha parliament that, ‘The Independent Croatian State supports the action of the conversion of the Greek-

Easterners into the Catholic faith'. All in all, Abbot Marcone expressed the Vatican's understanding that there is nothing to add or take away from the way that the Ustasha 'authorities support the struggles of the Catholic Church'" (p. 529). Owing to the fact that the Croatian Ustasha state provided the Roman Catholic Church with complete freedom for missionary work, and put itself completely in the function of the Vatican proselytization, ". . . the activities of the Croatian Catholic Church against the Serbs were developing in parallel to the activities of the Ustasha authorities. Their coupling was useful to the general politics of the Vatican on this side of the border, between the Eastern and Western Church. This coupling and politics were supposed to serve for the strengthening and improvement of Catholicism and the pan-Croatian idea; and damage the Orthodox Church and Serbian people. Thus, by the conversion of the Serbs and through their blending into the Catholic mass, all the specific traits of the Serbian people were to be erased. Having these facts in mind, it is absolutely understandable why Cardinal Maglione wanted and induced Croatian bishops to 'hasten that return' – to hasten the conversion of the Serbs" (p. 530-531).

### **i) Civilizational Inheritance in the Interpretation of the Vatican**

On one hand, the Vatican was generally forced to accept the principle of full religious freedom, as a civilizational heritage, and reject all types of pressures as a kind of extortion for conversion to Catholicism; but it behaved completely the opposite in real life. "Officially, The Roman Catholic Church is of the standpoint that no one should be forced to embrace and adopt the Catholic faith against their own will. However, the Ustasha confessional regulations, which the Croatian Catholic Church entered into their internal legislature, represented the basis of proselytization in the Independent State of Croatia. There was no discussion about some free will and rights of the Serbs, or of protection of freedom of consciousness and religion for Orthodox believers in the Independent State of Croatia. From the first days of the Independent State of Croatia, the Serbs were put outside the law. After all, following the model of Nazism and fascism, the regime called itself authoritative. The Croatian Catholic clergy did not only approve of the Ustasha authoritative regulations, but they issued their own as well, which made the position of the Serbs more difficult, thus showing in practice that the theory of anti-proselytization was one thing, and practice another – they were separate from each other. Therefore, the followers of the Orthodox Church, to whom mainly these Ustasha clergy regulations referred to, had to choose between death, exile or conversion to Catholicism" (p. 532-533).

When the papal legate, Ramiro Marcone, came to Zagreb on 3 August 1941, Stepinac wrote in his diary that ". . . by this, the Holy See *de facto* acknowledged the Independent State of Croatia" (p. 551). As stated in the *Secret Documents*, Marcone remained ". . . in Zagreb until the end of the Ustasha regime. He conducted his task to the satisfaction of the Vatican, and from the Ustasha side there was always enthusiasm for him and for his actions. He enjoyed all the honours and privileges – which he expected – and was regarded as the most important diplomat and given the most prominent seat in all the parades. There are many photos which prove this, and there are also photos that show the papal legate saluting at the parades with a fascist salutation with a raised arm. His heavy figure in the white monk's mantle of the St. Benedict order always stood out. He looked more like a fascist general who had camouflaged himself



with the mantle than an monk. He liked public appearances and speeches, and the content of these speeches characterize that figure and his role” (p. 551). Marcone was so politically engaged that he visited and supported the Ustasha troops even during battles with the Partisans or Chetniks, giving stimulus to further crimes over Serbian civilians. He gave special attention to Ustasha wasp’s nests in Sarajevo, Siroki Brijeg, Ljubuska and Capljina. “All of this shines an especially bright light on the relations of the Pope himself towards the Ustasha movement, towards the bloody misdeeds of the Ustasha bandits who, at that time, and before that, particularly in these areas where Abbot Marcone intentionally went, had been committing dreadful massacres of the Orthodox population and also of other people who resisted the Ustasha violence; and also on the completely silent population – women and children. Abbot Marcone, the papal legate, brings these murderers the “warmest regards from the Holy Father”, which means new papal stimulus to continue with these bloody methods of extermination. The papal legate also probably also provided the friars from Siroki Brijeg, who sent many murderers from their order, with stimuli to follow that path. The papal legate undoubtedly sent a detailed report to his leader on what he had seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Pope received that report, but he did not chastise Marcone, not did he directly or through Marcone chastise the Croatian bishops or those priests who had participated. With his moral authority, the Pope supported and blessed them, he sent them ‘warm regards’ and blessings” (p. 554).

In his speeches, Macone explicitly supported the Croatian nation in its fight against “Eastern barbarianism”, and expressed his conviction in the blossoming of Croatian statehood under Pavelić’s leadership. “Marcone is, as such, a bearer of a big part of the responsibility for what happened in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. With his words and his entire attitude, he gave a directive to the Croatian bishopric, and therefore to the entire Croatian clergy, for their orientation in favour of the Ustasha movement and the criminal Pavelić, and had great success in this. That is why the Pope respected him and acknowledged him. If he had not been pleased with him, he would have revoked him. Marcone did often travel to the Vatican concerning this job, and reported to the Pope personally. Otherwise, he sent him written reports. . . Marcone very openly manifested his great sympathies for the Ustasha movement, and he did that by wanting to personally perform the confirmation of the Ustasha youth in 1944. During a memorial at the Zagreb cemetery Mirogoj in December for Ustasha butchers who had been killed, Abbot Marcone was also present as the Pope’s representative, to show of the Pope’s solidarity with the Ustashes” (p. 554-555).

#### **j) Panic in the Vatican Just Before the Defeat of Fascism**

As it was clear in 1943 that the fascist forces would be defeated in the war, Pope Pius XII intensively searched for some variation of a peaceful compromise solution, and once again he launched the idea of a Danube Federation, feverishly searching for a possibility of saving the Croatian state with a border on the Drina River. “The big post-war trials of the Ustasha bandits in Zagreb, and a detailed investigation concerning the dealings of the Church, revealed connections that had existed between that grand Vatican plan and the campaign in Croatia, to transfer the Ustasha movement into some allegedly ‘democratic’ crew, with the support of Archbishop Stepinac, and therefore ease the Pope’s intervention with the Allies for the ‘salvation of Croatia’, i.e. for an

Allied occupation of our country, at least up to the Drina. . . The Vatican did not succeed in this, although the Pope believed in it until the last moment, which can be concluded from the directives he gave to his subordinate bodies in Croatia who, as the case of Archbishop Stepinac shows, believed until the day of liberation, and a bit afterwards, that the Pope's plan would still be realised. It was not only the stubbornness and fanaticism of Stepinac that drove his persistence in saving the Ustasha movement in the days when it stood clear to everyone in our country that the destruction of the Ustasha movement was inevitable. Only papal directives could have had an impact on him to intercede so completely in favour of the salvation of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia" (p. 573). After all, ". . . the fact that the Vatican, through the efforts of Cardinal Spellman, had striven in the beginning of 1943 to influence the government of the USA and to save the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia can be claimed with certainty" (p. 573). The Archbishop of New York, Spellman, was the most engaged in this matter. "He supported (certainly with a great interest) the Vatican's line for that Ustasha creation, and tried to compromise even Roosevelt himself in this. His statement really stands out: 'I am well informed about everything and I am very familiar with the Croatian issue'. That means that he had received, in the Vatican, exactly the same suggestions that he would have received from the Ustashes themselves. And what can be said about Spellman's agitation of the Croats against the Serbs and his emphasis on the 'borders on the Drina River'? For him, as well as for the most obsessed Ustashes, Yugoslavia was a danger for Catholicism and Western civilization! And he speaks of Byzantium! He is thrilled, as the other Roman Cardinals, with the 'Croatian principles'" (p. 575).

The Croatian representative in the Vatican, Lobković, informed the Ustasha Minister Lorković about the political views of Spellman in great detail. It was shown that ". . . although he wanted to, according to the Pope's wish, save the 'Independent State of Croatia', it can be seen in Lobković's words that he is not completely confident in success: 'we have a lot of enemies'. . . This report by Lobković also reveals, among other things, that on that occasion Spellman, in the midst of war, had contacts with the fascist authorities; again in line with the papal relations with fascism and his desire to assist fascism during difficult and critical moments. We have already seen how Archbishop Stepinac acted in Rome in 1942 during his visit to the Pope, in support of Pavelić and the Ustasha 'state', thus making the Ustasha specially pleased with him. In May of 1943, Stepinac was once again in Rome. On that occasion, he went with the specific intent to strengthen the position of the Independent State of Croatia and prepare the Vatican for action in case there should be some changes of an international character. Stepinac was also being impacted by the unfavourable development of the war for fascism and the Ustasha movement. Therefore he handed over a memorandum to the Pope, in which the focus was on the Pope's oath not to admit anything, so that the Independent State of Croatia could remain, whatever happened. In that memorandum (dating 18 May 1943), Stepinac especially dealt with the fact that the Ustasha 'state' was responsible for the mass conversions of the Orthodox people, thus the base of the Catholic Church had increased, and the disappearance of the Independent State of Croatia would mean the loss of these violently gained masses, the new believers" (p. 575-576). With an imposing number of 240,000 converted Orthodox Serbs, Stepinac ". . . handled himself before the Pope as with a positive, remarkable result, pointing out that this huge success, which had to please the Pope himself, would fail if the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia should fail! Is that not yet another proof that the Pope is

directly responsible for the mass conversions in Croatia, and therefore responsible for all that followed these conversions!” (p. 576). Stepinac is very clear and concise, open and direct in that memorandum, especially when he stresses: “According to the natural order of things, if God does not perform some grand miracle, the progress of Catholicism is closely tied to the progress of the Croatian state, its survival to the survival of the state, the Church’s salvation – the state’s salvation. Holy Father! Deeply believing in God’s grace and providence, whose emissary you are, I recommend the Independent State of Croatia to His fatherly care and His prayers, convinced that in so doing, I am also recommending to the world the faith in my homeland and on the Balkans in the best possible way” (p. 576).

Stepinac’s text contains: “. . . this absolute conditionality once more: the Church cannot do without the state, and that state cannot do without the Church. Their reciprocity is here characterized as a law of survival, as something destined. However, it should be noticed that Stepinac did not limit this to Croatia, but alluded to the Church’s interests even on the Balkans! This means that he also thought that the Ustasha state was only a base for the Vatican for an offensiveness and a widening of its terrain to the other parts of the Balkans, as it had really been interpreted in the past. After Stepinac’s return from Rome, he published in his *Catholic Gazette* no. 23/1943, that the Pope blesses the clergy and the Ustasha Croatia” (p. 576). Stepinac was intensively assisted by Marcone in Rome, and the delegate Lorković reports that their mission had been successful. “It is noticed that the Vatican is friendlier towards Croatia. Archbishop Stepinac was advised, in the Vatican, to try to be in cordial relations with the Croatian state authorities. . . Vatican circles were very happy by the Archbishop’s visit and the Archbishop himself was very pleased with the reception. According to various announcements and his own statement, the Archbishop reported very positively on Croatia. He emphasized that he had kept quiet about some things that he otherwise completely disagreed with, only in order to create a better impression of Croatia. . . The Archbishop announced that he clearly noticed a difference in the conduct of the Vatican towards the Croatian state a year ago and its conduct today. He saw a significant improvement in every aspect” (p. 576-577). According to the comments of the organizers of the *Secret Documents* concerning the advice from the Vatican that the Roman Catholic prelates should attempt to have the best possible relationship with the Ustasha authorities, “. . . it is significant that such suggestions were being given to Stepinac at the same time the operation was being led, so that the Ustasha movement could gain stronger connections with the Croatian Peasant Party for some opportunistic reasons, considering the dangerous outcome of the war for them. However, the Vatican’s heart was in the Ustasha movement with Pavelić as its head. . . This shows that Stepinac gave absolutely no criticism towards the Ustasha movement in front of the Pope and that he advocated the Ustasha movement with all his might; the Vatican also had no objections to the Ustasha movement, so that Stepinac’s position would not be a difficult one. The Pope liked to listen to nothing but good things about the Ustasha and Pavelić. . . They consistently supported the Ustasha movement until the very end” (p. 577).

Similar attitudes were displayed in the Vatican by Čule, the Bishop of Mostar: “An Ustasha could do nothing but speak in favour of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia. At this moment, the Pope had undoubtedly given Stepinac a guarantee or a firm promise that the wishes outlined in his memo would be respected and that he would support the Independent State of Croatia in all presented opportunities in order for it not

to fall apart and disappear. Therefore, this papal blessing and his promise were rightly interpreted as prayers for the ‘homeland’” (p. 578). From the post-war hearing of the Ustasha minister, David Sinčić, who the Pope had received on 9 May 1943, “. . . it was clearly visible that the Pope had influenced the Ustasha that they too should attempt to save themselves with the assistance of the Croatian Peasant Party, and that, directly alluding to the fascists in Italy and the fascist and collaborator Antonescu, he also approved of the Ustashes’ saving themselves, including Pavelić, by some machinations, so as to appear ‘positive’ in the eyes of the Allies. Besides, in this very conversation, the Pope asked about Pavelić, sent his regards, blessed him, and wished to see him again. The Pope certainly intended to act this way with the Allies, and as we have seen, he employed the American Archbishop, Spellman, for this very purpose” (p.581). The Pope explicitly engaged his forces to “. . . save a revolutionary, fascist creation, as was the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia, with prospects of it fitting into some trans-Danubian federation or bloc of Central European Catholic countries under the direct control of the Vatican. This occurred in mid-1943, close to the capitulation of Italy. Being that there was no expected quick penetration of the Allies through Italy or other routes leading to the Balkans, the Ustasha movement continued its old practices; but until the very end, there was still a firm belief that the Pope would remain true to his familiar position and that he would save the Independent State of Croatia under any circumstances. The amicable relationship between the Vatican and Pavelić would resume. There is abundant documentation to support this” (p. 581-582).

In his famous speech in the great Catholic shrine of Marija Bistrica in July 1944, Archbishop Stepinac “. . . interpreted the condition that the occupying forces and the Ustasha movement had created in Croatia as the goal which all the past fighters for Croatian freedom and independence had striven for” (p. 582). Several days later, in the introduction to Stepinac’s *Catholic Gazette*, it was clearly visible how openly “. . . the Croatian Episcopate, with the Archbishop at its head, had put all its authority, all of the apparatuses in its jurisdiction, its whole church, in the service of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia, in the service of the suppression of the people’s distrust and their hatred towards this monstrous creation of the Ustashes. The Church used its preachers to deceive the people, to persuade them that the Ustasha criminals had good intentions towards the people, to invite the people to cherish and honour these criminals, to conform to their horrific laws and provide them with their money which, as the *Catholic Gazette* wrote, was spent ‘only for the good of the people’. . . These Ustasha robbers ‘are our own flesh and blood’; they breathe with the same spirit as the people; these are the ‘local’ sons of the people. . . The bearers of the Ustasha power are ‘true friends’ of the people etc. There is no point elaborating on the relationship between the Croatian Episcopate and the Vatican at this time. The episcopate would not have been such if it were not the Vatican’s will” (p. 584).

On the occasion of Stepinac’s statement given at the same time for the *Croatian People*, stating that he was an unshakable optimist in terms of the future of the Croatian people and their war-time heritage (which had been gained by the mass crimes of the Ustashes), the commentary of the organizer of the collection of the original documents is fitting: “The emphasising of the role of the Vatican in guaranteeing a ‘bright future’ for the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia concerning the talks between the Archbishop and the Pope himself, who was ‘properly informed’; the emphasising of this ‘optimism’ and the ‘unshaken optimism’ of Archbishop Stepinac, who sympathised with the

Croatian Ustasha cause like no other; the emphasis of him being an optimist on the basis of his Vatican 'experiences' is all confirmed by what has already been mentioned in this chapter: assisting the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia and the familiar role of the clergy in it in accordance with the Ustasha line, is a strict policy of the Vatican! The Vatican is responsible for this!" (p. 585). The time when Stepinac issued such a statement, the end of July 1944, is also highly indicative. "This was at the time when the Ustasha Croatia was increasingly systematically shifting the focus of the Ustasha idea and 'statehood' to the Episcopate, only the Ustasha 'work', 'the Independent Croatian State', was to be saved through some Vatican-Anglo-American connection after the decline of fascism and Nazism. . . It was also interpreted that the Western Allies had to consider certain 'positive' Catholic elements of the Croatian Ustasha movement, which were only to be shifted from the fascist-authoritative system to a 'Western-democratic' one" (p. 585).

However, all these Roman Catholic hopes and the hopes of the Ustasha fell through. "The events developed much more differently than what the Vatican had hoped for. The promises given to the Episcopate in Croatia and to the Ustasha were not realized. Adhering to the Vatican's directives, Archbishop Stepinac tried to influence the sequence of events up to last minute, right before the liberation of Zagreb itself in April and at the beginning of May in 1945, thus he became the most significant political figure. A diocesan conference was called, new memorandums were sent to the Vatican, which were to establish connections with the Allies, an alliance was formed with a Slovene bishop, Rožman, and local clergy and collaborators – but all in vain. The Allies had landed on our soil! Pavelić and the Ustasha had to flee the country. There was nothing the Vatican could do but continue with its policy in another situation. It still managed to save Pavelić's life, as well as the lives of numerous criminals around him, who hid in monasteries and the Vatican itself. The Vatican became the official head office of the Ustasha emigration. The Vatican materially took care of the Ustasha criminals, organized their liberation from the camps and transportation with 'proper' travel documents to various countries overseas, under the leadership of priest Krunoslav Draganović, who became the leading figure of the Ustasha movement second only to Pavelić himself, and who had a seat within the very organization of the Vatican. A new terrorist action was organized and commando groups infiltrated Yugoslavia; a service for espionage was organized, which ended in a big trial in Zagreb in July and August 1948. During this trial, old and new connections of the Vatican and the Ustasha were brought to light, as well as all of the old and the new responsibilities... It is well-known that together with the Ustasha perpetrators, a large number of discredited priests fled from the country, and also a bishop, and the Archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Šarić, and the Bishop of Banja Luka, Garić. The eminent collaborator and war criminal, Bishop Rožman fled out of Slovenia. They, too, had found refuge in the convents of Austria, until they found a better place to move to at the beginning of 1948" (p. 586). Based on a huge number of material evidence and direct testimonies ". . . the Zagreb trial discovered a broad foundation of the Catholic Church in cooperation with the Ustasha criminals. That is a comprehensive activity, it goes from the most vulgar crimes, through the terrorist troikas, to the Cardinals' plans for some Catholic trans-Danubian federations. . . Prominent dignitaries of the Vatican are helping the emigrant Ustasha criminals by word and deed. Cardinal Ruffini was especially distinguished among them.

He visits the camps, encourages the criminals and holds sermons, emphasising that their struggle is valid and that they will vanquish and return to their country” (p. 587).

### **k) The Pope, the Chief Organizer of Post-war Terrorism**

Rosandić, one of the eminent Ustasha criminals, described Cardinal Ruffini’s visit to the prison camp in Fermo in detail at the Zagreb trial. “The preparations for Cardinal Ruffini’s arrival to the camp were huge. Not only the camp administration, but the whole camp was afoot, the major and all of the staff were waiting. It was a festive reception. Cardinal Ruffini came with a couple of priests, among whom was Dr. Mandić, the friar finance minister, who had divided up a lot of money among the emigrants. Cardinal Ruffini held a sermon in which he emphasised that they knew, that the Vatican knew perfectly well who the Croats were, how they were one of the best fighting men against the new invasion of the new heathens and that the future awaited them; that they knew that Croats wished for their own country again and that they would obtain it again. That was the meaning of the sermon. . . . It seemed surpassingly optimistic. It seemed so optimistic, that upon Cardinal Ruffini’s arrival to the camp of Fermo, the position of Draganović, Žanko and others was definitely strengthened among all the refugees, and they felt powerful. The influence of it was rather good (for the Ustashes in the camp and their combativeness), the influence on the disposition was optimistic and the following was said: There, we can see now that they care about us, and here we thought that we had been forgotten about. This had an absolutely combative effect on the disposition of the Ustashes at the moment. It was one of the basic conditions for a boost of combativeness” (p. 588). As the accused Ustasha Petričić testified, “Count Žanko maintained the connection to the Vatican (for the camp of Fermo), through priest Draganović in Rome, who was actually the chief connection between the Ustasha emigrants and the Vatican. Priest Draganović had been visiting the civil and the military camps of the Ustasha emigrants on a regular basis, so according to that, he must have had special permission from the authorities. Through that very means, i.e. through Draganović, we came to the Pope himself and some of his representatives in the Vatican. The Vatican provided us with monetary support, and through Dr. Mandić, the head treasurer of the College of St. Jerome, we received larger sums of money” (p. 588).

On his part, “Pius XII has himself, personally, shown that even after the war, he was maintaining the position he had had during the war in regard to the Ustashes. The Zagreb trial did not reveal any discoveries about the secretive visits and discussions with the Pope, because Draganović, who had led the conversations, was not sitting in the defendant’s seat; but some other factors came to light, which say a lot. The defendant Rosandić talks about a visit by a delegation to the Pope. That delegation had left from the camp of Fermo. It constituted of a war criminal, professor Žanko and a war criminal and former rector of The University of Zagreb, professor Horvat. Priest Draganović was with them. They submitted a petition or a memorandum to the Pope. As Rosandić states, they asked “. . . that he intercedes for the Croats who have suffered, to help them materially, to intervene so that they would not be extradited or prosecuted. Those were the very beginnings of the whole affair,” concludes Rosandić. That same Rosandić states that the members of that delegation, Žanko and Horvat, have talked about it after the visit to the Pope, saying at the same time that the Pope had promised, as Rosandić

claims, 'that he will intercede, that he will take care of the assets, that he will help the whole thing'. Therefore, should the question arise about where priest Draganović got the authority and why his allies are assisting him, why was it that he can convey whole transportations of criminals to Argentina, where he got the money for financing a whole army of terrorists etc., this fact, the promise given by the Pope from 1945, can explain it all" (p. 588-589).

The defendant Miloš testified that colonel Štir and co-colonel Talić told him that ". . . Žanko and Horvat had gone to the Pope and submitted some petition, so that Pavelić would not be extradited, and that the Pope said that he would use his authority, because he knew Pavelić as a good man and a good Catholic" (p. 589). According to the commentator's opinion, ". . . this shines an even brighter light on the Pavelić case, it explains better why that murderous criminal, one of the biggest of them from the previous war, had not been extradited; and when he had not been extradited, why he never stood trial outside Yugoslavia, but on the contrary he enjoyed protection. This shines a special light on Pope Pius XII as well, who still called an executioner of hundreds of thousands of people 'a good man' and 'a good Catholic'" (p. 589). The defendant Kavran said at the same audience: "A memorandum was submitted to the Pope in which he was asked to intercede, so that the extradition of so-called war criminals would be prevented, and then the Pope said that he was familiar with the struggle of the Croats and that he considered the struggle valid and that because of that, he would support the struggle, sure that the struggle would come to its realisation" (p. 589). In all of the mentioned opinions, Kavran's opinion is especially indicative ". . . that the Pope's declarations influenced the whole Ustasha population 'absolutely in a positive sense'" (p. 589). The defendant Rosandić revealed in detail what the meeting of Ustasha criminals, after the return of the delegation from Rome, looked like. "Žanko in his speech explained in detail the reception of the delegation to the Pope, and gave the Pope's speech highlights. At the beginning of his speech, the Pope introduced the Croats' struggle through history and particularly mentioned the struggle against the Turks, for which the Croats had received the honourable title 'the front wall of Christianity', emphasising that recently the Croats had shown that they had earned this honourable title through the struggle against Bolshevism, and that he hoped that the Croats would be faithful to the Vatican in the future as well. Next, he (the Pope) stressed that he would take special care of the Croats, and their country as well, that he would not abandon them in any kind of distress, and that he would help their endeavour passionately. This audience at the Pope aroused a stupendous sensation among the emigrants throughout Italy and Austria, roused the discouraged and brought a strong sense of optimism to them" (p. 589). A new criminal enthusiasm had been created. "That is why the Pope is admired amongst the Ustasha criminals. When they were cast into Yugoslavia as terrorists, they did not only carry bombs, knives and radio transmitters with them, but the Pope's photographs as well" (p. 589).

There is no doubt whatsoever that ". . . the Pope thus directly – not only indirectly – through his ecclesiastical apparatus and certain exponents, influenced the development of new Ustasha criminal actions, the formation of the new terrorist gangs, etc." (p. 590). The next time, the Pope welcomed an audience of an Ustasha singing troupe. "In that choir, which was conducted by the priest Jole Bujanović, also one of the bigger war criminals and the organizer and executor of mass slaughters in Croatia, many war criminals of the same calibre sang: the great *zhupan* Juraj Marković, an executioner and

murderer; senior Ustasha functionaries Nikola Jerković, Major Slavko Hajdinović, Nikola Jerbić, Maks Hranilović, etc. Some of the criminals who were later inserted into Yugoslavia as terrorists had been there as well, thus they were tried at the Zagreb trial. The defendant, engineer Petračić claims that the visit to the Pope, his words and his cry in Croatian language '*Živjeli!*' (Long live!) had an effect of 'lifting spirits'. Other defendants at the Zagreb trial talked about the visit of the singing troupe to the Pope, thus the defendant Križanić claimed that the Pope had expressed 'sympathy' for the Ustashas and their struggle through his speeches. That defendant Križanić claimed that the Ustashas were given the front seats during that audience, so that they had could be closer to the Pope. He also claimed this: 'During the visit to Rome and the Vatican, we sang on the Vatican radio station too'. The Ustasha minister of finance Vladimir Košak. . . revealed at the trial of Archbishop Stepinac, where he participated as a witness, that the wife of Ante Pavelić had told him in emigration in Austria, 'that the Ustashas have assurance from the Vatican and high clergy that they will be returning to Croatia, to rule brutally against the people again'. These were just some of the factors, of course, which marked the continuity of the Vatican's line of solidarity with the criminal Ustasha movement, even after the liquidation of the Ustasha movement in our country, . . . how the Vatican did not resign, that it did not subside nor acknowledge the situation that arose after the war, with the defeat of the Ustasha movement and fascism. . . The Ustasha movement in emigration, at the head of which was 'the good Catholic' Pavelić, has therefore still been marked, even until today, with the Pope's blessing and his 'fatherly care'.

"Dedijer revealed a facsimile of a written confirmation of Archbishop Stepinac, with his signature, that on 6 May 1945, immediately before the Ustashas fled from Zagreb, he accepted to keep six cases of the archives of Pavelić's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 'Simultaneously, Archbishop Stepinac agreed that the Franciscans bury a part of Pavelić's gold at the Zagreb Kaptol, which was mostly golden teeth of the Jasenovac victims, as well the rest of the pillaged treasures. I have included a few photographs of that'" (p. 593). When the U.S. Government opened its military counter espionage archives in 1986, it could be seen from some of the documents how the Vatican had directly organized the transportation of Pavelić and two hundred of his fellow criminals to Argentina. A day before Ante Pavelić died in Madrid, Pope John XXIII had sent him a special blessing on 27 December 1959. From the day he died, 28 December, until 31 December, the body of the Ustasha headman was exhibited in a church in Madrid. In an official announcement to the public from his cabinet, the following was said, among other things: "The Croatian state official had a crown in his hands, which was given to him by the Holy Father Pope Pius XXII, on his official visit to the Holy See in 1941" (p. 599). The Ustasha Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrija Artuković, claimed at the Zagreb trial on 16 April 1986, ". . . that he had subjected his life and his actions to moral principles, which had come from the principles of Catholic Church. . . The moral principles and regulations I have adhered to are identical to those of the Catholic Church. There is no difference whatsoever between the two" (p. 603). The attention of the worldwide public was again, at least for a moment, drawn to the unbelievable mass crimes which the Roman Catholic and Ustasha-inspired Croatians had committed toward the Serbs. "On the occasion of taking Andrija Artuković to court, the U.S. press wrote about the connections of the Vatican with the Ustashas, especially about the role that Krunoslav Draganović, the Secretary of the College of St. Jerome, had in the



transportation of Pavelić and other Ustasha leaders, as well as other Nazi war criminals, to Argentina and Latin America” (p. 603).

### **I) The Cover-up of Ustasha Crimes in Tito’s Yugoslavia**

After World War Two, the Yugoslav communist regime began covering up the Ustasha war crimes more and more systematically, and creating an artificial symmetry between the Ustashas and the Chetniks. On 15 October 1985, Lieutenant-general Dr. Đuro Mešterović questioned the inadequate treatment of the Jasenovac concentration camp, as the single biggest Ustasha gallows. “When one enters the murderous Ustasha death camp Jasenovac, which was the biggest in Yugoslavia according both to the number of victims and the huge land area it covers, and one of the biggest in Europe as well, he expects to find obvious and horrific evidence of all the monstrosities to which the detainees had been subjected to prior to being murdered in the most atrocious ways. What is actually exhibited in the two museum premises does not even come close to leaving the impression of the monstrous tortures, humiliation and mental exhaustion of thousands of innocent human beings of all age, from toddlers to the oldest, who were murdered after being completely exhausted, just because they were enemies of the fascist regime or belonged to a nation against which genocide was being committed. Walking around the vast areas where the camp was situated, as well as those where the detainees were murdered and buried, one is under the impression that he is in a beautiful picturesque landscape with grassy meadows and an exuberant forest, with tidy paths, designated for the tourists to enjoy. There is no sign of where the detainees were tortured, where they were murdered and thrown either in the Sava River or in pits to be buried. When we compare the concentration camp Jasenovac with the murderous concentration camps in Europe, not only those in Poland, but those in Germany as well, which were preserved in the same state in which they were while being managed by Nazi malefactors, we must ask ourselves why we have not done the same” (p. 615). The Roman Catholic Church carefully hid all the traces of its criminal activities, but information found its way into the public every now and then, greatly compromising the Church. “Since the progressive public opinion condemned Kurt Waldheim for his crimes in the past war, the Vatican is now trying to mend his reputation him by inviting him to Vatican. But this fact only helped in revealing the bloody role of the Vatican itself in the past war” (p. 743). The last quotation comes from the announcement of the Lord Russell’s War Crimes Tribunal, signed by Vladimir Dedijer, and published in *Politikin Svet* on 29 July 1987.

### **3. A Collection of Documents by Milan Bulajić on the Mission of the Vatican in the Croatian Ustasha State**

Inspired by the renewed scenario of the break-up of Yugoslavia and the reprise of the historical role of the Roman Catholic Church in the Balkans during the World War II, Milan Bulajic published a two-volume anthology, the *Mission of the Vatican in the Independent State of Croatia* (Politika, Belgrade, 1992), about Stepinac’s and the Vatican’s general policy of splitting up Yugoslavia and the Catholicising the Orthodox Serbs, as well as the genocidal creation of “God’s State” as a front wall of Christianity. Activities for the overall rehabilitation of Alojzije Stepinac’s role in the war were

conducted simultaneously. Thus, Cardinal Dr. Franjo Kuharić, in 1991, “. . . considers the obstinacy in accusations towards Archbishop Stepinac, without identifying the objective truth, as ‘stubbornness in hatred’, and that ‘hatred is deaf and blind for any objective judgement; there are neither valid arguments nor witnesses against it’. The Cardinal claims that Archbishop Stepinac was convicted ‘so that the committed crimes could be, absurdly, ascribed to the Catholic Church, and the Croatian people be given the epithet of being genocidal!’” (p. 12). Therefore, any responsibility must be taken away from Stepinac at any cost. “Cardinal Kuharić is right, from the point of view of the Catholic Church, when he claims that Archbishop Stepinac is not guilty, because everything he did was in accordance with the Vatican and the centre of power in the Holy See, the Holy Father Pope. Today, when the ruling Croatian Democratic Union openly proclaims the creation of the Independent State of Croatia and asks for the break-up of Yugoslavia, the responsibility of the Catholic Church in Croatia’s past can be brought into question. Nevertheless, the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia committed genocide against the Serbs, Jews and Roma, which would not have been possible without the support of the Catholic Church; the Catholicisation of the Orthodox Serbs was accepted at the price of genocide” (p. 12).

It appeared very soon that the rehabilitation of Stepinac was not possible without the synchronous rehabilitation of the Ustasha state. Thus, the Roman Catholic priest Aleksa Benigar, in the role of Stepinac’s official biographer, published the book *Aloysius Stepinac – The Croatian Cardinal* in Rome in 1974, in which he claimed that on 10 April 1941, “the Independent State of Croatia was renewed, at the inexpressible elation of the whole Croatian nation”, so in accordance with that he recognised that Stepinac “. . . was undoubtedly zealously in favour of the free and independent life of the state of the Croatian people, of a free and independent state of Croatia, and being that, at the moment, all of the Croatian people wished for that unanimously and pronounced it freely, and considering that the Croatian people had the God-given natural right to that regardless of any agreements and regulations, be they international or ecclesiastical. Stepinac clearly expressed that with his complete demeanour during the war, and finally explicitly confirmed to the whole world in front of the ‘national’ communist court, which sentenced him to 16 years of imprisonment for it” (p. 13). Živko Kustić, as the editor-in-chief of the Roman Catholic weekly *Glas koncila (The Voice of the Council)*, published the book *Stepinac’s Era* in Zagreb 1991, and in it emphasised that during the fascist occupation in 1941, “. . . there was an honest, nationwide joy over the break-up of the imposed and illegally created Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and that the Croatian people had renewed its independence which belonged to it according to the natural and historical state right” (p. 13). Besides that, Kustić claims that “. . . the Croatian state was not created in 1941 by the German nor Italian occupying forces, nor by the few Ustashes who returned from exile, but rather as soon as the Royal Army started to disintegrate, the people themselves, by means of previously organised protective squads of citizens and peasants, started disarming the army and establishing their own Croatian governance, not yet knowing what the name of the country would be, nor who would be at its head” (p. 13). Bulajić also cites from the book how “. . . Kusić openly claims that together with the people, ‘most of the priests and bishops rejoiced’, that ‘no one tried to hide their enthusiasm’” (p. 13), although those very bishops, as Bishop Dr. Đuro Kokša admits in the book *Social-political Circumstances During the Age of Dr. Petar Čula*,

“For God’s Kingdom”, published in Mostar 1991, had been getting generals’ salaries in the state of Yugoslavia.

### a) Tudman’s Rehabilitation of Jasenovac

Many Croatian authors, both priests and laymen, wrote in the 1990s that the Serbs themselves had caused the Ustasas’ reprisal against them by the Chetniks’ rebellion, that the retaliation is the critical factor here, while the new Ustasha headman Franjo Tuđman, in his book *Wastelands of Historical Truth* from 1989, also rehabilitates the concentration camp Jasenovac, reducing the number of its victims by twenty times. Tuđman writes, “The promoters of the Jasenovac myth, from the very beginning to today, persist on the stand that the Jasenovac camp was organised with the explicit purpose to do away with all the detainees, and that hundreds and even thousands of Serbs, Jews, Roma and Communists were slaughtered there on a daily basis. But the truth is that the camp was organised as a ‘work camp’ with several agricultural and manufactory-craftsmen work units. Thousands and tens of thousands of unfortunate people were brought here, individually or more commonly in small groups of a few dozen or hundreds, but they were also released, or sent to other camps or to work in Germany. The whole time, detainees were exhausted and tormented under unbelievably harsh and unhygienic working conditions; in addition to that they were tortured and murdered individually for even the slightest disobedience – especially the bed ridden and the old, and occasionally, usually under the excuse of retaliation for the murdered Ustasas or for trying to escape, they were heinously murdered in smaller or bigger groups as well (tens, even hundreds of people). Accordingly, a few (probably 3-4) tens of thousands of inmates really did perish in the Jasenovac camp” (p. 18).

As commented in the content of Tuđman’s interview in the journal *Start* from 1991, “. . . later, as the President of the new independent Republic of Croatia, on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independent Ustasha State of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman declared yet another revision of this number, claiming ‘that the approximate number of thirty thousand victims reflects an objective picture of the total Jasenovac crime’. He goes even further claiming that the Croatian and the Serbian people had ‘suffered pretty much the same’, ‘the difference, if there is any, is more of a fraction than a percentages’, and even that ‘on the whole, the Croats suffered even more than the Serbs!’ Franjo Tuđman claims today that the allegations that ‘several’ Catholic priests were commanders of the Jasenovac concentration camp were ‘a pure concoction’: ‘Not one Catholic priest was a commander, let alone several’” (p. 18). In regard to the forced Catholicisation of Orthodox Serbs, Tuđman is even a bigger and more unscrupulous liar, because he states unimaginable falsehoods in his book: “With this and similar depictions of the ‘forced christening’ and genocidal crimes, the goal is to prove how the Catholic Church and the Ustasha movement actually waged a religious war of Catholicism against Orthodoxy. But that does not coincide with reality, not only because the Catholic Church did not initiate a pogrom against the Orthodox population, but also because of the fact that Pavelić and other Ustasha headmen, from 1941 onwards, declared publicly that they were not against Orthodoxy as a religion, but that they would not tolerate the existence of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which acts as a foreign ‘political organisation, on Croatian soil. . . The confirmation for this is particularly obvious in the fact that the Croatian Orthodox Church was founded in accordance with the Synod of

the Serbian Orthodox Church and even the chief Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul” (p. 18).

The attempts to remove all responsibility from the Croatians for the war crimes on the Serbs and ascribe them completely to the German and Italian occupying forces are widespread. In that sense, Tuđman’s party co-headmen Stipe Mesić, in his interview for *Politikin Svet* newspaper dated 5 September 1990, when he became a member of the Presidency of the SFRY, replied to the journalist’s question on what he thought of the statement that “the Serbs who live in this region are afraid of the appearance of the symbols and iconography that greatly resemble the iconography of the Ustasha ideology and Ustasha movement, considering that it is the iconography under which a horrid genocide has been committed against the Serbs”, he claims: “Well, the they did not suffer a genocide in this region from the Croatians. The genocide against them was committed by the occupying forces of this country. That is a misconception that the Serbs have been led to. And now those people feel fear” (p. 20-21). Lawyer Ivan Gabelica, as the Vice President of the Croatian Democratic Union, said in the same issue of the Belgrade newspaper: “The Independent State of Croatia was a state which was founded by way of a revolution(!), thus the lives and personal safety of its adversaries were in danger at all times. Nevertheless, for those who were on its side, and that was the majority of the Croatian people, this meant the realisation of a thousand-year dream. It was a fully independent state *de jure*. The Independent State of Croatia meant a strong affirmation of the Croatian national idea, it meant the cultural revival of the Croatian people. Publishing activity, for example, especially in the field of Croatian history and culture, was by then unbelievably developed. . . Also, efforts were made, within the limits of possibilities, to increase the birth rate, to help the mothers with children” (p. 20).

### **b) The Primary Mission of the Vatican**

Bulajić describes in detail all of his unsuccessful attempts of getting a glimpse at the Vatican archives and establishing a dialogue with the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church on overcoming the conspiracy of silence and confirming all the relevant facts about the demeanour of its officials during the war. Besides that, he again analyses the documental contents concerning the clerical political activities and the Vatican’s animosity towards the Serbian people and the Yugoslav state, which was has already been elaborated on in the books by Viktor Novak, Vladimir Dedijer and Dragoljub Živojinović; but he finds a lot of new resources and data as well, with which the previous analyses are supplemented. Bulajić examines certain aspects of the Vatican’s anti-Serbian policy in detail, especially the appointment of the Bishop of Đakovo Antun Akšamović and the Archbishop of Vrhbosna Ivan Šarić without the previous approval by the Yugoslavian King; and also the concordat crisis. He also processes fragments of Stepinac’s personal diary, which was first made publicly available by Ljubo Boban at the beginning of the 1990s, and after that, the direct engagement of the Catholic priests in the organisation and development of the Ustasha movement, in the establishment of Pavelić’s governance and in the mass crimes over the Serbian population. He comprehensively depicts the Vatican’s mischievous diplomatic action concerning the Italians’ banishing of the Yugoslavian ambassador to the Holy See, Niko Mirošević Sorgo, a Catholic born in Dubrovnik, from Rome. Then follows a display of the concrete and direct participation of the Roman Catholic priests in the slaughters, and also an

analysis of the leading figures and ecclesiastical institutions in the process of forced Catholicisation.

As an illustration of zealous participation, there is also a fragment of a text by the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Križ, Janko Šimrak, which he published in the *Metropolitan Apostle* at the beginning of 1942, in order to contribute to the more efficient managing of the Ustasha government's legal provision concerning Catholicisation, advocating for the foundation of special Church councils who would help the pastors in this sordid affair. Šimrak says, "Every pastor is to bear in mind that the historical days of our mission have come, which we cannot and must not relinquish at any cost, but for which we must act with all our power. Now we must show in action what we have been talking about in theory for centuries. Concerning the conversion, we have done very little so far, only because we have been reluctant and because we have been afraid of small obstacles and the objections of the people. All great deeds have their adversaries, but we must not lose our spirit because of that, because a holy union is in question, and the salvation of souls in the greatest glory of Christ the Lord. Our work is legal in the sense of the Holy See's decision. Also, it is legal in the sense of the decision by Holy Congregation of Cardinals for the Eastern Church; and finally, in the sense of the circular letter of the Independent State of Croatia, dated 30 July 1941, which desires that the Greek Orthodox people convert to Catholicism" (p. 444).

The Vatican directly participated in the cover-up of the heinous Jasenovac crimes before the international public. On 6 February 1942, the Jasenovac camp was visited by an "international delegation", whose members were the secretary of the Papal Envoy Marconi, Giuseppe Mesuzzi, and Secretary of the Archbishop Stepinac and Stjepan Lacković. Monsignor Lacković returned to Yugoslavia in 1990, after 38 years of emigration, and he gave an interview to *Voice of the Council*, in which he stated, "The Directorate for Public Order and Safety organized a visit to the Jasenovac camp by a delegation of the Swiss Red Cross and other representatives, we being among them as the ecclesiastical representatives. The Directorate wished to demonstrate to the world that the Jasenovac camp was not what it people widely believed that it was. The Director himself, Dido Kvaternik, pointed us to the place at Jasenovac where the dead had been buried and where there were several open pits for – as he said – every Ustasha member or watch guard who violated the regulations of the camp and wanted to confront a detainee in his own way. We returned from Jasenovac under the impression that no one was happy to be there in the first place, but that life there was a usual camp life. Everything was very clean and neat. We were told that a priest could come to the detainees. The detainees were also provided with doctor's care for the sick. It is understood that the Croatian authorities at the time wanted us to be under the best possible impression" (p. 600-601). As Bulajić concludes, it is hereby obvious that "... the responsibility of the Catholic Church officials regarding the Ustasha concentration camp Jasenovac can be determined even before an inspection of the reports which were submitted to the Holy See, from the fact that they stand behind the false pro-Ustasha reports to both the local and international public, which was the goal of the 'international committee', by claiming that the 'concentration camp in Jasenovac was not as bad as I have been told' (Giuseppe Masuzzi), that 'the life in the camp is a usual camp life', 'everything is clean and neat', 'doctor's care was provided in the camp for the sick' (Stjepan Lacković)" (p. 601).

**Comment [Z37]:** Translator's note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed

As one of the rare survivors among the Jasenovac detainees, Đorđe Miliša, writes in his book *In the Torture Grounds – The Jasenovac Hell*, published in Zagreb 1945, “. . . if the Church wishes to remove that great stain from itself, it first it has to stain the felons from its own ranks. If it does not do this, may it be judged by He in whom it itself believes. In the Ustasha Croatia, the role of the Catholic clergy was very important, crucial and decisive, but always oblique and two-faced. A number of priests were indoctrinated by the old and well-known Vatican policy of converting the Serbs to Catholicism, while the others most actively participated in the Ustasha movement, whose only goal was death for the rest of the Serbs via the hell of Jasenovac, Stara Gradiška. . . And in hell itself, the crucial opinion was that of the Catholic priests in Ustasha robes, who at the same time committed the most heinous of crimes. In Jasenovac the priest-captain was Brekalo, and in Stara Gradiška it was Lipovac. Both of them tormented the detainees ruthlessly and terribly, murdered and slaughtered, especially the Serbian detainees. Those same priests held all the services in the church, which were obligatory for the Catholic detainees. . . Together with other satanic butchers, these ministers prosecuted Serbian priests” (p. 613-614).

It also occurred that certain Catholic priests became the champions of massacres and bestial unscrupulous orgies that were being carried out in Jasenovac. Thus, Dr. Nedo Zec, a former Jasenovac detainee, recorded in his memoirs the confession of the slaughterer Žile Friganović, concerning the record set by Pero Brzica, a Franciscan from Široki Brijeg, who had slaughtered 1,350 detainees in one night alone. Friganović, who had asked Dr. Zec for psychiatric aid, tells, “The Franciscan Pero Brzica, Ante Zrinušić, Šipka and I made a bet who would slaughter the most detainees that night. The butchering started, and after an hour I already had a big lead on the others according to the number of slaughtered people. I was overwhelmed by some strange ecstasy that night. I felt as if I was in seventh heaven. Never in my life have I felt such a bliss. And only after a couple of hours I had slaughtered 1,100 people, while the others had barely slaughtered 300 to 400 each. And then, while I was in the greatest elation, I saw an elderly peasant who stood there with some inexplicable peacefulness, watching serenely as I butchered the victims and how they tumbled in the greatest of pains. The look he gave me startled me somehow: it seemed to me that I had come out of that greatest ecstasy and suddenly became petrified, and for some time I couldn’t move. And then I approached the peasant and found out that he was some Vukašin from the village Klepci nearby Čapljina, whose whole family had been murdered in his home, and he had been brought to Jasenovac from some forest labour. He talked about all of that with an unattainable serenity which hit me harder than all the frightening wailings surrounding us. I felt a sudden fervent wish to break his serenity and tranquillity with the most wolfish torture and, through his pains, regain my elation and bliss in enjoying in the distress. I singled him out and seated him on a tree stump. I ordered him to shout ‘Long live headman Pavelić!’, and if he didn’t, I would cut his ear off. Vukašin was silent. I cut off his ear. He didn’t say a word. I once again told him to shout ‘Long live Pavelić!’, or else I would cut off his other ear. I cut off his other ear. Shout ‘Long live Pavelić!’, or I will cut off your nose. And when I ordered him for the fourth time to shout: ‘Long live Pavelić!’ and threatened him that I would cut his heart out of his breast with my knife, he looked at me and, looking somehow through me and over me into the uncertainty, slowly and audibly replied, ‘Do your job, my child!’ After that, his words made me completely lose my senses – I jumped on him, cut out his eyes, cut out his heart, cut his

throat from ear to ear and kicked him into the pit. But, at that moment something snapped inside of me and I couldn't slaughter any more that night. The Franciscan Pero Brzica won, because he had butchered 1,350 detainees, and I paid his bet without a word" (p. 596).

The Croatian Stjepan Gaži, who was in Geneva as a post-graduate, and who had joined the Yugoslavian consulate, wrote the following based on the information he had received from the well-informed Catholic lines, in 1942: "The lower clergy, especially the friars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are absolutely sided with the regime, and are committing horrid monstrosities with the others. . . At the beginning of the Ustashes' coming into power, many priests and monks were even more bloodthirsty than the Ustashes themselves, and were particularly involved in 'St. Bartholomew's Night' for the Orthodox citizens and those Croatians who they didn't like. This terrorism on part of the priests had grown up to such dimensions that there was a danger that the political activities would be marked by religious fanaticism" (p. 619). Another Croatian, Vječeslav Vidler, in July 1942, commented on the participation of Roman Catholic priests in all of the Ustasha celebrations, and especially Stepinac's suggestion for a special Mass to be held on the occasion of Pavelić's birthday: "This means that Mr. Archbishop Dr. Stepinac ordered that there be prayers in the Catholic Churches in Croatia for Hitler and Nazism to win. Mister Archbishop Stepinac did all of that at the time when even the Vatican, i.e. his superior, has not formally acknowledged this mockery of a state, at the time when the Catholic Bishops in Germany itself were publicly speaking from the pulpit against Nazism, which was an outspoken enemy of Christianity itself, at the time in which all the churches of other Christian denominations, the Serbian Orthodox Church, in that Croatia had been forcefully closed, when its priests were being slaughtered, when the innocent Catholic priests in Slovenia were perishing for God's justice, when... etc. We cannot say anything more about this ignominy for the moment, except that darkness had fallen on the mind and soul of the Archbishop Dr. Stepinac" (p. 620-621). Vidler gave this statement as an official representative of the Yugoslavian government in exile.

Considering that Ante Pavelic, appreciating the priceless merits of the Catholic clergy in the establishment and criminal functioning of the Croatian Ustasha regime, simply swamped the bishops and priests with high medals, he gave Bishop of Đakovo, Antun Akšamović's striking speech from 28 April 1944 on the occasion of awarding Ustasha decorations, the "Grand Order with a Star". In the speech, which he concluded with the Ustasha greeting "Ready for the headman and the homeland!", Akšamović said, "Reverend master great zhupan! Respectable gentlemen! Our master, the great zhupan, has come today for the first time from his county residence to our region, Đakovo. You, reverend master great zhupan, have come to take care of your regular administrative business. But, also, you are here as a deputy of the Croatian government of our ISC to award me a high medal, which has been assigned to me and chosen for me by the headmen, his highness Dr. Ante Pavelić. I can tell you that because of this high medal, I am especially proud and encouraged in my humble work for God and Croatia, although this high medal is too great of an evaluation of my merits. Being now a man in his old age, entering the seventh decade of my life, I cannot measure up with the great and devoted patriots, who are today the pillars of the ISC, but I consider it my holy responsibility to assist in all the patriotic deeds, and to work on that as long as I live.

“The headmen had many patriots medalled at the end of the third anniversary of the ISC. He had the devoted men from higher and lower state offices medalled, he had the acknowledged patriots outside the state services medalled. Among these he medalled all the bishops of the Catholic Church. Gentleman, I myself emphasise this with the purpose of expressing my joy over the fact that the headman, the bearer of the state leadership of our ISC, sees the Catholic representatives as his helpers. Because of this I wish to use this solemn moment to express my humble gratitude for this high acknowledgement to the headman, in my humbleness and complete loyalty. I ask of you respected gentlemen gathered here to agree with me and cheer to the forerunner in the struggle for our Croatian ideals, our headman, with a triple ‘Long live!’ (all those present accepted and cheered to the headman). Gentleman, in this momentous hour for our people and state life, all of our cares and our efforts should be directed at protection from our enemies, and at the preservation of our state’s borders. That is the mission for both our national army and the army of our allies. Furthermore, it is our most important and non-deferrable duty to create the conditions for a regular state and civil life. This is the holy responsibility of every Croatian, every citizen. Therefore each one of us must show in his sphere of activity that he is courageous and resolute, that he is selfless and devoted, and above all that he is diligent. Recently, the headman told the people loud and clear: ‘The Croatian state exists and it will persevere’. And we will add: ‘Every Croatian, young and old, lives for Croatia and dies for Croatia’. In that round, you will have your Bishop” (p. 803). Akšamović’s speech and report from the ceremony were published in “*Hrvatski list*”, (Croatian Journal) on 5 May.

### c) The Mission of Saving the Ustasha State

The Roman Catholic clergy had hoped for the salvation of the Croatian Ustasha state until the very end, looking for a way to substitute Pavelić with Maček by founding some trans-Danubian federation or by the transition of the Ustashas and *domobrans* to the West Allies’ side at the right moment, etc. Interpreting the data from the book *The Spy in a Cassock*, by Siniša Ivanović, Bulajić concludes, “At the beginning of August 1943, the president of the Bishops’ Conferences of the Independent State of Croatia, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, called professor Dr. Krunoslav Draganović, asking him to immediately leave for the Vatican on a mission to save the Ustasha state amidst the new conditions, when fascist Italy was about to capitulate, and the Allied front was approaching from the East to the West. Archbishop Stepinac had assigned professor Draganović with the task of contacting, through the Vatican, the representatives of England at the Holy See and to offer them the full cooperation of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia and the Catholic Church in Croatia, including siding the Ustasha-domobrans troops with the Allies against the Communists who were fighting for the liberation of the occupied country. The price of this proposal was the acknowledgement of the Ustasha (Catholic) Independent State of Croatia by the Western Allies” (p. 829).

Draganović systematically and thoroughly accomplished the tasks he was entrusted with, and although the salvation of the Ustasha state was not possible, the Vatican became the crucial factor in withdrawing the leading criminals to safety. The Roman detachment of the counter-espionage corps of the American army, on 12 September 1947, in a report to its headquarters, concludes, “Pavelić’s contacts are so high up, and



his current position so compromising to the Vatican, that every extradition of the subject (Pavelić – note V.Š.) would cause such an impact that it would stagger the Roman Catholic Church” (p. 868). Somewhat earlier, the American Embassy in Argentina had sent a memorandum to its State Department and to the Embassy in Rome, in which, among other things, it was stated: “Immediately after World War II, American official representatives regarded the ‘Ustashas’ as Croatian (Yugoslavian) members of one political and terrorist organisation founded in 1923 by Dr. Ante Pavelić, with the purpose of destroying the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. During World War II, this organisation collaborated with Germany, and it took over the governance of Croatia in Yugoslavia. It is estimated that the Ustashas have destroyed around 2 million people. . . The organisation provides its members with the free food, accommodation and possibly clothes. It seems that the money needed comes from Vatican circles, which had previously been active supporters of this organisation, between 1923 and 1941. For help and support in leaving Italy, membership in the Ustashas and the Catholic faith is obligatory” (p. 868).

That same year, based on more conclusive inquiry data, a special British commission for refugees created a more detailed and precise memorandum on the Ustasha-Vatican connection and forwarded it to its Foreign Office, the American State Department and the Intelligence Collection Group of the Ministry of War. It specifies: “The nucleus around which the overall Ustasha activities have taken place in Italy was, and still is, the Fraternity of St. Jerome in Rome. This institution is located at 132 Via Tomacelli, and is by tradition a Croatian monastery and a seminary for the Croatian clerical youth. Some 20 years ago, it was extended by creating a Croatian fraternity, the purpose of which was to nurture and protect the Croatian religious, political, cultural and social interests in Italy. To this end, it accepted benefactions not only from rich Croats in Croatia, but from the United States as well. Until 1941, St. Jerome became the centre of the Ustasha emigrant circles. Between 1941 and 1945, it was dealt mainly with private aid to Croatian internees and prisoners of war in Italy, and that was the domain in which Dr. Krunoslav Draganović, a young Croatian priest, who is now the founder of the Croatian Ustasha movement in Italy, first distinguished himself. Draganović, who had earlier been a secretary to the Archbishop of Sarajevo Šarić, a famous Ustasha sympathiser, was appointed as a delegate of the Croatian Red Cross in the International Red Cross in Geneva by Pavelić, so in that role he was constantly in connection with the Croatian circles in Italy, and had been receiving substantial sums of money from the Croatian government, of which, after the fall of Pavelić’s regime, a significant part was left in his hands.

“After the fall of Pavelić’s regime in 1945, St. Jerome once again took on the role of giving asylum to Ustasha emigrants. In the summer of 1945, Draganović personally visited the camps where the former members of the Ustasha armed forces and political organisations were situated. He soon developed enhanced political activity, making contacts with the main representatives of the Ustashas. Other Croatian priests helped him with this, thus a close connection between St. Jerome and Ustasha groups across Italy had been established, as well as in Austria. This led to the founding of a political intelligence service which enabled St. Jerome to collect reports and data on the political affinities amongst the emigrants. It is equally probable that the intelligence gathered from the reports was later forwarded to the Vatican. Dr. Draganović and his colleagues were enabled to continue their work with significant success due to the fact that they

owned church premises that enjoyed immunity from surveillance by the military and civil officials. A large number of political refugees had settled in St. Jerome itself, and apart from that, several large groups were eating in canteens especially established for Croatian refugees. Besides that, St. Jerome supervised a number of other Church buildings, such as sleeping accommodations in 6 Via San Paolo alla Regola, where there was enough space for around 25 people; a women's convent Grottaferrata, some 30 kilometres from Rome, which was supposedly a hostel for Croatian female students; and the monastery Centocelle in Rome, where a large number of the most notorious Ustasha war criminals and their families had been situated. Further on, St. Jerome developed the practice of issuing special personal identification cards, printed at a Franciscan printing house under their supervision, which the Italian authorities accepted as official documents, on the basis of which Italian personal identification cards and residence permits were issued. It is estimated that in this way, a significantly larger number than 300 residents of the Fermo refugee camp acquired Italian documents in the summer of 1946. There is irrefutable evidence that some of the most notorious war criminals were thus issued personal identification cards from St. Jerome, with completely false name, thereby being permitted to receive Italian residence permits, visas and other documents allowing them to emigrate (General Valdimir Kren, for example, who was arrested in March 1947 in Genoa right before boarding, had documents of this kind on him, made under the name of Marco Rubbini; and a number of other prominent Ustashas in this same group had similar documents on them as well). The financial organisation of St. Jerome and the providing of Ustasha emigrants with assistance was in the hands of two other Croatian priests, Dr. Mandić and Dr. Naletilić, who had been handling the contributions received from the Croatian circles in America with great astuteness, and arranging for the gold, jewellery and foreign currencies gathered by the high Ustasha officials to be exchanged for Italian currency" (p. 868-870). Otherwise, Dominik Mandić was the Vice President, while Vitomir Naletilić was the treasurer of the College of St. Jerome.

Although the powers of the Anti-Hitler coalition had firmly agreed to relentlessly and mercilessly pursue all proven war criminals after victoriously ending the war, things had been taking place much differently. "Instead of efforts to strengthen world peace, for which millions of dollars have been sacrificed, a cold war has started among the victorious Allies, which threatened to become a hot new world war, far more destructive because of the new nuclear weapons. Secret military and intelligence services have started preparations, which required a thorough reorganisation – taking yesterday's enemies into the service, war criminals – agents and experts from the Nazi services in the war against a former ally, the Soviet Union. Considering that the new strategic orientation meant not only violating the Allies' agreements and multilateral international contracts of the United Nations, but violating the laws of the United States as well, creating secret channels for the transportation of criminals was necessary. Already in the beginning of 1946, creating of a system of 'ratlines' had started..., acquiring legal visas using false names, by bribing diplomatic and state officials, including international organisations. American military intelligence services estimated that in the operation of the 'ratlines' the Vatican might be useful as the most efficient, most organised and most trustworthy organisation. The analyses had shown that the Vatican was ready to help all the proven Catholics, regardless of their political orientation and nationality, including Nazi collaborators. The reports had shown that the escape routes from justice of the war

criminals go through Rome, that the Catholic Church was investing enormous financial assets for the transportation of the war criminals out of Europe” (p. 872-873).

Bulajić mainly gathered the data from the comprehensive books by Christopher Simpson and Nicholas R. Doman, American authors, both published in 1989. “The 430 Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) in Austria found out that a high priest from Croatia, Dr. Krunoslav Draganović, had already established a ‘ratline’ for the Ustasha fugitives, whom he called ‘Croatian fascists’, through the Catholic College of St. Jerome. In the official report of the United States Department of Justice, it has been said that the 430 CIC had no illusions regarding who Monsignor Draganović was: ‘Draganović is well-known and enlisted as a fascist, a war criminal, etc., and that his connections with the South American diplomats of a similar class had not been basically approved by the officials of the United States Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has been affirmed that his arrival to Rome was in direct connection with the creating of ‘ratlines’, through which ‘refugees’ were transported, such as the Ustasha Headman Ante Pavelić and the Minister of Internal Affairs Andrija Artuković, who between themselves had organised the murder of at least 400,000 Serbs and Jews. If it wasn’t for the fact that through the ‘ratline’ of the Croatian Catholic Priest Krunoslav Draganović, a Gestapo officer Klaus Barbie, the butcher of Lyon, had fled, a war criminal whose extradition to France was prevented by the American military intelligence service, the truth about the ‘ratlines’ under the patronage of the Vatican would have probably never been discovered. While preparing for the trial of the war criminal Klaus Barbie in France, the U. S. Department of Justice had conducted an investigation on the responsibility of the United States of America’s agencies. It has been affirmed that Barbie’s travelling and his new documents had been prepared with the assistance of a Croatian fascist organisation directed by a priest by the name of Krunoslav Draganović” (p. 873). Up until 1959, the American intelligence service officially stated that Krunoslav Draganović “. . . had been in a high position with the Ustashas, a ‘Croatian fascist organisation, a ‘large clerical party’; that he was ‘a fanatical anti-Serb’, a personal emissary of the Zagreb Archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, and that he reports to Pavelić on a daily basis” (p. 884). The very same Krunoslav Draganović had suddenly returned to Yugoslavia in 1967, and lived in Sarajevo until his death in 1982; and for mysterious reasons no one had ever pressed criminal charges against him nor had he ever been on trial, although he was officially declared a war criminal immediately after the war, and volumes of valid documents and personal testimonies had been gathered on his criminal activities.

Aleksa Benigar, in his nine-hundred-page book about Stepinac, published by “*Editing Group: The Injured Swan*” in Rome 1974, shows that Stepinac did not alienate himself from Pavelić even after the war, thus he grieved over him when he heard that the Croatian Headman had been injured in an assassination attempt. “When he found out later in Krašić that there had been an assassination attempt on him in Argentina, he told Vicar Vreneković: “I would feel sorry if anything bad happened to him, although we didn’t agree in many things, and although he caused many troubles for me” (p. 887). According to Benigar, the Archbishop of Zagreb had “. . . acknowledged good will to the Ustasha Headman to help the Croatian people. He excused him in many things, because it was a state of war, the country was born in the toughest of times, Croatia was flooded with foreign armies, and in the country itself there was the Partisan war, so it was impossible to keep a peaceful surveillance over people and events. He did not take Pavelić’s party-politics into consideration, nor his being an Ustasha; nor did he pay

attention to that with other public officials, because he had respect for individuals' convictions. He only took into consideration whether their principles, according to which they operated, were in accordance with the truths of the holy religion and Christian morality" (p. 887).

In 1952, 143 Croatian Roman Catholic priests, led by Archbishop Ivan Šarić, proclaimed in a memorandum addressed to all of the world's governments, state and religious leaders, public figures and intelligence agencies, among other things: "We are using this opportunity to amend the generally accepted misconception of the public, that the Axis powers had created the Independent State of Croatia. It is a historical fact that the Croatian people had declared independence before the Germans, Italians and the representatives of the war regime showed up on the Croatian territories. The declaration of independence was a spontaneous expression of the whole Croatian people, and it is independent from the later development and political complications. In one of the statements by Cardinal Dr. Alojzije Stepinac on his trial, he states this: All the Croatian people had declared this about the Croatian state and I would have been a coward if I had not understood the heart beat of the Croatian people, which was a slave in the old Yugoslavia. . . The historical struggle of the Croatian people for independence shows their sturdy will for the establishment of a democratic and autonomous state of Croatia, which would guarantee their religious freedoms and cultural development. Therefore we members of the clergy consider it our duty to exert all of our forces to direct the attention of the whole world to this fact: The Croatian nation does not want to be a part of any Yugoslavian state, in any way" (p. 887).

#### **d) The Butcher Saint Alojzije Stepinac**

The tenacious, gradual and systematic distorting of the historical truth and concealing the war-time criminal role of the Roman Catholic priests has led to the beatification of Stepinac, and to the statement of the Archbishop and Metropolitan of Zagreb, Cardinal Dr. Franjo Kuharić "that no more than forty thousand Orthodox Serbs had perished in Jasenovac" (p. 888), as well as the spreading of a perfidious lie that on the grounds of the Jasenovac concentration camp many Ustashas and *domobrans* had been executed at the end of the war. The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia obstinately gave priority to the Croatian victims, in other words the greater number of Ustashas and *domobrans* being shot down at Bleiburg. Thus, Friar Tomislav Duka, after the requiem mass for the souls of the victims, on 13 May 1990, in Laibach near Bleiburg, in his narration said, "This place is a place of unification, because these Croatian martyrs perished for what we wished for and what we loved, and today we are making it happen in Croatia. . . This place must, therefore, become a universal, national, Croatian holy ground. . . The blood of the martyrs who died for the ideals is not wasted blood, but the seed out of which an ideal that they had perished for must grow, and that is a free and independent state of Croatia. . . Let us discard all of the divisions among us, for our sacrifices will never be purposeless if we insert Christ and Allah into their hearts. Thus this commemoration of ours must fill us with a sacred pride, because we are commemorating a death which is not futile, a death which breeds life. . . Croatians, may all of that for which our fathers had shed blood come true" (p. 892).

Duka's speech was completely conveyed in *The Voice of the Council*, the chief Catholic newspaper for the Croatians, which, in its issue dated 24 June 1990, via a

comment by the editor which asked the question: “Why should the Pope come, namely, to Jasenovac, to condemn the genocide against the Serbs there, when it is well known that the great majority of the Jasenovac victims were not Serbs, but Jews, Roma and mostly Croatian anti-Fascist? . . . And despite allegedly reliable statements of some detainees of the Jasenovac camp who survived, it is becoming increasingly renowned that a great number of members of the Independent State of Croatia armed forces who had surrendered at Bleiburg had been murdered there. . . If perhaps genocide is in question, is it not true that a systematic genocide had been committed in our region against the Muslims during the last war, and a systematic genocide against the Croats as well? Not only during wartime but during the peacetime that followed it as well. Should the Pope, as we say, in a habitual pattern, besides Jasenovac, immediately go to the bridge in Goražde from which the Chetniks’ daggers had filled the Drina River with dead Muslims for weeks, then to Bleiburg and Kočevski Rog, and then to Jasenovac again?” (p. 894). As Bulajić adds, “. . . the exemplary Cardinal Kuharić has never been there nor did he hold a commemorative Mass in the Ustasha death camp Jasenovac. In June 1991, he held a ‘commemoration mass for around 20,000 innocent Croatian martyrs in Macelj near Krapina’, who were executed in the night between 4 and 5 June 1945, on the site ‘Lepa Bukva’, including 20 priests, monks and priest-trainees” (p. 894).

All in all, not only had the Roman Catholic Church never even thought about admitting their own responsibility for their involvement in the genocide against Serbian people, but their high-ranking prelates relentlessly repeat their readiness to repeat the crimes again. “The persona of Alojzije Stepinac, on part of the Vatican and the Catholic Church, became untouchable, holy. As a matter of fact, that was the defence of the Roman Catholic policy towards the Catholic Civitas Dei, the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia. . . Archbishop of Zagreb Stepinac was convicted on 11 October 1946 of ‘culpability to the people and the state’, receiving the punishment of being deprived of freedom with forced labour for 16 years, and losing political and civil rights for five years. The Vatican firmly responded after three days, on 14 October 1946. The Holy Convocation assembly made a decision about ‘the excommunication of all the co-perpetrators in the prosecution and conviction of the Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac’. Nothing was said about who the Pope had excommunicated. It is not known that a decision was made earlier about the excommunication of the Ustasha genocidal malefactors, the priests who were proven to be sworn Ustashas and who had participated in the crimes of genocide. In reply to the offer by the Government of the FPRY that Stepinac would be released from prison, under the condition that he be immediately withdrawn to the Vatican, the Holy See answered by refusing. When the FPRY cut diplomatic relations with the Vatican on 17 December 1952, Pope Pius XII replied after 26 days, on January 1953, by appointing the Archbishop of Zagreb Alojzije Stepinac as a Cardinal of the Catholic Church” (p. 900-901). On that occasion, in a solemn speech, the Pope said, “Although we are happy to see you here before us, honourable brethren, we think with sorrow of our honourable brother, the Archbishop of Zagreb, who, because of the circumstances he is in, was not able to come to Rome to the common father and to return freely. Although he is absent, we hug him with fatherly love and fervently miss him, for the whole world to know, that we have venerated him with the dignity of the Roman scarlet, and for no other reason but to testify our good will to his people, to distinctively commend and comfort our dear sons and daughters, who in these

hard times firmly profess their Catholic faith. . . Our conscious could not approve of us admitting and approving the reasons, which are stated in the accusation of the Zagreb Archbishop. Neither could we disappoint the hopes and expectations of Catholics all over the world, as well as a significant number of non-Catholics, who with great pleasure accepted the news that the shepherd, who is the exemplar of apostle ardency and Christian strength, has been upraised to the honour of the Roman scarlet” (p. 901).

### **e) The Vatican’s Public Support of the Break-Up of Yugoslavia**

At the beginning of the 1990s, both the Slovenian and Croatian Roman Catholic bishops and the priests subordinated to them had been intensely working on the break-up of Yugoslavia. On the occasion of Tudjman’s referendum, dated 19 May 1991, on the sovereignty and international subjectivity of Croatia, *The Voice of the Council* suggests, “With a clear conscience, we can say that Yugoslavia, all the previous ones as well as the current Yugoslavia, has been a negative experience for the Catholics and Croats. From the beginning, it has actually been inappropriate to be a Croatian national and a Catholic by religion in Yugoslavia. There were times when it was less awkward, but it never became pleasant. Resolute Croatian orientation was considered a national danger in Yugoslavia on a regular basis. Catholicism was regarded an alien ideology in both Yugoslavias. The consequence of such an understanding in practice is the continuously reducing number of Croats in Yugoslavia, and the increasingly worsened position of the Catholic Church in Croatia itself” (p. 921).

On the other hand, as noticed by Bulajić, “. . . the Nazi-secessionist group of the Croatian Democratic Union did not hide its Catholic-clerical guidelines either. Pope John Paul II, on 25 May 1991, welcomed the Croatian Democratic Union’s head of the new independent state of Croatia, as Pope Pius XII had on 12 May 1941, welcoming the Ustasha Headman of the Independent State of Croatia” (p. 922-923). As reported in the *The Voice of the Council* on 2 June, “. . . after an audience with the Pope, President Tudjman visited Monsignor Angelo Sodano, who was the acting Secretary of State of the Holy See. That visitation meant certain unusualness in the Vatican’s customs, because the Papal Secretary of State usually does not welcome the dignitaries whom the Pope welcomes in a private audience, but only those welcomed by the Pope in an official (state) audience. The audience of President Tudjman with the Pope was formally private, because the Republic of Croatia at the time was not a subject of international law. An announcement on the content of the dialogue between the Pope and President Tudjman was not issued from the Vatican, because such announcements are only issued when an official visitation is in question, and not a private one” (p. 923). The historical coincidence with the reception of Tudjman’s predecessor and ideological founder is not at all accidental. “That is how Pope Pius XII had acted, during the ‘private’ audience of the Ustasha Headman, Dr. Ante Pavelić, on 18 May 1941, 50 years and one week ago; because, according to positive international law, the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia was not a subject of international law then either! The Catholic College of St. Jerome in Rome was behind the visitation of the leader of the Croatian Democratic Union to the Vatican, just as it had been on 18 May 1941, at the visitation of the Ustasha Headman of the Independent State of Croatia, Dr. Ante Pavelić, when the Ustasha flags flapped from the College of St. Jerome, and when the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was removed” (p. 923).

Following Pavelić's pilgrimage through Rome, as *The Voice of the Council* reports further, ". . . immediately after the meeting with the Pope, the President (Tudjman - note) had come to the Papal Croatian College of St. Jerome, where he and his company stayed for lunch. On that occasion he was greeted by the rector of the College, Ratko Perić, who emphasised that the College 'had throughout its history earnestly and restlessly advocated for the preservation of the identity of the Croatian people and their territorial integrity'" (p. 923). Concerning his visitation to the Pope, Tudjman also gave an interview to that leading Catholic newspaper, in which he had given the highest grade to the role of the Roman Catholic Church in their struggle to achieve Croatian independence. As he claims, ". . . if it wasn't for the fact that the endeavours of the Catholic Church and the program of the Croatian Democratic Union corresponded in their own way, almost to the point of complete permeation, all we had accomplished establishing democracy, that spiritual unity and revival of the Croatian people, and which is in a way a miracle, would not have been possible" (p. 923). Buljić analyses in detail the behaviour of the local Catholic clergy. "Cardinal Dr. Granjo Kuharić on his part gave full and strong support to the Croatian Democratic Union's action of breaking up the Yugoslavian country – the declaration of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia 'on establishing a sovereign and independent Republic of Croatia', dated 25 June 1991 – the same way his predecessor, the Archbishop and president of the Bishops' Conferences, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, had given support to the proclamation of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia in 1941. With the goal to support the break-up of the Yugoslavian state, an exceptional convention of the Bishops' Conferences of Yugoslavia was summoned on 27 June 1991, the same way it was done as a support for the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia at a Bishops' Conference from 17 to 20 November 1941. . . . The bishops talked about 'the violation of the legally expressed peoples' will', disregarding the violation of the valid Yugoslavian Constitution. Moreover, the bishops used the term 'residuals of the present constitutional order'. According to that, the bishops are placed in the position of judges, who again believed that they were attending a funeral service for the wrecked Yugoslavian state. . . . The bishops publicly directed their worshippers in that direction 'to consistently persevere' in breaking up of the Yugoslavian state" (p. 923-924).

Pope John Paul II openly supported the breaking up of Yugoslavia, on 29 June 1991, after a number of sporadic clashes had already happened, suggesting the possibility of a civil war. He declared, "Today, my thoughts are conducted especially towards the dear people of Slovenia and Croatia. I feel close to those who are crying over their dead and wounded, those who live in pain and fear. I once again repeat that the rights and legal aspirations of the people cannot and must not be strangled, and thus I wish to encourage all the initiatives in search of righteous solutions, the only ones that can guarantee peace and fraternal co-existence among the people" (p. 924). The Pope would like for Croatia to separate and take many Serbian territories with it, and for that to happen peacefully and in "fraternal love", while his favourite Tudjman publicly regenerates the Ustasha ideology and makes the old and notorious Ustasha symbols official. Using a similar tone, John Paul II sent epistles to Ante Marković, Milan Kučan and Franjo Tudjman. The Bishops' Conferences from Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Germany, the United States of America, and the Bishops' Conference of European Union, agitated a wide campaign in support of the Slovenian and Croatian separatists.

Encouraged by the Vatican's great influence on the governments of the Western countries and the Pope's enthusiasm to support the breaking up of the Yugoslavian state with all its powers, *The Voice of the Council* attacked the YPA (Yugoslav People's Army) on 7 July 1991: "At the moment when the army, which is still officially called the 'people's', was sent against the people, who are its and their own sovereigns, there was no high command over it, so no one could issue such an order. Nevertheless, the army started off, committing a terrible bloodshed, sending not only a certain number of legally armed defenders of the national freedom and sovereignty to their deaths, but many unarmed civilians, women and children as well. The soldiers were shooting at the peaceful passers-by, even at hospital. They have used their official weapons and are still using them, to protect the armed scoundrels who are persecuting, depriving of rights, killing, wounding and banishing the Croats from their own homeland and state. That army has caused an immeasurable damage to the economy, police and residence. The crimes were recorded on television and the whole world saw them" (p. 927). Thus the Roman Catholic Church included all its potentials in the anti-Serbs war of propaganda and the launching of media lies of fantastic proportions, with which the whole world was swamped on a daily basis.

Thus, for example, the Roman Catholic clergy insisted on a perfidiously constructed deception, that the Slovenians and Croats are fighting for liberty and democracy, and that the Serbs wanted to preserve Marxism and Communism. Concerning the Pope's encyclical from July 1991, in which it was emphasised that the crisis of Marxism had not brought a universal elimination of injustice and oppression worldwide, *The Voice of the Council*, immediately after that, in its issue number 28, commented, "We, who live in the region that was recently Yugoslavia, unfortunately, have the opportunity to be sure of that. Especially because of the fact that Marxism here was neither the original nor the main Marxism, but almost from the very beginning it was placed into the service of Greater Serbianism. After Marxism started to disappear worldwide, the Serbian potentates were trying to keep it alive both in the state and especially in the so-called Yugoslav People's Army. That coincidence is a warning that the Army is an instrument of that same government. It is obvious that they tried to preserve the Marxist ideology, not having anything else to substitute it with before the world. If they discarded it, a bare chauvinism would show, the ideology of blood that wants to exterminate any other blood so it can own the land alone. But, as time passes, the mask of Communism is increasingly transparent. Instead of the camouflage of ideology, the usage of bare force is what is left. Militarism. If the European and world peacekeeping efforts do not succeed, together with economic consequences for the disobedient, to talk some sense into that force, we will only be left with a bloody struggle – 'until the inquest, ours or yours'" (p. 928).

Cardinal Franjo Kuharić and his supporting bishops, Đuro Kokša and Juraj Jezerinac, passionately supported all the activities of Tudjman's regime, and took care, through Masses and public statements, ". . . of all the perished, abducted and confined in these hard and difficult days of defending the Croatian homeland and its liberty" (p. 928). Bulajić noticed that ". . . the high representatives of the Catholic Church never mentioned with a single word the rights and position of the Orthodox Serbs in 'the Croatian homeland'. This was how the representatives of the Catholic Church, at the head of whom was Archbishop Stepinac, acted in 1941-1945 in the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia" (p. 928). So, in the Roman Catholic Church policy, throughout the



whole twentieth century, no significant changes took place, regarding the conducting of the anti-Serbs policy and the activities aimed at the break-up the Yugoslav state. Therefore, it is no accident that Franjo Tudjman, after the Croatian Democratic Union entered the government, officially stated “. . . that the Independent State of Croatia was the expression of the historical aspirations of the Croatian people, when the ‘chess board’ was taken as a party’s symbol on the Croatian flag, which was done for the first time in the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia” (p. 928).

The first moves of Tudjman’s government showed that this really was a restoration of the Ustasha Croatian state, somewhat modified. “The Croatian Democratic Union had, upon entering the government with an outspoken support of the Catholic Church clergy, urgently enforced the new Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, in December 1990, according to which the Serbs lost the status of a nation, and became a national minority. Instead of ‘Croato-Serbian’ and ‘Serbo-Croatian’, ‘Croatian’ became the official language in Croatia. Instead of the Latin and Cyrillic alphabet, the official alphabet is Latin only, with a possible exception such as ‘Cyrillic or other alphabets, under the conditions prescribed by the law!’ The Serbs in Croatia do not have their own schools or educational institutions, their own newspapers or televisions, not even their own cultural centres. One of the first decisions of the Croatian Democratic Union Government in Croatia was renaming the Victims of Fascism Square in Zagreb to the Great Men of Croatia Square. The squares and streets received the names of Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, Mile Budak and other clerical-Fascist persons. The Ustasha party was founded in Split, and on 10 April 1991, the day of the founding of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia was marked. The Croatian Party of Rights asked for the posthumous remains of the Ustasha Headman, Dr. Ante Pavelić, to be transported to the Croatian Democratic Union’s Republic of Croatia, and to be ‘buried deservingly’. The Ustasha genocidal criminals return or abide occasionally in the Croatian Democratic Union’s Republic of Croatia. A society of the ‘Ustasha *Domobrans*’ was established, under the name of a regular army of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia. Imitating Adolf Hitler’s Nazi party, Dr. Franjo Tudjman had also, as the first in post-war Europe, armed his Croatian Democratic Party” (p. 928-929).

According to those very first, external signs of the real intentions of the Croatian government, the Serbs had nothing good to look forward to. Especially when they saw how the official Parliament members attended the commemorative ceremonials on the occasions of uncovering the monuments of prominent Ustasha malefactors. For example, “in the church of St. Antun, in the village Vukmanić near Karlovac, the Croatian Democratic Union’s Croatian authorities uncovered a memorial ‘to the perished and missing Croats from World War II’, where there are several names of genocidal criminals, Ustasha butchers – among others Dragan Mujić, the organizer of the massacre near Ivanić park in 1941, where around 400 Orthodox Serbs had been murdered” (p. 929). Tudjman’s authorities rapidly renewed the old Ustasha attire and simultaneously initiated the war of propaganda against the Serbs and systematic reprisals. “Following the example of the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia, Croatian names are introduced everywhere. In just a couple of months, many firms have been renamed, by adding the Croatian prefix such as: Croatian Television, Croatian Radio, Croatian Electric Power Industry, Croatian posts and telecommunications, Croatian roadways, Croatian forests, Croatian railroads, Croatian Water Management, Croatian Journalist Society, Croatian Society of Film Makers, etc. The Yugoslav Academy of

Sciences and Arts in Zagreb, who carried that name from its foundation in 1866, has been renamed into the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In the system of Croatian-Goebbels propaganda, the foundation of the Croatian Informative News Agency (HINA) is especially important.

“The activists of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) were proclaimed as ‘terrorists’, ‘bandits’, ‘outlaws’ and ‘Chetniks’ in the Croatian media. Many Serbian leaders have been taken into police stations, arrested, interrogated, beaten and molested by the Croatian special units (among whom there were many Albanians from Kosovo, mercenaries). The activists and ‘specialists’ of the Croatian Democratic Union started to attack the Serbian Orthodox Church, its temples, parochial houses, priests (the priest from Petrinja, Dragan Glumac, was wounded by the Croatian police in October 1990; the priest on duty in Slunj, Braco Seničanin, was arrested on 1 April 1991, interrogated with no reason and harassed, etc.). In places where Serbs were a minority (Zagreb, Zadar, Šibenik, Split, Drniš etc.), the Serbian officers were asked for written statements of loyalty to the Presidency of the Croatian Democratic Union. Stevan Ilić was murdered in the village Bršadin on 1 May 1991, just because he carried a Serbian flag through the village. At that time, at the entrance of the factory ‘Borovo’, a sign was placed that said ‘Entrance forbidden for Serbs’; several catering objects in Zagreb (Dubrava) posted the signboards ‘Entrance forbidden for Serbs and dogs’. A special mode of the Croatian Democratic Union pressure on Serbs was manifested through the destruction of their possessions, minings, vandalism, throwing stones at Serbian houses, ransacking, scorching. Serbian houses on the Adriatic coast were being demolished, nearby Croatian ones, which stayed untouched, only because of national affiliation. New higher taxes were introduced for the houses whose owners were Serbs from Serbia. The position of the Serbs in Croatia, in the beginning of the 1990s, was much like the position of Jews in Nazi’s Germany in the 1940s!” (p. 929).

### **f) Serbs Under the Dagger of Pope John Paul II**

Soon, bloody armed confrontations started between the Croatian police and paramilitary groups and the Serbian nationals in Borovo Selo, Pkrac, Tenja etc. Serbian refugees started to rush from the Croatian grounds of AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia). “The bishops in Croatia, on behalf of whom was the exemplary Cardinal Dr. Franjo Kuharić, never mentioned in a single word the Orthodox Serbs in the Croatian Democratic Union’s democracy, the democracy of Civitas Dei. His Holiness Pope John Paul II did not even mention the Orthodox Serbs in 1991. In a time when the number of Serbian refugees from the Republic of Croatia doubled . . . the Caritas President of the Bishops’ Conferences, Monsignor Vladimir Stanković made an appeal for ‘the Croatian families that had been banished from their homes in Knin, Slavonija and Banija’. . . Across the Republic of Croatia, the Catholic Church is organising ‘public prayers for the soldiers’, not for the legal soldiers of the Yugoslav People’s Army, but for the paramilitary organisations of the Republic of Croatia. On the ‘260<sup>th</sup> votive pilgrimage to Marija Bistrica’, the exemplary Cardinal Kuharić placed the blame for the ‘war’ in the Republic of Croatia on the Yugoslavian Constitution, although the legal foundation was created by the Croatian Democratic Union’s Constitution of the Republic of Croatia” (p. 930).

The Pope supposedly advocated for peace on more than one occasion, but it is clear from the content of all of his speeches that he insisted on a definite elimination of Yugoslavia and a peaceful demarcation between the Serbs and Croats along the seams of AVNOJ's boundaries. "Talking to the young Croats on 26 July, the Pope emphasised that their homeland, i.e. Croatia, 'in spite of great hardships, advocates the defence of the freedom and democracy'. The Catholic weekly greets this attitude of Pope John Paul II as 'the first contribution of the Church towards the Croatian dignity and self-importance before the eyes of the public worldwide'" (p. 932). As Bulajić further comments, ". . . at the same time, the exemplary Cardinal Dr. Franjo Kuharić, at the Franciscan jubilee in Livno 28 July, only addressed the Orthodox Serbs: 'Brethren Serbs, we love you in Jesus Christ, and in the name of that love, we beg and beseech you – forsake violence'. These words were uttered in a place where the Ustashas had killed 1,587 Orthodox Serbs in a genocide during the war, among whom 248 were between 6 days and 6 years old, and 425 innocent souls between 6 and 18 years of age were cast into pits. In a Serbian Orthodox village Golinjevo, not even a chicken pen was left: 256 Orthodox Serbs were murdered. The exemplary Cardinal emphasised in Livno: 'The truth will repel the lie, like the winds repel the smoke!' In the name of that truth, he did not speak about the victims of genocide; concerning Friar Srećko Perić, who is on the top of the list of 56 Ustasha criminals in this region, who allegedly publicly called the Ustashas to the crime of genocide against the Orthodox Serbs, to first kill his sister who had married a Serb, and then come to him to ask for forgiveness – the Cardinal claims that he is innocent! Only two weeks after the Franciscan jubilee in Livno, on 11 August, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church Pavle and six Orthodox bishops held a bishop liturgy and dirge in Livno, above the exhumed bones of the victims of Ustasha genocide. The exemplary Cardinal did not show up for that sorrowful dirge, nor did any representative of the Catholic Church" (p. 932).

The Roman Catholic bishops from the territory of the Republic of Croatia sent, on 30 July 1991, an appeal to the public, which they had named *Croatia is in the Misfortune of an Imposed War!*. The essence of that appeal was extremely propaganda-like and anti-Serbian, the judgements were one-sided and based on an artificial differentiation between the "good" Croats and "bad" Serbs. "The bishops speak their mind 'in front of the whole world' that this is about 'discarding the democratic parliamentary mode of solving open political issues'; they proclaim that 'the defence of the homeland and its democratic institutions is the right and responsibility of the legal governance'. It means that the Orthodox Serbs are once again placed in the dock, because their right 'to defend' their own legitimate rights is not mentioned. The bishops are talking about the 'current crime against humanity' and violating the international conventions; Yugoslavia is a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, but the Catholic Church had never asked for the implementation of that Convention for the Ustasha crimes of genocide against the Serbs, Jews and Roma. It has never called the Catholic priests, who were proven to have had participated in Ustasha crimes of genocide, to answer for their actions.

"In this dramatic situation, the bishops ask for international intervention, they make appeals for the 'statesmen and international institutions to urgently and actively engage themselves towards peace and a democratic solution to the crisis we are having', they are inviting 'the universal church, ecclesiastical brethren and all the believers to join us

in prayer and actively support us'. The Croatian bishops had, one day before the Assembly session, 'decided to pay a visit to President Tudjman and render the attitude of the Bishops' Conferences to him, discretely, so that it would not look as if the bishops were directly interfering in politics'. 'The bishops did not inform the public about that'. The discretion was revealed by the President of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tudjman: 'in his speech at the Assembly he mentioned that he had been visited by a delegation of Croatian Catholic bishops'. The visitation of the Croatian bishops to the Croatian Democratic Union Headman, Dr. Franjo Tudjman in 1991, lead by the Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Dr. Franjo Kuharić, resembles the visitation of the Croatian bishops after the Bishops' Conference in 1941, to the Ustasha Headman Dr. Ante Pavelić – the policy of Stepinac and the creation of Civitas Dei on the ruins of the Yugoslavian State. The main obstacle in that line is the Yugoslav People's Army, about which the Catholic weekly writes, 'There is no more doubt – the deeds of a part of the Army, which is neither Yugoslav nor national, should be called by their real name – an army war against the Croatian people is taking place!'; 'the so-called Yugoslav People's Army is killing Croatian youngsters, demolishing family homes, churches, schools, ambulances'; 'for Croatia and the Croatian people, after all, it is solely hostile, occupational and criminal'" (p. 933).

The passionate participation of the Catholic prelates and their headquarters in the anti-Serbian war of propaganda continued with an increased vehemence. As documented by Bulajić, in August 1991, the Catholic weekly *The Voice of the Council*, ". . . on the front cover writes about 'terrifying' sufferings and destruction, about the 'Banija massacre', under the headline 'Premeditated Genocide!', about the 'Chetniks' kidnapping for a living wall according to Saddam's model of 'a bunch of criminal butchers'! On a concelebrated Mass in Županja, at the funeral of fallen Croatian Democratic Union guards, priest Ivan Varošić, in the name of Bishop Ćiril Kos, accentuated in his sermon that they had fallen for 'the defence of homeland', that 'God awards such a sacrifice with eternity in his home': 'Croatian sons are sown into the ground as a seed. I believe that they will be fruitful. The martyr's blood has always been a seed of new life. We believe in that now as well!' Support in the name of the Lord! . . . In an interview for an Austrian Catholic news agency, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić stated that the armed skirmishes on the Croatian borders represent an 'ignominy for the whole Europe', that for this increasingly severe situation, 'the Serbian extremists' are 'responsible and guilty', who 'wish to defend the system, ideology and civilisation which is different from the one in Croatia. They attack the Croatian villages whose inhabitants are 'either surrounded or have already fled'. In the region of Banija alone, which belongs to the Zagreb Archdiocese, seven pastors had to leave their parishes in order to save their bare lives'. The Cardinal said that 'the hate between the groups of people has awakened, although not between the leaders of the Churches', and in that context announced 'his intention to contact the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitan in Zagreb so they can consider together the possibility of introducing dialogues for peace'.

"At that time, Radio Vatican reported on the honourably carried out commemoration of 'the Catholic devotees in East Herzegovina for the victims of World War II!" Radio Vatican also mentioned the dirge for several thousands of victims of the Ustasha genocide against the Orthodox Serbs in the Serbian village of Prebilovci in the same area (from that village alone, out of one thousand inhabitants, over 800 Orthodox Serbs, women and children had been murdered, slaughtered and thrown into the pit Šurmanci,

around 500 in just one day, 6 August 1941), when the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Pavle, blessed the foundations of an Orthodox church, on 4 August. None of the representatives of the Catholic Church were present, and Radio Vatican emphasised that on that occasion, ‘the Croatian people were directly accused’, which raises doubts that ‘not only building a temple for martyrs is in question here’, but ‘in fact a building of one more bordering fortress of Serbdom’! What is forgotten is that actually the horrendous genocide against the Orthodox Serbs of Pribilovci and other places in this part of Herzegovina was directed towards moving the borders of ‘the ramparts of Christendom’ (Antemurale Christianitatis)” (p. 933-934).

### **g) The Vatican’s Diplomacy in the Service of the New Independent State of Croatia**

All the traditional Jesuits’ wickedness had come to full light once again on the occasion of a visit by the Vatican’s Secretary Jean-Luis Toran, who supported the Croatian separatist endeavours in Zagreb, and appeared in Belgrade with a mouthful of false ecumenical love. On the basis of his report, “Pope John Paul II had, during his visit to Hungary, expressed his attitude towards the break-up of Yugoslavia more outwardly. In a Mass in Pecs, on 17 August 1991, attended by around twenty thousand Hungarian Croats and 1,300 pilgrims from Croatia together with Cardinal Kuharić, Assistant Bishop Đuro Kokša, the Bishop of Đakovo, Ćiril Kos, Assistant Bishop Marin Srakić, the Bishop of Banja Luka Franjo Komarica, the Bishop of Subotica János Péntzes and the Bishop of Zrenjanin Laszlo Husvar, the Pope said in Croatian,” as quoted by Bulajić, according to *The Voice of the Council* dated 25 August, “I cordially welcome Cardinal Kuharić, the Archbishop of Zagreb, and other bishops who have arrived from Croatia together with numerous devotees. Once again I assure you that I am close to your legal aspirations, repeating my appeal to the international community to help you in such a difficult moment of your history” (p. 941). Bulajić further reveals the characteristic facts which unmask the Papal policy: “The Catholic weekly *The Voice of the Council* brought this statement of Pope John Paul II to the cover page under the heading *The Pope Invites the International Community to Help Croatia*, with the remark that ‘Oton von Habsburg with his family attended the Pope’s Mass in Pecs as well’. *La Stampa* daily from Turin explained this statement, that ‘the Pope wishes to go to Croatia, but an independent Croatia’, that the Pope ‘has never before associated the issue of Croatian independence and the possibility of his visit to this country in such a direct manner’.

“In order to understand the Vatican as a state and the Holy See as a universal Catholic Church, it is important to identify the facts and compare them with each other. In Yugoslavia, his messages that were conveyed by the bosses of the secessionist states of Slovenia, Milan Kučan, and of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, were not believed in, because the official statements from the Vatican were in a completely different tone. It is obvious that Pope John Paul II promised and told certain things to Tuđman and Kučan, and made different statements in public. . . Also, at a Mass in **Shambateli (Cubapista)**, Pope John Paul II cordially welcomed ‘Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, the Archbishop of Zagreb, the Bishop of Zagreb Archdiocese’s Assistant Đuro Kokša, and Croatian pilgrims who had arrived from Hungary, Croatia, Austria and Slovakia in order to meet with Peter’s successor’. After listening to the sermon of Cardinal Kuharić, on 4 August 1991, in a Zagreb cathedral, Spanish reporters concluded that the Cardinal ‘yearned and

**Comment [Z38]:** Translator’s note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed

almost begged for Croatian vengeance on the Serbian ‘terrorists’, which sounded like an invitation to a Crusade” (p. 941-942).

By the end of August 1991, in an official Vatican daily *L'Osservatore Romano*, a statement was published that “. . . the whole Croatia was in flames because of the joint offensive of Serbian rebels and the Yugoslav army” (p. 947). Bulajić discloses that such a statement “. . . in a telegram line, sent by the State Secretary of his Holiness the Pope, Angelo Sodano – who had been visited earlier by the head of the Croatian Democratic Union and President of the Republic of Croatia in an official visit – to the Chairman of the European Union Council of Ministers, Van den Brook, there was an invitation ‘to the international community to use all its powers to try and stop the armed confrontations’ in Croatia. It is important that, in that telegram the State Secretary expressed hope ‘that certain republics will be successfully persuaded(!) to accelerate the process ‘of state reorganisation’. This diplomatic statement was explained by Radio Vatican that it is ‘Serbia in first place’, to which they had predicted ‘a total collapse’ and its being reduced to its real size from 1914” (p. 947).

The Bishops’ Conference, on 4 September 1991, insists that the war was imposed on Croatia from the outside so its territory could be stolen, which, with the support of Serbia and Montenegro, was led by the Yugoslav army, which had broken free from any civil control of the federal governance. “In the conclusion of the letter, the bishops emphasise ‘that the greatest contribution in overcoming that state – disgraceful for modern Europe – would be an international diplomatic acknowledgement of Slovenia and Croatia’, by which the international community, which is advocating for peaceful solutions for the Yugoslav crisis (as opposed to certain subjects’ refusal to cooperate in Yugoslavia), would get authentic and trustworthy associates and collocutors for the establishment of peace and further development of the democratic processes in accordance with the international conventions and principles!” (p. 948). That letter represented a platform for a wide international campaign in favour of Croatian separatism, which was led by the president of the Pontifical Commission of “Justice and Peace”, Cardinal Roger *Elegari*, and the president of the European Commission of “Justice and Peace”, Irish Bishop Jeremy Connolly. “Pope John Paul II had started the worldwide action of breaking up the state of Yugoslavia with his invitation, dated 5 September, to all the Catholic bishops worldwide to join him and all the Catholic devotees in a prayer on 8 September on the holiday of the Holy Mother’s birth” (p. 948).

As reported in *The Voice of the Council* from 22 September, “. . . the news on that unique invitation by the Pope, never recorded in Croatian history before, and which, besides the religious importance, possessed an exceptional diplomatic importance, was communicated to the Archbishop of Zagreb Cardinal Franjo Kuharić by the Pope himself in a letter in which it is emphasised that ‘in these times of pain and insecurity, I wish, before all, to express my solidarity also to the families of the fallen and wounded, to all those who are running away frightened and especially to all the Croatian nation, which is unable to stop the disaster” (p. 948). In a central Croatian Mass at the Kaptol in Zagreb, in the presence of the highest Croatian state officials, “. . . the Cardinal held a sermon that a conqueror’s war is in question, ‘the devil’s wisdom’, ‘insanity and misery’, ‘evil and the evil-doers’, and as far as the Croatian Democratic Union warriors, policemen and guards are concerned, that is ‘the legal defence of the homeland, family, freedom, which represent ‘a right and moral act” (p. 949). In addition to that, *The Voice of the Council*, from 15 September, explained that the sole fact that “. . . the enormous

**Comment [Z39]:** Translator’s note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed

Catholic Church, with almost one billion soldiers across the globe, held its World Day of Prayer for Croatia,” signifies “Croatia recognised through the prayer” (p. 949). The political importance of that act is explained in the following way: “In every Catholic Church, on every continent, on 8 September, the people heard the Pope’s message in favour of peace in Croatia. That was the chance for all of them to find out, because many of them did not really know that Croatia existed as a state or where it was, that it was fighting against a war imposed upon it, that it is fighting against the last remains of the vampire of Bolshevism connected to a vampire as well, the hegemony of the Serbian state. From that World Day of Prayer for Croatia, hundreds of millions of average people actually knew that what was going on in Croatia was not just some kind of an ethnic skirmish like everywhere in the world is, but that it was, everything considered, the last bloody collision of the worn-out Bolshevik imperialism against democracy that was growing from the roots of biblical humanity. Thus, the Pope, in a manner that is only available to him, enlisted Croatia in the consciousness and the concern of mankind” (p. 949).

With the engagement of all the Catholic organisational and propaganda potentials in spreading monstrous Croatian lies against the Serbian people, the public opinion of almost all the Western countries had been ignited, and on 15 September, the Pope once again publicly asked for foreign military intervention in the internal Yugoslavian conflict. How important the role of the Vatican’s diplomacy was in the break-up of the Yugoslavian state is explained in *The Voice of the Council’s* editor’s comment from 29 September: “It is important for us to perceive that the most important role in this case was played by the Catholic Church, i.e. the diplomacy of the Holy See. That oldest of all, most experienced of all, most pacifist of all, and in material support most meagre diplomacy (!), which has its humble but very influential missions in the majority of the member states of the OUN, these weeks, especially these days, has quite obviously developed a very wide campaign for the ending of the war in Croatia and for the realisation of the people’s rights in a peaceful manner. After John Paul II had recently agitated the world’s public opinion in the most ecclesiastical way, in favour of the endangered Croatia and for the welfare of all the nations in the region of the former Yugoslavia, in the last days he used every opportunity to emphasise that even more. On Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 September, the Pope talked to those present at special general and separate audiences about Croatia, about its suffering and its rights; he obviously did not speak so that only those present could hear him, but to resound again in the diplomatic public. We found out about the unusually live contacts between the Croatian Episcopate and the Holy See” (p. 953).

Both Croatian and foreign bishops were increasingly persistent in their requests for the Western countries to acknowledge the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. As stated by Bulajić, *The New York Times* had noticed those days that the Croatian warriors carry a Catholic cross as an identification sign, in order for them to differ from the Orthodox Serbs. Robert D. Kaplan, in the same newspaper, on the theme “The Pope and the Civil War in Yugoslavia”, noticed that Pope John Paul II had intervened 18 times for the peace in Yugoslavia, that “the war in Yugoslavia has brought the Vatican in an extremely sensitive position”. Kaplan indicates that “the Holy See must exit the shadow – not only to help, but also to clarify the past” (p. 954). The next fragment from Kaplan’s text, Bulajić quotes literally: “The Roman Catholic Church, apart from the fact that it is the middle point of the national resistance in Croatia, played a role in history

that has led to the current bloodshed in Yugoslavia. The Zagreb Archdiocese had publicly welcomed the creation of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia in April 1941, whose internal security apparatus was responsible for the massacre of Serbs in the same border districts where battles are being waged again” (p. 954). Following is the interpretation by Bulajić again: “Kaplan asked the question why the Pope, who had travelled to all four corners of the earth, had never visited the Catholics in a state which was in the neighbourhood of Italy and the Vatican. According to him, there are two big obstacles in question – a prayer on the grave of the Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Stepinac, in a cathedral in Zagreb; and a visit to the Ustasha death camp of Jasenovac. ‘The Church must accept the guilt for what happened during World War II, judging the current aggression of Serbia’. That way only, according to Kaplan, could the Pope use his real strength, which the European Union lacks, to appease the extremists in Croatia and to placate the Serbs. The Catholic Church in Croatia today outwardly denounces any responsibility for the crimes of genocide in the Independent State of Croatia during World War II, and the fact that the modern international conflicts between the Croatians and the Serbs is ‘basically only an extension of what had started in 1941’” (p. 954).

The campaign of the Roman Catholic prelates has two fundamental goals before it – to lead to the independence of the Croatian state, whose territorial perimeter would include the regions that had for centuries been Serbian, and to forge the historical facts that prove the criminal nature of the genocidal Ustasha regime. As Bulajić finds, *The Voice of the Council*, dated 29 September, “. . . without beating around the bush claims that the Serbian Orthodox Church, ‘with no historical context, places a harsh accusation for a genocide ‘the kind of which has never happened before’ against the Serbian people, its culture, Church and possessions’. Concerning the allegation that more than a million Serbian inhabitants had been killed, tens of thousands houses burnt, more than 500 Orthodox churches and parochial houses demolished, the Catholic weekly estimates that ‘it is in the spirit of a newly-established Belgrade history, serving political-imperialistic appetites’. The example of the torturing of the Orthodox Metropolitan of Zagreb, Dositej, until he lost his mind, ‘has nothing to do with the historical truth’. Regarding the Ustasha death camp of Jasenovac, the repentance for the crimes of genocide committed against the Serbs, Jews and Roma, the Catholic weekly confronts with the statement that ‘Jasenovac was a concentration camp until 1947’, that Bleiburg and other ‘Jazovkas’ across Croatia should be talked about, that ‘when numbers from the pre-war census are compared to those of the first post-war census, only the Croatian nation came out of that period with less members’! The latest interview with Cardinal Kuharić discloses that this is not an opinion of the editor of the Catholic weekly; in it, he states ‘that during the war, the Catholic Church via its highest representatives stood against the violence, and that it publicly condemned violence, regardless of which direction it came from’. Today, more openly than before, Cardinal Kuharić claims that Archbishop Stepinac was ‘in the times of occupation, Nazism and war, one of the most courageous Bishops in Europe’” (p. 954-955).

Tudjman was the guest of the Pope once again, on 3 October 1991, and upon returning, he elatedly announced that he had received undoubted and adamant support from the Pope concerning the request for acknowledging the independence of Croatia. “The talks in the Vatican were interpreted in Zagreb as an open engagement of the Holy See on the side of the secessionism of Croatia, ‘that the Vatican with its so-called secret diplomacy is leading the campaign for the acknowledgement of the independence of



Slovenia and Croatia’, that Pope John Paul II, ‘who had openly sided with Croatia’, ‘is asking for a group of countries, and not one by one, to immediately acknowledge Croatia and Slovenia’. ‘The Holy See is ready to acknowledge Croatia immediately and is looking for counties that think alike. Because of that, Tadjman was more satisfied with the results of the talks led in the Vatican, than those led in the capital of the Italian Republic’. That was how the Pope had proceeded in 1941/42, but despite the support from those who thought alike – the Axis-Nazi quislings, he didn’t live to see the acknowledgement from the international community. After such an open and strong support from the Holy See, the decision by an assembly of the Croatian Democratic Union’s Croatia followed, dated 8 October 1991, according to which the Republic of Croatia ‘is terminating the state-legal connections that were the basis for the common foundation on which it formed the former SFRY with the other republics and provinces’” (p. 961).

Many European and American bishops supported such requests even more openly and publicly, and the entire Catholic press had led the campaign to the boiling point. “A regular session, held in Zagreb on 15 and 16 October 1991, also served the maintaining of the combative pressure of the Catholic Church in the decisive battle for breaking up the Yugoslavian state. Pope John Paul II did not miss this opportunity to send a letter to the Croatian bishops, in which he especially supported the Peace Conference in the Hague “concerning international pressure for the international acknowledgment of Slovenia, Croatia and other republics who might ask for it” (p. 964). The Vatican sent a memorandum, on 26 November 1991, to all the participating states at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the essence of which is determined by the following: “Before the bitter battles led in Croatia, the Holy See invites the community of states to consider once again the necessity of valuing the right to independence of the people of Croatia and Slovenia and the nations who wish to exercise that right. The opinion of the Holy See is that the time has come for Croatia and Slovenia to be internationally acknowledged, even before the Christmas holidays. The nations of those two republics have chosen independence in a free and democratic manner” (p. 970).

### **h) The Vatican’s Open Praise for the Crimes Committed**

As reported by *The Voice of the Council*, dated 29 December 1991, “. . . the Vatican’s spokesman, Dr. Navarro-Valis, had explained in an interview to a Vatican radio ‘that the Holy See has been acting in two ways from the beginning of the crisis: through diplomacy and frequent interventions by the Pope – through diplomacy the Holy See suggested the solution to the crisis by the international acknowledgment of the respective republics, while the Pope had constantly and with grief presented the reasons and conditions by which the problem that appeared might have been solved, so that all the sides are respected as well as the right to self-determination’. In front of the world public, the Holy See revealed the attitude that the acknowledgment of Catholic Croatia and Slovenia ‘is not directed against any party involved’, and that ‘the Holy See steadily wishes to preserve good relations with all the Yugoslavian republics’” (p. 971). At the beginning of the next year “. . . the Vatican had started the decisive attack for breaking up the Yugoslavian state. Monsignor Piero Pannacini informed the public, on 13 January 1992, that the Holy See had sent notes to the Governments of the Republics Slovenia and Croatia, informing them that it acknowledges their sovereignty and independence.

At the same time, 'a note had been sent to the government in Belgrade as well, in which it was informed that the mentioned decision is not at all directed against Yugoslavia', that the Apostolic Pronuntius in Belgrade, Monsignor Gabriel Montalvo, continues 'his mission as the representative of the Holy See in Yugoslavia'. With this act, the Vatican had for the first time terminated its centuries-long tradition to be the last one to acknowledge a state. That is how it treated the first Yugoslav state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians in 1919. There were cases when the Vatican declined to coordinate its church policy with the actual conditions in certain countries for decades. It is significant that in the break-up of the Yugoslav state, in recognising Catholic Croatia and Slovenia, the Vatican found itself alone with Germany. The intention is obvious – an attempt to influence the decision of the European countries especially, which, according to the Brussels Agreement dated 16 December 1991, must make a decision in two days – 15 January 1992" (p. 972).

A full rehabilitation of Stepinac, and even all the other Ustasha criminals, on which not only Pope Pius XII had insisted, but John XXIII and Paul VI as well, was accomplished by the Conference decision immediately after acknowledging the independence of the Croatian state by the Vatican. In this two-volume book, Bulajić publishes the biographical data on 694 Roman Catholic priests, undoubtedly proven war criminals, with a note that the list is incomplete. Bulajić especially investigated the coincidence between the appearance of the 'Madonna' in Međugorje and the Ustasha crimes in that western Herzegovina region, about which he writes, "While studying the archives in Herzegovina – and bear in mind that Čapljina, according to the Ustasha genocidal plan from before the war, was one of the centres of that terrifying plan – I was left in amazement by the coincidence that the Madonna had appeared 23 June 1981, and on that same day four decades ago the massacres were conducted in Berkovići, Ržani Do, Međugorje and other places. In the village Prebilovci, where only Serbs lived, the Ustashes murdered 800 out of one thousand inhabitants, among which 296 children were under 14, and 64 under 2 years old! They were all thrown into the Šurmanci pit, which can be easily seen from the hill on which the Madonna appeared. While everywhere around Međugorje, there are asphalt roads, duty-free shops, there is talk about the airport; you can get to Šurmanci only by foot. There is a memorial, but what is the most horrendous is that the pit is sealed. No one has opened it or examined it. Mothers with children in their arms were thrown into it. On one occasion, I was invited as a lecturer on a 'floating university' on the Mediterranean. A group of American professors told me that Međugorje was included in the program of their visit to Yugoslavia. They asked me what that was. I explained them with a shorter historical overview. They were flabbergasted. They invited me to come along and so I visited Međugorje as an American. We received rich material on the Madonna's statements, that she deliberately chose this parish and that she has special plans for it. A strategy that cannot be any clearer! And her creator is the Franciscan Zovko, convicted of teaching the children the fascist salutes. Two friars named Zovko from this district were Ustasha butchers, who killed in the name of the Madonna, because the Madonna was the symbol of Ustashism, and the 'Queen of Croats'" (p. 1027).

#### **4. The Vatican's Post-War Policy Towards Yugoslavia**

In 1994, Dragoljub Živojinović, published the book *The Vatican, the Catholic Church and the Yugoslav Government 1941-1958* (Belgrade, Prosveta - Teraip), including therein the historical period until the death of Pope Pius XII, showing the almost six-century-long continuity of the Vatican's anti-Serbian policy. "Already by the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Curia had marked the Serbs as heretics and schismatics, and decided to fight them until their extinction. The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples had endeavoured to root out this schism, using the idea of a union for that purpose. The endeavours in that sense were reinforced, and the fight for new souls became the leading idea of Vatican's policy. It did had lost its breath even until the most recent times, and the Croatian Catholics had become the most powerful weapon in that fight. In such conditions, the cooperation between the Catholic Church and Ustasha governance came naturally. Hence, it is no wonder that the Serbs and the Orthodox Church were predetermined for destruction, condemned to disappear, disregarding the means and manners for the fulfilment of that" (p. 17).

The Ustasha creation, under the shelter of the German and Italian occupying forces and the Independent State of Croatia, has shown itself as in all the previous six centuries, to be the most efficacious instrument for the realisation of the Roman Catholic interests. "The cooperation between the Vatican, the Catholic Church and the Ustasha regime was based upon divine, Catholic foundations, and not on some uncertain political or other foundations. Such a foundation for cooperation represented an unhoped-for danger for their adversaries – Serbs, the Orthodox, Jews, Roma, Communists. The Vatican's leaders considered it their task, an obligation in fact, to help the new governance in Croatia wherever and however possible. While doing so, they often crossed the allowed boundaries and acceptable norms of international law, morals and humanity. Because of that they confronted with the Allie's governments and diplomacy, kept silent before the violence committed by the Ustasha side, refused to condemn the criminals and crimes. On his side, Pavelić and his associates were aware of the Pope's soft spot for the Catholic state created on the 'border of Christianity', convinced that he will be silent about the crimes committed in the name of the militant religion. That is what really happened" (p. 32).

##### **a) The Vatican's Cover-Up of Crimes**

The establishing of the Communist regime in post-war Yugoslavia gave a valuable chance to the Vatican to, behind the mask of a struggle against the dictatorship and atheism, hide its own responsibility for the Croatian Ustasha war crimes. They also benefited from the unscrupulous policy of the Titoistic regime, which was based on a willingness to sever any form of oppositional action at the very root, and also to persecute religious communities and forcefully diminish their power and influence. The Communist regime was actually defeated by the court trial of Archbishop Stepinac, because it was led according to the usual Bolshevik pattern, violating the basic principles of law and by leading the principles of functioning of the court system to absurdity. "An arrogant and unprepared campaign, and in addition to that, an insufficiently methodical one, has caused an unwanted reaction in the country and a lot of noise outside it. As the regime was willing, though, to deal with the inner opposition,

such an action was understandable. The imprudence was the result of self-consciousness and arrogance. The statement by Tito, that the Yugoslavian government was not afraid of anyone in the world, had shown his naivety, short-sightedness and imprudence. The lack of political wisdom, on one side, and ardour and self-conscience, on the other, explain the decision on initiating the trial of the Archbishop of Zagreb. The revolutionary logic was not acceptable in the world in which the Vatican and Catholic Church had played a significant role, had their ways of expressing discontent and the means to fight against those powers that they considered to be their rivals. Only the circumstance that the USA was not ready to go to the very end with their political support of the Vatican had saved the Yugoslavian regime from a lot of international criticism and political defeats” (p. 230).

It is as if the Communists were trying to help the Catholic Church for its prelates to gain the most convincing aureole of martyrdom. Stepinac’s right to independently choose his lawyer was only half-honoured: from the arrest until the end of the trial he only had one conversation with his lawyers, which lasted for one hour. The police arrested and harassed the priests who could participate in the preparation of the defence, in order to frighten and discourage them. All the media led a fiery campaign against the accused, and no one was allowed to publicly confront the media lynch with a single word. The Communist Party organised a forced petitioning by the citizens requesting for the accused to be punished as hard as possible. At the beginning of the trial, and during it, a public chase was organised and the lynching of a couple of priests, out of which a certain number was killed. Pressure was exerted on the priests to prevent the gathering of the devotees even in churches. Stepinac was trialled according to an illegal retroactive application of a special criminal law regulation – The Act on the Crimes against Nations and State from 1945, and not according to the pre-war Yugoslav criminal law. Besides, the regulations of this special universal legal act enabled utterly arbitrary interpretation.

The trial against the Archbishop was led together with criminals with whom he had no direct connection whatsoever. The court assemblies lasted twelve hours a day. The members of the court committee did not refrain from mocking, disdain and humiliating the accused in the courtroom. The judges acted as public prosecutors on a regular basis. The defence was deprived of the right to cross-examine of the witnesses. The evidence material was treated extremely arbitrary and wittingly, and obviously forged documents were included in it. It was made impossible for the defence to examine the statements by the false witnesses. The defence witnesses were ideologically disqualified and thus their appearance at the trial was prevented. All the evidence by the prosecutor was automatically accepted, and the evidence by the defence rejected a priori. If a document submitted by the defence was accepted at all in the evidence proceedings, the president of the court would read it extremely fast and utterly indistinctly, so that no one in the courtroom could understand it. All the prosecutor’s witnesses had been interrogated, and the majority of those called by the defence were declined. During the trial, the public prosecutor spent 48 hours talking, while Stepinac’s lawyers spent only twenty minutes. The record on the hearing of witnesses had afterwards been alternated during the investigation so that the forged one could charge the accused more strongly. The shorthand of the process had also been alternated afterwards, so that the public became familiar with the false version. The audience at the court house, with few exceptions, was represented by Communist activists, who had been orchestrated to loudly support the prosecutor’s statements, and mock the accused. The president of the

court and the public prosecutor relentlessly used the ideological and political disqualifications of the accused. Stepinac's lawyers were constantly under the terrifying surveillance of the secret police. There was no trace of independent judiciary. It was as if the regime had relentlessly endeavoured to make Stepinac a myth.

The cruel Communist regime of Tito made it possible for the Vatican to coax the most powerful Western intelligence services to cooperation in a campaign of saving the war criminals. "The Vatican and the great powers (USA, Great Britain) had cooperated in that business, hiding the criminals, the political people of the Ustasha or quisling regimes, the prominent prelates of the Catholic Church, as well as many others who fled from Yugoslavia, being aware of their guilt or because of their cooperation with the Ustasha or other powers. Indeed, there were some who were returned to the places where they had committed the crimes. Even before the beginning of the 'Cold War', a policy was led that in many respects was remindful of it. A close connection between the Vatican and its organisations, as well as the individuals which had acted among them, enabled the establishing of ways and channels, connections and cooperation between various political, informational, humanitarian and religious services in wide, religious regions. The influential individuals had been doing the big jobs in that, and many war criminals for years avoided arrest, going to the court and being punished for their wrongdoings in the past. The Allies' intelligence services used the individuals from the Church for their own goals" (p. 321).

The Vatican engaged in the saving of the Ustasha Headmen Ante Pavelić with all its powers. "On 4 May 1945, Pavelić and Andrija Artuković, the Independent State of Croatia co-headmen, crossed into Austria, where the Catholic Church provided them with shelter. Wishing to escape, the distrustful Pavelić changed several convents in which he had stayed for a shorter or a longer while. He had also changed his appearance: he cut off his thick eyebrows, grew a beard and wore false spectacles. Many remembered him as Father Benarez. According to some American intelligence sources, Pavelić stayed in Celovac, nearby the Yugoslav border, where he had a personal villa and an apartment to use. Few traces were behind him. Another report stated that he had stayed in Austria until spring 1947, when he left for Rome. Eventually, according to Special Agent Gowen, Pavelić had enjoyed the support by the British authorities, since he had close connections with them in the past. . . The data from the American intelligence and diplomatic sources, unknown and unused until recently, allow a more accurate reconstruction of the most important events and determination of the Vatican's conduct, and that of the American and British military authorities in the Pavelić case. The entanglement of the Vatican and ecclesiastical institutions across Europe and Italy was no less, if not even bigger. While the first could not be expected, the second could be considered natural" (p. 253).

### **b) American Intelligence Reports on Pavelić's Escape to the Vatican**

American Special Agent Franklin Gowen revealed the most data on Pavelić's whereabouts in the beginning of 1947. "Gowen's report stated that, according to news from several sources, it had been confirmed that Pavelić stayed in Rome on several occasion, and that he was probably there at this moment as well. He attempted to affirm if that as true. According to the news available to him, Pavelić was on the territory of the Vatican, in a separated block, on the left bank of the Tiber River in a part of Rome

called Lungo Tevere. Inside the block, there were five Catholic organisations, a wine cellar, garage, a store and a private apartment. There were also the following religious institutions: St. Sabina Convent, Leshka School for Roman Studies, the Order of the Knights of Malta, the convent of Saint Anselm and a children's school run by nuns. The intelligence officers were not able to enter the inside of the block, and even if that were possible, it would be hard to find Pavelić, who lived in an old building. Another officer stated that Pavelić was connected via tram line with the Ustasha base in Via Cavour 210. Gowen remarked that it was hard to penetrate the closed Ustasha circle, since no Croatian was ready to act against Pavelić. Gowen allowed the possibility that the information was incomplete and unreliable. The only way to find out where Pavelić really was, was to perform a raid on the apartment in Via Cavour, illegally enter the Vatican's territory or arrest Draganović, who was the only one who could reveal Pavelić's den and facilitate the arrest. Gowen stated that Pavelić had been hiding on Vatican territory that was extraterritorial" (p. 257).

**Comment [Z40]:** Translator's note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed

Another American intelligence officer, by the name of Clayton Mudd, at approximately the same time as Gowen, reported ". . . that Pavelić came to Rome in April 1946, escorted by his personal bodyguard Dragutin Došen, a former officer of his personal guard. They were both dressed as Catholic priests. They settled at the Catholic Collegium in Via Giacomo Bella 3, the only one which was fully extraterritorial and which could be entered only with all the necessary documents. He assumed that it was the papal stamp, since that was the only Collegium under the direct surveillance of the Pope. Mudd confirmed that Pavelić had recently got a passport at the Spanish Consulate, under the name Pedro Goner, and a visa for South America or Canada. Three other Ustashes were taken care of in this way as well, but only one had been identified. That was General Vladimir Kren. Mudd's officer identified the road by which the Ustashes were transported from Italy to Yugoslavia. . . The whole network was in the hands of Catholic priests, who were exclusively Croatians. Its central nerve was the College of St. Jerome" (p. 257).

## 5. The Trial of Alojzije Stepinac

Branimir Stanojević, in his book *Alojzije Stepinac – A Criminal or a Saint: Documents on Betrayal and Crime* ("Nova Knjiga", Beograd 1986), revealed a shortened version of the indictment, the court shorthand and the Archbishop of Zagreb's verdict, within the trial that was led in 1946 before the Communist court against a group of Croatian war criminals. The evidence against Stepinac was very persuasive, so the arrogant conduct of the authorities, judge and the prosecutor could just ruin the general impression of the public and help Stepinac's followers in acquiring the aureole of martyrdom for such an obscure, vicious and bloodthirsty person the Croatian Roman Catholic primus undoubtedly was. In April 1941, Stepinac undoubtedly publicly supported the Croatian Ustasha governance, while the Yugoslav army still fought against the fascist aggressors. On 28 April, he issued a circular letter to the clergy of his Archdiocese, calling on all the priests and believers to cooperate with the quisling authorities. He participated in all the public festivities of Pavelić's regime and the Italian and German occupying forces; and the official Catholic press, under his direct command, passionately joined the Ustashes' propaganda activities, so it did not differ from the regime press. He never by a single act or a word opposed the participation of the Roman Catholic priests in the Ustasha military organisation, nor their leading role in

many massacres. The whole Catholic Action, led by Stepinac, as well as all of its special organisations, with great enthusiasm and support from him, had joined the Ustasha movement. All the religious festivities led by the Archbishop of Zagreb were, with his consent, turned into Ustasha propaganda events.

Archbishop Stepinac was at the head of a three-member committee for the forced Catholicisation of the Serbs, and he was also the chief army vicar of the Croatian Ustashes and domobrans. In 1944, as the president of the Archdiocese Spiritual Assembly, he approved the prayer book *The Croatian Soldier*, in which he invited all the Ustashes and domobrans to be loyal to Ante Pavelić. All of these are heavy criminal acts, for which he would have been severely punished even if the pre-war Yugoslav law was applied, especially bearing in mind that the fact that, at the end of the war, Stepinac was given a significant part of confidential archives of the Ustasha regime and even gramophone records with Pavelić's recorded speeches for safekeeping. He could have been convicted to a very severe punishment by the post-war Communist law, for, objectively observed, indisputable criminal act of direct assistance to the Ustasha-crusader terrorists, etc. The punishment to which Stepinac had been sentenced, sixteen years in prison, was not even a particularly strict one in comparison to the degree of the proven guilt.

### **a) The Glina Church Massacre**

The Judicial Committee, during the process, interrogated a large number of witnesses, mostly victims of Ustasha-clerical terrorist groups, but also some of the highest Ustasha functionaries, such as commander Slavko Kvaternik, the Ustasha Minister of Foreign Affairs Mehmed Alajbegović and diplomat Vladimir Košak, who were later trialled, sentenced to death and shot. The most significant testimony is that of Ljuban Jednak, the sole survivor of the Ustasha massacre in the Glina church. Jednak first describes the circumstances of his arrest and transportation to Glina, confinement in the church and the beginning of the torturing. Then the Ustashes started to question if anyone knew anything about the Chetniks, and the first who spoke up, “. . . an Ustasha struck with a knife across the chest, completely tearing his chest apart and he fell” (p. 427). Another one was ordered to put his head on a desk. “He placed his head on the desk, and the Ustashes cut his throat. ‘Now sing’. As he sang, the blood from his throat squirted 2-3 metres. When the blood squirted in our direction, he barely told me: ‘This is what will happen to you too, poor us’. The Ustashes then screamed: ‘Stab him with a knife, that motherfucker. . .’ They stabbed him behind the neck 2-3 times with a knife, and when he fell on the floor, others jumped in, especially certain ones who smashed heads. Two Ustashes jumped in, and they smashed his head completely. Then they threw him in a truck. That is how it went – one truck – then another truck. . . . When almost everyone in the church had been slaughtered and when the number of us alive came down to only ten, I was in a corner of the church, and at once, I realised that no one was in the church. There were only ten of us. I looked from the corner towards the door and saw how the Ustashes were carrying out bloody and bloodied-up people. . . . Blood was running all over the church. Everything was quiet, all the church was lit by candles. Then I threw myself among the slaughtered people who were lying on the floor. I spread out my hands and lay among them. Three of those who were with me hid at a space near the altar, where the priest had held his books. The other 5 or 6 could not hide, and those

5 or 6 were then slaughtered. In a few hours they started taking the butchered out of the church – first, second, third and so on. I don't know how many were there. I stayed lying. They were almost near me. They went from one to another, striking them with a knife. One climbed my back and struck everyone around me with a knife, one by one, like this... (he shows with his arm). It was my turn, he kicked me in the head with his boot and said, 'It's all finished'. He moved a little further and saw one still alive. "Look, not me, people, I am alive. Not me, I didn't do anything to anyone". 'Good', said the Ustasha, 'Get up'. He told them: 'Please don't kill me, I am not guilty, here, all the people around here are already slaughtered. There is not a single man alive'. I turned my head a bit, as far as I could, and I saw – the man was being slaughtered. The Ustasha had asked him if he had any family, and he told them that he had one 18-year-old sister, and another 22-year old one. 'Will you give me your 18-year-old sister?', and the other asked, 'Will you give me your 22-year old sister?' When I lifted my head a bit again, I saw how one Ustasha held one of his hands, and the other held his other hand. One burned him with a candle, and I saw that his moustache was on fire. Then they started burning his eyes. Those tribulations were unbearable, in my opinion the greatest pains in the world. When they had burned one of his eyes they started burning the another, the man screamed, and one of the Ustasha hit him on the spine with his rifle butt. 'Oh, owe!', screamed the man. They continued burning his other eye, then threw him on the ground and crushed his head. They stabbed him in the ribs and all over. When they crushed his head, the parts of his skull scattered all around and fell on me as well" (p. 427-429).

A description of the transportation of the corpses follows, for which a truck came for the fifth time. The Ustasha were taking the slaughtered people out, holding them by their arms and legs. Ljuban Jednak describes it: "They threw me on a truck where the slaughtered men were lying in piles, all on their stomachs! When they threw me in the third pile, and it started leaning and fell over. I hit a board with my head. Since this truck was overloaded, they threw me on another truck. One grabbed me by my legs and pulled me outside, so I all my back got scratched up, and when he threw me out, he made me hit a rock with my head, so my skull split open. They threw me on another truck where there were already corpses, and after that they threw 4 or 5 slaughtered man on top of me. One of the butchered men fell on top of me and his cut throat was right by my mouth. It was extremely unpleasant, because I was all soaked with his blood. The blood flew into my eyes, mouth, and down my whole body. One Ustasha said: 'Is he dead?' 'He's dead', replied another. They examined the church to see if anyone was left. They didn't find out about the three hidden in the altar. As I heard later, these three had stayed at the church for two days, and on the third night they climbed the steeple and asked the people for water. The Ustasha shot at them and killed all three" (p. 529-430).

When they arrived to the predetermined destination, "... they drove the truck right up to the pit, so they could throw the people in it more easily. One pit was already full. I was grabbed by my head and legs and thrown into the pit. I was hunched over, four to five people were thrown on my legs, one lady gave signs of life. Alas, what did they do to her! They raped her above the pit, she shouted and screamed. 'Where are you from?' they asked her. 'I am a teacher from Bović'. Then they hit her on the head and she fell into the pit. Then, one said to another: 'Come on', he said, 'see if she has a gold ring that we might sell'. Another one came down, found a ring on her left hand, and said, 'We can sell this.' The Ustasha were standing above the pit, hitting with hammers and axes.



A first truck came, than a second, third, fourth. You could only hear a man crying, 'Alas, my children, alas my mother, I am not guilty of anything'. Those who were half alive, they would hit once or twice with an axe or a hammer. I couldn't see how long the pit was, but only heard the cries of people. When one group was unloaded from the truck, there came another one. There were three pits, one next to the other. One, that I wasn't in, they filled to the top. About 100 people were beneath me. Four to five lay on top of me. I was listening: everything was quiet, not a single sound. I moved my head and saw something move, I heard an Ustasha saying, 'Listen people, they will not all fit in there, they should be removed to another pit, and will have to be arranged neatly so we can put as many as possible inside'. Two of them came and started to carry out bodies. Those who were thrown across my legs were next. "Those motherfuckers. . . They're alive, shoot at that corner'. They shot two or three times, and one hit me. I was bleeding. I tried moving my toes, I saw: good, the bone is not broken. When they threw the ones that were lying on top of me, they grabbed me by the arms to throw me into another corner. Then they saw that I had a thick shirt from Lika: 'This one has a nice shirt, we should take it off him'. They grabbed me by the arms and took the shirt off. I stopped breathing. They turned my face to the ground and spread out my legs. I was silent, and they left" (p. 430-431). Jednak concluded his testimony before the court by describing his coming out of the pit and salvation, which all in all represents an unbelievable life story.

### **b) Croatian Witnesses to the Misdeeds of the Catholic Clergy**

A Catholic from Udbina, Mara Rupčić, described to the court council how, according to her, the behaviour of the priest Mate Moguš was. She said, "When the conversion to Catholicism of Serbs started among us, there was the priest Mate Moguš. He gathered Ustashas around himself and whatever he ordered them, they would do it. Around Udbina, where he was stationed, and nearby villages, there lived a great Orthodox population. According to the order given by this priest, the Ustashas slaughtered and annihilated those Orthodox. Moguš lured the Orthodox to come to him and was taking bribes from them. People went to him and brought bribes due to their feeling of fear. After a while, he invited the Orthodox from three villages to come to him as he was planning to covert them to Catholicism. When people came to the church, and we Croats came along too, he told them, 'Come out to the monument of King Petar, I will hold a speech for you'. Those poor people came out to hear the speech. Moguš had gathered around him the Ustashas and addressed the people: 'You, Serbs came here so I can convert you to Catholicism. You should not be converted; me to convert a wolf, yet the wolf to run to the forest. There is no salvation for you, whether you are converted or not'. Indicating towards the Ustashas, he said, 'Look at my Ustashas, those are my twelve falcons; wherever I send them, they slaughter and annihilate all, and coming back to home they sing. These twelve are capable of annihilating twelve thousand Serbs. You, Serbs – there is no salvation for you – should you run into the woods, in the woods I will find you!. . . We shall divide your land among ourselves, because you do not have deliverance, proceed where you wish'. After this, these poor people full of fear ran off and did not come back. In Udbina, the Orthodox were half of the population, Croatians the other half. By the order of Moguš, all the Orthodox were exterminated. They towed them away to the foot of Velebit Mountain and no one returned ever again. One woman,

when she came to plead for her husband who was in jail – she had ten children – accompanied by Croatian civilians to plead to the Ustashas for her husband; however the Ustashas told them that the priest had given them an order: the priest's order, their command. . . The civilians, then, went to the priest and said, 'Let the woman go, she is with us and we have lived together well, let the woman save her poverty'. Yet he said, 'I am going to kill that bitch, so I do not see the bitch anymore, and to throw her in a canal. I shall give the order to my Ustashas for the bitch to be destroyed, so she does not stink'. This is how the priest behaved evilly, that he could not have done worse' (p. 438-439).

Also a Catholic, the clerk Josip Ban from Ledenice, testified about the violent conversion of Serbs to Catholicism, stating, "Immediately after the fall of Yugoslavia, the Serbs were forcedly sent to camps and interned by the Ustashas. In September 1941, the Ustashas started destroying the Orthodox Church in the village Suhopoljsko Borovo. I have no information where the church bells and other valuables were taken. Bricks, stones and other similar materials that remained from the former church were sold to the Germans, Hungarians and Croatians who resided in Borovo at the time. Converting Serbs to Catholicism was initiated for the very first time on 21 November 1941. Two friars from Virovitice came for the occasion of the conversion. They were accompanied by the camp officer Bakić and other Ustasha functionaries. Fourteen days later, a second religious conversion took place, namely, they were converting those who did not change their religion on the first occasion. Before this conversion, the Ustashas from Suhopolje and Virovitica came along with the camp officer Bakić and one more camp officer, whose last name I cannot recall, however, I think it was Vargolić. They were compelling the Serbs to convert to Catholicism, threatening that they would kill them all, send them to camps and the like. Two priests from Suho Polje came as well, who were unfamiliar to me; they had some meetings encouraging the Serbs to convert to their religion, and that nothing inconvenient would happen to them after that act. After that conversion, the camps still continued to exist, killings, thefts, arson and so on. Very early one morning in the month of September 1943, four trucks arrived in Borovo. The trucks were filled with Ustashas. They besieged the entire village. They confined all the village inhabitants in one courtyard. There, they extracted the Croatians, Germans and Hungarians, especially leaving the Serbs. Among those Serbs, they left aside twenty five to thirty people: women, children and men, and moved them to a separate room. In that room they beat them, then they left four Ustashas among them and put the others on the truck. These four who were left behind tortured them inhumanly: they tore off their arms and legs and plucked out their eyes. Having been abused like this, they were killed and buried in manure" (p. 440-441).

Roman Catholic Mato Čutić, a villager from Velika Barna, among other things stated, "As a local Croatian citizen and a resident of Velika Barna village, it is well-known to me that from the pulpit of our church, the parson of Grubišno Polje parish, Pero Cvijanović, held a speech in which he stated that all who refuse to convert to Roman Catholic religion would be sacrificed. After the religious conversion they will be able to become a member of the Croatian *domobrans*, where they will be secured from any possible inconvenience. I know that from my village, seventy families have been banished and driven up to the park of the village of Grubišno Polje. Among these families, there were those who converted. Some of them went to entreat the parson to help them and to explain why they had been driven to the park when they had converted to the Roman Catholic religion. He answered that he could not help them on any matter.

From that place, the people were taken to the camps in Sisak and Jasenovac, and they never returned to their homes” (p. 444).

Brano Stanković, from Slobošćina, near Slavonska Požega, testified about the incidents that he witnessed in his district: “It is known to me that a religious conversion of Serbs to Catholicism was carried out in 1942. A certain missionary or a friar from Zagreb, Božidar Šantić, came to our village, to the parish – where there used to be a parish – in Slobošćina. Coincidentally, I spoke to him in a teacher’s home and asked him which appointment had brought him here. He told me ‘the Archdiocese of Zagreb appointed me’. Throughout his time in the village, he performed religious conversions. During the acts of conversion, he made people be baptised by force. On the occasion of his last ritual, at the actual conversion and forcing people to take on the Roman Catholic Religion, he insisted that they say a certain prayer; yet people declined saying the prayer immediately. Namely, he started saying something and the people declined accepting it. Then he started saying the same prayer for the second time and again, people rejected to accompany him in the prayer. When he started saying the prayer for the third time, he said that if those people declined saying the prayer, he would hand them over to the Ustashas. Therefore, the people were forced to say the prayer with him, and that is how they were converted to the Roman Catholic religion by force. He continued the conversion acts in other villages and kept forcing people to accept the new religion; however, if someone declined doing that, he would say to them that he would send the Ustashas after them, who would punish them. When the conversion was carried out in the summer 14 August 1942, from the nearby villages of Deževac, Žigrovac, Skendrovac, some inhabitants from Bosnia, from Kozara were collected also; all of them were locked inside a church, I think it was 20-30 family members, and then they set the church on fire; they threw the other five or six hundred people in wells. Four wells were filled up with these people, and I think there are still people in the wells. However, while converting people, they said that if the people accepted the new religion, they will be protected and will not be persecuted. Yet, that had no value for them, as they proceeded with the persecution, abusing the people” (p.445-446).

A Roman Catholic and an officer from Gospić, Ante Zupčić, testified about the crimes of priest Jole Bujanović: “It is known to me that a conversion of Serbs started in May. However, Serbs were arrested and brought to jail in Gospić before that. From Gospić they were sent to Jadovno. When the mass slaughters started in August, those who did not escape were murdered. Some peasants ran to the forest, and some citizens paid the Italians, who transported them in trucks. Those who were caught were murdered, regardless of whether they had been converted or not. . . The priest from Gospić participated in the conversions. Nevertheless, in 1944, when the Grand Zhupan Frković perished, he was replaced by the priest Jole Bujanović. When he came, there were thoughts that the situation would be somewhat better. However, soon the rumours started that the other Serbs would be slaughtered and murdered. At the end of September, the arrests of men and young women started. . . They were imprisoned, and than the arrests of the others followed. Those were mainly older women and children. They starved there in the prison. I watched them from the window in the building I worked at, how they got a few potatoes a day and how they starved. Many had already been killed in the prison. In February they started killing Serbs in the surrounding area as well. Notices were issued that in one place 20 Serbs were hung, than in another village several dozens again, etc. In Gospić, in my street, 20 Serbs were hung. In the

village Oštra, on the road from Gospić to Karlobag, 20 Serbs were hung as well. They had to remove those hung Serbs, on the very next day and they were buried by the same people who were later, i.e. in March, hung themselves. That was all done by the priest Jole Bujanović” (p. 454-455).

A peasant from Vilda, Adam Dragaš, testified about the crimes of the Catholic priests and Ustashas in Čuntić: “In May and June 1941, I noticed that in the village Čuntić, in the convent of St. Antun, the Ustasha organisations, which had been called the Protection up to that point, started wearing the Ustasha uniforms. We were then pressured by them, that the whole Serbian community in this municipality should dig and mow for those friars, since the guardian was the president of the municipality of Jaškovec. I went to mow for him, and after that, digging was needed. Soon I noticed that we were being forced to change our religion” (p. 456). Later on, Dragaš describes how a larger group of peasants, Serbs, were arrested and brought to one yard, where they were first beaten by the Ustashas with rifle butts. “Then they started to shoot at us, using exploding bullets. As soon as the shooting started, one man was hit in the head, and after the explosion he fell on top of me, on the ground, and I wasn’t able to notice anything anymore because of the noise in my head, and I lay there for a long time until they started removing the dead and collecting them, and then I was lifted up by someone. I saw that a Gypsy cart had entered the yard. They threw the dead into the cart, and I was given a bucket of water to clean the blood from the stone, and they also gave me more hay to soak the blood from the cement, and I had to wash all of that. . . After that, we were transported to Banski Grabovac. . . At the station in Grabovac, over 300 people had been gathered into one yard, so they couldn’t put us there. They sent us to the street again and told us to squat. After that, Ustashas came in twos, taking away two to three men at a time. They took them somewhere; not far from the station gun shots were constantly heard. So my turn came. Three men came and took us to a small meadow, on which there were many corpses. They brought us to the place where a half-meter pit had been started to be dug, and gave us a small shovel. One of us with the small shovel, and two using our hands, dug a pit two meters wide, two meters long, and maybe a meter and a half deep. Then they forced us to drag those corpses into that grave” (p. 456-457). By a strange coincidence after that, the Ustashas released Dragaš and two more Serbs. “I immediately told the people how it was and how they need to be careful, and so we fled afterwards. But, the guardian from Čuntić started to summon the people to conversion. He gathered the residents of Klinac and sent them to Čuntić. Few men stayed home that day, they took everyone with them and they never returned. From the village Telić as well, better known as Dragutinovac, people were taken to be converted, but they never returned” (p. 548)

The professor from Zagreb named Mirjana Šimanski, described the behavior of Vicar Grečl in Kostajnica to the court committee: “While the Yugoslav army was withdrawing on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April 1941, they were crossing the bridge in Kostajnica, with both an Orthodox and Catholic church on the Croatian side. The vicar of the Catholic Church was Grečl. He opened the church steeple to domestic Ustashas and from there they would shoot a machinegun at the Yugoslav army that was withdrawing. They were shooting around Bosanska Kostajnica and on that occasion many people perished... One battery from Bosanska Kostajnica shot at the steeple to quiet the machine guns and truncated it. That was a reason for the Ustashas to slaughter Serbs and then Grečl started to preach that those who convert might find salvation.

Several Serbs, the old professor Matijašević and his family among them, did so. When Ustashas came, they started collecting everyone and the Matijašević family ran to Grečl to get confirmation that they had converted. He refused the confirmation because, as he said, the Serbs were to blame for the steeple. All the Serbs were murdered in Bajiča Jame and persecution against the Serbs began. That also applied to Catholic women who married Serbs. My sister was married to a Serb, but she had remained a Catholic and she and her six children went to the vicar to ask for a certificate that she was Catholic and, although married to a Serb, did not convert to Orthodoxy. Grečl said that everyone was equal, those who had Serbs as friends and women who had married Serbs - they were all outcasts of the Catholic Church and could not be given protection ... Many believed that they would get help from the ministers, as did I, but we were wrong... for the most part, it was only a promise to lure people to stay at home, where the Ustashas would afterwards catch them and slaughter them” (p. 459-460).

### **c) A Fee for Catholicizing**

The witness Ostoja Samardžija, a forester from Mlaka, stated: “I know that in 1942, around the 15<sup>th</sup> March, a minister sent from Zagreb came to convert the whole village of Mlaka. When he came, he invited the men first, almost all of whom were elderly. That meeting was held in Mlaka, in a tavern. I came to the meeting to hear what that minister wanted and what he would speak about. His speech was like this: ‘I have been sent from Zagreb, from the diocese, since I had been returned from Istra. There are about 400 ministers like me – so there is no place left and I came here to convert you.’ People said that it was impossible and that they could not let themselves do this because they were not all there. ‘We alone, a few of us, could not convert’, people said. On hearing that, he started to shout, saying that those who wouldn’t convert, were enemies of the ‘Independent state of Croatia’ and that they will be placed outside the power of any law. And those who were converted will enjoy all the rights and will be like ‘pure-blooded Croatsians’. However, that meeting was interrupted and, on the next day, at 8 o’clock, thirty Ustashas, who were at the station, had collected all the people from Mlaka and chased us off to a parochial house in Mlaka. There we found the same minister and several Ustashas, officers I suppose. When we had gathered, he held a sermon for us in which he said: ‘I have been sent from Zagreb, by the Diocese of Zagreb, to convert you Orthodox to the Catholic Church. Now I will explain the act of conversion. I will stay here for 8 days. I will hand you some booklets – catechisms I suppose – which you will study for eight days, to prepare. Each of you has to bring 40 kunas – as some kind of a fee – which will be paid to us’. So, for those eight days, the people learnt religious teaching. Every day, the Ustashas went through the village, collected people and drove them to the parochial house. On the eighth day, when the conversion was supposed to take place, we all came to a spacious hall of the parochial house, which was crammed with people. We again encountered the same vicar and several Ustasha seniors. In each corner of the hall, there was one Ustasha with a machine gun and with his hand on the trigger. The minister was in the middle of the hall at one table, one Ustasha beside him as the so-called confirmation godfather. Two Ustashas were standing beside the table, each with one candlestick and one candle. One by one, we neared the table. When we came before the minister, we each had to lift three fingers and repeat the oath: ‘I swear by God...’, I cannot say everything that happened. Besides that, each one of us had to

say: 'I am not a Serb any longer, Orthodox, but a pure-blooded Croatian'. After that, each one of us approached another place, where we paid our 40 kunas in cash. When all of that was done, the minister held a speech in which he said: 'You, who have converted today, are now pure-blooded Croatians. You will have the right to join the army, if you wish to join the Ustasha army. Those men may report to the camp and will be received there as such'. After that, a few words were said by that Ustasha of ours – the confirmation godfather: 'I am the commander here and you all know me here in Mlaka, and from today, I am your confirmation godfather, and I want all of you to call me godfather'. That was on the 13<sup>th</sup> April and, just the next day on the 14<sup>th</sup>, at 6 am, the notorious Ustasha Vasilj Punić came and, together with the confirmation godfather, proceeded to arrest the whole village. Everyone was arrested, tortured and sent to the concentration camp. On the next day, they slaughtered 26 people, and the rest, together with women and children, were sent to the Jasenovac concentration camp. Out of the 1232 people that were chased out of Mlaka, only 145 people returned home after the war" (p. 442-444).

As the horse merchant Sima Manigodić testified, "immediately after the establishment of the so-called and notorious Independent State of Croatia, the Maček people and Ustashas came to our neighbourhood in Herzegovina. One of their convoy was welcomed by our vicar in Jabalnica, prior Nikola Ivanković, who gave approximately this speech: 'hit and kill everything Serbian, even a child on his mother's breasts'. After that, the prosecution of the Serbs began throughout the whole of Croatia. They threw the Serbs dead, half-dead and alive into various pits. Terrible molestations of Serbs began through the whole of Herzegovina. After that, some forms were distributed again, already filled in, and they asked for them to be signed in order to get conversion to the Catholic Church. There were many relatives of mine who signed that in order to save their lives. Those who had signed were released home, and the rest were killed in the prisons. Later, they collected Serbs in Ljubinje again, Mostar, Ljubuško, Trebinje, Konjic, Čapljina and other places. They gathered around 500 of them and brought them to the camp of Jablanica, where they were held for a couple of days... Then, a couple of German officers came, who recorded that, and then ordered those people to be taken out of that camp. All were taken to Gospić and all killed there. No one has yet returned home and I think they will not return. After that, there were public discussions, that the Serbs must be slain, or move, or convert. They couldn't move so those who wanted to save themselves had to convert to Catholicism. The vicar, prior Nikola Ivanković, who was the Ustasha camp officer, said to a relative of mine: "Why do you joke with your life? Why don't you convert to Catholicism?" But although people converted to Catholicism, there were still killings of people who were thrown into pits on a daily basis; 25-30 people were murdered a day" (p. 448-449).

As Mićo Ignjatović, a craftsman from Brčko, revealed before the court committee: "In 1941 in Brčko, the forced conversions started slowly, so nothing happens to us then. Certain people - pensioners, state officers and some others - really did convert, but others, who were imprisoned (and I was among them), remained persistent. When we were released from prison, they incarcerated us again, but again no one converted. Bishop dr. Ilija Violani, a war criminal, who was convicted and shot by the national authorities immediately after liberation, had several agreements with today's accused - Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, the Archbishop - but the result remained the same. When Dr. Alojzije Stepinac sent Dr. Ilija Violani in November, he brought two companies - 18<sup>th</sup>

Ustasha and 5<sup>th</sup> Ustasha companies composed of Ustasha emigrants. The commander of the 18<sup>th</sup> company was captain Barjak, and the 5<sup>th</sup> company by Franjo Kastel. They came to Brčko on the 29<sup>th</sup> November. That same night, they arrested several innkeepers and directed them to be our missionaries and tomorrow, when they released them, they said that applications for conversion should be brought by the 1<sup>st</sup> December at noon. They said that we would be beheaded if we didn't convert. From the afternoon, from 2 o'clock till 4, they collected us - over 150 Serbian family heads and their sons. As we were brought by the Ustasha squads, they threw us into the gymnasium like in a cage. They beat us there with everything they had in their hands - rifle butts and whips. Although it was winter and 15 below zero, they took our sweaters off, our shoes, our winter coats. This lasted from 4 until 12 o'clock, i.e. they beat us for 7 hours continuously. Bare naked and barefoot, they chased us to Gunja, 4 kilometres up the railway line, arrested 60 Serbs that could not walk and 7 Jews. We stayed there for 24 hours. In the evening, the notorious district chief Montani came with his Ustashes and said: "We didn't know that you had submitted the applications". And we didn't know either! "Come on, you are free, and come for conversion tomorrow". On the 2<sup>nd</sup> December, we reported to the parish office. They gave us the completed forms there, which were brought from Zagreb. We only had to sign our names. In the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> December, they pillaged the Orthodox church, which was the biggest and wealthiest one in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they took away all the gold and valuable books, then set it on fire and raised it to the ground; they threw parties on that spot etc. After that, they went to the cemetery and dug over and demolished all the Serbian-Orthodox graves and demolished all the Serbian graves and tombstones with dynamite and hammers. We were converted, but it didn't do us any good, because after that the prosecution went on, so we suffered and perished as Catholics as well" (p. 450-451)

The peasant Božo Lalić from Sremske Laze, described in detail how the Ustashes and the Roman Catholic priests harassed the Serbs there. "Upon founding the 'ISC', the criminal actions against our people started, both in other villages and in mine as well. On the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1941, the first and the most significant terrorist action happened. On that day, our village was besieged from all sides by Ustashes, and they started entering the houses through the yard, using their rifle butts to throw the people outside. The Ustashes started to beat up the people while still in their rooms, so many remained lying in the houses and those of us who were stronger and held on, came out into the street. First, they ordered for us to take our shoes off, and laid us down one beside the other and they hit us on the soles. Many lost consciousness and fainted. Then, they forced those who were strongest and who held on to get up, were put on the truck and sent some place from which they never returned. Until today, it is not known where they went and the Ustashes most probably killed them in a monstrous way. From that day, the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1941, the terrorist actions began happening on a daily basis throughout our village, beating, torturing etc. In 1942, at the beginning of April, an order came from our district authorities in Vinkovci to our municipal authorities, and the municipal authorities ordered a drummer to go through the village and notify that everyone that the Serbs should start submitting their applications for conversion. It is understandable that the people, although they've heard it, didn't take it seriously. They wouldn't accept that, because it was hard to convert from one religion to another. However, on the next day, minister Marko Baličević came to our village from Stari Jankovci and started talking among the people about Croatia and how the Catholic religion is the best and the biggest

in the world, how that is the religion to which all of us should convert, because when we convert to that religion, we will be real Croatians, that we were once Croatians actually and that we will now become that again by converting to the Catholic religion, that we will be at peace and equal to the other Croatians, that nothing bad could happen to us, that and what had happened until now would cease and that we will be completely free citizens. Although he said that, we didn't change our minds. Another action followed. This time they used sharper criteria and put it in such a way that we had to convert. Minister Baličević came to the village again and started saying that we would have to convert to the Catholic religion, otherwise we would all be dragged into the concentration camps, so it would be better for us to convert. We again stuck to our opinion and wouldn't convert. Then the notorious Ustasha executioner Tolj came to be the district chief of the authority of Vinkovci. He came to our village. The order came for everyone to close their shops and public offices and we were all prevented from buying and accomplishing what we needed. He allowed us to go to another town to buy things, but those of us who wanted to be granted permission, had to have a certificate that he had submitted and application for conversion. People then started submitting the applications, because they needed things. One Sunday, or rather Saturday evening, a drummer passed through the village to announce that we were all to gather on Sunday in our church where the conversion would be performed. Those of us who wouldn't convert would be driven off to the concentration camps. We came to the church. The minister Baličević was there already and he again started to tell us what he had before – that we would be free, that we were now Croatians and similar things. On hearing that, a woman started to cry, and in a short while everyone in the church was crying; some were crying, others were screaming and nothing more could be heard of what the minister Baličević was saying. Then we started to depart without conversion. But then the minister Baličević started to shout that we would all be punished, although we had come to church to convert. He said that he would sign everything. We stayed at the church and he started to say again that we would become free and equal citizens, that no one should be afraid of anything anymore, because we were now the citizens of the 'Independent State of Croatia'. We believed that it was true. But, what happened? As soon as he converted us and we came back to our homes, the Ustashes came and glowered at us. In some 3-4 days, the notorious executioner Tolj drove here in his car, together with the minister Baličević. They gave the order for us all to gather in front of the municipality office, and those of us who didn't show up, would be immediately shot. The notorious Tolj started mocking us even when he was referring to us as Croatians, it was obvious that he was glowering at us, mocking us and that he derided us for converting to Catholicism. Minister Baličević smiled cynically, too, when he was talking about that. Before their departure, Baličević and Tolj said that the Ustashes would not appear in our village again. We believed this was true and were even somewhat happy. However, as soon as their car left, the Ustashes came, chased us all from the streets and even ordered us not to turn the lights on in our homes at night. We saw that we had been deceived, but we thought that this was happening without permission from Tolj and minister Baličević, that maybe they didn't know about that. However, what the Ustashes were doing continued. The Ustashes started to beat us up and some of us were sent to the concentration camps. Everything was the same as before, until the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1944, when the Ustashes again besieged our place, entered into the village and beat up everyone they found. They ejected us from our own houses, burglarized us and started to



torture people in other ways. On that occasion, 54 people were shot in our village, mostly elderly people and children. I consider that minister Baličević was to blame for the old people and children being slaughtered and beaten, as he was talking to us and promising us that nothing would happen to us any more if we converted to Catholicism, because if had he not said that, our people would have gone somewhere and hid and no terrible crime would have happened. But, in this way, we were deceived by minister Baličević. So many innocent victims died” (p. 451-454).

## 6. Miletić’s Collection of Documents about Jasenovac

A three-volume book entitled *The Jasenovac Concentration Camp* by Antun Miletić (Narodna knjiga, Jasenovac Memorial Area, Belgrade, 1986) is, so far, the most comprehensive collection of documents concerning the greatest Ustasha genocide facility. Besides Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška, which were the largest, other concentration camps, such as Đakovo, Tenje, Lobograd near Zlatar, Gornja Rijeka on Kalnik, Kruščica near Travnik, Lepoglava, Gospić, Jastrebarsko and Sisak, were a part of a unique system of Croatian concentration camps under the direct command of the Ustasha inspection services. “In the way the victims were tortured and killed, in how incredibly monstrously the detainees were molested, in how children and old people were harassed horribly, in how mothers were separated from their children and fathers were murdered right before their eyes, in how daughters were raped and sons destroyed in the presence of their helpless parents, in how Serbian, Jewish and Roma people were exterminated, ... the concentration camps of Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška exceed even what the most wicked mind could imagine and objectify” (p. 30).

The terrible suffering and killing of several hundreds of thousands of people in these death camps cannot be completely described, according to Miletić, “because all of what was negative, pathological and criminal about Ustashism in general – all of that was put together here, and showed up like the most horrible ignominy and curse, exceeding in its perfidy, bloodthirstiness and muck all of the most terrible crypts and tortures in Europe that was thrown to hell by Hitler and Mussolini. The Ustashes killed the detainees on a daily basis, in smaller and larger groups and in masses. This massacre was done by the Ustashes in more than one way: killing with guns, automatic rifles, machine guns and revolvers, slaughtering with knives, dirks, bayonets, axes, adzes and daggers, then using wooden mallets, steel bars, hammers, stakes and whips. The killings were done by hanging, burning in a “Pacelli” crematory, burning parts of the body, stamping underfoot and drowning in water. It is hard to even imagine what the detainees went through – fenced in with wire, with no buildings, sheds or eaves, exposed to the worst of the blizzards and snow storms and a temperature of thirty degrees below zero and, in addition to that, famished and dresses in rags. It was not any better during the summer months when the detainees, without water, suffered horrific thirst in the worst heat day after day, until they collapsed with sunstroke. Besides that, a billion parasites, lice and bugs sucked the last strength out of those martyrs and transmitted typhus and other contagious illnesses. With no shade or shelter apart from the shadow of the person closest to them, they awaited the sunset and night as a relief. But, that was only the beginning of new trouble. In the watery and marshy area where the concentration camp Jasenovac was situated, swarms of mosquitoes plundered and molested the detainees, robbing them of their only chance to rest. So, it was not clear which was more

frightening, winter or summer, day or night, hunger or thirst - or the constant fever and high temperature of those with typhus or malaria, which was only calmed in summer at night or early in the morning by a rare dewdrop.

### **a) Testimonies from the Archives of Milan Nedić's Government**

The Jasenovac concentration camp was formed as a special detachment of the Ustasha concentration camp of Gospić, on the execution place of which (called Jadovno) thirty to forty thousand Serbs were already killed in 1941, slaughtered, hit with mallets and thrown into a deep limestone pit on the Velebit Mountain. Because of those inconceivable crimes, the Italian army drove the Ustashas away from there, but they continued their criminal business with even more enthusiasm in the Jasenovac concentration complex. In this work, Miletić looks down on Tito and it is obvious that Tito's Partisan headquarters avoided the attack on Jasenovac on purpose, although some initial plans were made on several occasions. It is an undoubted fact that the Partisans, in exchange for arrested Ustasha and German officers, almost exclusively saved communists of Croatian nationality and their families from Jasenovac, while they hardly cared about the arrested Serbs. In the first volume of his collection, Miletić reveals a large number of documents from the Ustasha state governance about sending certain people and groups to concentration camps in accordance with legal regulations provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to isolate problematic citizens for some time. Mainly Croats and Muslims are in question here, while the Serbs and the Jews were taken away *en mass* because their nationality alone represented the basis for the highest doubt and greatest guilt. There are several statements from the minutes of the interrogations of smaller groups of Serbs, who were released from Jasenovac and banished to Serbia on the request of Germans.

Interrogations about their terrible camp experiences were carried on in Belgrade, at the Commissary for Refugees of Milan Nedić's government. The content of the statements are pretty congruous so, as an illustration, I am presenting parts of the speech from the hearing of Lazar Orozović, one of the rare few who managed to run away. It begins with the description of the arrest of Serbs in Pakrac and their transportation via goods train to Jasenovac: "They lined us up in Bačić's brick-fields in front of the Ustasha office. The Ustasha lieutenant named Ljubo, whose last name I do not know (this is Ljubo Miloš – V. Š.), received us with the Ustashas and angrily shouted: 'Why do I have to kill all the Serbs, there are other camps in Croatia'. After that, the Ustashas searched us thoroughly and took away all of our money, rings, watches, tobacco, cigars and generally everything they found on us. After the search was over, Ljubo asked who among us was a lawyer. Judge Vlado Ilić responded... Then he took a carbine that was leaning against the office wall, took judge Ilić to one the side, ordered him to take off his winter coat and placed it on a pile of bricks, then shot three bullets at him. Judge Ilić fell dead. After that, the Ustashas ordered the rest of us, who were standing in a line and watching, to say who among us was from Lika, and they responded. The Ustashas took them out of the line and slaughtered them one after another in front of our very eyes. The slaughter was conducted by the Ustasha lieutenant Ljubo personally and several other Ustashas. The victims were standing up and lieutenant Ljubo and the Ustashas brandished their long knives towards the necks of the victims and cut their throats. As they cut, the men would fall to the ground suffused with blood. The rest of us had to

stand quietly in a line and watch the slaughter of our friends. Other Ustashas, who weren't slaughtering, stood there watching us, and those of us who couldn't watch the slaughter, were separated from the line and handed over to lieutenant Ljubo to be slain" (p. 22)

Then one of the Serbs separated for slaughter, tried to save himself by saying that his cousin was some sub-zhupan. This was Joca Divjak. Lieutenant Ljubo answered that he was in search of just such people. Then he ordered to him to lay down on the slain Serbs and show where his heart was. Divjak did so. Lieutenant Ljubo then sat on his legs and another Ustasha sat on his head, while another two squatted beside him on both of his sides and cut out his living heart with their knives... Tomorrow, all of us had to go to work. We were making new barracks. On the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1941 at around 2 pm, the Ustashas lined us up in front of the barrack and separated out 75 Serbs, tied their arms behind their backs with wire and then took them to a shed in the camp, where they killed them all by striking them on the head with wooden mallets. The corpses of the murdered people remained lying beside the shed for the rest of that day. The next day, 80 Serbs – myself among them – were chosen to carry the corpses of the murdered Serbs to the camp graveyard, which was situated in a field near the Sava River, not far from the camp, and we buried them there...

On the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1941, we were working on the construction of the new barracks and 130 Serbs remained in a barrack, unable to work that day because they were sick. On that same day, around 4 pm, the Ustashas burst into the barrack and dragged all the sick Serbs outside. Those who could not walk, they killed immediately with wooden mallets right in front of the, and the rest had their arms tied behind their backs with wire and drove them off to the previously mentioned field near the Sava River, where they killed them by hitting them on the head with wooden mallets... On the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1942, around 80 Serbs were brought to Jasenovac - peasants and citizens from Banja Luka. The Ustashas brought them from the railway station to the brick-fields, tied their arms behind their backs with wire and immediately sent them on to the camp graveyard. The Serbs had to sing Chetnik songs the way to the graveyard. At the graveyard, the Ustashas killed them all with wooden mallets... The next day, a group of Serbs from Sarajevo was brought to Jasenovac. In this group there were both peasants and citizens and there were around 40 of them in total. This group of Serbs was brought to the camp by the Ustashas, who lined them up near one shed and killed them all with wooden mallets. This group of murdered Serbs were brought to the camp graveyard. ... The food in the Jasenovac camp was very bad. Twice a day, we got some corn flour pottage, one spoon each time, and we never even saw any bread, so we were suffering from terrible hunger. On the 4<sup>th</sup> January 1942, a group of Serbs, myself among them, were sent from Jasenovac to the camp at Stara Gradiška... On the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1942, I went to the railway station in Okučani, together with two more Serbian and three Jewish detainees. We unloaded potatoes from the wagon, ordered for the Ustashas in Stara Gradiška... when we were done unloading the potatoes, two busses of Ustashas came, who were on their way somewhere, and they stopped at the railway station and started a conversation with the Ustashas, who were guarding us. The three of us took this opportunity and ran away, unnoticed by any of the Ustashas" (p. 273-275). Lazo Orozović was lucky enough to save himself after only twenty days in the camp (from the 24<sup>th</sup> December until the 15<sup>th</sup> January).

## **b) Friars, the Most Fervent Butchers**

In the second volume of the collection, along with many documents on sending away, lists of detainees and testimonies of the survivors, Miletić publishes statements from the post-war investigation of the chief Jasenovac Ustasha executioners - Ljubo Miloš, Miroslav Majstorović Filipović, Ante Vrban and Josip Matijević. With a condescending attitude to the Partisan interrogators, the criminals described the massacres, trying to diminish their own guilt and transfer it to the others. What seems especially interesting here are the extracts from the interrogation of the warden of the Stara Gradiška concentration camp, Maja Buždon - together with Nada Luburić, Božica Obradović and Vilma Horvat, she was the bloodiest female butcher. Maja Buždon states: "In October 1942, I voluntarily joined the Ustasha movement, from which I was allocated to the Ustasha camp of Stara Gradiška. On arriving, I was appointed a warden of the detainee camp. In that position, I was mainly in charge of taking care of the detainees, their work and circulation. Together with the others, I participated in the mass murders, like all the other functionaries of the camp - men and women. I couldn't remember all the crimes that I committed in detail, but I remember my first murder I committed the best, that of an old unknown woman in the tower of the Stara Gradiška camp. I committed the crime in this way, I pushed the old woman to the floor and shot her in the temple. After that, I prepared hundreds and hundreds of women and children for slaughter - they were dragged from the camps and murdered by Ustashes unknown to me, who were directed by the first lieutenant Čenan, Nikola Gargo, Ustasha corporal Gunjaš, the man called Cigo and many others. I also personally committed the murder of one woman in front of the well in the "tower" yard by shooting a bullet into her chest, and the occasion was that she asked for a cigarette from the present guard, who was then on the guard watch point. That happened some time in the autumn of 1943, but I do not recall the date. I am familiar with the murders of children brought from Kozara, the number of which might have been 200. They were shut into two rooms, the doors and windows of which had been well sealed. Then the rooms were filled with Cyclon B and the children all suffocated. We took only out the children when we knew that the Cyclon B was no longer dangerous. I remember that, on more than one occasion, I received orders from the Ustasha headquarters of the camp to prepare a group of women and children that were selected for execution. Those women and children were usually taken out of the camp, than executed in Mala Mlaka and Jablanac and a part of them were thrown into the Sava River. The corpses of the murdered women and children were buried in collective pits. People were murdered in the graveyard, which was situated right beside the boundary fence. I watched how the murdered were buried and several bodies were buried in single biers, while only one cross was put on the grave. In the camp itself, two rooms were designated in 'the tower', over which I had surveillance for the executions. The crimes were committed at night. I always received the order in advance to lock the other cells and, since not all the cells had functional locks, I locked the hallway that led to those premises. That was done in order to prevent other detainees from hearing the cries of the murdered. However, the other detainees knew about those crimes. The murders were most commonly committed using a heavy steel ball - i.e. mallet - while individuals such as Stojčić, Runjaš, Vuković and others from the security services used to use their knives. The bodies of the slaughtered detainees were thrown into the Sava River or buried" (p. 1047-1048).

Just as the Catholic friars were among the most active butchers in Jasenovac, the Catholic nuns also competed in the monstrous murder of Serbian children in the children's concentration camp of Jastrebarsko - nuns who belonged to the group of St. Vinko Paulski, conducted by their custodian Pulherija Barta. In the third volume, along with a myriad of Pavelić's original legal acts and regulations, reports on slaughter, lists and directions for the Jasenovac camp, statements from the survived detainees, autopsy results on the mass of corpses and statements from the interrogations of the arrested criminals, Miletić pays special attention to the analysis of the data on the mass executions of children. The most distinctive document in that sense is certainly the statement of the woman detainee survivor Mara Vejnović Smiljanić, who wrote: "The children were thrown into the big camp building in masses. They overcrowded all the premises in that building, so that 50 children were driven into some of rooms, who could only fit in there by standing up straight. Then three to four nuns (abbesses) in their uniforms would go from room to room, carrying buckets of liquid and brushes and coated the children's mouths. They said loudly that it was a liquid to quench thirst. However, after one to two hours, all the children started screaming, moaning and calling for their mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers, aunts and other relatives. The children were writhing in pains and their howls and cries became increasingly horrifying. The children, aged one to fifteen, loudly cried, shouted and howled: 'Mother, I am dying - sister, I am in pain - aunt, I am thirsty' and similar. They squirmed and started to fall and because of the lack of space, they fell in crowds, arms, legs, heads and bodies tangled. Their decomposition started. Excrement mixed with live human mass. Gashes were opening up on their bodies. Soon, they started to die in the most terrifying pain and crying and that lasted for days. A group of detainees, selected by the Ustashas, passed through the premises and the dead children, or children in their last jerks before the death, were stacked in blankets and took them to the places where bodies were destroyed, the number of children left diminishing from day to day. In the end, only the most enduring lingered and, at that point, the Ustashas performed their huge criminal parade. The small number of children that were still alive were thrown into the attic of the camp building. Several of these rooms of terror, where the children had been dying, were turned into children's infirmaries. They washed and settled the premises and placed children's beds there with white sheets. They placed healthy children into the beds and swamped them with candies. Doctors and nurses on duty, wearing white uniforms, were allocated to the rooms, and then the international committee of the Red Cross was brought in and passed through the camp's "children's hospital", escorted by German officers and Ustasha functionaries. The Ustashas bragged about their care for the sick children in the camp. However, they didn't show that committee the premises in the attic where the rest of the sick and decomposing children were situated. We, the female camp officers on duty, helped the children with comforting words, cleaned them and fed them, but that was of little help because the Fascists were stronger in their annihilation plan" (p. 439-440).

### **c) The Massacre of Serbian Children**

The Croatian Ustasha project implied the total annihilation of everything Serbian, especially Serbian progeny. As Mara Vejnović Smiljanić continues, "the sight of the children suffocating in a gas chamber was something that I will never forget. Every time

I remember that, I think that it is necessary to tell the truth about the deeds of the Fascists of all kinds, that they must be shown in public in their real image of villains, nonhumans and blood-suckers. All people must find out about their wrongdoings and crimes in order to be able to fight for the freedom of men, for the freedom of life for children and youth. The gas chamber was full of naked children, crowded one on top of the other in a pile. The pile of live children's bodies was constantly growing as they brought them in blankets. In that way, they crammed around 500 children into that room and, before the gas was released, the Ustasha squad came to inspect the room, which was undertaken by the Ustasha captain Barbarić – who was, by the way, a short but rather cruel villain. One child, one-year-old approximately, was lying naked on the threshold of the room. Barbarić stepped on the child's leg with his heavy boot, grabbed the other leg with his hand, then cut the child in half and threw it onto the pile, cursing his 'Serbian or communist mother'. He gave the order for the room to be sealed and the gas to be released, and passed on with his group of Ustashas" (p. 440).

Miletić returns to that issue in the epilogue of his collection, asking how many children had perished in total in the Jasenovac camp. "The crime against the children of Serbian, Roma and Jewish nationality was blessed by the heads of the Catholic clergy and a part of their ministry immediately upon establishing the Ustasha ISC. At the end of April 1941, the first bullets of hatred were shot at the children of the village of Gudovac near Bjelovar. Viktor Gutić, one of the most prominent Ustasha malefactors, gave threatening speeches throughout the Bosnian Krajina: 'All the Serbian pests, 15-years-old and above, we will kill, and their children will be placed into convents where they will become good Catholics'. Dionisije Juričević, an Ustasha priest, joined him with these words: 'No one, apart from the Croats can live in this country and we know where to take those who wouldn't convert – to Jasenovac. It is not a sin today to kill a little child that is in the way of the Ustasha movement'. Hearing that sign, in August 1941, the Ustashas killed 668 children in twenty days in the wider area of Kozara. The most heinous crimes were executed then in the killing of 538 children of the village Drakulić, Šargovac and Motika, in the immediate vicinity of Banja Luka. One of the commanders of the Jasenovac concentration camp, Miroslav Filiopović, a priest better known as Friar Majstorović, was the first to slay the child of Đuro Glamočanin and he yelled: 'This is how, in the name of Lord, I convert the degenerate, and all of the sins I take upon my soul'. So, incomprehensible crimes against children had been committed as early as June 1941 and, in several documents published in the first book, we can see that there were '80% women and children among the incarcerated people' or perhaps that the children were sent to the concentration camp of Gospić, where they ended their lives on the execution place of Jadovno" (p. 713)

According to valid data, Miletić estimates that between five and six thousands Jewish and between five and eight thousand Roma children were killed in Jasenovac. "Many documents published in those three books testify to the killing of Serbian children in 1942. For instance, the way the Ustashas used force on the children is best depicted in the testimonies of published decisions and directives to send a 12-year-old child named Mirko Ševa to the concentration camp of Jasenovac, then the document concerning sending 502 children, from four days to 15 years old, from the villages around Bosanski Brod. There is more data concerning the suffering of children in the concentration camp of Jasenovac, stating that from two districts alone – Bosanska Dubica and Bosanska Gradiška - 3223 children, name and surname given, were killed in

Jasenovac. Likewise, the children from the villages of Slavonija perished. Out of one transport alone that consisted of 1008 people, 434 were children” (p. 714).

But that was just the beginning of the great children’s tragedy, the likes of which the world had never seen before. “The worst days for the children came after the offensive on Kozara in the summer 1942, when 140 sub-Kozara villages were pillaged and 22623 children were put in the concentration camps, ranging from infants to 15-year-olds. And this, what the Serbian, Jewish and Roma children from all the territories of ISC, and Kozara especially, experienced in the Ustasha camps of Jasenovac, Stara Gradiška, Cerovljani, Novska, Sisak, Gornja Rijeka, Đakovo, Jastrebarsko and Prijedor, represents a unique and until then unimagined example of human suffering in the history of World War Two. Against them, those innocent children, the most terrible crime was committed – that of genocide. Separated from their parents, the children in those Ustasha camps died in masses and were suffocated with Cyclon B in Stara Gradiška - and even more of them were killed in Gradina and thrown into the Sava River in sacks. According to the preserved documents from the 12<sup>th</sup> July 1942, in a short period of time, 250 children died in Gornja Rijeka near Križevac, 1631 in Sisak, 768 in Jastrebarsko and 924 in Zagreb shelters, which totals 3563 children... The International Red Cross from Switzerland found out about this horrible suffering of children and sent its delegate, Dr. Schirmer, to intervene with the Red Cross of the ISC for something to be done. However, not only did the management of that Red Cross not do anything, they also... sabotaged the action.

The conduct of the circle that surrounded the Zagreb Diocese was no better, although they now claim that Stepinac had saved 7000 Partisan children. According to the list of “Caritas”, which was a part of the Archdiocese, there were no more than 666 children that were saved by them, regardless of national determination. When the first transportation came from Stara Gradiška with 850 children in a desperate state, 40 dead were pulled from the wagon. 17 more died during transportation and another 30 during disinfection ... Laurencija Đurić, a nun from Široki Brijeg, shouted: “All of those children should have been killed in Zagreb and not dragged here”. Nun Barta Pulherija, the warden of the children concentration camp of Jastrebarsko, followed her example, saying: “These are the Partisan, Serbian children, and to feed them would mean to raise the people who will slay us tomorrow”. According to the preserved data, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> July to the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1942, in total, 12623 children from Kozara were saved from the camp, out of which 2376 later died, while about 10000 more children stayed in the Stara Gradiška camp, out of which only 3591 were later saved. So, out of 22623 Kozara children, 17000 were saved, of which 3140 died as a consequence of being in the camp. Also, the names and surnames of 2376 children from the wider area of ISC in the Jasenovac camp are known... In the book of evidence of those murdered in the concentration camp of Stara Gradiška – which starts from ordinal number 1 and continues until number 3926 and contains the data: age, profession, address and when the person was killed – there are 1107 children of 15 and younger, none of them from Kozara. From all that, we can conclude that the available documents, mostly published in these three books, give the opportunity to identify 7886 children, murdered in the camp Stara Gradiška / Jasenovac by their name and surname.

When the unidentified Gypsy (Roma) and Jewish children are added to this number, the number of children murdered in Jasenovac is terrifying. That number by far exceeds

the data that the number of children murdered in the whole ISC was over 20000” (p. 714-715).

## 7. The Serbs Facing the Dilemma- to Become Catholics or Die

In the foreword of his book *Be a Catholic or Die. Genocide Against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia* (Institute for the Modern History, Belgrade 1995), motivated by the fact that “today, the new Ustasha Croatian state is endeavouring to continue what it was doing in the 1941-1945 period”, Gojo Riste Dakina emphasises the problem of hiding the historical truth, stating: “The subject of the genocide against the Serbian people in the Independent State of Croatia after World War Two, was a taboo in our country for decades. Organised oblivion was attempted – even the complete negation of genocide. Genocide against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia is a terrible historic fact, so the tendency to make investigation and research impossible in every possible way is even more peculiar. In all of our country after World War Two, Croatia especially, a strategy of oblivion was efficaciously developed and a conspiracy of silence about genocide was very successfully organised. Also, genocide was hidden behind an ideological veil, in order for it to be preserved from investigation and research. Everyone who tried to deal with the investigation of the genocide against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia, or to write about it, was proclaimed a nationalist and an anti-state element. The slogan of ‘brotherhood and unity’ was proclaimed and every mention of the war victims on a national basis was rigorously suffocated at its root. The warnings from the highest party and state functionaries, not to ‘dig into the war wounds’ were frequent, while the historians were pressured to keep away from ‘sensitive issues’. A lot of archived materials about the Ustasha genocide against the Serbian people was destroyed in due time, while the remainder of the documentation was ‘beyond the seven seas’ in order to prevent the professional and scientific public from reaching it and processing it thoroughly and analytically” (p. 7-8)

In 1989, Vladimir Dedijer also testified to the destruction of the archived documentation and the ban on research into the Croatian genocide against the Serbian people: “Stevo Krajačić and his adherents considered that every investigation into the Ustasha genocidal crimes was an attack on the Croatian people... I have exact data that some of the most powerful persons in FR Croatia ordered the Croatian Archive and some other archives to destroy all the materials of the ISC, including the documentation on Jasenovac. This means wagon-loads of materials. The excuse for this was the need for the materials to be sent to paper factories because, allegedly, there was not any raw material for the production of new paper“(p. 8). Simultaneously with that, according to Dakina, material evidence on the location was destroyed as well. Many execution places where innocent Serbs were massacred or thrown alive into the abysses of the pits were set in concrete in Lika, Banija, Kordun, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their corpses were neither blessed, nor buried according to Christian customs. What about the memorial sight at Jasenovac? Where, during the existence of the ISC, was the Ustasha concentration camp of Jasenovac? In 1946 and 1947, an order came from Zagreb that all the traces of former concentration camp Jasenovac should be destroyed, which was done. They even offered the inhabitants of Jasenovac the chance to move and leave Jasenovac, so everything could be demolished – to plant a forest and to forget everything” (p. 8). When two books came out in Zagreb in 1948 by two Croatians –



*Magnum Crimen*, by dr. Viktor Novak in 4000 copies, and *The Jasenovac Camp* by dr. Nikola Nikolić – they were sold out rapidly because the Roman Catholic Church organised for all the copies to be bought and burnt, while new editions were prevented by discrete bans on the part of the communist governance.

### **a) Genocide as a Result of Several Decades of Catholic Indoctrination**

Dakina searched a large number of historic books, personal testimonies and legal documents about the history of Croatian and Catholic genocidal policy over several centuries in order to show, using very distinct examples, also found in the works of other authors interested in this subject, the distinctive features of the Croatian national character and clerical blindness, which led to the incredible crimes during World War Two but also repeated their murderous instincts in the period of the creation of Tudman's Croatian state, with direct assistance from the Western powers and the Vatican. So, we can see from the testimony before the court in Šibenik of the Ustasha district representative in Dvor on the Una River, Marin Bučan, that the Ustasha butchers were also materially stimulated for their bloody work: "At the end of July 1941, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the so-called ISC, represented by Andrija Artuković, gave an order for all the Serbs to be completely physically exterminated, regardless of age and gender, and for their property to be pillaged, i.e. for that property to be rewarded to those who were the immediate executioners of the murders. Immediately after this, mass slaughtering of the Serbs began in the districts of Bosanski Novi, Krupa, Cazin and Glina, and in the districts of Kostajnica and Prijedor. The Serbs were murdered only because they belonged to that nation, with no interrogation or finding of any guilt, because such guilt didn't exist. After the physical termination, done almost exclusively by slaughtering with knives or by beating, a pillage of the whole properties of the slaughtered followed. The executors of the slaughter divided the removable property among themselves, because that was promised to them as a reward before the start of the executions. In a forest, on the road between the municipality of Žirovac and the neighbouring district in Bosanska Krupa, I personally saw around sixty children several months to three years old, who were all slain with a knife or murdered with a bludgeon blow on the head. My officer told me that he had seen with his own eyes some Serbs being slaughtered in Bosanski Novi, on which occasion an old Serb took a gold watch out of his pocket and gave it to the Ustasha, who was slaughtering, with the wish to be slain as soon as possible. On that same occasion, a young man approached him looking for a district chief of Bosanski Novi, who would pay him 1800 dinars because he had slaughtered around 900 people and asked, as a reward, two dinars per slain man" (p. 41-42)

Explaining the historical conditions and the reasons why the Roman Catholic ministers were idealistic inspirers, organisers, direct executors and accomplices in the Croatian slaughter of the Serbs, Dakina emphasises that "proclaiming all the Serbian people and the Orthodox religion as constant culprits throughout history couldn't be done overnight. The indoctrination of hatred towards the Serbs and Orthodoxy was developed not only over decades, but over centuries as well, and a consequence of that were mass crimes and genocide against the Serbs. The Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia were the inspirers of hatred and these crimes. To the ignorant part of

the Croatian people, the authority of the ministers and their sermons were enough to create a seed of hatred in them. A great number of ministers in the ISC were the chief inspirers of all the mischief, prosecution and genocide against the Serbian people. All of that was approved by the Catholic episcopate and by the Vatican itself. A great number of the Catholic priests supported the tendencies of the Ustasha authorities to solve the Serbian national issue in the ISC by murder, so they inspired national hatred in the people and encouraged them towards genocide... the Franciscans and the clergy gave birth to Ustashism. No party, no social layer, so fervently and enthusiastically advocated Ustashism as the Roman Catholic Church in the ISC did. The whole clergy greeted the success of the Ustashes in April 1941 almost ecstatically. They presented this success of the Ustashes to their devotees as an act of God and as God's reward for "the sufferings and the troubles of the Croatians, whose prayers were heard by the Mother of God and Jesus Christ alone".

Besides the Ustashes, a significant role in the prosecution and murder of the Orthodox Serbs in the ISC was played by a great number of Catholic ministers. In many regions, they were also the main inspirers of the prosecution and genocide against the Serbs and many altars of the Catholic Church were in the service of the Ustasha ideas. Undoubtedly, the crimes of the Ustashes would never have been so widespread if their chauvinist and racist hatred was not accompanied by a religious one as well, the carriers of which were numerous Catholic ministers. There is a large amount of evidence that many Roman Catholic priest became Ustashes, took a knife and a gun in their hands and slew the innocent Serbian people, adults, women, children and powerless old people. The highest clergy supported the Ustasha criminals. A deep hatred was sowed in writings and words against all that was not Ustasha. In the first days of establishing the ISC, a part of the Catholic clergy approached the organisation and arming of the Ustasha militia in certain towns or villages, from which military Ustasha formations later originated. A number of Ustashes / Catholic priests, voluntarily reported for service as military caretakers in Ustasha and Domobran units, to support them in their massacres of innocent Serbian citizens and, with their sole presence, be their paragons. Only experienced Ustasha volunteers could be military caretakers. No public protestation is known to the Yugoslav public by the military caretakers, in whose presence the crimes against the Serbian people were committed... There is not a single piece of evidence, nor even a sign, that the higher Catholic clergy, the Archbishops or Bishops ever raised their voice against the physical crimes, i.e. the genocide against the Serbs – not only towards the Ustashes, but to the priests-Ustasha butchers" (p. 137-138)

### **b) A Live Ustasha Idea in Modern Croatia**

Dakina especially emphasises the fact that the Croatian intellectuals, especially writers, persistently avoided publicly declaring the Ustasha crimes. "The war is over, but the ideology of Ustashism remained present in Croatia, thanks to the nationalist elements in the Communist Party of Croatia, such as Andrija Hebrang, Stevo Krajačić, Dr. Vladimir Bakarić and many others. They also ordered the remains of the Jasenovac concentration camp to be destroyed, banned the registration of the war victims and the elimination of Nazi elements was not performed. The decision was even made in Zagreb to offer to the inhabitants of Jasenovac – both Serbs and Croatian – the chance to move and leave Jasenovac, so everything could be straightened, a forest planted and

everything forgotten. The inhabitants of Jasenovac refused that and Andrija Hebrang sent word to them: “The poverty in the economy will move you”. The monument in Jasenovac was unveiled on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1966 but that also did not happen without insults. The president of the Parliament of FR Croatia, Stevo Krajačić, told the delegates of the Serbian SUBNOR: “We have killed you here little.”

Risto Stjepanović from Sarajevo, one of the surviving detainees from Jasenovac, sent a letter to the president of the SFRY Josip Broz Tito on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1974, in which he suggested that he visit the Jasenovac Memorial Area on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1975, on the anniversary of the breaking of the Jasenovac camp. The representatives of the SFRY confirmed reception of Stjepanović’s letter on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1974 and that “comrade president has been informed about the content of your letter. A copy of your letter had been sent to the Central Committee of the Communists Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Executive Committee of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the Communists Union”. Risto Stjepanović again sent a letter with similar content to Josip Broz Tito on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1979 and suggested a new date for a visit to the Jasenovac Memorial Area. However, the voice of Risto Stjepanović was “the voice of the deserted man”. Josip Broz Tito visited many cities in all the republics and provinces, some of them even ten or more times. He visited a great number of countries on every continent. But he never found it necessary to visit the Jasenovac Memorial Area, a place where, in the time of the ISC, the notorious Ustasha concentration camp Jasenovac was situated, in which around 700,000 to 800,000 people perished, including women and children, among whom was the greater part of the Serbian nationality. Going by the number of victims, Jasenovac occupies the third place in the world, after Auschwitz and Majdanek. For the Serbs, Jasenovac is the greatest Serbian grave – the biggest Serbian town beneath the ground” (p. 332-333).

## **8) Roman Catholic Barbarity in the Name of the Christ**

Dragoljub Živojinović and Dejan Lučić published a collection of documents entitled *Barbarity in the Name of Christ* (“Nova Knjiga”, Belgrade 1988), in the form of supporting additions to *Magnum Crimen* by Viktor Novak, considering that many new findings and testimonies appeared over four decades that Novak didn’t have immediately after World War Two. As the authors emphasise in the foreword, “in a certain way, Novak’s book was a result of one recently finished event, of a key moment in the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – World War Two. It represents documentary testimony on the mentality and temper of one period in time, about individuals, groups and organisations; about the most heinous and monstrous crimes, which, in their brutality, remind one of distant religious wars of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. As such, the book had a certain political connotation and represented, among other things, a moral disapproval of the Vatican, the Catholic Church, its orders and its individuals. In the era of the trial of the Archbishop of Zagreb, dr. Alojzije Stepinac, and his closest henchmen, as well as other prominent individuals of the Ustasha regime, Novak’s book had an undoubted strength of testimony that was very hard or impossible to question. In time, with the appeasement of the fury, attacks on Novak and his work gained power and their primary goal was diminishing and pushing into oblivion. New books, original material and articles about those questions were greeted with enormous resistance and criticism. Nevertheless, Novak’s work was impossible to subdue or push into oblivion. The

significance and the breadth of the issues he raised, revealed and explained in his book, found their confirmation, and thus their approval, in the latest research. More peacefully and comprehensively, digging deeper into the past, more versatile and, above all, by using materials that became available only recently – the Vatican's, foreign and domestic, new books, collections of the sources, articles" (p. 5).

### **a) A Symbiosis of Vienna and the Vatican**

Ever since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Vatican has been preoccupied with uniting and converting the Orthodox Serbs and that project has been continuously happening until the present. "The consistency and continuity in the application of such policy by the Vatican and its bodies (congregations) cannot be denounced, regardless of the conditions in different historical eras. That was the goal it strived for and which it never permanently gave up – which could be temporarily hidden, but never discharged" (p. 6) Although there are many indications that the most confidential documents in the Vatican's archives - regarding the policy of Pope Pius XII - were systematically destroyed, the opening of the American and European diplomatic archives offers an opportunity for some significant questions to become clearer. The new historical and documentary material allows "the completion of old and the opening of new issues, and understanding the dimensions of the monstrosity and the crimes inspired and lead by the Catholic Church heads" (p. 7). Although the Serbian Government endeavoured to directly organise the relations between the Kingdom of Serbia and the Vatican, after the upheaval in May 1903 and after subduing the Austro-Hungarian influence on the official Serbian politics, which was crucial before that, in order to denounce the Austrian imperial protectorate over the Serbian Catholics, established by the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, Pope Pius X, who came to the position of the Roman Pontifex with direct Viennese protection, was not able to hide the hatred towards the Serbs, so he publicly denounced Serbs as Barbarians after the Second Balkan War and supported the Bulgarians, hoping that they are more prone to uniting and fleeing from the Russian domain. The Concordate was signed after all in 1914, which represented a great diplomatic success for Serbia, but the Vatican's animosity was not halted by that. The Sarajevo assassination represented a favourable opportunity for the Vatican to openly express their, actually traditional, conduct once more. The support that the Curia and the Catholic hierarchy offered to Austro-Hungary and its policy of open conflict with Serbia, in the days of the July crisis, was utterly unreserved. It was also natural, despite the occasional misunderstandings between the Curia and the Habsburg Empire. The mentality and the traditionalism of the Curia, as well as its pretensions, made them natural accomplices, while the Catholic façade, political methods and philosophy... gave a special strength to that coalition. The fact that the Monarchy, despite everything, represented the last great Catholic state in Europe was frequently emphasised and persistently believed by the Curia. A special role was dedicated to it – the protection of Catholicism in the East of Europe and in the Balkans.

The fear of the Orthodox Russia, in which the Curia saw the greatest enemy of its religious tendencies and political plans, has strengthened the union between it and the Monarchy and made it unbreakable. Knowing that Serbia was considered by the Vatican to be a protégé of Russia, in the political and religious sense, and acquired increasing respect and influence among the Yugoslavians in the Monarchy after the Balkan wars by

playing the role of the Piedmont, it was natural that the Vatican considered it to be responsible for the murder of the Archduke in Sarajevo. The Curia endeavoured to find associates in its tendencies to prevent the exit of Russia on the Adriatic Sea. Russian success in that would endanger Catholicism and Romanism at the same time. The Curia stated that the presence of the strong Austro-Hungary in the Balkans and its preservation as a great power, should prevent that from happening. Pius X found himself in a position to conclude the Concordate with Serbia, in order to help the Monarchy and diminish the agitation among its Catholic-Slavic subordinates, although he claimed all the while that Serbia should have been treated harshly, even punished in a military way... The lack of diplomatic savvy and good will, the decisive support of the Monarchy and the readiness to resort to radical measures - i.e. the war against Serbia – his long-held dream, all told.

The Vatican was especially stricken by the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, because the Austro-Hungarian Archduke fervently conducted a pro-Zealot policy, protected Roman Catholicism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and especially helped the Jesuits and all their activities. When the clerical press in all of the Monarchy began raging propaganda against the Serbian people and Serbia, the leading role was played by the Archbishop of Sarajevo Josip Štadler and his assistant Ivan Šarić. The Vatican completely supported the war against Serbia, hoping that the war would be of a limited character and create conditions for the realisation of the Roman Catholic goals in the Balkans. “The conception of the ‘limited war’ revealed the basically aggressive intentions of the Vatican in the Balkans. This conduct of the Curia was determined by religious reasons as well. In the political sense, the Vatican argued for the elimination of Serbia from the circle of independent states, since that was considered to be the most secure way to diminish Russia’s influence and presence in the Balkans. This is also confirmed by the statements of Pius X and Mario del Valle, that the Curia was not paying enough attention nor believed in the power of the weapons in the country considered to be the protector of Serbia. The elimination of Serbia and the absence of Russia from the Balkans was supposed to secure the terrain for the pro-Zealot work of the Catholic Church as well. The support of the belligerent policy of the Monarchy and the idea of a ‘limited war’ represented, in a wider sense, a struggle for new souls and wider regions for Catholic activities. Obsessed with such thoughts, Pius X was not prone to thinking about the political consequences of his conduct, nor the dangers that were approaching from the possibility that the idea of the ‘limited war’ might remain unrealised. Anyway, the Curia was not hiding its optimism about the outcome of the war and they gave explanations for the elimination of Serbia from the political map and through providing support to the Monarchy to persevere in its intentions.” (pp 66-68)

### **b) The Vatican Propaganda in the Service of the “Righteous” Habsburg War**

When the war broke out, the Roman Catholic propaganda began wide propaganda for its justification in the European public, manipulating its believers and the press. “The statement of Pius XX that the Monarchy was leading a ‘righteous war’, immediately found its place in the statements of the highest church prelates and the writings of the Catholic Church. The explanation of the righteous war spread throughout The Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia, although the intensity was not always the same. The Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Gustav Piffl,

addressed the devotees gathered in the cathedral of St. Stephan in Vienna with the words that 'the war represents God's voice, which speaks through the thunder of the cannon'. The Cardinal claimed that the war against Serbia was morally excused and that it should be punished for all that it had done in the past. Cardinal Léon Skrbenski, the Archbishop of Prague, supported him by stating that the war against Serbia was righteous and necessary. Skrbenski called on the believers to pray and work for the victory of the Austrian weapons. The Catholic hierarchy in Hungary also didn't miss the chance to support Piffel and Skrbenski. The Hungarian Primate and Cardinal Ostrogona Cernoch claimed that the war was in accordance with 'the Christian morality' and is thus not opposed to the peaceful tendencies of the Church. Cernoch also emphasised that the Monarchy can realise its unity through war. The Archbishop of Székesfehérvár, Otokar Prohaska, openly asked for bloodshed, although he claimed that the Church wasn't 'the friend of war'. (p. 71) Basically, such a behaviour would be a characteristic of the Catholic prelates during all the war years, although the new Pope, Benedict XV, was somewhat more careful and conducted himself more according to the political interest of Italy. Anyway, the Vatican was a persistent adversary to any Yugoslav idea, the backbone of which would be Serbia. The Vatican expressed special distress and worry regarding the English and French promise that Russia would acquire Istanbul with the Bosphorus and Dardanelles after the victorious end of war. When the outcome of the war was possible to predict, the Pope developed wide diplomatic activity in order to convince the powers of Entente of the usefulness of saving Austro-Hungary.

The Italian aspirations on the Eastern Adriatic coast, the occupation of parts of the coastline and some islands, as well as reprisals towards Croatian and Slovenian Roman Catholic ministers, accompanied with a ban on usage of the Glagolitic and Old-Slavic language during ceremonies and the imposition of Latin and Italian, motivated the Yugoslav Catholic Episcopate, including Bauer and Stedler (as the Archbishops with the most authority), to support the establishment of The State of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs and its unification with the Kingdom of Serbia. A great gap appeared between the Vatican's policy, which was strongly orientated towards the Italian expansive goals, and the Yugoslav Bishops' Conference, that would later gradually disappear, starting from the end of 1919 when the Pope started a new pro-Zealot initiative by proclaiming that every Catholic should act like a missionary. The Yugoslav state, "created against the will of the Curia, began its international existence confronted with persistent and unhidden animosity. The persistence and the hatred that projected from every act and decision of the Vatican presented the Catholic clergy, whose patriotic and national feelings were significant, with great dilemmas and ordeals. The conduct of the Vatican towards the Yugoslav clergy was inconsiderate, a consequence of the harsh intention that the Curia's decisions were imposed at any price. The tendency to support Italy and its policy, to use every opportunity to help it, represented the Vatican as an opponent of the external and internal political establishment of the new state. The determination to impose its policy on the clergy and support the pro-Zealot actions reflected on the inner strength, unity and the peace amongst the confessions in the new state" (p. 315)

### c) The Unity of Interest of Fascism and Catholicism

The animosity of the Vatican towards Yugoslavia was especially strengthened by the arrival of the new Pope Pius XI in 1922, who directly supported Mussolini's Fascist imperialistic ambitions. "A congruity of interests united the Vatican and Fascism in Italy, in working with all its powers against the state integrity of Yugoslavia. In the Vatican's plans, Yugoslavia represented the country of missionaries..., i.e. a space that needs to be conquered for the 'Holy' Roman Church. The Vatican's strategy was simple but efficacious: if Yugoslavia existed, the Roman Catholic Church, being a powerful organisation, would ask for privileges from the state – in payment for the Vatican tolerating it! If not, the newly-established state would acquire a powerful adversary who has the abilities to disturb, not only on the diplomatic field but from within as well. According to the Curia, Yugoslavia was supposed to become a Catholic state, in a short period of time, or – to disappear. For conducting such plans, which belong to the sphere of religious imperialism, the Vatican was using the connection between the religious and the national chauvinism in Croatia, which was strengthened in the first years of the newly-formed SCS Kingdom. On the Pontificate institutes and collegiums, the Vatican prepared 'the hard nucleus', which would conduct in the country what was decided in Rome. All the Vatican's students were proclaimed Ustashas – Stepinac, Draganović, Sakač, Kamber, Lacković, Berković...

During the Pontificate of Pius XI, the Jesuits were especially aggressive towards Yugoslavia. In accordance with his plans, Pope Pius XI had appointed several Bishops and Archbishops, which turned out to be real enemies of the Yugoslav state. In order to increase his influence on the religious and political situation in Yugoslavia, this aggressive Pope helped the Catholic orders and worked on the establishment of new orders and congregations, who were levers for rendering the political will of the Vatican and of Fascist Italy. Pius XI authorised Catholic action, which turned out to be especially capable as a transmission of the mass indoctrination of the Catholic people. The Pope distributed medals liberally to those who were especially distinctive in the application of this policy. The demonstrations of the unity of Vatican's policy and the indoctrinated mass were particularly obvious during the pilgrimages to Rome. The Clerical-national spirit was literally bursting before the Pope in an ecstasy rarely seen during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The pilgrimages to Rome were always an opportunity to publicly demonstrate against the state integrity of Yugoslavia. The Roman Catholic Church in Yugoslavia was constantly dissatisfied. It expressed its intolerance during the agricultural reformation and the restitution of damages for church assets... The Anti-Yugoslav policy of the Pope, Curia and the clergy in Yugoslavia were a constant that accompanied all diplomatic relations and the internal ones as well. The Roman Catholic clergy wanted to gain the best possible position in the new state, using all kinds of pressure – and Yugoslavia had to give up before this persistence. The Concordate, which was giving privileges to Catholicism, was a legal fundament for the pro-Zealots and possible peace. That was the compromise under which the Vatican would halt the actions of the clergy against Yugoslavia" (p. 319-320)

#### **d) The Serbian People Toppled the Concordate**

The Concordate with the Vatican was prepared by the government of Bogoljub Jevtić and the question of its signing and ratification was left as a heritage to the government of Milan Stojadinović. When the Concordate was signed in 1935, Stojadinović was surprised by the massive resentment of the Serbian Orthodox Church and a strong revolt of all the Serbian public. The general opinion was that the text of the Concordate significantly violated the equality of the churches, guaranteed by the constitution. As the authors of this collection claim, “revealing the privileges that the Yugoslav state was ready to give the Roman Catholic Church in the state, which were even humiliating in some points of the Concordate for the state and for other confessions as well, provoked the distress of the public. Stojadinović’s government was condemned for signing such a Concordate, by which Yugoslavia was turned into a state of the Catholic mission. The patriotic and religious feelings of the non-Catholic were humiliated by the state’s acceptance to subject its laws to the canons of the Catholic Church. With such a Concordate, the road to clericalism was open - to a policy that didn’t make any country happy. With such an agreement, rights in all the spheres of the public life were admitted to the Catholic Church that it did not possess even in Catholic monolithic states. Because of these facts, although the first voice of the protestation was heard from the Serbian Orthodox Church, a struggle against the ratification of the Concordate acquired neither national nor religious attributes, but a political one! The brunt of the people was directed towards the governing regime that signed such a humiliating act accepting the tutorship of the Vatican’s political hegemony. Since the Concordate was an act of one policy, the goal of which was strengthening the political influence and governance over public life, the struggle against its ratification was exclusively a political one. Only as such, could it have developed these proportions in Yugoslavia, the kind it didn’t have directly from its occurrence” (p. 350-351). Although The National Parliament ratified the Concordate in 1937, increasing the revolt of the public, which was strengthened by the excommunication of all the members of Parliament who were Orthodox and who had voted for the ratification from the Serbian Orthodox Church - the bloody confrontation of Korošec’s gendarmerie with a procession carrying the church banner from the Saborna Church through the centre of Belgrade, and also the poisoning of the Patriarch Varnava (which was never solved), led to Stojadinović’s government giving up hope of raising the question of the ratification in front of the Senate, as a higher parliamentary house.

The Vatican’s reactions expressed confusion at first, and then extreme bitterness. “The first reaction of the Holy See was silence, hoping that things would change anyway. However, when the Vatican realised that the Concordate could not pass in reality, with all the obvious privileges, it was decided to turn the policy again to the old track – plotting against the state organisation of Yugoslavia. For the Vatican’s policy, Yugoslavia could only survive as a Catholic dominion, otherwise it had to disappear. The Concordate was the last chance to end the Anti-Yugoslav campaign. Its denouncing meant gaining a powerful enemy again for Yugoslavia, which was omnipresent through the Church hierarchy. The directive on the break-up of Yugoslavia, passed in the Vatican, was systematically applied” (p. 489). Considering that Pope Pius XI himself, in his speech dated the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1937, openly threatened that the day will come when all those who are against the Concordate will regret it, “the words of the head of Roman



Catholic Church had a significance full of reproach and threat. At the same time, it was an incentive, a direction of action, for the Catholic hierarchy in Yugoslavia. A mighty and well organised Catholic elite began the systematic realisation of what the Vatican wanted in the country. For the Vatican, Yugoslavia signed nothing more than a death sentence by refusing the Concordate!" (p. 490).

All the Vatican's plans regarding Yugoslav issues were extremely clear and simple. "The Serbs should be catholicised with the help of the Yugoslav state and the Concordate, which was supposed to enable that legally. However, when the plan became impossible, the Vatican lost its interest in good relations with Yugoslavia and employed all its powers - i.e. clerical policy, indoctrinated ministers and the most powerful fist of Croatian chauvinism, the Ustashas - to break up Yugoslavia" (p. 511) The essence of that stand was best described by the Roman Catholic minister and prominent Ustasha Ivo Guberina in the article *Ustashism and Catholicism*, published in the *Hrvatska Smotra* in 1943. Guberina writes: "In 1918, the Croatians fell into a state and political constellation, against which they had fought for centuries. Croatia fell into the Eastern kettle, in which the Croatian nation was to disappear because of the ruler's will. Croatia was to be destroyed as a front wall of Western Christendom... Many Catholics let themselves be fooled, and they even created movements in order to create Yugoslavia as a necessary road to acquire the unity between the Eastern and Western churches - Catholicism and Orthodoxy. When that idea of Yugoslavia was realised, the Byzantines didn't even think about the unity of the church in a sense of Catholic tendencies, and it was the idea of the Great-Serbian state that all the Croatian people would be culturally Bysantinised and politically Serbianised... What the Vatican had never experienced from anyone in its two-millennium history, it experienced from Yugoslavia. This is where Byzantium, through its Serbian exponent, simply spat in the face of Catholicism and its representative, the Pope. The hunt, raised on the Concordate, represents the soul, opinion and tendencies of Serbia and Serbdom, as well as their power in the state of Yugoslavia.

Although the official governance was seemingly in favour of the Concordate, it had to surrender before Serbdom and its spiritual leadership: the Serbian Orthodox Church. Catholicism in Yugoslavia, in a state to which some of the Catholic circles allocated the role of the bridge of Catholicism into the Balkans, was not only on a constant defensive, but it experienced such a breakdown over the question of the Concordate that it was crystal clear that the Yugoslav state cannot serve as a means of church unity, as understood by Catholicism... So, everything was asking Croatia to separate from Serbia and to destroy that monstrous state of Yugoslavia. Firstly, that was asked by the historical role of Croatia, then the role that Pope Leo XIII solemnly declared, by calling us 'the front wall of Christendom'. In order to gain that goal, it was necessary to enter into an open and bloody fight with the people and the regime that had kept Croatia in captivity during the last 22 years - with the Serbian people and its state. Until 1929, parliamentary struggle was used, and later the Croatian struggle changed its methods and reached for weapons. This language was the only one that Serbs understood. It replied with the sound of bombs throughout the captive homeland, with the upheaval in Lika, with the Marseilles assassination and finally with the national uprising on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1941" (p. 510-511)

That minister Guberina was for years, as a political emigrant, a primary connection between Pavelić and the Vatican. It turned out that "the Vatican and Yugoslavia couldn't

have good relations, because the religious empire couldn't reconcile itself to the fact that millions of the Catholics – Croats, Slovenians, Hungarians and partly the Albanians – were in a community with the Orthodox Serbs and that it wasn't a dominant factor in that community. The recipe for the break-up of Yugoslavia, which was becoming increasingly implemented, especially after the denouncing of the Concordate because they saw that nothing would occur from Catholicising 'the un-united', was encouraging separatist nationalist movements. The Vatican's accomplices were not only ministers tainted with nationalism, but a whole Franciscan nationalist movement. Under the influence of the Vatican's wishes, close cooperation occurred between the separatists and clericalists... The ministry played the leading role in the organisation of the Ustasha movement in the area and in conveying the clerical-nationalistic ideas of the 'elite' among the people. In modern words, the ministry performed the 'indoctrination' necessary for the strengthening of the Ustasha-clerical idea, which was destroying 'Yugoslavism'. The Catholic press of that time was extremely Ustasha-oriented, although out of demagogical reasons, it appears separately and represents the ecclesiastical and religious interests. Of course, this conspiracy was dextrously coordinated in the Vatican. Ante Pavelić was a beloved guest in this international religious organisation – and during his 'state official' existence, the headman often accentuated the merits of the Vatican's prelates in the creation and the action of the Ustasha movement. After signing the Lateran Pact in 1929, the Vatican no longer hid the compatibility of its imperialistic tendencies with the Fascist ones. Mussolini's plan for the break-up of Yugoslavia was compatible with that of the Vatican and the lever of that plan was the Ustasha-clerical connection in Yugoslavia... The Vatican didn't hide its support for the Ustasha movement, which was slowly emerging, developing and strengthening under the auspices of Italy abroad and under the auspices of the ministry in its own country" (p. 519).

### **e) To the Pope's Goal by a Bloody Knife**

The Roman Catholic priests acted synchronously as political propagators, organisers of Fascist associations and terrorist concealers, in accordance with orders from the Vatican. The Ustasha *Poglavnik* (translator's note: the Ustasha Head) Pavelić was promoted to a direct executor of 'God's will' and the higher causes, due to which all kinds of crimes were allowed. "Like the priests who acted together with them in conducting the ideology of hatred, The Ustasha leaders held that these barbarities were 'pleasing to God' and 'nationally justified' and that it would, sooner or later, receive the recognition it deserved from those who did not understand at that moment" (p. 553). After so many mass crimes that the Ustasha members committed with the support and direct participation of the Roman Catholic priests, a system of a morbid and spurious clerical ideology was developed to its ultimate consequences. "That the Ustasha movement encountered 'sympathy' in the Vatican and with a great number of the clergy in Croatia is proven with a morbid chronicle of cooperation of the Greater Croatian chauvinists and the clergy during their domination. The Vatican had practically introduced the medieval politics of religious wars via the Ustasha movement and, therefore, Budak's psychological identification of the Ustasha war with the crusades. It was the religious fanaticism that connected them. That factor of religious fanaticism, to which mostly ordinary people are susceptible – was abused by the Roman Catholic

priests to the maximum degree. They accepted policies dictated from the Vatican via Kaptol. Conquering areas for Catholicism with the help of the Croatian chauvinism, whose strike force were the Ustashas, was a coordinated action. Working for the Catholic faith meant the death of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people. All this did not happen accidentally, without the knowledge of the competent authorities. It was not a series of incidents involving half-crazy religious fanatics that their superiors did not know about! It is common knowledge that the Church is strictly centralised and there is no part of the church in some state that is able to have its own policies” (p. 553).

All moves are directed from the Vatican. After all, how could the message from Archbishop Šarić of Sarajevo to Pavelić in 1941 be erased from history? Its contents were published in *Vrhbosna*, a magazine under his control. “I salute you, Mr. *Poglavnik*, on behalf of the suffering Croatian people of Herzeg-Bosnia, which has been waiting for centuries for its liberation and resurrection. Now, we are happy and proud because of the fact that a son of our land, our homeland in the narrower sense – of proud Herzeg-Bosnia – brought us freedom and independence... we pray to God to give you a long life, to the benefit of our homeland and the blossoming of our faith. Let him, the omnipotent God, bless with his blessing your deed, our beloved free Independent State of Croatia” (p. 559).

The archbishops and bishops supported the objectives of their church in words and blessings and their subordinates used knives for that purpose. To illustrate how it functioned in practice, we can use the example of the priest Josip Astaloš, who proclaimed himself the Ustasha commander in 1941, the mayor of the Dalj municipality and who personally led the persecution and killings of the Serbs. According to the testimonies that were the basis for proclaiming him a war criminal, we can see the following: “As the rector in Dalj and a sworn Ustasha, he was appointed a commander right after the establishment of the NDH and he was a direct leader and instigator of the sadistic crimes in both Dalj and Erdut. Forming a gang of scoundrels and ill-advised people, he persecuted the Serbs in the aforementioned towns. He performed numerous arrests and drove people to the camp in Osijek (the former Sokolski dom), where many perished. Murders were committed – everyone knew that his men were responsible but nobody dared investigate, they were afraid of his revenge. At night, he and his men used to collect Serbs with their wives and children and force them into cellars where his men would beat them and strip the clothes off the women. But this was not enough to vent the persecution of the Serbs – he immediately continued to personally persecute all the inhabitants of those areas who stood up to him and his tyranny... He is the main inciter of the demolition of the Orthodox churches in Dalj and Erdut. He was a fanatical Ustasha who advocated the battle to exterminate the Serbs with a cross in his hand. As a priest, he showed the utmost intolerance and, as an Ustasha, inhumanity and malice” (p. 562-563).

As we can see on the basis of the testimony of Pavelić’s close friend, Friar Kerubin Šegvić, from his book of recollections of the first days of the creation of the Croatian Ustasha state, “For the Vatican, the NDH was a long-desired reality and it recognised it *de facto*” and maintained a normal relation with it. The only differences were that the Vatican representative did not have the title of nuncio, but the title of legate, while the Croatian representative in the Vatican had the role of a ‘plenipotentiary’. The experienced Vatican diplomats would have recognised the NDH *de jure*, but did not want to rush and show the whole world how much they cared about this clerical-Ustasha

state. Because of that, they recommended an indirect way – first, some other, neutral countries should recognise the NDH – for example, Argentina or Brazil. Those two states were counted on especially because they had already suffered Nazi influence. When this formality was over, the Vatican would not have to wait for the end of the war and the Ustasha wishes would come true! Obviously, the atrocities committed in the NDH are common knowledge in the seat of the Roman Pope but are kept silent diplomatically. Šegvić himself admits that the Ustasha members had already been known as “a pack of barbarians and cannibals”, but he wanted to change this ‘image’ using the story about the libels spread by the enemies of the young state.

Of course, the Vatican ‘believed’ that these were only libels, because that suited them. It would have been unpleasant for history if one ‘Catholic’ state, whose independence the Vatican wanted to recognise without hesitation, committed barbarisms in the name of Christ. Because of that, they offered Šegvić their help in counter-propaganda in order to negate those ‘libels’. They put the main Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano* at his disposal, which Šegvić used ardently. The Pope was satisfied with that and stated: “The Holy See can always count on Croatia as a Catholic state”. Of course, this happened because Šegvić informed him that the leaders of that state were godly, especially Pavelić. According to the envoy of Ante Pavelić, the Pope was exceptionally obliging and kept him there for an unusually long time to chat with him... The establishment of the *NDH* was not a surprise for the Vatican, but a part of the plan that was unfolding. The downfall of the Catholic domination, which had been concocted as a concordat with Yugoslavia, meant only a change of plan concerning proselytism, not a step back. The Vatican never gives up on its major goals! The Yugoslav withdrawal from the concordat implied that the Vatican would work towards the destruction of this multi-confessional community via its exponents. The occupation of Yugoslavia presented a chance for the clerical-chauvinist elements in Croatia to take the dominant position. The introduction of a dictatorship, mass genocide committed against the Orthodox Christians and Jews, chauvinism that was not only ethnical, but also religious – all that is the result of a multitude of interests interconnecting in Croatia. The Pope - the head of the Roman Catholics - did not try too hard to conceal his love and support for this monstrous state” (p. 578-579).

### **f) The Friars’ ‘Preventive’ Massacres**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1942, when Ante Pavelić convened the Croatian Parliament in Zagreb as an authorised Members of Parliament – although that event was not preceded by anything even approaching democratic elections and the MP mandates were imposed by the Ustasha government – the following priests showed up: Alojzije Stepinac PhD, the Bishop of Đakovica Ante Akšamović, the Rector of Sarajevo Božidar Brale, the Rector of Daruvar Mijo Etinger, the Rector of Farkaš, Ante Orgalić, the Dean of Senj Ante Lončarić, the Rector of Koprivica Stjepan Pavunić, the Dean of Bakar Matija Polić, the Dean of Križevac Tomo Severović, the Rector of Đelekovac Franjo Škrinjar, the Rector of Ledenik Stipe Vučetić and the Friar of Tučep Bonifacije Sipić. All of them greeted the speech of the *Poglavnik* on the program with frenetic applause and standing up to honour the speaker. After all, there were almost no differences in the propaganda activities between the Roman Catholic religious press and the Ustasha political press. “In all the Catholic newspapers, in some of them almost on every page, pro-Ustasha

propaganda was performed – pro-regime actions of the clergy were noted, Ustasha celebrations, the dedications of flags and homes, Ustasha oath-takings, mutual Ustasha/clergy visits, medals and decorations - all were reported on in detail. Consequently, the Croatian Catholic press was serving the Ustasha regime, the ideology of which was clerical-chauvinistic” (p. 618). All those newspapers propagated the forcible conversion of the Serbs or their extermination if they refused to convert. That attitude was even explained through the highest principle of the Roman Catholic morality. “This means that the Catholic Church, i.e., its hierarchy, endorses the extermination, i.e., slaughtering, of the Serbs only because they do not want to be assimilated – because they do not want to become Catholics” (p. 626). As the already quoted priest and Ustasha ideologist Guberina emphasised, “because those ‘elements’ want to remain in their faith and ethnicity, they deserve to be exterminated. He also mentioned that they engaged in ‘armed conflicts’, ‘which is even worse’, but even if they did not engage in those ‘armed conflicts, they should still have been exterminated” (p. 626).

The Roman Catholic morality, supported by the priests’ criminal enthusiasm in the savage Ustasha practice, implied and often emphasised that “peaceful folk, those who do not fight, should also be slaughtered, for ‘preventive’ purposes! In time, those peaceful people may come up with the idea of fighting. The children in the cradle would grow up, and, they too could be dangerous, therefore slaughtering children is also ‘preventive’. All Serbs should be slaughtered “without waiting for their attack”. All of this under the pretence of ‘defence’. The emphasis is on the ‘sword’, which should be used to strike the peaceful Serbian population for ‘preventive’ reasons! And all this is justified by the Catholic morality... There had been many priest who killed with their own hands, slaughtered, tortured and committed the most obnoxious bestialities” (p. 626). Moreover, it was not by chance that the Roman Catholic priests proclaimed Adolph Hitler as an authentic interpreter of God’s will. The priest of Banjaluka, Petar Pajić, published an article in the *Catholic Weekly* on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1941 under the name *Hitler’s Missions*, explaining to the elated Croatian flock that: “Until now, God has talked in advices, Papal encyclics, numerous sermons, catechisation, the Christian press, missions, in the heroic examples of the saints, etc... So? – they have closed their ears. They have been deaf. – The overall persecutions in Europe and the whole world. Now the Lord has decided to use another method. He shall perform missions. European! Worldwide! They shall be held not by the priest, but by the military leaders lead by Hitler. Sermons shall be heard well, assisted by cannons, machine-guns, tanks and bombers. The language of the sermons shall be international. There will be no one who could say that he does not understand, because people are familiar with what death, injuries, diseases, famine, fear, slavery and poverty are” (p. 613-615).

Although there have been multiple attempts at perfidiously concealing the extent of the anti-Serbian genocide, “today, it is very difficult to hide this criminal work of the Roman Catholics clerics from history, not only among the elite, but also in the field, among the common people. There are numerous proofs that many priests, who wore Roman Catholic uniforms, became Ustasha leaders. The very people, who were supposed to preach about love among the Christians have shown that they could not care less about Christianity. They took guns and knives in their hands and slaughtered innocent people, innocent Serbs – only because they had different opinions and because they did not bow to the Roman Pope. The Roman spiritual imperialism in the NDH

exceeded the imperialism at the time of the inquisition, when only individuals were suffering. At the time of this clerical-chauvinist product, all the Serbs had the destiny of witches. They had to die in terrible pain! And all of this was coming from the Vatican and from the Kaptol. From mouth to mouth, from the writings, with the help of the press and the activities of the archbishops and bishops, an ideology was spreading. That ideology is unprecedented in the history of human stupidity. ... The Croatian 'independent' state, as it was organised by the Ustasha and the Roman Catholic priests, was a symbiosis of the Great Croatianism and religious hegemony. The Ustasha movement, which was a small terrorist group, could have never been able to execute the plan of exterminating the Serbian Orthodox people, Jews and Roma..., if they were not helped by the Roman Catholic priests instructed by the Kaptol and the Vatican" (p. 633-634).

Problems in the clerical-Ustasha cohabitation occurred when the overly zealous Ustasha crimes started to interfere with the process of conversion to Catholicism and there were many cases where the new Serbian converts were slaughtered immediately after conversion. Addressing these issues, Stepinac wrote to Pavelić on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1941 and warns him: "By God's grace, today we have a chance we have never had in history to help the Croatian cause and save a large number of souls, people of good will, peaceful peasants who live among the Catholics. They know the Catholics, as the Catholics know them. Their conversion is easy and acceptable. Unfortunately, the authorities put obstacles before the Croatian and Catholic cause, with their narrow views. In the meantime, we shall miss a great opportunity for the Croatian cause and the holy Catholic cause to become a majority where we are now a minority" (p. 747).

### **g) The Joint Criminal Enterprise of "The Border on the Drina"**

From the book of Đoka Slijepčević entitled *The History of the Serbian Orthodox Church*, we can see that the Bishop of Mostar, fra Alojzije Mišić, was "wholeheartedly for the conversion of the Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism, but he opposed the method used to convert them decisively" (p. 742). The authors of this anthology take some citations from the letter Misic sent to Stepinac on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 1941, complaining about the unfavourable circumstances that interfere with the conversions. He wrote: "By God's grace, now is our best chance, a chance we have never had before, to help our Croatian cause, save numerous souls, people of good will – they are the good natured peasants who live mixed with the Catholics. They know the Catholics and the Catholics know them. Conversion is very opportune and easy. Unfortunately, the authorities put obstacles before the Croatian and Catholic cause, with their narrow views. It is not the leaders that are guilty. Almost everyone interferes, the young, the unready, the inexperienced people: instead of sense and brains – there is fire and violence – it is no wonder they have very unfavourable consequences for the Croatian and the Catholic cause" (p. 742). Then the writer partially paraphrases and partially directly cites the fragments from Mišić's letters. "Bishop Mišić testifies that the Ustashes would catch those who converted to Catholicism, even during masses, 'old and young, male and female', and kill them. Mišić laments over this 'work' and says: "A few years ago, everyone condemned such ill-advised work and activities and now, at present, we miss good opportunities and chances that we could use for the holy Catholic causes. To become a majority in Bosnia and Herzegovina, instead of a minority. To stop waiting for

mercy from somebody else's hand, but to be the ones who give mercy. I hold this to be our sacred and holy cause”.

In his second letter to Stepinac, from the 7<sup>th</sup> November 1941, Mišić testified even more clearly about the Ustasha crimes committed against the Serbs. “They hunted people –Mišić said – like beasts. They slaughtered them, killed them and threw them into the pits alive. They threw women, mothers with children, grown-up girls and small children, both male and female, into the pits”. Mišić listed the names of the places where the Serbs in this region were killed, stating their numbers and how they were killed. He said that “six railroad cars, full of mothers, girls and children who were less than ten years old”, were brought to the station at Šurmanci, “where they were unloaded and taken into the hills. They threw mothers together with their children into deep chasms. They were all thrown down and killed”. Mišić himself said that he would go on for too long if he cited the all. “In the city of Mostar, hundreds were bound together, taken out of town and killed like poultry. Finally, there came the deportation of masses of Serbs into Serbia. There are cries everywhere, people are mourning – running away – and even a deputation went to Rome, to Mussolini. It is no wonder that, due to such circumstances, the question of the conversion of the Orthodox to Catholicism in Herzegovina failed totally. The bloodthirstiness of the storm troopers and camp commanders, the bestiality of some individuals and the lack of understanding of the higher regional authorities severely damaged not only the religious interests, but also the national interests. If God, our Lord, had given the responsible people some wisdom and discernment, if the question of the conversion to Catholicism had been handled more skilfully and smoothly, the number of Catholics would have risen to around six hundred thousand. This is how much Bosnia and Herzegovina needs – to rise from 700,000 to one million three hundred thousand Catholics (p. 742-743).

There are no protests regarding the prosecutions and the killings of the Serbs save for those claiming interference with the process of forced conversions. The dispute is all about the efficiency of the models and maximum effectiveness – the matters the Vatican was interested in the most and, because of that, it tolerated the ‘collateral damage’, as the most brutal bestialities were called. “The Vatican had its representative (legate) in Zagreb – Marcone – who had an insight into everything and travelled to Rome frequently, where he reported to his superiors. However, the policies of the NDH state magnates were favourable for the Vatican's goals and, therefore, it was absurd to expect someone to protest against their interests! The NDH was also useful and, because of that, the Vatican did everything in its power to cover up their flaws before the world public. The goal justified the means! The Ustasha state increased the power of Catholicism in the Balkans. The exterminations of the Orthodox people, demolishing the Orthodox churches and destroying the Orthodox priests created better perspectives for the powerful Roman Catholic Church. Because of this, the Vatican was satisfied and grateful to Pavelić and his friends and satisfied with Stepinac. Furthermore, the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Maglione, openly expressed his joy and told the Ustasha envoys that the Holy See rejoices because of the success of the mass conversions to Catholicism of the Orthodox Serbs that he referred to as Schismatics. In addition, the head of the Croatian section in the Vatican administration, monsignor Sigismondi, ‘expressed’ his ‘joy’ to the Croatian ambassador Rušinović, in February 1942 about the mass conversions of the Serbs. Sigismondi said clearly that “the Holy See rejoices because of that”. He did not say it as his personal opinion, but on behalf of the Holy See,

the centre of Roman Catholic proselytism. It is obvious that Sigismondi was well informed on the implications, because the American and the British press wrote about that, as well as the Italian – they are horrified at what was done in the name of Christ in the allied state of NDH! But, as far as Sigismondi was concerned, all of that was just enemy ‘propaganda’; he did not acknowledge the facts, the same as the Ustashas – he preferred to hide his head in the sand of religious dogma. When the data on the terror arrived, he stated that “The Holy See does not believe” in that! But he listened to such lies with pleasure and suggested that the Ustasha theses should have been formulated in order for the attitude of the Holy See toward the question of mass conversions to be consolidated” (p. 760).

Cardinal Maglione stated that the enemies of his Church were “all those who speak the truth about the Ustasha movement, on the massacres committed under the wing of the religious Catholic hierarchy in Croatia. All these are confirmations of the genocidal partnership of the Vatican, Kaptol and the Ustasha state! Each of them entered this ‘job’ with its own agenda. The cooperation was necessary, because none of these factors was able to conduct this evil project alone. Archbishop Stepinac was a direct exponent of the Vatican in that huge action of conversion. But he also acted as a Croatian chauvinist, who did not only hate the Orthodox as members of another religion, but as Serbs, too. He knew how to utilise the symbiosis of religious and national chauvinism that was present in a portion of the Croats and to articulate that enormous negative energy through the elimination of the ‘intruders’ – the Serbs – and through their forced conversion. Thus, the Vatican dream of a purely Catholic region stretching to the Drina River would also have come true. Stepinac was the most determined propagator of the Ustasha state with the Pope. He was the one who manipulated the truth with the help of false reports he received from Šarić and the likes. In Rušinović’s report to Marković, from the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1942, we discover that Stepinac was an intermediary between the Vatican and the Croatian clerical product and whose idea he offered to the Curia. Rušinović wrote that Stepinac had spent 12 days in Rome and that he had been in a good mood, “actually, in a combative mood against all possible enemies of our country”. Without a doubt, for Stepinac, the Ustasha ideology was something to strive for. He criticised its flaws and stupidities, but not to oppose it, but to make it more functional and more acceptable. Arguments or, to be more precise, misunderstandings with Pavelić and his helpers, which are tendentiously explained today as ‘opposition’, are in fact the functional disputes of two like-minded people who streamed towards the same goal. How slight this disharmony was is obvious from the activities of this Croatian Prelate in Rome” (p. 761).

From that report, it is also obvious that, in the Vatican, Stepinac presented “Pavelić’s dictatorship and terror as something ‘absolutely positive’, avoiding the truth. Stepinac explained matters that were distinct to the terror, which was known to the Pope, as a method of ‘enforcing law and order as soon as possible’. The religious leader from Croatia was bothered by each attack on the NDH and strove to present the circumstances as much better than they really were. He talked to the Pope about the Serbs in Croatia, blaming them for the sins. The Pope agreed, because Stepinac had the intention of inciting the realisation of politics convenient to the Holy See. In the centre of Catholicism, at the time of WWII, many were overjoyed with the Ustasha pragmatism, which was one of the reasons why Stepinac could support the NDH without suspicion. That was also obvious at the banquet organised by Rušinović, where the Catholic leader



of the Croats proposed toasts. Rušinović referred to that mutual support, praises and motivation as 'very nice'. It is obvious that Stepinac could not have appeared in the Vatican with that clerical-Ustasha ideology if he had encountered the disapproval of that politics in those responsible for creating the policies of Vatican.

That the Ustasha politics was what the Holy See wanted, is confirmed by the presence of the minister (official minister, because the Vatican still recognised Yugoslavia) Felicio, as well as Pretner-Cipik, the official in the Vatican 'state secretariat'. The Duplicity of the Vatican was also revealed in this case, which proved itself to be a constant of its political actions. At the banquet, those who should have disapproved of the inhumanity, according to their diplomatic or Christian place in the hierarchy, sang odes to the Ustasha movement! Stepinac had always tried to say what the head of the Catholic Church would like to hear, as the Pope's subordinate" (p. 762). Going against all moral and Christian principles, "by false arguments and historical forgeries, Stepinac managed to get the Pope to support the extermination of the Serbs and Orthodoxy, which meant liquidations and forced conversions. That was the theses that the Pope himself acknowledged and approved of, as well as the whole Vatican Curia. Stepinac emphasised that the Ustasha Croatia also defended the Pope's Italy from - Orthodoxy! This can not only be seen from the Vatican decrees and the reactions evident in the 'diplomatic' correspondence cited here, but all other matters point in that direction, even the attitude of the Archbishop of Zagreb – it is clear that what the Ustasha regime conducted suited the Vatican,

because their goals were the same: the tighter border of the Catholic Church on the Drina! That goal 'justified' everything, even the sea of blood and tears of hundreds of thousands of victims" (p. 763-764).

### **h) Inciting and Organising the Crusade Terrorist Gangs**

At the end of WWII, many Ustashes, running away in panic, managed to get to Austria and Italy, where they surrendered to the Western Allies. "In accordance with suggestions from Vatican, they were not treated as criminals who had killed around a million of people, but as possible allies in their possible conflict with 'world communism". In the camps where the Ustasha members found themselves, their recruitment and training was initiated for a special operation – they were supposed to be infiltrated back into Yugoslavia and 'prepare the rebellion" (p. 859). A greater number of Ustasha criminals fled into the woods and called themselves the 'crusaders'. Stepinac's residence in Zagreb and Šarić's residence in Sarajevo became centres for helping crusader gangs with food, medicine and all other necessities. "The crusader-terrorist groups, inspired, organised and helped by a part of the clerics, were composed exclusively of Ustasha criminals. Their only activity was pillaging and killing. Banditism became their means and the goal... Behind that banditism, stood a part of the Catholic clericals who were relying on the foreign imperialist reaction" (p. 862).

Stepinac actively participated in inciting and organising the crusade gangs. "In the Archbishop's residence, the Ustasha-crusader gang's standard was consecrated. Under that standard, they were supposed to commit crimes 'in the name of Christ'. Standards were made by the nuns from Gundulić Street; it was consecrated in the Archbishops chapel and then sent to the crusader gangs. Archbishop Stepinac was familiar with the consecration of the standard, but was concerned that the act of consecration was

performed seriously and carefully, so that the cause would not be revealed” (p. 863). The authors present in their anthology a considerable number of original documents that describe in detail how the curate Friar Kruno Miklić was the organiser of the crusade-terrorist group in Vareš, that the priests were the founders of the crusader-terrorist activities in Tuzla and Banja Luka, that the steward of the Franciscan cloister at the Kaptol of Zagreb, Friar Mamerto Margetić was a helper and an organiser of the Ustasha crusade groups, that the Vicar of Sarajevo, don Ivan Čondrić, was the leader of the crusade gangs around Sarajevo, that the Vicar of Zenica, Friar Franjo Šlafhauzer, was an organiser of the crusade terrorist formations in Zenica and Busovača, that Friar Kerubin Posavac and Friar Gilbert Đerkeš were organisers of the Ustasha crusaders in Osijek, where the crusader brotherhood especially intensified its activities, that Friar Skansa and Friar Bube were the main helpers of the crusader gangs around Dubrovnik, that the Vicar don Ante Talić was the spiritual leader of the crusader terrorists in Sinj and Imotski, etc.

## **Part Six**

### **Tito's and Tudjman's Achievement of the State-Building goals of the Roman Catholic Criminal Project of Creating the Artificial Croatian Nation**

#### **I. The Anti-Serbian Instrumentation of the National Concept of Great Serbia**

##### **1. General Information**

From Ljudevit Gaj, through Josip Juraj Štrossmajer and Franjo Rački to Ante Starčević and Eugen Kvaternik, the artificial Croatian national ideology had been created and developed by imposing the Croatian national awareness on the Catholic Serbs. It started with expressions of brotherly love and solidarity toward the Orthodox Serbs, only to end in unrestrained hatred and intolerance. Hatred and intolerance were the result of the discovery that the Orthodox Serbs would never agree to submit to a Croatocentric concept motivated by the aspiration to convert the Serbs to Greek Catholicism or Catholicism, as well as that they would never accept for the main political and cultural centre of the Slavic South. It turned out that an artificial, externally inspired, pseudo-national project cannot compete successfully with historically deep rooted and naturally developed ideas of the all-Serbian national unification and the restoration of the state-building traditions through the concept of Great Serbia, in the sphere of ideas or political reality.

Sometime around the time the publicist works of Mihovil Pavlinović were published, the propaganda campaign against the Great Serbian aspirations intensified, followed by constant demands to delimit the Serbs and the Croats at the Drina River. This is present in the ideas of Stjepan Radić, while his successor accepted a smaller territory for Croatian megalomania, considering the solution of Banate as a successful end to the first phase. The publicist works and political speeches of Ante Pavelić are full

of protests against the Great Serbian danger. In this respect, there are no differences in his writings as a head of the genocidal Ustasha project and the texts from either of his works as an emigrant. Josip Broz Tito and Franjo Tuđman are not so different to Pavelić. It was the continuous aspersions of the Great Serbian national concept that enabled them to dissolve the Serbian lands, to make parts of the Serbian people confrontational against each other and build the Croatian state of today on many of the Serbian ethnic territories. Furthermore, the Western Croatian patrons lead by the Vatican, heartily interfered in that orchestrated anti-Serbian campaign, filling it with monstrous lies and aspersions. In the final outcome, the victims of genocide were proclaimed as criminals, while the perpetrators of the genocide were praised as determined freedom and democracy fighters. This is how globalism subsequently redistributed their historical roles.

## **2. The Essence of the Project of Great Serbia as the Framework of the National Ideology**

The Great Serbian national project has never been hegemonistic or aimed at subjugating other peoples, because the Serbian political ambitions have always been aimed at the unification of the violently separated parts of the Serbian nation and the territories where the Serbs had lived for centuries as majority. The achievement of the Serbian national and state-building unity is a fundamental national right. The Serbs do not want other peoples' territories – Italian, Austrian, Romanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Greek or Albanian; they only want what is theirs – the territories they have inhabited permanently or the territories they were chased out of by force. Serbian natural state borders can only be national borders and there is no serious segment of the Serbian nationalistic ideology, or any respectful nationalistic ideologist, who would advocate greater pretensions and imperialistic objectives. Therefore, throughout the wars in the last two hundred years, the Serbs had never been conquerors but, exclusively and regularly, liberators, they liberated their territories and the parts of the Serbian people who lived there. There are only slight, irrelevant variances present in the attempts to encircle the state borders in accordance with strategic criteria. In those attempts, the most important tool of the ethnic determination of a certain territory is the language spoken on that territory. As opposed to the Great Germany idea, for example, on which the realisation of the Great German state-building project had been attempted several times, the Great Serbian idea has always been, in its essence and self-determination, exclusively people-liberating and emancipating – never aimed at conquest or subjugation. But those who attack Great Serbdom today, creating a bogeyman out of it and intentionally spreading fear and dissatisfaction, speak of it as if they are faced with the bearers of the Great German idea; they have just changed the basic terminology.

The Great Serbian ideology is the ideology of Serbian national unity and state-building – the aim to achieve the international legal materialisation of the collective national consciousness which has withstood occupation and the dismembering of its own ethnic territory and systematically conducted denationalisation through conversions to Catholicism, Islam or by the communist doctrines. That collective consciousness survived owing to the rich development of the Serbian language, national culture, customs, traditions and sagas. The Serbian national customs are in no way collective habits or a regular behavioural pattern, but always something more, owing to the

original sacral and ritual elements in them, where the mythical formula of a common national origin is hidden, as well as the formula of the sense of existence and destiny. Our customs connect us with other nations with close ethnic and cultural heritage but, on the other hand, they express the main unique features of our collective being. Their vitality, passed down from generation to generation, and a specific inviolability of national unity in the collective consciousness, which is never questioned, elevates them to the mythic level. That myth is, in that sense, the incorporation of the live collective consciousness of the past into the dynamics of the present, where it shows its vitality and proves its power and energy, which makes it greater than any customs. The myth is an inviolable and unchangeable faith in the collective national being and its values, but also an elevation to the degree of a higher reality, never subject to the temptations of daily life, although it is the major landmark for the actions of the whole nation and each individual in that nation. The national myth is the fundamental cornerstone of the Serbian national ideology, where it is manifested at behest of the forefathers – to realise all their ideals one day or to, at least, never stop fighting for that. Consequently, the myth encompasses customs, epics and tradition, but even more than that. The national consciousness of their own past is always a factor in the creation of their own future; at least to the degree that they can influence it with their own will. The continuous historical perpetuity of the collective national consciousness and its constant improvement are, in essence, a proof of its meaningfulness and functionality on the combined philosophical and religious level. We have always been in the position to show, by our behaviour and actions, that the life of our forefathers had deep sense and that their sacrifices were not in vain, from the standpoint of collective aspirations and volition. By continuing the life of the collective being, we already prove the existence of a significant form of immortality. If we are constantly torn by doubts regarding the question of the eternal existence of the individual soul and spirit, the continuity of the collective national spirit through many generations convinces us of the immortality of the national being, at least while that small piece of the universe exists.

In our collective national life, we have achieved common historical national experiences, knowledge, models of values and memories of people and events. The national memory is one of the most important supports for the creative inspiration, but also a precondition for designing further continuity, in order to present history more than just the past – as a part of the permanent present. Without the myths and tradition, a collective identity is impossible, as well as a national character. In addition, the possible rejection of the myth inevitably leads to the loss of national identity. The national myth is so autochthonous, specific and inseparable from the national spirit that one cannot change it or embrace somebody else's as one's own. The approach to it is often unintelligible to the outside world, so incomprehensible that there is no use imitating it, unless somebody wanted to achieve a grotesque effect. From the national tradition, culture and civilisation are developed and, from the myth – from the spiritual essence of the collective national being and, therefore, the essence of existence. The myth of spirituality is the nucleus, centre; while the tradition, political ideology, statehood. Social institutions are just forms of manifesting that essence in the historical habitus. The national spirit has national potential and historical activities, cultural efforts and political fights represent forms of searching for the possibility of realizing spiritual potential. Tradition can be realized through state institutions, but tradition never remains without its spiritual essence and every individual, member of a nation, constantly has to

turn to tradition, lean on it, draw life energy from it, find motivation for actions and explanation of the purpose of those actions. So, tradition is the main link of spiritual togetherness of national collectivism. Belonging to a certain tradition represents loyalty towards ones ancestors and our mutual ancestors, their fights and their victims, give a great deal of sanctity to our desire to preserve the community through which we realize our collective entity and develop collective awareness, and also decisiveness on our mutual road because we place goals and projects, visions of the future, which cannot be fulfilled by just one generation. Our collective ideas and wishes go from one generation to another and thus guarantee eternity to our existence. And our collective memory in fact forms a collective tradition. National tradition and individual talent are two main assumptions of every creative act, especially in the highest intellectual and artistic spheres. And the greatness of that creativity is measured by criteria of values crystallized in tradition as a manifestation of the national soul. In contemporary times, in the life we lead, we cannot understand nor think without deeply embedded tradition in our conscience and a good historical knowledge. National tradition was born from history and we got it by intuition, inspiration and revelation.

### **3. The Attempts of Serbian Scientists to Fight Anti-Serbian Hysteria**

From the 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2002, the Serbian academy of science and arts held an international scientific meeting named *Great Serbia – Truths, Mistakes, Misuses*, from which reports were published in a magazine of the same name the next year, in the edition of the Serbian Literary Cooperative. A couple of reports from that symposium looked at the fact that the Hague Tribunal, although illegally founded and managed by illegal procedure, was dedicated to the trials of Serbian national ideas, Serbian history and the Serbian people as a whole. Hiring incompetent and corrupted historians to offer desirable ideological instead of objective scientific versions of real political happenings, which led to bloody war at the end of the Yugoslav crisis, inquisitors from the Hague fixed the Serbian guilt in advance and then set themselves a task of adjusting the real activities to the “judged facts”, which would, according to Kosta Čavoški and his report *The Trial of the (Great) Serbian Idea in the Hague* be qualified “as a kind of a precedent that the courts would take without again checking and passing judgement in later cases” - i.e. “which, as has already happened (*res iudicata*), could be put into future verdicts without again checking and passing judgement. Among these, already “sentenced facts”, there is also the idea of the so called Great Serbia, which the Hague tribunal apparently blames for the war in the former Yugoslavia and the hard crimes done during the war” (p. 479-480). As Milorad Ekmečić pointed out in the report *The Notion of Great Serbia According to World Role Models*, “the modern Tribunal for war crimes in the Hague has the same historical task that numerous Austrian processes had between 1914 and 1916 (with the process of Banjaluka taking first place). Because of Great Serbia, almost all the Serbian intelligencia in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Croatia was arrested. At the process of Banjaluka, the amount of the war compensation was officially defined and the defeated Serbia would have to pay, due to aggression in 1914 on foreign territory. In 1914, that Tribunal also tried to deny the truth of modern Balkan history. However, one does not have to forget that in every trial there are two judged parties – the accused and also the judges. History is a big and without doubt also merciless judge. It will judge the Hague tribunal too, for its attempt, with its distinct one-sidedness and evasion of legal

protection for the accused, to cut the historical facts of modern Balkan history. This was also done by the Austrian courts between 1914 and 1916. Today, in the world of science, nobody regards these courts as prosecutors, but the accused before history”.

The Hague tribunal, illegally founded and utterly biased, is one of testing instruments of the new world project, manifested as total globalism and representing incomparably greater danger to mankind than that once represented by Attila, Genghis-Khan, Napoleon or Hitler. The Serbs were historically misfortunate to become one of the first victims of that new totalitarianism and they are still suffering under its attacks. As Dejan Medaković formulated it at one of the previous scientific sessions of the Academy in 1999, “things have already happened before our eyes that shook actual social order and all international contracts were made less strong and reduced to the remnants of yesterday’s world. With special fire, he commented on this new order and those countries in which new authority had not yet been established and new notions on national identity and state sovereignty were not passed. Those changes connected to conquering global power in the modern world were most painfully felt on our soil and their first victim was the Yugoslavia created after the WWI. In the strategy of the new order, it turned out that the third Yugoslavia very soon had to be tailored, because of which the whole Serbian national entity was devastated. In this state shipwreck, the Serbian people was moved from their century-long residences and their road to exile is still not finished. Every day, we hear painful news from everywhere, especially from Croatia and Kosovo, which testify to well thought out ethnic cleansing - more precisely, unhidden genocide, one of most scary in the new European history. Those premeditated crimes started to grow with such unlimited power that it has been jeopardizing the foundation of the European civilization” (National identity and sovereignty in Southeast Europe, Historical institute of the Serbian academy of science and art, Belgrade 2002, p 9).

Science and scientists are at a crossroads, at which they have to decide whether to accept responsibility for its own social roles and then fight, criticize and oppose the spiritual and physical violence, or to obey and lose themselves to weakness and disappointment. As Medaković says, “if our determination is to accept responsibility, then we have fight for the truth before us, throwing away of all compromises with our conscience, even have a readiness to be victims... This fight for the truth, scientific truth, is especially important today when every day we can convince ourselves that a fabricated truth possesses that safest predecessor - an ally of the dirtiest political game. Only the Jewish misfortunes under Nazism can compare to suffering of the newest order intended for the Serbian people. The crimes in Vase Miškina Street and at Markale market were orchestrated with the goal of satanising the Serbian people and, much later, the judges who were arrogantly passing judgements on us acknowledged our innocence, though of course without consequences for the sown seed of lies and illusions. We were accused of a humanitarian catastrophe at Kosovo and for ethnical cleansing, while foreign missions were tirelessly reporting what their leaders had ordered. All this was happening in the name of the holy principles of humanity, and again without consequences for those to whom lies had been proven. There was a special form of untidiness, spiritual distraction and chaos, and those wounds were the hardest to cure” (p. 10).

### **a) The Concrete Strategic Goals of Globalism**

Globalism is ready to artificially create national identities, but also to stamp on the principle of one nation's sovereignty, if doing so is in the interest of the leading force and its assistants. Besides this, even the worst crimes can be justified by the reasons of civilization - the need for the triumph of western cultures or the alleged fight for the protection of human rights. And the denial of traditional moral principles is a common, everyday thing and gladly paid as the price of the progress, i.e. the satisfaction of material needs. According to Slavenko Terzić, "all that happened in the last years, and especially the aggression of the NATO punitive expedition against the Serbs, which led to destroying a great deal of illusions about the western world, whose values were role model to other parts of Europe. It showed that one big spiritual and cultural tradition was transforming into a world without feelings for moral good, a world in which a man was not a measure of things, in which oppression and the conquering of other nations was done on behalf of alleged higher civilisation reasons - the world that nurtures a passion for destruction, for violence. We do not have many reasons to believe in the sound reasoning and judgement of modern mankind. It is illusionary to expect any inner moral transformation on the part of the major bearers of political and military power today in the world" (p. 18-19).

This twisting of historical truth has the totally concrete geo-strategic goal that Serbian people should be held back, crushed into the smallest territory as possible, ruined economically and military-politically, because it is disobedient, inflexible and tries to think with its collective mind. The Croats are, again, the main instrument of the foreign attacks, a means in the American or German hands, in whom Roman-Catholic fanaticism installed anti-Serbian hatred as the basic sense of their own existence. For today's Croats, to exist means constant Anti-Serbian activities. It took such drastic proportions in the artificially created Croatian collective conscience that it was totally certain that, if the Serbs as people disappeared at some point, the Croats would very soon stop existing as well, because their existence, as social group, would have no point anymore. They would have no motive to fight the assimilation with the surrounding people, so they would very easily assimilate into Germans, Italians or Hungarians. Maybe even more easy into Americans.

### **b) The Croats and Muslims, Instruments of the Anti-Serbian Program**

The Serbs are target of western forces because, in their eyes, they represent the Russians in miniature; they are extremely Russian-oriented, of the same religion, a similar culture and tradition and the biggest Slavic force. Pushing the Serbs away from the Balkans means pushing away the Russians. With this aim, Serbian renegades are most convenient, whether religious converts, like denationalized Serb-Catholics and Serb-Muslims, who today say that they are "Croats" or "Bosnians" or ideologically misguided and smuggler-mafia deeds performed by the "Montenegrins". Half a century of communist dictatorship, with its deafening ideological propaganda and cruel terror, undermined the Serbian national awareness so much, that there were more traitors and renegades than had ever been seen before. Today, at the centre of Belgrade, they act like the Roman-Catholic and Islamic converts used to. They sell themselves to the highest



bidder and serve all the Serbian enemies for money. Mostly we are talking about descendants of Tito's communist establishment, used to low morality and privileges since childhood. It looks as if their fathers instilled betrayal of their own people into their genes and as if those genes are still going further in their ethical degeneration.

In Milorad Ekmečić's opinion, "Great Serbia represented something legitimate and the rights of the Serbian people to gather all the territories where Serbs live within their political borders. Just like in every other European role model, that did not only mean gathering countries where Serbs lived in ethnical majority, so that they would already have that right statistically, but also those border zones where they lived as a considerable ethnical group, although not in majority" (M. Ekmečić: *Notion of Great Serbia According to European Role Models, Great Serbia – Truths, Mistakes, Misuses*, Serbian Literary Cooperative, Belgrade 2003, p. 16). The propaganda of the traditional Serbian enemies, especially that thought and launched by the Vatican and Austro-Hungarian centres for manipulation of public opinion, which imposed every political concept of Great Serbia as *a priori* negative from moral, legal and other valuable aspects. "Taken by itself, the base of every modern country is the aspiration for the unity of all the ethnical areas of a nation, with a strategic circling of its borders. So, that is also the base of its democratic structure" (p. 16).

Nikola Žutić emphasises the fact that the Vatican clericals, Austrian legitimists, Italian fascistic and German Nazi revisionists, Comintern and communists demagogues and protagonists of the global elitist western liberal democracy all joined together in the negative definition and ideological disqualification of the Great Serbia idea. One could ask why, why their goals are identical and why they constantly have problems with the Serbian people and their aspiration to join and live in freedom as an independent country. In Žutić's opinion, during 19th century, "the idea of Great Serbia, for a number of people, was a real state in the south-east of Europe, due to their number and wide diffusion of Serbs", given that "the territories of former Yugoslavia and the larger part of the Balkans were populated by Orthodox, Roman-Catholic and Islamic Serbs" (Nikola Žutić: *Ideologies and idea of Great Serbia* by the end of XIX and in the first part of XX century", prēt. book, p. 219).

Vatican and Austrian writers had traditionally thought of the notion of Illyrism or the Illyrian people as a synonym with the notion of the Serbian or people from Ras, until the ideologists of the Illyrian movement began to treat it as synonym for Croatian ideas, falsifying all that had been defined in the history books as Slavic or Slovic, attributing to it a later Croat entry. "In XVIII century, Austrian and German chronicle writers and others, for example, testified that the Serbs lived on both sides of the Velebit mountain, so on the land and the sea side. For the sea channel between Velebit and Pag, the Venetian name "Morlaks" is used as Serbian. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, together with the notion of Illyrism (Illyrian Serbian territories), the national notion of Yugoslav idea started to be used there (Rački, Štrosmajer). Only by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new national notion of Croatian idea started to be used more and more, for Austrian state and Vatican missionary reasons. Therefore, there was a new nationality of Roman-Catholics of the South-eastern Europe, which had the mission of spreading the Roman religion and the Austrian empire. In Serbian countries (Lika, Kordun, Banija, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Srem, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro) there was a former phase of creating and spreading the imported Croatian idea in a mythological form, in second part of 19<sup>th</sup> century, by politicians, bishops, canons and historians, advocates of the

Croatian idea (who were mostly of foreign origin), and in form of the so called “white” and “red” Croatian ideas” (p. 219-220). However, at roughly the same time, in his book *On diffused Illyrian-Rascian nation* (Novi Sad, 1866.), baron Bartenštajn uses very convincing arguments to prove that the terms Illyrians, *Rajci*, *Rascijani*, Greeks, Greek Catholic or non-Greek Catholic had been used for the Serbs in original historical documents as synonymous roots. After all, the Croatian authors proved that the *Chronicles of the Priest Dukljanin* had been falsified three centuries after its creation by inserting the term Croatian in it in many places, although Dukljanin had never even heard of the Croats. Namely, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, according to historian Nada Klaić, in the so-called Croatian edition of the text where the Croatian name was deliberately inserted in place of the Slavic. Giving general evaluation of the *Chronicles of the Priest Dukljanin*, Nada Klaić concluded that news from the *Chronicles* was “pretty unconfident” so the review historiography “barely took them into consideration.” (N. Klaić, *History of the Croats in early Middle Ages*, Zagreb, 1971, p. 17., 20-21.) (Žutić, p. 221).

#### **4. The Artificial Projection of the Croatian Nation on the Territories of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina**

It is especially striking how this Croatian nationality was artificially projected onto the territories of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. “The area of the modern Montenegro (with Boka), in historical retrospective, was free from the presence of Roman-Catholic Croats. By their nationality, people of the Roman-Catholic religion belonged to the corpus of the Serbian, Albanian and Italian (“Latin”) nation. A seed of the future Croatian idea was sewn by the Serbian missionaries of the Roman-Catholic religion from the territory of modern Montenegro who fanatically hated their Orthodox brothers – for example, Vićentije Zmajević and Andrija Zmajević. Although the Zmajević family originates from Njeguši, they are “important people in Croatian history” as Advocates of the Croatian idea, who were mostly Roman-Catholic priests. This Croatian idea that did not exist, was already being made. The Dalmatian *Serbian Magazine* called it an anachronism whose drive was made by the Roman-Catholic clergy. For technologists who were creating the Croatian idea, Boka Kotorska was represented as its outer part, Dukljanin’s mythological Red Croatia, “the most magical part of the beautiful Croatian country”. In fact, the Croatian presence in Boka was a consequence of a propaganda war of foreign immigrants, Roman-Catholic clerks, professors and priests who were carrying out the general Austrian-Vatican strategy of spreading their sphere of influence. The Greater Croatian national greed is now at its peak by promoting Bay of Boka Kotorska as ‘the Bay of Croatian Saints’ (Ozana Kotorska from Njeguši and other Serbian Catholics). Roman-Catholic missionaries from Bosnia and Herzegovina, led by Bosnian archbishop Josip Štadler, Franciscans and secular clergy, began at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century to promote the unknown national notion in B/H – the Croatian idea of the Roman-Catholics. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Archbishop of Vrh Bosna started a magazine for propaganda of the Croatian idea entitled titled *Croatian Journal*, which soon began open attacks on the Serbian idea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to provoke a harsh Serbian reaction and often fights” (p. 220-221). This is how it all began. “As a logical consequence of creating and spreading the new Croatian idea of a nation (which was not a toponym – a geographical

notion bound for three regional units around Zagreb), there was a repulsion of the Serbs from the western territories of the Balkans and South-East Europe, and a clear removal from historical memory” (p. 222). Alongside this, the Vatican-Austrian propagandists were shouting loudly against the Serbian idea as an aspiration to establish a Serbian hegemony over the non-Serbian people.

Unveiling the anti-Serbian identification of the Great Serbian ideal with any hegemonistic aspirations, in his study *Montenegro and the Hegemonism of Great Serbia*, Zoran Lakić said that “it all says that the notion of Great Serbia and everything that came after, at first meant a brave man, brave warrior, clever conversationalist, proud host – so it meant a lot more than ordinary and common, because it was not easy to comprise all the given characteristics in one person” (p. 265). Montenegro had been preserving Serbian national awareness, the aspiration for the renewal of national unity and the restoration of state traditions and has preserved it for centuries. Up until the WWI, no one serious even doubted the Montenegrin Serbs. The atlas of the Kingdom of Montenegro by Đuro Popović and Jovan Roganović from 1893, which saw a couple of editions, states specifically that “in Montenegro live honest Serbs, who speak the Serbian language, and their population is around 300,000. The majority of them are Orthodox, but one has to know that all of us are of Serbian origin and nationality... Montenegro is ruled by king Nikola I from the famous Serbian family of Petrović-Njegoš. Apart from Montenegro, there are more Serbian territories in which our brother Serbs live. No Serb or Serbian woman, regardless of their religion, should regret their life or land – for all-Serbian freedom, good and well-being. One has to know that a brother is dear, regardless of his religion” (p. 264). Lakić cites the edition from 1911, printed in Cetinje, pointing out that this part had given “a clear answer to a question of the roots and national awareness of the people in Montenegro. As if there was a presentiment of possible later manipulation due to religious and national feelings and determination – it is about all the Serbs, regardless of their religion and the territories they live in – free and conquered. Former documents did not allow any doubt concerning the change of notions of religion and nationality. They clearly say of some pupils that they are Serbs of Mohamed’s religion. And from numerous school documents we can see that nationality – Serbian – and the religion given as Orthodox or Muslim, which means that national and religious belonging were not identified, which happened much later” (p. 264).

Only the Comintern brought the idea of “Great Serbian hegemony” to political life, attributing an utterly negative meaning to it and wanting to disqualify the idea of Yugoslavia with it as well, thus performing the same anti-Serbian activity in cooperation with the Vatican and the Ustashas. That conspirational work also projected the artificial Montenegrin nation and both the Communist party of Yugoslavia and Tito’s regime forced people to declare that they belonged to that “nation”. Lakić most effectively shows how grotesque this looked in real life by quoting an article from Nikšić’s magazine *Free thought* from 1936, which says: “Through all periods of Serbian history and for all generations, there could be no greater offence for a true Montenegrin than to tell him that he was not a Serb. They had always been living and dying for the Serbian name, religion and freedom, and the fulfilment of the Serbian oath and thought, which consisted of setting free and uniting all the Serbian peoples. This was a cult, the maxim of the Montenegrins and their national gospel from Kosovo to modern times” (p. 267).

However, at the time of Yugoslav breakdown, when the nationalisms of minor nations developed a primary Anti-Serbian component to the utter limits, the regime in Montenegro, which was more and more openly manifesting separatist ideas, was spreading a paranoid psychosis of the danger of Great Serbian hegemony and, on this foundation, collaborates openly with the worst Serbian enemies. The dark ideology of the Montenegrin Ustasas Sekula Drljević, Savić Marković Štedimlija, Špiro Kuličić and Savo Brković became like a vampire. “From this state in Montenegro, they began seeding a real Serbophobia, perfidiously supported by the political elite. That is why parallel institutions were set up, as well as their destructive activities. Some new “science” on the history of Montenegro was stimulated. Long abandoned ideas on the origin of the Montenegrin people were restored. There were attempts to make the notion of Great Serbia itself as disputable and negative as possible, so it began to be qualified with archaic expressions like “Greater Serb”, “Greater Serbdom”, etc... In this way, the identity of a nation was jeopardized, without (which) there is no continuity. There is no withdrawal before such attacks.

And keeping quiet also means withdrawal. It is dangerous to be indifferent when there is such a reality. Then there was the forging of the economic growth of Montenegro within Yugoslavia. But there were scientific truths and competent factography on this road, which seemed unsurpassable obstacles. A similar fate also had aspirations to crush the people’s spirituality and to accuse their great men of things they had never been (Njegoš was accused of genocide).

Intellectual manipulations occurred in the transmission of this science from centres of political power out to the widest base. This was how Serbophobia came to the people. At sporting events, slogans could have been heard – Serbs to be hanged on willows, kill a Serb – and there was graffiti with a similar content on the facades of buildings. Serbian music was forbidden in cafes. Various TV channels were Croatized – in terms of language, special shows, a obligatory TV schedule. Every thought to the contrary was silenced in the cruelest way. There were even wanted lists – and they were publicly announced. All of them were qualified as exponents of Greater Serbian hegemony. Even the court did not do its job – lawsuits were postponed endlessly. Serbophobia was seen the most often and the most brutally in the electronic media. The so-called yellow journalism, though still official, was full of similar things. History was falsified in the rudest way. Even that taught in schools. But then it all started to return like a boomerang – exactly to the base. Belgrade sport clubs, when they played in Montenegro, had more supporters than the home clubs. At sport manifestations, people cheered Yugoslavia. Graffiti changed its content as well. The most commonly used slogan was “Enough”. The wave of Serbophobia was stopped. Even the media talked about previously forbidden themes and published forbidden authors. The notion of a Serb was no longer like that. Its earlier meaning was restored – from the period of the Petrović dynasty” (p. 271-272).

## **5. The Anti-Serbian Goals of Yugoslav Idea**

History showed that the Yugoslav idea of the Croatian national ideologists was placed with the aim of realizing clearly anti-Serbian goals. The Serbs fell for that very naively and then showed indifference concerning the possibility of questioning and indecision concerning fighting it out of fear of the retribution of repressive regimes,

whose establishment they themselves almost unconsciously contributed to. As Vasilije Krestić warns, “out of the needs of every day politics, because of strengthening the Yugoslav thought and state, in our science and politics, even in the general public, easily and uncritically, there were ideas proclaimed and accepted as Yugoslav, even those ideas that, in their essence and base, were not Yugoslav, and they even used to be narrowly national and nationally exclusive. It is important to emphasise that the ideas and movements established in Croatia, Slavonija and Dalmatia were proclaimed as Yugoslav, even when there was no real base for that, and that similar ideas, established among the Serbs, were almost regularly and without exception ignored by the Croats as being narrowly Serbian and Great Serbian. Such relation was not a coincidence, not naïve, nor without consequence. We can talk about a very skilful fight to impose an idea around which the Southern Slavs would gather and, on the basis of which would be built a common state” (Vasilije Krestić: *The Yugoslav Idea – Emergence and Disappearance of Yugoslavia*, “National Identity and Sovereignty in the South-Eastern Europe, The Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Belgrade 2002, p. 37).

In his statement on this international scientific conference, Krestić gave an overall retrospective of the Serbian weaknesses and indecisiveness concerning the timely exposure of a dangerous political trap and opposition to the intentions of its creators. “Judging by the development of the events and the outcome of the struggle around the imposition of the Yugoslav ideal, originating from the Croatian soil and the soil of the Serbian people, the Serbs lost this battle. They did not understand in time the far-reaching consequences of the Croatian determination to impose the ideas of the Illyrian movement and the Yugoslav ideas of Rački and Štrossmajer as the true and the only acceptable Yugoslavian ideal. The Serbs did not oppose in the right time and by the rights methods the Croatian stigmatising of the Yugoslav integrative ideas begun in Garašanin’s *Načertanije*, in the political activities of Prince Mihailo and subsequent Serbian efforts regarding liberation and unification, not only of the Serbs, but also of other Yugoslav peoples. Because the Serbs were interested in winning over the Croats for the common state, they did not want to strain their relations defending their ideas and attitudes toward the method of establishing this common state.

Due to their greater numbers and because they first had two dependent and than independent states, the Serbs underestimated the systematic Croatian attacks on the Great Serbian aspirations, the Great Serbian hegemonic tendencies and chauvinism, which survive to this day. These attacks, mostly unfounded, caused great damage to the Serbs, both in the areas of internal and foreign affairs. The paradox in this situation is that the attacks came from the partner who wanted to check the alleged Great Serbian ambitions, but, also to realise the old Croatian aspirations. While the Croats stigmatised each Serbia and Yugoslav opinion originating from the Serbs as a Great Serbian idea, the Serbs failed to unmask the Great Croatianism, even when it was clearly discernable and irrefutable. On the contrary, the Serbs accepted the Illyrian movement and Štrossmajer’s Yugoslavism as truly Yugoslav movements, with a small dose of reserve. Some of them, some people with acclaim and influence, such as Jovan Skerlić who was a devoted Yugoslav, even proclaimed Ante Starčević, the leader of Great Croatian Rights, to be a Yugoslav who, allegedly, wanted to unite all the South Slavs under the Croatian name. This information on Skerlić and Starčević only shows how history could be forged to fit the purposes of the current political ideology” (p. 37-38).

### **a) The Incomprehensible Underestimation of the Roman Catholic Enemy**

The Serbian political representatives of 19<sup>th</sup> century were overly easy-going towards the sudden inflow of the historical opportunities of their own nation and underestimated the degree of maliciousness and treachery of the dangerous Roman Catholic enemy, who has been tearing apart the Serbian national being and eating away at its national consciousness. “Thus the stage was set for the appearance of the protagonists of the Great Croatian idea: to expand its territory at the expense of them, opportunely and in accordance with the European trends. Their first attempt to claim the Catholic Serbs was the Illyrian idea, but that ended in failure. The Serbian idea was dominant. The second attempt used the Yugoslav idea, which was embodied in Josip Juraj Štrosmajer – but this movement also did not bear rich fruit. His efforts to include the Orthodox Serbs into the Catholic framework and to put them under the Austrian-Hungarian roof were too transparent. In both cases, the goal was to Croatise them, but it could not have been realistic because it carried this idea as just a feudal, clerical and intellectual stratum, which did not have a foothold in their own people as the intellectual elite” (Veselin Ćuretić: *The Dissolution of Serbdom in the Yugoslav Melting Pot*, op. cit., p. 194). According to Ćuretić, with the indolence of the politicians and intellectuals, the Serbs practically stayed “outside the mainstream, allowing the strategists of Croatian politics to jump into this vacuum and fill it with their own nation-building experience obtained at the time of the struggles for autonomy in the Austrian Empire and later the Dual Monarchy. Through their agreement with Hungary, the Croats entered the phase of the utilisation of their nation” (p. 194).

The largest vacuum concerned the organised and systematic Serbian political influence on the compatriots belonging to other religions. “The most Croatian propagandist, Dr Ante Starčević, used this “vacuum” the most aggressively – trying to run away from his own Serbian ancestry by proving that in the most selective and provocative way. In his pathological Serb-hating and self-sufficient narcissistic rapture, he counted not only the Catholic Serbs among the Croats, but also the Orthodox and the Muslim Serbs. With the help of myths and controversies that the Serbian scientists neglected, he was creating Croatian historical “facts”. From shady historical legends – where, by the way, the Croats are only mentioned in footnotes – he penetrated deeply into the Serbian lands. He referred to the Serbian language, the Serbian factors awarded to the Croats, as Croatian in order to assimilate the ones he took the language from (the Catholic Serbs) into the Croatian national body. The Croatian name started to appear as a national determinant in Dalmatia and Dubrovnik. Most often, at first, this was along with Serbian religious feelings, which were denominated by the term “old faith”, “our language” and the new layer of Yugoslavism, which was deposited on top of the old “Slavism”. It became known in the Banska Croatia, although the separation between the peasantry and the upper class gave precedence to the religious determinant. Starčević-like claims concerning the Orthodox Serbs were the game of neutralisation of the Serbian national politics. It was without any chance to succeed because of their tight connections to their cultural-historical soil and spiritual being. However, tactical successes were achieved on the territory of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, where their use became an ally in the autonomous confrontations with Vienna and Pest. The most efficient way to achieve it was through coalition agreements, which were just the road to

the goal for the Croats, while the Serbs embraced it hoping that one day they would grow into a Yugoslav anti-Germanic and anti-Hungarian movement” (p. 194-195).

### **b) A Great Historical Chance for the Serbian People Squandered**

Liberation ecstasy, which lit up the entire Serbian nation in the early 20th century, was materialised in glorious victories in the Balkan Wars and World War I, with heavy casualties and destruction. The huge and practically unrepeatable historical chance – with a victorious triumph and a great national euphoria, at a time of extremely favourable international circumstances – to unite the entire Serbian nation and all the Serbian lands, was imprudently squandered away. The self-complacency of the Piedmont role of the entranced power-holders mislead them to overlook the crimes that the Croatian soldiers, wearing Austro Hungarian uniforms, had committed with tremendous enthusiasm. They turned to Yugoslavism, ready to, for its love, renounce the glorious Serbian name, while Croatian political leaders, who had been heavily defeated and embarrassed in war, saw it as a sudden windfall to, without territorial and material losses, in an instant leave the losers’ side and climb the shiny pedestal of the victors. In a new Yugoslav state, they saw the chance to accomplish bigger national interests, persistently upholding autonomous manners of political behaviour and never-ending litigation.

The economic superiority of the Croats soon became apparent, together with their incessant whining that the central authorities were plundering and impoverishing them. Belgrade’s politics, which were based on unifying principles, accidentally gave them another opportunity to complete the process of Croatianisation of the Serbian Roman Catholics. The authorities cared little about their Serbian ethnicity, while legions of friars relentlessly possessed their souls, thoughts and emotions. “With the creation of the Yugoslav state (The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians) it became apparent that neither the Vatican nor Catholic Europe was happy about the Serbian ‘Orthodox Piedmont.’ Those who could not accept the disappearance of the main Catholic stronghold in Central and South-Western Europe were the least happy. Their destructive role manifested itself on the Croatian political scene. Although the state system’s conditions had been agreed upon while the war was still going on, the Croats were renewing and using them to stir up their people, presenting the new state as ‘a Greater-Serbian burden.’ It was clear that there was no common, cultural-historic harmony as the spiritual foundation, and that a new process was developing separately, without the, guiding principle that had been accepted by all. . .

“The biggest setback for the Yugoslav ‘melting pot’ was the conjunction of the Croatian, Shqiptar and other separatists, with the Vatican’s proselytistic strategy on terra misionis and the Stalin-Comintern fighters against the Yugoslav state – as an imaginary Whiteguardist stronghold. The social-revolutionary ideology which had been initiated by the October Revolution seemed to be both an ideology of the destruction of Yugoslavia, and an ideology of Serbian neutralization. It was destruction because it acted in the name of the fight against a nonexistent ‘Greater Serbian hegemony’: and as Serbian neutralization because the Serbian Russophilia was stronger than every ideology and policy – this is why the Soviet influences were accepted as Russian. Social ideology became less the initiator of a revolutionary action, and more a calculated lever for the homogenization of non-Serbs, symbolized in their struggle against ‘the Greater Serbian

economic and national oppression'. It also included a part of the Serbian nation, giving them illusions of 'a new society of workers and farmers', which had 'early-Christian' messages. The lumpenproletariat and lumpen-farmer entered the social scene, dressed in the garments of the 'revolution', which liberated them from all moral norms of patriarchal and civil life. Within these ranks, a new Croatian nation emerged as a goal which was justified by all means for the fight for its creation." (p. 197)

## **6. An Ongoing Anti -Serbian Strategy of Comintern and Broz's Communists**

The Serbs had their hands tied, since they still regarded the Soviet Union as the Holy Russian country, while the Croats all of a sudden found strong support for their extreme separatism in this Communist superpower. The Communist International's stance in the Balkans transformed the old Bolshevik empty phrase "Greater Russian self-government" into "Greater Serbian hegemony", in the sense of a concentrated evil and an enemy who should be beaten by any means. "The Serbian Yugoslavism," as it is pointed out by Đuretić, "had given the makers of the Greater Croatia's politics various means for the neutralization of the Mother of Serbdom (Matica Srpska), as a possible opposition to their intentions. This was made possible by an informal combination of the Vatican's strategy for terra misionis and a Stalin-Comintern 'social laboratory', in which, in the struggle against the Greater Serbian hegemony, there were conspiracies plotted against the Serbs. The policy of producing 'new nations' as the victims of that 'hegemony' was the thing most fatal for the Serbian nation; in fact, the regional 'narcissism of small differences' was encouraged, which led to the 'self-determination' of the 'grey areas' of Serbian ethnicity, to be precise, to their separation from the complementary cultural-historic being. As a consequence, creations of dry spirituality and cultural surrogates were developed, so they could, in the name of some new 'labour-peasant ideology' transform themselves into self-sufficient 'entities'. This is how the social ideology coming from Russia was becoming not the foundation of the systematic socio-economic transformation, but a lever for the metaphysically destroyed and idolatized consciousness of the masses, and socially it was ran by the distrust of 'the Greater Serbs' – which bordered on hostility towards this nation. The branches of Serbs formed through history turned against their own tree. Speaking in the name of this ideology, 'the revolutionaries' marked some new 'historical beginning', disregarding culturally founded assumptions, by avoiding everything that could be a threat to their ideological consciousness" (p.198-199).

The Yugoslav Communist Party continually carried out a Comintern anti-Serbian strategy, and its Serbian, nationally more conscious members were destroyed in Stalinist cleansings. Suitable allies for the Communists were the Ustashas, Macedonian supporters of the Bulgarians, and Balists and Montenegrin federalists. Parallel with this Comintern action, the Roman Catholic circles blatantly flooded public opinion in the West with propaganda slogans about "the Greater Serbian hegemony", "Belgrade street tricks", the Serbian domination over the oppressed nations, etc. Anti-Serbian hysteria was gradually intensified until just before World War II. It was used by "clerical Croats through their 'right' and 'left' levers of their politics to stir up hate towards the Serbs, who, screaming for the world to hear them, pointed to the 'new arrival of the old Greater Serbian bogeyman': emphasizing their 'state and historic right' in an



ultimately exclusive manner” (p. 200). The Ustasha’s genocide over the Serbian people during World War II had been systematically prepared for a full century, in the minds and works of the fanatical Roman Catholic ideologists and their worldly reflections. And even then, when the Serbs were the most existentially endangered, the Croat Broz appeared among them to stop them from rallying their forces of resistance, and to start a bloody civil war. “The Soviet discontinuity of Russian politics made it possible for Tito, even during the war, to continue to use old Russia by means of his Partisan (in reality Serbian) version of the resistance movement, presenting it as Yugoslavian and continuing the same anti-Greater Serbian game which had divided the Serbs before the war. Tito came forward with an ideological doctrine that projected the Soviet reality on the Yugoslav reality, with illusions of mixed causes and consequences, friends and enemies; with a class-logic that was, in the Serbian war-time situation, ultimately illogical, even violently adventurous” (p. 202).

Serbian orientation during World War II was quite natural. The fascist forces were an existential threat to the Serbian people, and they were ruining their hard-earned statehood. National traditions, ethnic relations and the Orthodox cultural heritage linked them to the Russian people and their defensive efforts. Democratic principles linked them with the Allied forces. On the other hand, all the anti-Serbian separatists openly put themselves in the service of German, Italian, Bulgarian and Hungarian enemies. However, Tito, on one hand, was pushing the rebelliously disposed Serbian people into a revolutionary adventure and a fratricidal battle, and on the other hand, he was presenting all the successes of the rebels as Yugoslav, or would give them a regional characterization, and later on, he would give them a false Croatian prefix, perhaps because of the territory where armed Serbs were fighting against the Croatian quisling forces. The entire enthusiasm of the uprising was based exclusively on old Serbian freedom-loving traditions, sincere Russophilia and the need to fight for their lives against the Croatian genocidal advances. With clever manipulation of Yugoslavism and the policy of brotherhood and unity, along with fanatical, ideological and bloody conflicts with the nationally aware Chetniks, the Partisan movement was gradually transformed into an instrument of Croatian, anti-Serbian aspirations. While simultaneously deceiving the Serbian people as well as the world’s public opinion, Tito created his own concept of the restoration of the Yugoslav state. The concept was imposed “. . . by playing games with the Soviets and the Allies, with the help of the Serbian ideological ‘revolutionaries’, by which Greater Croatian politics were continued” (p. 203).

Tito’s two-sided game worked, and at one time he enjoyed both Stalin’s and Churchill’s trust, which was crucial for him in establishing his personal dictatorship, with a totalitarian character and a Communist ideology. As Đuričić claims, “AVNOJ Yugoslavia was instigated during a session of the Partisan ‘parliament’ in Bihać in late 1942, proclaimed in 1943 in Jajce, and realized after the war, during the Third Session of AVNOJ on August 4 (which was renamed the Interim National Assembly on 10 August 1945); there was neither reconstruction nor rectification of the Yugoslav ‘melting-pot’, but exclusively a Croatian framework of Yugoslav deconstruction (created as a symbol of Communist-internationalist slogans)” (p. 203-204). Although the members of the Partisan movement in those early years were exclusively Serbs, and subsequently predominantly Serbs, the Partisan movement, judging by its character, goals and outcomes, was exclusively Croatian. Tito was carrying out Greater Croatian

politics by using Communist slogans, instrumentalising Serbian Russophiles and enjoying the support of the Comintern and the Allies. The Serbian Partisans were used to thwart Mihajlović's trialist, federalistic model – as “the new expression of Greater Serbia” – to the advantage of Tito's model, which was presented as the real “Yugoslav model”, by equating Croatian and Serbian war-time misdeeds, and mixing cause and effect, murderers and the murdered. He was going behind the back of the Serbian Partisan fighters, who could only expect a kind of fusion of their epically praised “Proletarian Internationalism” with integral Yugoslavism, since this was the leitmotif of their struggle. The realistic ratio of forces implied a nationally-organised society, since such an organisation was the only way that all the participants in the genocide over the Serbs could have found refuge (p. 204).

With Tito's victory, all of Hitler's allies in the region of Yugoslavia became winners in the war, regardless of the fact that some of their leaders were physically liquidated. Their political ideas and state-building concept won. “The war ended in ‘compromise’, and the real reason behind the Serbian behaviour, the Ustasha's pogrom of the Serbs, was hidden from the Allied world. The war ended in favour of Tito's version of Yugoslavism, which continued the pre-war projections of a Greater Croatia, taking on an even more radical form: all the Serbian Krajinas were included into the Croatian federal unit with no autonomous rights. Dalmatia, Dubrovnik and Slavonia did not receive autonomous rights either. Federal Serbia was given two ‘autonomous’ neutralisers – Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija, although there were not any existing national reasons for it. Parts of Old Serbia and Macedonia were directed towards paths of a self-complacent, new national definition, on an ‘anti-Greater Serbian’ bases. Montenegro, which had been separated from Serbdom, was given the ‘right’ of institutionalization, according to new-national reasoning. Bosnia and Herzegovina, separated from Serbdom, was presented as a ‘miniature Yugoslavia’, but only until the war rage subsided; afterwards it was redirected towards a Croatian-Muslim coalition against the local Serbs” (p204-205).

## **7. A Noose of Federalism around the Neck of Serbia**

The Communists at first projected Yugoslav federalism as non-ethnic and non-historical, whose internal division of peoples was only a formality; but as time went by, they would give it a more pronounced national characteristic, until it became self-complacent and exclusive. “Tito's Yugoslav model surfaced during the victors' euphoria, thus the perfidious motives of its architect went unnoticed: by equalling Serbian and Croatian war-time positions with nationalism and anti-Yugoslavism; causes and effects, the Croatian genocide crimes and the Serbian response, were confused; and on the other hand, by discrediting them, their own Yugoslavhood was promoted as the right thing. In fact, a certain kind of abuse of the ideology, on behalf of which the victor had acted, in was imposed. Through socialist projections, the immanent internationalism demanded uniformity in differences, and a way to overcome local retrogrades on a level of generally acceptable and universal values. Tito's federalism did not have any common grounds with it: on the contrary, it was a facade for the old ideas of ‘Greater Croatia’, which acted in the name of the mentioned federalism. The ways of the Croatian war-time utilization of the Muslims as ‘the flowers of the Croatian people’, was renewed in a new form. Though, in this different path, a path that did not send them back to the

previous form of manipulation – since this was no longer possible, because of their anti-Serbianism during the war – but by way of their separation from their Serbian cultural-historic roots, this path led towards a constituency separated from Serbdom on a clerical bases. In order for this to be realised, it enabled a framework of a more closed Bosnian and Herzegovinian unit, and it even enabled this unit to receive a special ‘new national’ expression. Pavelić’s Croatianisation of the Catholic Serbs, which had been intensified during the war, was given institutions for self-preservation, which, relying on exclusive war homogenisation, developed hostility to the degree of opposition to Serbian roots” (p. 205-206).

Tito postponed the break-up of Yugoslavia, since in 1945, the outcome of the break-up would not fulfil the Croatian and Vatican objectives. This is why he only glued on stitches, so they could be destroyed when the future historical circumstances were more favourable. The Croats were immensely rewarded for their evil, which is why they were prepared to do it once again, as soon as the Roman Catholic Church signalled that the political circumstances were again favourable. During his lifetime, Tito created an extremely efficient mechanism for blocking all state functions and completely paralysing the central government. Everything he had created, with utterly anti-Serbian intentions, was only possible under the conditions of a rigid dictatorship and stern persecution of every different opinion. His open flirtation with the Vatican in the 1960s was evidence of what this headstrong Communistic leader was up to; that is why Franjo Tuđman had everything ready when he embarked on the final separatist campaign. He only finalized what had already been programmed and comprehensively prepared by Tito. Their political appearance was so similar that, when Tuđman appeared for the first time wearing the uniform of the leader of the neo-Ustashes, it seemed to many like the old Communist marshal had risen from the grave.

The Croatian federal unit within the Communist Yugoslavia was formed by the will of the leading revolutionary factor while the war was still going on. The process of its constitution started with the First Session of the Antifascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Croatia, at Plitvice and Otočac in 1943. Its main resolution stated that this was a representative body comprised of “representatives of the Croatian and Serbian nation and national minorities in Croatia, regardless of their political and religious orientation.” A resolution of the second session of ZAVNOH (Antifascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Croatia) in Plaško, in October 1943, proclaimed that “there is not, cannot, and will not be a Croatia where Serbs are not guaranteed full rights and equality.” Although the borders of the Croatian federal unit had not been determined, prior to the Third Session, which was held in May 1944 in Topuško, it was discussed among the leaders of the uprising whether the Serbs would have territorial autonomy in areas where they were the majority population, or be given a status of a constitutive nation in the whole of Croatia. The second alternative prevailed, owing to Tito’s personal will, so at that session, the Declaration on Basic Rights of the People and Citizens of Democratic Croatia was adopted, beginning with: “The Croatian and Serbian nations in Croatia are completely equal.” In the first constitution of the People’s Republic of Croatia, a formulation according to which “the Serbs in the People’s Republic of Croatia are equal to the Croats” was introduced.

In the basic principles of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia, this provision was skilfully watered down by the reformulation of the equality of the Serbs and Croats as constitutive nations, shifting the emphasis on self-determination. It says:

“The Croatian nation, together with the Serbian nation and nationalities in Croatia, in accordance with its historic and freedom loving aspirations, in its common struggle with the other nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia in the war for liberation and a socialist revolution, has obtained national freedom, a government for the labour class and working people, and established the Socialist Republic of Croatia on the foundations of the right for self-determination, including the right of separation from and joining to other nations, according to its freely expressed will, for the purpose of its national independence and freedom.” However, the opinion is clearly expressed here that the Serbs and Croats in Croatia fought side by side for their national freedom, jointly established “a government of the working class”, together founded the Croatian federal unit, and thus together expressed their “free will” by the realisation of the right for self-determination. Parallel to those constitutional transformations, by concealed but systematic measures, the Serbian population was gradually decreased; its cultural institutions were terminated, its newspapers etc. The Serbs were politically, economically and religiously discriminated against, while their national consciousness was subdued by artificially produced “Croatisms” in the language.

### **a) Termination of the Status as a Constitutive Nation, the Preparations of Tudman’s Regime to Expel the Serbs from Croatia**

Soon after the first parliamentary elections in 1990, the officials of the leading Croatian Democratic Community in their political speeches tendentiously suppressed the status of the Serbian nation as a constitutive nation, even in parliamentary debates. During the second session of the Municipal Council held on 28 and 29 June 1990, a parliamentary representative Marko Atlagić submitted a question as a parliament member, to which he never received an answer from the Executive Council (as the government was called at the time). The question read as follows: “On the first constitutive session of the first pluralistic Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Croatia, the highest ranking officials of the Socialist Republic of Croatia in their speeches broke the provisions of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia, to which I did not react, because of the solemn nature the parliament session. Mister President of the Presidency of the SRH, the President of the Parliament of the SRH, the President of the Executive Council of the SRH in their speeches used the following definition of the Socialist Republic of Croatia: ‘The Socialist Republic of Croatia is a state of the Croatian nation and other nations and nationalities,’ or ‘. . . the state of the Croatian nation and the other citizens who live in it,’ or ‘. . . the state of the Croatian nation and the other population.’ In these claims the Serbian name was never mentioned; the Serbian nation in the Socialist Republic of Croatia has its own state, and that is the Socialist Republic of Croatia according to the current Constitution.’ It is a constitutive element of Croatian statehood, and should be treated as such, to which the these gentlemen are hopefully obligated by the still-valid Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia.”

Marko Atlagić in fact received an implicit response when the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia was adopted, which was proclaimed on 22 December 1990. The Serbs were not mentioned as a constitutive nation in the constitutions and were unilaterally downgraded to a national minority. In the preamble the common theses of the ideologists of the Croatian state right are mentioned, even the nebulous statement

that the first Croatian principalities were formed in the 7th century, something the most fanatical pamphleteering historians would not have dared to say. The fundamentals of Croatian statehood were defined in the following way: “Expressing the millennial national identity and the survival of the statehood of the Croatian nation, confirmed by the course of its entire historical experience in various state forms and by the perpetuation and growth of state-building ideas based on the historical right to full sovereignty of the Croatian nation, which manifested itself in the creation of the Croatian principalities in the 7th century; in the medieval independent state of Croatia founded in the 9th century; in the Kingdom of Croats established in the 10th century; in the preservation of the subjection of the Croatian state in the Croatian-Hungarian personal union; in the autonomous and sovereign decision of the Croatian Parliament of 1527 to elect a king from the Habsburg dynasty; in the autonomous and sovereign decision of the Croatian Parliament to sign the Pragmatic Sanction of 1712; in the conclusions of the Croatian Parliament of 1848 regarding the restoration of the integrity of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia under the power of the Ban, on the basis of the historical state and natural right of the Croatian nation; in the Croatian-Hungarian Compromise of 1868, regulating the relations between the Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia and the Kingdom of Hungary, on the basis of the legal traditions of both states and the Pragmatic Sanction of 1712; in the decision of the Croatian Parliament of 29 October 1918 to dissolve state relations between Croatia and Austria-Hungary, and the simultaneous joining of independent Croatia, invoking its historical and natural right as a nation, to the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, proclaimed in the former territory of the Habsburg Empire; in the fact that the Croatian Parliament never sanctioned the decision passed by the National Council of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs to unite with Serbia and Montenegro in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1 December 1918), subsequently proclaimed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (3 October 1929); in the establishment of the Banate of Croatia in 1939, by which the Croatian state identity was restored in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; in laying the foundations of state sovereignty during World War II, through decisions of the Anti-Fascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Croatia (1943), to oppose the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (1941), and subsequently in the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Croatia (1947), and several subsequent constitutions of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (1963-1990) (The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia” Informator”, Zagreb 1991, p. 15-16).

In that preamble, the Serbs were explicitly pronounced a national minority, and Croatia was pronounced the national state of the Croatian people. The second part of the preamble says: “At the historic turning-point marked by the rejection of the Communist system and changes in the international order in Europe, the Croatian nation reaffirmed, in the first democratic elections (1990), by its freely expressed will, its millennial statehood and its resolution to establish the Republic of Croatia as a sovereign state. Proceeding from the above presented historical facts and from the generally accepted principles in the modern world, and the inalienable, indivisible, non-transferable and nonexpendable right of the Croatian nation to self-determination and state sovereignty, including the inviolable right to secession and association, as the basic preconditions for peace and stability of the international order; the Republic of Croatia is hereby established as the national state of the Croatian people, and a state of members of other nations and minorities who are its citizens: Serbs, Muslims, Slovenes, Czechs, Slovaks,

Italians, Hungarians, Jews and others, who are guaranteed equality with the citizens of Croatian nationality, and the realization of ethnic rights in accordance with the democratic norms of the United Nations and the countries of the free world. Respecting the will of the Croatian nation and all citizens, resolutely expressed at free elections, the Republic of Croatia is hereby organized and shall develop as a sovereign and democratic state, in which the equality of citizens and human freedoms and rights are guaranteed and ensured, and their economic and cultural progress and social welfare are promoted” (p. 16).

Unilateral cancellation of the Serbs’ status as a constitutive nation, who have lived for centuries in the regions of Dubrovnik, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Krajina, inevitably led to a bloody civil war. Ignoring that danger, the new head of the Ustashes, Franjo Tuđman, in his exposé on the occasion of the ratification of the text of the new constitution, said, among other things: “We have a task to do, and that is to solve the problems in the Knin region, where irresponsible, Greater Serbian individuals, using political deception, have managed to seduce a fraction of the Serbian citizens, and start a rebellion against the Croatian state using hayduk terrorism, which has been extremely detrimental for the region and the entire state. . . For that matter, it is my pleasure to point out for domestic and international public opinion that the great majority of Serbs in Croatia are not questioning their loyalty towards the legal democratic authority of the Republic of Croatia” (p. 4).

While the Ustasha emigrants, by their continual terrorist acts, were maintaining the extreme Croatian nationalistic spirit and serving as an inspiration to their like-minded compatriots in the country, Tito, with gradual constitutional reforms, turned Yugoslavia from a solid federation into a loose confederation, thus arranging the systemic conditions for its demolition at its first chance, when it would come to the blockade of the central government by the obstinacy and obstruction of some of the federal units. Most suitable to stick a hawthorn stake in the ailing Yugoslav state body turned out to be Tito’s general, Franjo Tuđman, who had previously acquired support from powerful international factors, primarily the Vatican and Germany. Meticulously preparing for such an action, as witnessed by the US publicist *Yossef Bodansky* in his book *Offensive in the Balkans*, published in 1996 (in Serbian as well), Tuđman, back in 1988, secretly visited Germany and spoke with high state officials, even with the Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Considering that Bodansky at the time was the director of the well-informed and influential American “International *Institute for Strategic Studies*,” and was politically highly ranked as a congressman in the House of Representatives, his claim is quite valid.

What would happen to Yugoslavia and which road Croatia – as one of its federal units – would take was soon quite clear, when, on 24 February 1990, at a pre-election conference of the Croatian Democratic Union, Franjo Tuđman said that Pavelić’s Independent State of Croatia “. . . was the expression of the historic desire of the Croatian nation for its own state.” This statement of Tuđman’s is certainly his most cited statement in the various media, along with the other one that he was happy that his wife was not a Jew; so, among the public from the beginning, it was recognisable as the basic guideline of the political program of his party and the regime that the party established after the triumph in the first post-Communist parliament elections. Because of this statement and the mass expulsion of the Serbs from Croatia five years later, in the December issue of *Šugar*’s magazine, the Croatian Left from 1996, a professor from Split, Ivan Perić, recalled one of the key principles of the Ustasha movement, which was

formulated by Ante Pavelić in 1933 – that when it comes to the Croatian state and state and national affairs, no one who is not a member of the Croatian nation by blood and origin should be making decisions. As Perić concludes: “. . . this provision, after the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia and the Ustasha regime, was the starting point of the extinction of the Serbs, Jews and Romanies, which was never completed because of the circumstances that had arisen. Fifty years after the collapse of Nazi-fascism, i.e. of the Independent State of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, a Partisan during World War II, subsequently a general in Tito’s Yugoslavia, in the function of the high commander of the military forces of the Republic of Croatia, by operations Flash and Storm had finalized the Ustasha project of an ethnically cleansed Croatia. Thus, the historic circle was completed.”

## **8. The Vatican’s Leading Role in the Destruction of Yugoslavia**

In the study *The Crime of Diplomacy. Appendices for an Indictment* (Kompanija Bobar, Bijeljina, 1988), based primarily on the analyses of selected texts chosen by topic from the daily political press, Stevo Ostojić analyzes the behaviour of the Western forces in the period of development and culmination of the Yugoslav crises, paying special attention to the role of the Vatican. In the preface for this segment of the book, he writes, “. . . almost parallel with the exceptional support from Kohl’s and Gensher’s Germany for the ‘Croatian Cause’, behind the Vatican’s walls, a less tough, but not less important battle for the concept of statehood of the independent and sovereign state of Croatia was being fought. Prelate Paul Beckett, head of the Bonn office of the German Catholic Church, in the summer of 1992, eagerly argued that ‘. . . the Croats were lucky to have the Pope, the German Government and beloved God on their side.’ (When it comes to the German Government we could be more than sure ourselves that the respectable prelate judged correctly; concerning beloved God, we have to leave that to those more competent to decide; however, when it comes to the Pope, that is, to the role of the Holy See, several pages of this book are dedicated to giving an account on this subject). If Germany in this ‘Croatian trinity’ had a key role and was the ‘political-engine of recognition’, the Holy See made the critical move of ‘unblocking’ that international recognition! We are informed about this from the extensive interview, which the Undersecretary of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Clergy, Monsignor Milan Simčić, gave to a reporter of the paper *Vjesnik*. This is definitely an important document, which surprisingly went unnoticed, beyond the reach of the research performed on the topic in Italy and Europe. A figure from the very top of the hierarchical pyramid of the Catholic Church, Monsignor Simčić talks about the background and the work done behind-the-scenes regarding the international recognition of Croatia (and Slovenia)” (p. 59).

A statement by Paul Beckett was quoted in a book by Nenad Ivankovic, Bonn, the *Second Croatian Front* (Mladost, Zagreb, 1993), and the interview with Milan Simčić was conducted by Darko Pavičić and published in the *Vjesnik* on 25 April 1993, titled *The Vatican Unblocked the Recognition of Croatia*. When asked about the extent of the Vatican’s help for Croatia’s achieving state sovereignty, Simčić had a ready answer: “Not everything can be made public now, but what I can say is that when historical documents and the chronology of events are published, we will see that the Church played a crucial role in the sense that the intervention by the Holy See actually

unblocked that which had been pinned down against Croatia. The Church does not want to gain some kind of political capital for this, but wants the Croatian people to see how it can always find understanding and protection in the Church, especially in critical times. The Vatican was under a lot of pressure by international factors to not accept and recognize Croatia. Nevertheless, the Church has its own line. It tries as much as possible to get approval. But when it comes to the defence of the rights of a nation, it is capable of staying isolated before the whole world; it fears neither judgement nor condemnations, because it wants to stay true to its principles” (p. 56-60). On that occasion, Ostojić points out that “. . . this unreserved intervention on behalf of the national being of one its ‘own people’ seems to have adequate interpretation in Simčić’s following sentence: “The Church, on many occasions in the past, and even today in many countries, has had to take on a subsidiary role, since the state and state structure were not capable of resolving some issues, or did not have the means or recourses” (p. 60).

Simčić’s fundamental thesis is that the Vatican, for the purpose of ensuring Croatia’s independence, first had to break down the resistance of the European Masons. When Pavičić pointed out to him that there were opinions that Croatia in an international context has a lot of problems, because of the fact that as a state it was formed on Catholic foundations, and the world presumably does not want new Catholic states, Simčić opens up the Mason issue, emphasising the links between the Masons and the Socialist Movement, and explains: “The question should be rephrased. You might have heard something, while I can explain some behind-the-scenes games in world politics that might have prompted you to ask this. After 1989 and 1990, the process of the break-up of Communism was gaining pace; in Paris in April 1990, leaders of the European Masons held a meeting. They are, mostly, representatives of the financial and banking establishment in Europe, structures with effective power. Behind closed doors, they discussed what kind of policy this type of establishment should adopt concerning the countries liberating themselves from Communism. The most important thing for them is to have control over the financial and banking institutions. A political base is needed for that, since they do not want to take part in politics directly. They were discussing about what kind of party, with what kind of political ideology they should take as a political lever in those countries. From their point of view, when it comes to the economy, they should be close to the position of the Christian Democratic International, but the Masons could never accept the conception of Europe which the parties of the Christian Democratic orientation have. It absolutely conflicts with the Masons’ view of the world, which cannot accept the Christian social conception; this conception, although it recognizes a moderate capitalistic system, demands that it be thoroughly revised and ennobled in a way that, in a productive process, man comes first, and then interest. That is why Masons refused to take parties of the Christian Democratic orientation as political levers, and chose socialists” (p. 60-61).

By further analyzing the ties between the Masons and socialists, Simčić comes to the meeting between leaders of the Socialist International and the heads of the European Masons, which was, he claims, held in Madrid in May 1991, and, allegedly, a deal was made for the coordination of interests, the assignment of roles and share of power. Then comes the extended session of the Socialist International in Vienna on 9 July 1991, where in a tense political atmosphere and lengthy discussion, the issue of the multinational, former Communist countries – the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and



Czechoslovakia – was analyzed. Simčić believes that the atmosphere was tense because “. . . the socialists coming from these countries felt the need that some of the integral nations should be given their national right. However, the Western socialist were opposed to those aspirations, so finally the thesis that unitary and centralized states should be preserved at all costs won, for two reasons: firstly, it is easier to conquer and maintain power from one centre compared to several; and secondly, if these multinational states do collapse, we would get at least four more new subjects, which for the time being, would probably not be socialist, but most likely Christian Democratic. These are Slovenia, Croatia, Ukraine and Slovakia. Thus, the power-balance will be disturbed, since the socialists have relative majority in Europe, and everything could be changed around” (p. 61).

As Ostojić summarises the remainder of Simčić’s interview, “European socialist leaders did not expect that ‘Croatia would put up a resistance in the field.’ They used to say, ‘How can one step before a tank armed with a hunting rifle?’” says Msgr. Simčić, and continues, “However, the unbelievable resistance of the Croatian people surprised and confounded them, and at the same time, within the Christian Democratic International, the people in charge saw through the entire game of European socialism and Milošević.” At this, he emphasizes, “It’s not the right time for the secret to be revealed about how we discovered these complicated, secretive games, but irrefutable and authentic documents exist to prove all this.” According to the cited words of Mr. Milan Simčić, the upper hierarchy of the Catholic Church spared no effort or amount of time to find out everything about one “complicated, secretive game,” and discover that there are “irrefutable and authentic documents on all this.” We, ordinary inquisitive mortals, are left wondering whether the time is right for the “secret to be revealed” on how they managed to find out about all this. What kind of “game” did the leaders and allies of the Christian Democratic International see through?

Msgr. Simčić pays particular attention to the conclusion of the Viennese session of the Socialist International regarding the economic and social program of the “countries abandoning real socialism,” which would result in a gap between them and the countries of Western Europe, which will never be possible to bridge. This means that “. . . these countries which are now liberating themselves will be in a second-class position compared to Western Europe, thus the destiny of these countries, according to the mentioned program of the Socialist International, is the destiny of semi-colonial countries,” concludes Monsignor, and says, “Fortunately, some of the representatives of the socialist parties from Eastern Europe opposed this, so when the word got through to the public through secret channels, the entire program was delivered to the Christian Democratic International, with a notice that the socialists had developed their own strategy for the countries of the former Eastern Block. Obviously, the Christian Democrats don’t have their own strategy, since they all were stunned by what was happening. Then the Christian Democrats got down to business, and in a couple of months, in Rome in November 1991, the summit of the Christian Democratic International took place” (p. 62).

Of course, Milan Simčić had to use this opportunity to brag about his role in the support of the Croatian separatist tendencies on the biggest Christian Democratic gathering, saying, “On this occasion, I had the honour of speaking and presenting the state Croatia was in, and the need for its recognition by this highly qualified summit” (p. 63). Summarising the remainder of the interview and quoting Simčić’s key words, Stevo

Ostojić thus concludes its importance: “In the presence of eight prime ministers, about twenty ministers of foreign affairs and a number of parliament members, in Rome in November 1991, with the wholehearted, skilful and authoritative effort of Msgr. Milan Simčić, the Undersecretary of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Clergy, probably the most crucial turn of events occurred in favour of Croatia. Almost two months before the official recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, forced by *Hans-Dietrich Genscher* “the turnaround of Rome” was described by Msgr. Simčić without restraint; literally, “The representatives of the Christian Democratic parties then (in November 1991) made a decision in favour of Croatia, and launched campaigns within their governments, thus the Church authorities could expect a quite prepared terrain for the recognition of Croatia. Such favourable circumstances were created that the Holy See could make its decision and break the vicious cycle which had been holding Croatia in the entrance hall of the international community.” All these circumstances and facts should be “. . . thoroughly investigated one day . . . since the Croatian people must know its own history, which was created outside of Croatia as well,” concluded Msgr. Simčić. However, before the case of this “thorough investigation” is closed, as the high representative of the Congregation for the Clergy indicates, we can be certain that the combination of the powerful political and institutional mechanism of the Christian Democratic International and the unparalleled power and charisma of the Holy See, in which the Pontiff, as his right hand, had Monsignor Simčić, was more deserving than Kohl-Genscher’s Germany concerning paving the road for the urgent recognition of Croatia” (p. 63-64).

With his offensive political engagement, which more and more resembled a new, modern sophisticated Crusade, Roman Pope John Paul II had a crucial role in the West’s anti-Serbian campaign of the 1990s. As Stevo Ostojić emphasises, “. . . Pope Wojtyła showed a strictly determined political orientation, with no small dose of ‘interest’, in the relatively early days of the Yugoslav crises. The moment was timed smartly – even studied. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia still existed as such, but centrifugal forces were already hard at work. Almost two months had passed since Croatia (and Slovenia) adopted the Declaration of Independence and Sovereignty, and were waiting for the authority from the highest place to support and encourage the ‘course of events’. The head of the Catholic Church did it, in person, on an almost harmless occasion on ‘neutral turf’ – in Hungary. During a visit to Pécs, a picturesque town at the foot of the Mecsek Mountain, in Baranya (in its northern and bigger Hungarian part, in any case, on the very Yugoslav border), Pope Wojtyła called them to reconciliation, human and Christian, not just the Hungarians, but one broader family of a nation. On this occasion he said, “Some among them, like the Hungarians, have already been liberated from long years spent between misery and temptation; others, unlike them, as the Croats, still need help from the international community to fulfil their ‘legitimate aspirations’. In light of the Pope’s declared political view, it should be mentioned that in Pécs, John Paul II, besides the pilgrims from Zagreb, met with a high-ranked delegation of the Croatian Church, led by Cardinal Franjo Kuharić. Therefore, even on 17 August 1991, four months before the anticipated recognition of Croatia and Slovenia by the Vatican and Germany, the Catholic Church, personified in the supreme personality of its head, chose to defend one side in a complex multiethnic conflict in the Balkans” (p. 65-66).

By unilateral support for the Croatian separatist aspirations, Pope Wojtyla put the entire Roman Catholic Church in the camp of the destroyers of Yugoslavia, and even assumed the leading role in that camp. “Starting from this inevitable fact,” as Ostojić points out, “and especially considering the Pope’s later statements on the subject, certain chronologists and historians have placed the Holy Father’s engagement in the issues of the Balkan conflicts more and more in the context of discussions on accountability. Hence, one of the most authoritative writers of modern Italian journalism, Eugenio Scalfari, founder and director of the newspaper *La Repubblica*, in the essay *Cain in the Valley of Drina* claims that Pope Wojtyla, in the first phase of the Yugoslav conflict, was ‘more than a witness’. What is more, Scalfari writes that the Pope was ‘one of the protagonists at the very source of the crises.’ The Vatican’s rush to compel the Western powers to recognise the dignity of the state of Croatia, along with the analogous urgency of Bon in favour of Ljubljana and Zagreb, led to the abyss of the break-up of Yugoslavia, as well as to the detonation of the Bosnian slaughterhouse. Concluding that, with their ‘rush’ and ‘impatience’, they caused the ‘abyss of the Yugoslav break-up’, Eugenio Scalfari puts the Vatican’s accountability at the as same level, at least, as the accountability of Germany, with special emphases on the views of Karol Wojtyla, as ‘one of the protagonists’ at the very outset of the crises, followed by the consequences of the recognition of the secessionist republics, which resulted in the ‘detonation of the Bosnian slaughterhouse’” (p. 66-67).

The Pope’s moves became more arrogant and extreme, so in the end, the Holy See “. . . on 20 December 1991, by way of their spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls, made the decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia public – ‘as well as the other Yugoslav republics who seek it’ – as soon as seven provisions of the international law are fulfilled (concerning interior democracy and the rights of ethnic minorities, among other things), as decided by the European Community” (p. 67). Finally, as Ostojić concludes “. . . having expressed ‘satisfaction’ that this possibility had been offered, Mr Navarro-Valls stated that this intention was not directed against any one side of the conflict, saying, ‘the Holy See has a strong desire to maintain good relations with each of the republics of Yugoslavia.’ Concerning the republics, he elaborated that the ‘united federation’ has already been ‘buried’, thanks to the ‘military operations of the federal army’. So many lies and so much groundlessness in just a couple of sentences! Let’s take a glance at the facts. No accordance of decisions and actions with the European Community was followed whatsoever. On the contrary! The Holy See hurried to officially recognize Croatia two days before the agreed date of 15 January 1992. Germany had done it even before Christmas in 1991. The Holy See blames ‘the military operations of the federal army’ for the break-up of Yugoslavia, at the same time completely disregarding the fact that the army only intervened after Croatia and Slovenia unilaterally proclaimed independence on 25 June 1991. The army reacted clumsily and unfortunately, in panic and pain, trying to defend Yugoslavia, which was its duty according to the constitution – as the political and state actors on the Yugoslav multiethnic scene could not reach an agreement in a peaceful way. It would be interesting, one day, to have an insight in the documentation according to which the ‘conditions of the EC were met’ concerning protection of the minorities, primarily the Serbs in Croatia, and the ‘interior democracy’, and compare that to the actual circumstances” (p. 76-86).

Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, Gianni De Michelis, in an interview in the Roman Catholic weekly *Il Sabato* in September 1991, said that a powerful

Croatian lobby is operating in the Vatican, warning about the risk that its activity might start an inter-religious war. "In the high Croatian Church circles in Rome, they declared that this was a case of 'shameless and inappropriate meddling in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.' That most harsh qualification of de Michelis' statement regarding the existence of a 'Croatian lobby' in the Holy See was given by the Vice President of the European Parliament, the former leader of the Popular Movement, Roberto Formigoni, who was in fact very close to the Vatican's milieu. Having labelled Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and one of the socialist leaders, 'a dangerous person', this prominent Christian Democratic politician, among other things, said, 'His (De Michelis') statements on the Holy See's position are disrespectful and offensive, and he must justify them in the Parliament.' Formigoni concluded his outburst saying that Italy's Foreign Secretary 'is justifying Serbian aggression'" (p. 70). Formigoni's statement was reported by the official Italian agency "ANSA" on 26 September 1991. Nonetheless, the Roman Catholic reaction to the Minister's statement was so angry and hostile that Gianni De Michelis fearfully kept quiet, and his Ministry, in a public statement, distanced itself from the statement made by its head, saying that the statement had been incorrectly and distortedly interpreted by the media.

In his book, Ostojić recounts the very lucid views of two Italian geopolitical experts, Giuseppe Ciucci and Gianfranco Gasperini, who openly criticised the Vatican's conduct in the Yugoslav crises and biased pro-Croatian stance. "The authors repeat that the Vatican has always, at least in modern times, led balanced politics, being careful not to start the procedure of recognition of new states before the states in question have been recognized by the whole international community. Generals Ciucci and Gasperini provide a shocking piece of information, showing that 'the Holy See was for pushing towards the division of the Yugoslav federation before that was supported by official resolutions'" (p. 122). The next two quotes are particularly striking, connected by Ostojić's commentary in between: "Succumbing, in fact, to separatists pressures felt even in the centre of the Yugoslav Episcopal Conference, the Vatican, starting from November 1991, took care to divide the Conference into separate episcopal conferences, getting hold of the territories which administratively belonged to one republic or autonomous province.' The most striking, but not the only case, was when the Croatian dioceses, with its headquarters in Đakovo ' . . . left its own territory and entered the territory of Vojvodina.' Thus, the Holy See not only effectively anticipated the recognition which was formally just an idea, but was sketching out new ideal borders, something the interested parties could not disregard" (p. 122).

Roman Pope John Paul II was becoming completely militant in his political appearances the following year. As Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican's State Secretary, said, "...we have talked with the Pope about the very worrying situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We spoke a little about the right of humanitarian intervention. I would say that the European countries and the United Nations have the duty and right to interfere in order to disarm those who want to kill. This does not mean that we support war, but its prevention" (p. 124). Facing public criticisms that the Pope had been expressly pacifistically oriented concerning the Iraqi issue, yet extremely belligerent when it came to the Bosnian Serbs, *Jean-Lui Toran*, the Secretary of the International Relations Department of the Vatican State, gave a statement to the Catholic newspaper *Avenir* on August 9: "The war against Iraq and the ongoing conflict in Bosnia are two very different situations. The first occurred in an international context between different

countries; in the second case, however, the conflict is national, within a state whose sovereignty has already been recognised, such as Bosnia. Here the civilians are attacked and taken hostage by militia gangs, aided by forces from the outside. In the case of the Gulf War, the reaction of the international community was decisive and without hesitation. However, in the case of the conflict in Bosnia, the international community has found itself in the position to enforce peace, but never has a government up to now used armed intervention. As we can see, these cases are objectively quite different, but the opinion of the Holy See remains the same: in both cases it is important to carefully calculate the equation between the invested means and the result which must be achieved. If, in order to hurt the aggressor, thousands of innocent people must die, then something might be wrong here” (p. 125).

Therefore, according to Toran, the Bosnian Croats and Muslims are civilians, while Bosnian Serbs are militia gangs. Some six months after this, Toran, at a session of the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE) in Prague, justifying the Vatican’s behaviour, said that by recognizing the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, “The Holy See assumed a situation which was de facto the result of democratically expressed legitimate aspirations” (p. 129). On a few occasions, eminent Vatican figures publicly advocated various international sanctions against the Serbs and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Serbs were accused, without any valid evidence, of shooting down a Italian transport aeroplane flying over Bosnia and Herzegovina on 3 September 1992, killing four crew members. “The Vatican gave its own judgement concerning the tragic incident, clearly condemning the aggressor. Believing that the Bosnian crises had reached the breaking point, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger explains – as, for example, reported by *Corriere Della Sera* – that from a moral point of view (though with reservations), a kind of limited military intervention could be approved . . . Since it was not directly specified which side should be defended, or in other words, who should be militarily intervened against, it was understood that the Serbian side in Bosnia was in question, who had in this case already fallen under open public suspicion. Undoubtedly, Cardinal Ratzinger was talking about the Bosnian Serbs – and his call for military intervention for humanitarian reasons, just as his previous, and especially later calls for intervention, which came from the mouth of Pope Wojtyla, were exclusively directed against the Republic of Srpska” (p. 154).

In this book, Stevo Ostojić is ready to be easy and tolerant on Cardinal Ratzinger, although the Roman Catholic dignitary openly advocated for the military intervention against the Serbian people. Regarding this, he says, “The high, I would say the highest doctrinal authority of the Catholic Church, in a banal, low (earthly) manner fell into the trap set by others, who are less ethical and certainly less well-intending. The sin should be not only on his soul, but perhaps even more so on the soul of the doctrinal, but also strategic geopolitical experts, who surrounded the Cardinal in the Vatican” (p. 155). However, four years later, when the official investigation was concluded, the public was officially informed that the Italian plane had been shot down by the Croats, and not the Serbs. But, the Vatican did not condemn the perpetrators. It in no way kept Pope Wojtyla from publicly advocating humanitarian military intervention and the just war against the Serbs. In the evening of the West’s massive bombing of the Republic of Srpska on 22 July 1995, Pope John Paul II issued this statement to the public: “The right for defence should be realised for the protection of the civilian population in an unjust war. Military action is always the last resort, but the only just war is a defensive war. . .

When a person has trampled on someone's right to life, than that person should have the right to defend himself" (p. 159).

At the Pope's call, the mighty NATO air force was lunched to spread death among the Serbian people and destroy the infrastructure of the Republic of Srpska.

## **II. The Anti-Serbian Political Platform of Josip Broz Tito**

### **1. The Secret Croatian Nationalist and Chauvinist**

Josip Broz Tito's enormous anti-Serbian hatred, which he drew from the Roman Catholic ideology, culminated on the Serbian front during World War I, where this Austro-Hungarian sergeant stood out in committing crimes against civilian populations. After the war, he aligned that hatred with the anti-Yugoslav politics of the Communist International, which had accused the Serbs of hegemony and domination. While he used the basest Machiavellian methods to gain the position as the head of the illegal Yugoslav Communist party, as a division of the Comintern (in other words, foreign agents), showcasing utmost immorality, cruelty and unscrupulousness along the way, Broz never strayed from his fundamental anti-Serbian course. He would maintain it continuously, even when he overtook the leadership of the party, leading the Communist revolution and establishing a post-war dictatorial regime, which was on par with Stalin's regarding ideological intolerance and ferocious confrontations in dealing with their political opponents, and with those were not like-minded. Like an evil spirit, Tito materialised over Serbia and the entire Serbian nation, systematically destroying almost all the efforts of the liberation wars the Serbs had led over the centuries. The clash with Simo Marković, who Broz, in 1928, wrote about, accusing him of opportunism, factionalism, and sect and clique membership – which would end in Marković's physical liquidation – showed how dangerous this monster from Zagorje was, who was prepared to tread rivers of blood just to get hold of authority and power.

#### **a) The Proclamation of Broz's Guidelines in His Political Activity**

In the first newspaper articles written by Broz in the late 1920s, "the Serbian hegemonic bourgeoisie" were mentioned as the main cause of social troubles and the deprivation of political rights, but also the "oppression" of the non-Serbian nations. The best illustration of the kind of vocabulary Broz used can be found in his text in the proclamation of the Town Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Zagreb, on 22 June 1928, by which he called on the labourers and the poor citizens to in get out on the streets of Zagreb en masse, to take part in the funeral of the prominent figures of the Croatian Peasant Party, Pavle Radić and Đuro Basariček, who had been killed in the National Assembly. Broz writes, "Belgrade's evil government, led by the King and his clique, has not had enough of the murders it has been committing over the workers and peasants for years. This government and its mercenaries, police and gendarmerie are killing an unarmed people on the streets of Zagreb, who are protesting against the bloodthirsty regime of the Belgrade authorities. Fresh victims of this gang of robbers are falling down on the streets of Zagreb. They are spilling the blood of unarmed people in Dalmatia and Vojvodina, who are protesting against the bloodthirsty regime of

the Belgrade authorities. As a sign of protest against the horrible crimes committed by the evil government, which is led by the royal clique, the County Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia is calling on all the workmen, work-women and public officials to go together on general strike, on the funeral day of the victims killed in the 'National Assembly', and as a sign of protest against of the murders on the streets of Zagreb" (Josip Broz Tito: The Complete Works, published by "Komunist", Belgrade, Beogradski Izdavačko-Grafički Zavod, Izdavačko-knjižarsko Poduzeće "Naprijed" – Zagreb, Belgrade, 1983, Vol I, p. 117).

### **b) The Founding of Paramilitary Formations, and Concrete Collaboration with the Ustashas**

In a letter addressed to the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) for Slovenia from 11 October 1934, Broz points out that "...one of our main goals should be the liberation of all the nations of Yugoslavia from Greater Serbian oppression" (Vol. II, p. 49). On 26 November 1934, in a circular letter he sent from Vienna to all the provincial committees of CPY and the League of Young Communists of Yugoslavia (SKOJ), Broz ordered "... the establishment of defensive troops in the fight against the terror of the militant fascist dictatorship of the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie, for the purpose of fighting every terror and attempt of the breaking down and destruction of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, and struggle of the oppressed nations in Yugoslavia" (p. 52). This directly coincides with the already-started terrorist activities of Ante Pavelić and his Ustashas. Tito explicitly advocates for the recruiting of national revolutionary elements together with proletarian ones into "defensive troops", which inspired better and closer co-operation between the Communists and Ustashas. According to the typical totalitarian party-led paramilitary structure, Tito ordered that "... the defensive troops must be formed after the model of military formations: a troop as the basic unit (6-12 people); a platoon made up of several troops in smaller towns or city quarters (3-4 troops form one platoon); and a battalion in cities, with several platoons. The work and actions of the troop, when it comes to its internal function, is strictly confidential; however, in order for members of the troops to be able to gather, meet and make arrangements, it is necessary in all places to found a variety of legal societies with massive membership: sport, recreational and mountaineering societies; reading-rooms, clubs, etc.; the defensive character of the defensive troops certainly does not exclude their offensive character, based on the principle 'offence is the best defence'. The defensive troop, since it is made up of fighting workers, peasants and youth, must ensure the success of every operation of the Party, SKOJ and trade union. . . Apart from this, the defensive troops have the duty of breaking up gatherings and demonstrations of fascist organizations by interruption, disruption and breaking them down violently, depending on the circumstances and conditions" (p. 54). "Fascist" organizations are considered pro-regime and heroic, while Ustasha and Crusader-like organizations are considered allies. "Armament of the defensive troops will be individual, depending on the circumstances; for example, rubber pipes 35-40 cm long reinforced from within by iron rope; brass knuckles, clubs or riding-whips; firearms should be avoided: this does not mean the defensive troop cannot possess firearms, but they must be a last resort, and kept in a safe place, because the defensive troop should avoid using firearms. . . For reasons of discreteness, the

defensive troops will not wear uniforms (shirts or similar) nor special badges. The defensive troops must be perfectly disciplined” (p. 54). So, the Communist paramilitary formations, by Broz’s order, are to be formed directly after the model of the fascist phalanges.

### **c) Broz’s Evident Affection for the Roman Catholic Church**

Contrary to his frontal attack on everything Serbian, and his anti-Serbian sentiment, Broz was much subtler when it came to executing to the Comintern political policy towards the Roman Catholic Church. Obligated to criticize the Church’s support of Franco’s fascistic rebellion in Spain, in a message for all the provincial committees of the CPY from 23 October 1936, which he sent from Vienna as an authorized proxy of the Communist International, he orders the “unconditional evasion of the word ‘clerical-fascism’ in the battle against the false and tendentious writing of the Catholic newspapers. We should distinguish the Catholic masses from the various reactionary Church officials, and expose the later before the Catholic masses (Vol. III, p. 31). Besides that, he suggested the need to “. . . win over the left-wing elements from the Croatian Peasant Party, so they could influence Maček, and with his signature issue an announcement or make a public statement supporting the Republican government of Spain” (p. 31). In mid November of the same year, Broz sent a letter from Vienna in which he proposed closer co-operation between the Communists and Catholics. “What is it that divides these two large social movements? Why would not they defend peace and freedom together? Let’s take a look who comprises the Communist, and who comprises Christian organizations. The Communist movement is labour movement, joined by a bigger or smaller part of the poor people from the villages and cities, and the advanced intelligentsia. The main body of the Catholic organizations is comprised of the peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, the poor living in villages and cities, and the youth of these classes, led by Catholic priests. Therefore, always bearing in mind the importance of the priest hierarchy of ‘church-princes’, and a particular class of capitalists, exploiters; we can claim that the social and economic differences between the masses of the Catholic and Communist organizations are not such to prevent the co-operation between these two movements. In Slovenia, as well as in the Croatia, the distinction is nearly the same as, say, between the Croatian Peasant Party and the Communists” (p. 45).

In Broz’s opinion, the irreconcilable philosophic differences between materialism and idealism should be put aside, and united when facing mutual dangers. “That is why the Communists are offering their hand to the Catholics, so together, they can oppose fascism and war – the most reactionary forces, which equally harm the people, regardless of their religious orientation or political beliefs. For German fascism, even Catholicism is too liberal, thus is persecuted as rebellious” (p. 46).

According to Broz, it would be “. . . fundamentally wrong to fight Catholicism ‘at all’, and even more wrong to identify Catholicism with the politics of the Catholic parties, and name them simply ‘clerical-fascism’. This should be stopped! We must look at every single movement, every organization, and even every Catholic leader, and evaluate them concretely according to their behaviour and their attitude towards war and fascism, towards the people’s movement for peace and freedom” (p. 47). Trying to reduce the support for the fascist regimes as writings of just a couple of Croatian and Slovenian Catholic newspapers, Broz tried to reassert the Catholic political movements,



claiming, with no supporting argument whatsoever, that they oppose fascist policies. Accordingly, his rhetorical question is directed: “Is this the policy supported by thousands of Catholic peasants from the ‘crusader’ organization ‘Educational Star’ and other numerous Catholic organizations? No” (p. 47). He needed massive political organizations of Roman Catholic fanatics as political allies. “Not losing sight of what sets us apart, we must look and find the things that bring us closer to them. After all, our struggle for daily bread brings us together more than anything else. The common fight for peace and freedom, against war and fascism. The common fight for the equality and freedom of the Croatian and Slovenian people. The common fight against the 6th of January fascist cliques, who prosecuted and imprisoned not just the Communists, but Catholic leaders and organizations as well” (p. 48).

In January 1937, two years before the Cvetković-Maček Agreement and the establishment of the Banate of Croatia, Josip Broz in the Proletarian, in a discussion with some of the critics of the events in Spain, quite lucidly predicted future events, and in advance announced which side the Communists will take. “It is quite possible that the outcome of next elections in Croatia and the whole of Yugoslavia will result in a new democratic government, which will have the trust of the vast majority of people. It is possible that the representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party will be part of it. Such a government, of course, will not be a revolutionary dictatorship, perhaps not even a government of the people’s (national) front, but just a government which relies on the parties and on the forces of the national front, as was the case of Blum’s government in France and the case of Kiroga’s government in Spain, just before the rebellion of the fascist generals. Undoubtedly, the enemies of the people will immediately call this government ‘red’ and revolutionary, and will plot against it with all their might. Pofovci, Chetniks, Jenesovci, “borbaši” and fascist around the ‘Gathering’ (Zbor), united with all the dark forces and individuals of the regime of the 6th of January, with the help of the retrograde deeds of officers, will be attempting to bring that democratic government down. If they do not succeed with their intrigue, lies and deceptions, they will resort to violence with help from fascists from abroad (Germany, Italy, Hungary); they will try to start an uprising against that democratic government, and in the whole country, a civil war will break out, just like in Spain now. If this happens, the workers and Communists will undoubtedly run, with guns in their hands, to the aid of the legal government, and defend democracy and people’s rights from the violence and rebellion of the retrograde fascists” (p. 49-50).

**Comment [Z41]:** Translator’s note. This name could not be confirmed. We tried to phonetically compare it to all the political people in Spain at the time, and there is no match

#### **d) Support for Maček, Glorification of Radić and a Warning to the Serbs**

Broz supported and backed the Croatian Peasant Party, even when Maček showed his utmost intolerance of the Communists and their ideology. Frequently in his articles in the Proletarian, he glorifies and quotes Stjepan Radić, stating that harassers like Stepinac, Pernar and Jelišić will not shake his determination to continue to support the nationalistic activities of their party. Proportionally to the strength of their verbal attacks on Communists in general, the Croatian Communists preferred and followed them in their separatism and anti-Serbdom. As Tito writes in the article Communists and the Croatian Nation in April 1937, “. . . in the Croatian people’s struggle for freedom and equality, the Communists have always been in the front lines. In this struggle, they co-

operated with all the Croatian fighters, and they co-operated with the Croatian Peasant Party. They selflessly participated in this struggle, even in times when the party leaders refused their co-operation because of party interests. The Communists do the same even today, when some of the prominent figures of the Croatian Peasant Party are leading their own Crusade against the Communists. They will do the same in the future, regardless of prosecution by individuals, because this is not a case of Communist tactics, but of a work corresponding to Communist principles, and the principles of the Communist doctrine.

Broz does not refrain a bit from accusing the entire Serbian nation of the oppression of other nations. Accordingly, he declares, "The Croatian nation requests for freedom and equality, it asks for peace and bread, it wants free political, economic and cultural development. Are the Communists for this or not? There is no doubt whatsoever that the Communists want this. What is more, they resolutely fight for the requests and needs of the Croatian people. The Communists are dedicated supporters of the right of every nation to self-determination. This means that the Communists fight for the Croatian people to be able to, without anyone's guidance and pressure, determine its destiny by its own free will. The Communists resolutely oppose any type of violent assimilation (fusion or blending in) of certain nations. This is why they condemn and fight against all attempts of the Belgrade authorities to wipe the Croatian nation from the face of Earth, to turn the Croats into Serbs and Yugoslavs, to make the Croats a tribe of one nation with three names. The Communists believe that the Croats, Serbs and Slovenians are three individual, brotherly nations. Brothers stay brothers as long as they work and talk as brothers, otherwise they stop being brothers and become enemies. The Communists resolutely oppose every type of oppression and exploitation. That is why they condemn and resolutely fight against the oppression of the Croatian nation by the Greater Serbian nobles and wealthy, for their benefit.

"The oppression of the Croatian people is an injustice for the Croatian nation, and a misfortune for the Serbian nation, because a nation that oppresses other nations cannot be free itself. The Communists are opponents of every type of exploitation and plundering of a nation, social class or an individual. That is why the Communists are fighting against the plundering policy of the Belgrade gentry and Belgrade capitalists, who are economically ravaging the Croatian people. They condemn Belgrade's economic policy, to which the Croatian people pays high duties and taxes, which is spent for the big state apparatus, which is in most cases Serbia, or is spent on buildings on Serbian territory. What goes for the economy, the same goes in the educational, healthcare and social fields" (p. 84-85).

Constant Communist expressions of love towards Maček's party could not remain unreciprocated forever. One day the love had to become mutual, that is why a satisfied Broz, on 26 February 1938, informed Wilhelm Pieck, a member of the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, saying, "The official stance of the Croatian Peasant Party towards us has changed for the better, and they don't attack as much anymore. This is a result of the fact that many of our friends work in Croatian organizations, in the 'Gospodarska Sloga' etc.; they do a good job and are devoted, and Maček himself has in many cases in recent times protected us and recommended co-operation with us" (Vol. IV, p. 27). Tito was especially elated with the forming of the coalition between the Croatian Peasant Party and the Serbian opposition parties, which united into the United Opposition, whose leader became Vlatko Maček. He sharply

confronted any kind of critical opinion towards the Coalition in the Communists ranks. Thus, in an extensive letter written to Communist prisoners in the Sremska Mitrovica Prison on 9 December 1937, along with several accusations regarding factionalism and sectarianism, Broz warns, "When it comes to the agreement, you have taken the wrong stance (this is the viewpoint stated in the article on the youth and the agreement, which passed your censorship). Instead of seeing in it a giant step forward in the struggle of the national masses, and the working class as well, against the main enemy, the Greater Serbian hegemony, you already got worried – and this is your main preoccupation and the core of your stance – what this new democracy will be like; in advance you guard yourselves from it, which of course, demobilizes the working class, which is starting to see the enemy in democracy, because of your article. You should understand that the further development of events, and whether the Greater Serbian hegemony will be brought down, and democracy be triumphant, rests greatly upon the mobilization of the working class for the struggle, and on its active participation in the struggle for this agreement," (p. 7-8).

In the German newspaper Rundschau from 19 March 1939, Broz, under the pseudonym V. Viktorov, published the article The Croatian Struggle for Self-Determination, in which he emphasised the issue of the historical development of the Croatian nation in different social-political circumstances, compared to the ones that the Serbian nation had developed in. This is the reason why their blending in into "a unified Yugoslav nation" was not possible. In the revolutionary tradition of the Croatian peasantry, he saw the main stronghold of the modern Croatian national movement, which was politically articulated by Antun and Stjepan Radić. "After the Imperialist war and the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, under whose rule Croatia had enjoyed a certain level of autonomy, the 'liberated' Croatian nation came under the yoke of the bourgeoisie of Greater Serbia, who ruled this state (created by the victors), which was four times larger than the old Serbia, and which was named 'The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians.' In late December of 1918, the Croatian people, in large protests, showed its dissatisfaction of the new rule of Greater Serbia" (p. 161). Concerning the St. Vitus' Day Constitution, Broz said that it sanctioned centralism and ". . . the hegemony of the bourgeoisie of Greater Serbia, with the King at the head. Over several years, the entire economic, financial, tax, administrative and cultural policy of Belgrade was directed at the plundering of Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia and other acquired territories" (p. 161).

The article abounds in empty words regarding the bourgeoisie of Greater Serbia, phrases about its terror over the Croatian national movement; so in the key part of the article, he would reassert Maček's programmatic integration of national interests and objectives of social justice. "A broad national movement gathered around Maček, which largely surpassed the boundaries of the Croatian Peasant Party. The movement attracted almost all civil Croatian groups, ranging from the democratic to the openly reactionary and pro-fascist. The latter always proposed compromise, capitulation to Belgrade, and wanted to direct the movement's leadership against the Croatian workers and peasants, against the unity of the democratic forces, against the National Front. The democratic elements of the Croatian movement, which were widely supported by the Croatian workers and peasants, fought against these reactionary influences. The labour movement, led by the Communist Party, not just in Croatia, but also in whole of Yugoslavia, helped the Croatian national movement and fought for the fulfilment of

their justified requests. The attempts of the reactionary elements in the Croatian movement to isolate the Croatian labour movement from the Croatian peasants and the working people in the towns failed” (p. 162-163).

In a new article in the same newspaper, Tito, on 25 May 1939, expressed his elation with the success of the negotiations between Dragiša Cvetković and Vlatko Maček which were completed on 27 April, although the agreement itself was signed on 26 August. In Tito’s opinion, “. . . the official statement, which says that the negotiators have reached an agreement regarding the resolution of the Croatian issue, was greeted with exultation in the whole of Yugoslavia. However, there are some disturbing rumours circulating that the Belgrade authorities are reluctant to verify the reached agreement between Dr. Maček and Cvetković, and that Prince-Regent Pavle has refused to sign the agreement. Nevertheless, the Croatian issue remains in the spotlight. An undemocratic resolution of the Croatian issue can in no way contribute to the internal consolidation and development of the state, since the question of democracy and freedom is one of the fundamental issues for the majority of Yugoslavian nations, including Croats.” (p. 193-194). In the report to the Comintern from September 1939, Tito stressed that the Croatian national masses were happy with the agreement and territorial boundaries. Its advantages are “. . . the fact that Yugoslavia became more united, the Croats are prepared, just like the Serbs, to defend the independence of Yugoslavia, the Croats recognize Yugoslavia as a unit, the danger of a break-up of Yugoslavia subsided and finally, certain democratic elements entered the government, which must to a certain extent have an impact in the democratisation of the country” (Vol. V, p. 7-8).

### **e) Disappointment in Macek, and Broz’s Change of Views by Order of the Comintern**

In Moscow, in September 1939, while writing an article for *Die Welt*, Tito once again claimed that the Serbs in Yugoslavia were dominating the other nations. He literally claims, “For the 20 years of Yugoslavia’s existence, the rule and hegemony have been had by the Serbs, who have applied almost semi-colonial methods towards the other nationalities. In order to achieve this, special reactionary laws had been introduced and a military dictatorship has been established. The Croats put up a particularly strong resistance. . . In 1928 the struggle intensified, and after the president of the Croatian Peasant Party, Radić, and also three of its leaders were killed, the Croats severed all ties with the Serbs, and King Aleksandar re-established a reactionary military dictatorship in order to preserve the Greater Serbian hegemony” (p. 32). However, the following year, Broz’s excitement with the Cvetković-Maček Agreement suddenly subsided when it turned out that Maček himself had been establishing his own dictatorship in the Banate of Croatia, and had been prosecuting those who ideologically differed.

In a manifesto to the working people of Yugoslavia in the April issue of the *Proletarian* from 1940, Broz writes, “In order to preserve ‘order’, a so called Peasant and Civil protection was introduced, which was a huge disappointment for the Croatian peasants and citizens, because it has been used as a means to terrorize, harass and divide the peasantry and the citizens,” (p. 59). Of course, there is no mention of the systematic terror performed primarily against the Serbian citizens, but a new definition of the factors that led to the agreement was given. “Compelled by the heroic struggle of the Croatian nation and other nations of Yugoslavia, the bourgeoisie of Greater Serbia have

succumbed to the Croatian bourgeoisie in order to find an ally in the struggle against the working people. The consequence of this yielding to the Croatian bourgeoisie was different than the hegemonists of Greater Serbia expected. Maček truly backed the hegemonists of Greater Serbia in their fight against the people. But at the same time, the Croatian bourgeoisie – encouraged by the success for which they themselves had not fought – revealed their imperialist tentacles. They demanded Bosnia, Vojvodina, etc., which the Greater Serbia hegemonists weren't prepared to let out of their hands, believing that the oppression of Bosnia and Vojvodina is Belgrade's concern, and not Zagreb's. The hegemonists started beating the Serbian chauvinistic drum, calling the 'Serbs to gather', since the positions of the Serbian 'nation' are supposedly in jeopardy. Agents of Greater Serbia in Croatia were undermining the positions of their Croatian 'brothers' with whom they sat in the government. They issued a court-martial, which was not only directed against the fighters for peace, but which threatened the Croats as well. For, when a 'preparatory status' appears with a court-martial, then the Serbian generals get hold of Croatia. Agents of the Greater Serbian and Croatian bourgeoisie are working to incite a chauvinistic Croatian-Serbian conflict among the masses. The Slovenian reaction (Korošec), which used to live by serving the hegemonists of Greater Serbia and extinguishing the Croatian struggle for liberation, also began fearing for its position. The Bosnian beys also sensed danger, fearing for their positions in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (p. 78).

As the directives of the Comintern changed over time, Tito's political views changed as well. In the Proletarian, he would first heavily criticize the English and French war-mongering policy, and then he received the order to intensify antifascist propaganda. The imprisoning of the Communists in concentration camps made his attitude towards Maček harsher. Thus, in late August of 1940, Broz writes in the Proletarian that "... the Croatian reactionaries led by Košutić are publicly conspiring with Berlin and are preparing to sell the Croatian people to German imperialism; they are working on the break-up of Yugoslavia, preparing to enslave the Croatian people – the same things the Croatian aristocrats used to do when they sold the Croatian people to foreigners. . . Why do the Croatian Journal and other Zagreb newspapers and radio so tastelessly and submissively praise German national socialism and Italian fascism and recommend them to the Croatian people? Why do the Croatian reactionaries refer to some historic 'ties' with Germany? Do they really think that the Croatian people has already forgotten these historic 'ties', which comprised of the German counts and their mercenaries whipping the backs of the Croatian peasants to shreds, while the debauched mercenary soldiers raped the women and children, set fire to the villages and towns etc.? The Croatian reactionary gentry have started preparations for the creation of a so-called 'independent' Croatia under the protectorate of Germany; something similar was done by the Slovakian gentry led by priests. The Croatian reactionary gentry think that the people are ignorant about why they have intended to complete this treacherous business. . . It is already being pretty loudly whispered about the treacherous intent of the Croatian reactionary gentry, however the gentry do not even try to hide it – their action clearly witness to that" (p. 156).

### **f) Concentration Camp Democracy in the Banate of Croatia**

To what extent pro-Nazi politics had spread throughout the Banate of Croatia is testified to by the fact that the concept of “peasant democracy”, which was persistently promoted by the Croatian Peasant Party, was in practice executed more and more as a democracy of concentration camps and uncontrolled police violence. As Tito states, “The Croatian Journal, justifying itself before its Berlin and Roman friends because of the ‘peasant democracy’, is explaining to them how “Croatian peasant democracy” is actually a precursor and parallel movement to German national socialism and Italian fascism. In its preface, it proves that the Radić brothers – even before the first imperialist war – supported a ‘one-party system’, and that the Croatian Peasant Party supports a ‘one-party system’ today. The Croatian Peasant Party says that the Croatian Journal has always opposed ‘capitalist liberalism’, and has been for a ‘controlled economy’ etc., but with ‘the preservation of private property’ – the same as national socialism and Italian fascism. The only difference, says the Croatian Journal, is that the ‘Croatian nation’ employs the same principles in ‘its own specific way’. The Croatian Journal not only breaks down all illusions of the temporary character of violence and violations of people’s rights by the bourgeoisie leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party in Croatia, but it even attempts to conceal the ‘democratic’ history of Radić and the Croatian Peasant Party – clearly and openly stating that the essence of the ‘Croatian peasant democracy’ is in fact the same as the essence of German national socialism and Italian fascism” (p. 150-151).

### **g) Continuous Accusations against the Serbs, and the Creation of an Artificial Balance in the Treatment of Pavelić and Nedić**

However, even after that, Tito continuously accused the Serbs for all the evils and troubles. Thus in the Political Informer (Politički Vjesnik) from December 1940, he writes about the Serbian “oppression” of the Macedonians. “Macedonia, that oppressed country, in which the Macedonian freedom-loving people have been suffering under the Serbian national hegemony for years, subjected to the cruellest of terrors, famine, deprivation of their national identity and exploitation; this blood soaked country is not there to serve as an ornament in someone’s royal crown or to be the exclusive property of the Serbian or Bulgarian bourgeoisie, but to be liberated from every type of national oppression” (Vol. VI, p. 87). On the occasion of the renewed public political discussions between the Serbian and Bulgarian politicians concerning the Macedonian issue, Tito says, “The Serbian bourgeoisie have hungrily sensed blood. They are becoming more restless, and are burning with desire to take care of some ‘unsettled’ scores in the Balkans” (p. 87-88). In January 1941, Tito writes that “. . . the chauvinists of Greater Serbia in Yugoslavia . . . are working with all their might to push Yugoslavia into a war, so that the people of Yugoslavia would die in a civil war and spill the blood of their brothers for the interests of the English financial oligarchy” (p. 130). In a Statement by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia regarding the April War in 1941, Tito claims, “The nations of Yugoslavia, including the majority of the Croats, are heroically fighting for their independence against the numerous enemy” (p. 189). But this Croatian majority welcomed Hitler’s mob of soldiers with delight, ovations and flowers.

When talking about the treachery among the Croatian ranks, Tito incessantly reduces it to a “handful” of Franco-followers, claiming that the Croatian people oppose Pavelić’s regime. In June of 1941, writing for the Proletarian about the recently held council of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Tito warns, “For this quick capitulation to the Yugoslav Army, the Serbian ruling clique blames the Croats. By so doing, it wants to transfer the responsibility for its treacherous deeds, it wants to stir up the hatred of the Serbian people towards the Croatian people, in the same manner that the handful of the Franco-like, treacherous gentry in Croatia is arduously striving to stir up hatred towards the Serbian and Slovenian peoples. The Croatian nation is being accused because of the treachery of a meaningless, Franco-following clique, which with the help of bayonets from the imperialistic conquerors, has saddled the back of the Croatian people, which has nothing in common with the treachery of the Franco-like gentry gang, just as the Serbian people have nothing in common with the treacherous clique of the ruling Serbian gentry. But, the Serbian people know too well that the main culprit for their tragedy, as well as the tragedy of all the people of Yugoslavia, is the Serbian ruling reactionary bourgeoisie, who will be called to responsibility by the people when the time comes. It is to blame for all the evil which has stricken the Serbian nation, and other nations of Yugoslavia as well” (Vol. VII, p. 29). That is why it is completely logical “. . . that because of such politics, the Serbian people is reliving its Golgotha; once again its land is being tread on by the conqueror; once again it has to undergo humiliation and suffering” (p. 33). In Vojvodina as well, under German and Hungarian occupation, the innocent Serbian population is atoning for the oppression of the former Greater Serbian agents” (p. 34).

During the entire year of 1941, in numerous articles, Tito tries to create an artificial balance in the treatment of Pavelić and Nedić, and even gives incomparably more space for the attacks on Nedić. In a letter to the Provincial Committee of the CPY for Serbia, he again warns of the dangers of Greater Serbdom. He accuses Draža Mihajlović’s Chetniks of collaboration with the occupying forces in the fight against the Partisans, claiming, “News that the enemy will hand Sandžak, Bosnia, Srem and Banat over to Nedić is along the same line – although it is unverified, but highly likely. It is obvious that a reactionary Greater Serbian centre is thus being formed, which will assume the leading contra-revolutionary role, regardless of the fate of the German and Italian enemies. This reactionary Greater Serbian centre is a danger for all the Yugoslav nations. In it, undoubtedly, is the future-greatest enemy of the liberation fight of the people of Yugoslavia, and today it is the main stronghold of the occupying forces. Therefore, undoubtedly, the main task of our Party in Serbia is a most resolute fight against that centre. Clearly, the strength and manoeuvring capability of these reactionary Greater Serbian forces are small, and all the objective conditions for their destruction exist” (Vol. VIII, p. 11-12). By Tito’s directive, “. . . every attempt of gatherings by the Greater Serbian reactionary elements on any base should be determinedly politically exposed and destroyed. This primarily goes for the various Chetnik factions” (p. 12). Apart from this, he orders the Communists to oppose “. . . the various Greater Serbian gangs who are establishing an alleged ‘people’s government’ in Serbia” (p. 13), and says that, “the slaughter of Muslims and Croats by Greater Serbian elements should be sharply stepped out against, and it should be revealed to the Serbian nation who benefits from these slaughters. Nedić’s treacherous trading with the occupying forces to the

expense of the people in Bosnia, Sadžak, Croatia, Vojvodina etc. should also be exposed” (p. 13).

### **h) Separating Bosnia from the Serbian Influence, and the Fight against the Chetniks as Broz’s main Preoccupations**

In 22 December 1941, in a letter to the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Montenegro, Boka and Sandžak, Tito says that the Communists undoubtedly “. . . expect new, difficult battles with the domestic reaction, particularly with the Greater Serbian hegemonists” (p. 35)., On 30 January 1942, Tito sent a message to the main headquarters of the Partisan People’s Liberation units for Montenegro and Boka, ordering that the movement of Draža Mihajlović should be exposed “. . .as an attempt of the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie even now to create a stronghold for itself, . . . for a new oppression of the Montenegrin nation and other nations of Yugoslavia” (p. 149). But his main preoccupation was to, stop eastern Bosnia from coming under Nedić’s authority, at all costs. This is obvious in a large number of Tito’s letters. For example, in a letter to Milovan Đilas dated 5 February 1942, Tito announces, “Because of the departure of the Germans, it seems the Ustashas are going to retreat from some of the places they have occupied, and it seems, according to an agreement, that they will be occupied by Nedić’s forces. Related to this, Nedić’s secret agents in Bosnia are developing strong propaganda, saying that Nedić’s army will be coming to Bosnia to free it from the Ustashas. Since we believe that the Bosnian Partisan forces will not fight Nedić’s forces – at least most of them will not (many say this) – we are taking precautions to secure the territory in danger of Nedić’s possible arrival, with units of the Proletarian brigade and certain trustworthy Partisan units” (p. 186). Chetniks were always Tito’s biggest problem, so he incessantly ordered that they must be ruthlessly exterminated, their helpers liquidated, as well as all the traitors – which the Communists considered all of their political opponents. They began mass killings of “kulaks”, for, as Tito writes to the main headquarters of the Partisan People’s Liberation units for Serbia on 20 February 1942, “. . . we have decided to liquidate all the traitor elements, consisting of various kulaks and other traitors” (Vol. IX, p. 23). And these alleged “kulaks” were only liquidated among the Serbian nation.

In a telegram to the Communist International, Tito announced that the Chetniks were a more dangerous enemy to his Partisans than the Ustashas were. In several letters and messages, he alleges that Draža Mihajlović is an exponent “of the Greater Serbian clique” from the emigrant government. On the other hand, he frequently calls the Croatian army, the Croats, etc. home guardians (domobrani).

### **i) Glorification of the Croatian Role in the Fight for National Liberation**

In the essay the National Issue in Yugoslavia in Light of the Fight for National Liberation, which was published in the Proletarian in December 1942, he noticeably softens some of his pre-war opinions, insisting on differentiating the Serbian nation as a whole from the “Greater Serbian hegemonic clique”, whose national policy he defines in



this way: “1) The corruption of the most reactionary elements of the Croats, Slovenians, Muslims, etc., and their utilization for the interior destruction of the people who fought for their equality. 2) Bribing the leadership of the Slovenian, Muslim and Džemijet parties, and keeping the Croatian nation in subjection with their help. In other words, this meant the utilisation of one nation against the other; this meant the systematic separation of the nations of Yugoslavia; this meant spreading hatred and deepening the divides among the brotherly nations of Yugoslavia. This meant the separation and not the association of the nations of Yugoslavia into one brotherly, equal state union. The persistent, stupid mumbling of the hegemonic clique that the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians are just tribes of one and the same nation have the objective of the Serbianisation of the Croats and Slovenians. Yugoslavia was just a mask for that Serbianisation, which completely revealed itself during the 6th of January military dictatorship of King Aleksandar and Pera Živković. The Croats, as the most important national element among the other oppressed nations of Yugoslavia, resisted this Greater Serbian national policy the most” (Vol. XIII, p. 97). In a report at the Second Session of AVNOJ in Jajce, 29 November 1943, Tito further reduces his thesis, saying that the Croats, Macedonians and other nations are being oppressed by “. . . a handful of Greater Serbian hegemonists” (Vol. XVII, p. 258). But he also mentions “. . . the twenty-year long slavery of the Slovenian and Croatian people” (p. 263), which could not rob them of their national identity.

In the declaration which ended the session, it says that during the war, “. . . the remnants of the Greater Serbian hegemonic policy” were destroyed (p. 288). Apart from a proclamation of a Federal system, the Yugoslav emigrant government was heavily blamed by a claim that in its composition there remained “. . . the most fanatic Greater Serbian elements, led by Draža Mihajlović and Petar Živković, although he formally was not a member of the government. This is a government of open civil war and chauvinistic terror, a government which serves the fascist enemy; an extremely anti-democratic government, which consciously strives for the break-up and division of Yugoslavia” (p. 289). In a separate decision by which the rights of the legal government were taken away and the king banned from returning to the country, it was claimed that all the Yugoslav governments in exile, “. . . using their agents in the country and their so-called ‘Yugoslav army in the fatherland’, organized the systematic mass extinction of Muslims, Croats and Serbian patriots for the purpose of using their physical extinction to create the conditions for the establishment of Greater Serbia, thus directly helping Hitler’s policy of the extinction of our nations, and are responsible for mass atrocities and crimes committed on our nations” (p. 294). After the conclusion of a session of AVNOJ on 30 November, Tito held a meeting with the councillors from Croatia, stressing that, “In the People’s Liberation struggle, Croatia plays a leading role, since the Croats and Croatia were the bearers of the struggle against the Greater Serbian reaction” (p. 302). From Jajce, Tito sent a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania, dated 2 December 1943, which expressed his attitude that “. . . the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija have the right to decide where they want to go and what they want to do” (Vol. XVIII, p. 5). However, this problem was to be resolved after the war. “To ask the question of annexation today would in reality help the reactionaries, and the occupying force as well, who want to thwart the armed fight of the people by putting forth questions, which for them, are harmless and irrelevant” (p. 6). At the same time, Tito understood the problems the Albanian Communists were facing in their fight

against the occupying forces, considering that in the case of Kosovo and Metohija, “. . . various reactionary cliques are trying to stop the uprising against the enemy and present our movement as Greater Serbian” (p. 6).

### **j) Evidence that Broz Personally Ordered the Bombing of Serbian Cities, and Spared Zagreb**

Tito's collected works from the war period contain evidence that he personally ordered the Allied bombings of many Serbian cities, in which more civilians were killed than in the aftermath of the German airstrikes. Hence, on 19 April 1944, Tito sent a telegram to the Headquarters of the Third Corpus of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia: "Report immediately which important military targets should be bombed. Since only we determine what will be bombed, you must be careful that only very important structures and clusters of the enemy troops are given." (Vol. XX, p. 9). To all the units under his command on 11 June 1944, Tito sent the following order: "Allied air-support of our forces will increase from this point on. In order for this to be realised, I am ordering that Allied military missions and specially delegated air-force officers are constantly sent the following detailed information: 1) All enemy movement, concentration, enemy intent, various warehouses, airports and the activity of the enemy air forces; 2) The towns and villages controlled by the Partisans, the roads the Partisans are using and the maximum number of our transport vehicles on these roads, the borders of the free territory, the advances of our and enemies' forces; 3) Requests for the bombing of immediate tactical targets will be determined by the Headquarters themselves. The Supreme Headquarters of the People's Liberation Army and POJ (Partisan detachments of Yugoslavia) will provide bombings in accordance with the more extensive operations of our forces, provide strategic bombings, give the priority of bombings in certain sectors, etc." (p. 147). After Serbian towns were razed according to Tito's commands, and masses of their inhabitants killed; on 15 January, Tito warned Vladimir Velebit, who was at the time on a diplomatic mission in London and had got in touch with Pavelić's envoy: "Our desire is not only to protect the Croatian people, but also to protect villages and towns, especially Zagreb, from destruction" (Vol. XXVI, p. 14). According to Tito, "It is important that the Croatian Army (Ustashas and Domobrani (home defenders), none other existed – note by V.Š.) help as well. Prevent destruction by their immediate rebelling against the Germans" (p. 14).

### **k) Broz's Interpretation of the Term "Croatian Army" and his Meetings with Draža Mihajlović**

Tito would also sometimes call the Partisans in Croatia "the Croatian army", although the Serbs largely outnumbered the Croats in those units. In a letter to the Headquarters of the Second Corpus from 6 December 1943, Tito was thrilled with the rising numbers of the Partisan units, saying, "Soon the percentage of Croats in our units in Croatia will surpass the Serbs. . . The Croatian units completely cover the entire Croatian territory. . . Firmly led, this army is capable of resolving all the issues in Croatia. We remind you that with the fall of Italy, the Croatian army has been armed substantially, though not to the extent it should have been" (Vol. XVIII, p. 22-23). Tito

knew that one day it would certainly be necessary for him to call the Serbian Partisan Units “Croatian”, even when almost no Croats were in them. On the other hand, he constantly equated the role of Ustashas and Chetniks in the war, even claiming that the Chetniks had killed tens of thousands of Muslims and Croats. Constantly lying, in an extensive article for the US magazine Free World, published in June 1944, regarding that, he untruthfully represents a conversation he had with Draža Mihajlović in September of 1941, saying, “Since Draža Mihajlović – then and for long time afterwards – thought that I was Russian (I don’t know what his reasons were), he openly talked about the Croats and all the other nations of Yugoslavia. When I asked him what he thought about the national issue, he answered unequivocally that the Croats, Muslims and other nations must be strictly punished, and after a certain reprisal must be subordinated to the Serbs. Since I objected, he said that his opinion was quite correct, as all the Croats were guilty of the Ustashas’ crimes, they were all Ustashas and traitors, who had sold Yugoslavia to the Germans” (Vol. XIX, p. 171).

Submitting a clarification of the proposal that the Presidency of AVNOJ approve general political amnesty to the Chetniks of Draža Mihajlović and Croatian and Slovenian domobrans on 21 November 1944, Tito emphasised that this was a case of “seduced” people, who had for various reasons happened to find themselves on the side of the enemies of their country and nation. This was one more opportunity for the “Greater Serbian hegemonists” to be named as the main and biggest evil, thus Tito in the following way classifies the reasons from the pre-war period which forced many people go the wrong way: “First, the reasons lie within the national oppression of the people by Greater Serbian hegemonists. Second, the reason lie in the stirring of hatred among the peoples of Yugoslavia by the former authorities. Third, the reasons lie in national chauvinism, which was developed among certain nations by foreign agents, such as the Ustashas were in Croatia and others. Fourth, the causes lie within the twenty years of political oppression of the working class, especially of the Communist Party, which was portrayed before the people as anti-state. Fifth, the reasons lie in the systematic propaganda and slander, which were, during this People’s Liberation war, perpetrated by domestic traitors and the occupying forces united against the true patriots, which by the call of the Communist Party, picked up their weapons, and under its leadership, weapons in hand, fought for their independence and their lives. Sixth, the reasons lie in the systematic propaganda at home and abroad: that it was not the right time for an uprising, and that they should wait for a sign for the fight against the occupying forces” (Vol. XXV.,p. 31).

### **I) An Outline of Broz’s Anti-Serbian Policy after World War II**

A record of Tito’s conversation with Winston Churchill from 15 august 1944 testifies what an unbelievable liar Tito was. The leader of the Yugoslav Communists categorically claimed that his intention was not to introduce the Communist system in Yugoslavia, and that his Partisans follow democracy and freedom as their basic political principles. According to Tito’s words, “. . . all the European countries must have democratic systems after the war, and Yugoslavia must not be an exception” (Vol. 22, p. 46). His slogans of brotherhood and unity were always just empty phrases, since Tito was not able to conceal his anti-Serbian animosity, even in direct communication with the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party for Serbia. Hence, in a letter from 17

September 1944, he sharply criticised its members because of the content of a circular letter they had previously sent to their membership. Indeed, he scholastically nit-picked their actions, reproaching the Serbian Communist for “falling into empty and faulty analysis”, especially reproving them because of “faulty” conclusions regarding the role and significance of Serbia in future events.

In fact, this fragment is the most significant, because it represents the outline of Tito’s complete anti-Serbian policy after World War II. Tito writes, “What is the significance of Serbia in recent times, after the Second Session of AVNOJ? It is the fact that in Serbia, a central reactionary group has been concentrated, linked to all the reactionary groups in Yugoslavia, aided by the reactionary circles from England and America, and the German occupying forces. From this position it ensues that all the reactionaries have speculated on the issue of Serbia. But it wouldn’t be right to say, as you are doing, that the Serbian nation has some kind of a leading role in ‘deciding the future of the other nations in Yugoslavia.’ What does that mean, speaking from practice? It means that the people in Serbia are liberating other nations – the Macedonians, Montenegrins, etc. However, this is wrong. And it might give the wrong impression to others how the Serbian nation, by liberating other nations, at the same time should acquire some bigger, leading role. It would be right to say that the Serbian nation can be liberated only with a common struggle with the other nations of Yugoslavia, and in this common struggle it cannot accomplish its own freedom if it does not destroy the various hegemonic cliques. In this struggle it will ensure its independence and equality with the other nations of Yugoslavia. The matter should have been defined in this way, without talk about some kind of leading role, mission or similar. Not one of the oppressed nations of Yugoslavia would be able to understand that opinion and policy of yours, and they could only hurt the people in Serbia, as well as the strength and real unity of the People’s Liberation Movement in Serbia” (Vol. XXIII, p. 165).

#### **m) An Attempt to win Over the Leadership of the Roman Catholic Church for Broz’s Personal Dictatorship**

Aware that the Croatian nation had been founded solely on Roman Catholic exclusivism, Tito, already in 1945, tried to win over the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia for his totalitarian political project and personal dictatorship, concealing it under the veil of Croatian national interests. Hence, in Zagreb on 5 June of the same year, he received a delegation of the Catholic clergy led by the assistant bishop in Zagreb Franjo Salis-Sevis, as Archbishop Stepinac’s deputy. He expressed his joy over the fact that prominent Church dignitaries were showing complete understanding of the current political events and a desire to work with the new authorities. By expressing his own opinion of the future relationship between the Church and the state, he presented his own vision of the instrumentalisation of the Church organization as follows: “I must tell you that I, as a Croat, was not satisfied with the behaviour of a part of the Catholic clergy in these difficult historic times, which have cost a lot of lives. Forgive me for being frank, but I am speaking openly, saying what I think: I was not happy. However, this does not mean that we are condemning, nor am I condemning the priests in general. I think you are aware that a large part of the clergy, especially the younger priests, have separated themselves from the older priests, especially from the followers of the great Strossmayer, the followers of the Yugoslav idea. Of course, during

the struggle itself we always bore in mind as a guiding notion the thought that the issue of religion is deeply rooted in our people, and that that issue, as well as the issue of the Church, that is to say, the stance of the Church towards the state, cannot be resolved by an act of decree, for those kinds of solutions have always failed and hurt the community and the national cause in general. Conducting ourselves by that notion, that guiding idea, we have taken on the job of making an agreement and finding the best solution. I would like (I also stated this to Monsignor Svetozar Ritig) to have some kind of a proposal made about how you think the issue of the Catholic Church in Croatia should be resolved; likewise, we are going to do the same with the Orthodox Church. As far as I am concerned, I would say that our Church should be national, that it should adapt more to the nation. It might seem a bit strange to you that I am so firmly advocating nationality. But too much blood has been spilled; I've seen too much suffering of the people – that is why I want the Catholic clergy in Croatia to be national, to be connected with the people better than it is now. I must openly say that I am not claiming the right to condemn Rome nor your leading Roman jurisdiction. No, that I won't do. But I have to say that I am looking at this issue critically, because that jurisdiction has always leaned more to Italy than our people. I would like that the Catholic Church in Croatia, now when all the conditions exist for it, to be more independent" (Vol. XXVIII, p. 86-87).

However, since the Roman Catholic prelates had the habit of instrumentalising others, and not they themselves becoming someone's means, a conflict would soon arise with Tito's regime. The Episcopal conference under the leadership of Stepinac addressed its members on 20 September 1945 in a "pastoral letter", in which it distanced itself from the new authority and the scheduled elections for the Constitutional Assembly. Tito reacted to this in an article in *Borba* (Struggle) from 25 October 1945, where he showed the vanity of a hurt dictator, but for the first time he aired the essential facts of the thorough Church compromise during the war. The article says, "The so-called pastoral letter, signed by all the bishops in the country, led by the archbishop Stepinac, clearly confirms by its content that its initiators have an extremely hostile disposition towards the new Federal Yugoslavia. The letter's contents, as well as the time in which it was issued, also confirms that it is in accordance with the planned persecution and attacks by all the enemies of the new, reborn Yugoslavia, i.e. the Federative Democratic Yugoslavia. The two things the gentlemen Bishops refer to most in their epistle are the persecution of priests and the agricultural reform, although they do not call it an agricultural reform, but expropriation of Church property. In their epistle, the gentlemen bishops go so far as to identify the punishment of the bloodthirsty Ustasha butchers who were priests as persecution of the Church. The gentlemen Bishops boldly say how they are prepared to fight, even if it costs them their lives. Who are they prepared to fight? Clearly, against the people's authority, against the achievements of the national liberation struggle, against the new, democratic Yugoslavia – in other words, against the vast majority of the nations of Yugoslavia" (Vol. XXIX, p. 126).

Only now does Tito open up the problem of the behaviour of the Roman Catholic clergy during the war, now that the prelates have refused to submit to his political requests. He begins with rhetorical questions: "Why didn't the Gentlemen bishops, say, in the time of Pavelić and the Germans, issue and read a similar epistle in all the churches against the horrific massacres of the Serbs in Croatia, where hundreds, and hundreds of thousands of women, children and men were killed? Why didn't they

condemn those hideous Ustasha crimes, which will go down in history as the biggest stain on the Croatian nation? Why didn't the gentlemen bishops issue such an epistle and allow it to be read in all the churches against the slaughter and execution performed by Ustashes and Germans on tens of thousands of the Croatian nation's best sons? Why didn't they object to the most appalling human slaughterhouse – the Jasenovac concentration camp, where Ustashes equally destroyed Serbs and Croats alike by the tens and hundreds of thousands? Why weren't they, at the time, prepared to lay down their lives as the spiritual shepherds for hundreds of thousands of Christians, and yet are now saying that they are ready for every sacrifice because of an agricultural reform and their personal interests? Isn't it a bit weird and too transparent? Do they know who those priests, who they are now supporting, were? They were rotten Ustasha butchers and the spiritual inspirers of the Ustasha massacres. Have they ever condemned and excommunicated even one of these villains from the Church? No, they have not – quite the opposite. They want to make martyrs of them. They are fighting for the graves of those villains, the Ustasha butchers, which were caught by the hand of national justice. Why don't they fight for the graves of the Ustashes victims? Why don't they fight for the graves of those innocent little children who were killed by the villain's knife in their mother's arms? Have they ever visited the resting places of the thousand and thousands of the Ustashes' innocent victims? No, they have not. What does it mean? It means that they care more about the graves of the Ustasha butchers than the graves of innocent victims" (p. 126-127).

The case in question here, in the first place, are the graves of Ustashes and domobrans, about fifteen thousand of them, who the Partisans executed near Bleiburg. After this, Tito lists concrete examples of direct criminal activities of the Roman Catholic clergy, again using rhetoric questions as an effective figure of speech: "Do they know that in Široki Brijeg and Herzegovina, many friars fought alongside the Germans and Ustashes against our national liberation army? Of course, they died together with the Germans and Ustashes, and now these here are calling that the persecution of the Church. Why did so many Ustasha leaders and butchers originate from Bosnia and Herzegovina? Pavelić the murderer and those like him were students at school ran by friars. The friar schools and secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina were the hotbeds of hate among the Croats towards the Serbs and Muslims. The Franciscan and monastic schools planted horrifying hatred into the heart of the Croatian nation in Herzegovina and Bosnia, whose results appeared under the leadership of the villain Pavelić. . . Many of those who had seduced him escaped the punishment of national justice. Now some people want to absolve the others. . . Are you familiar with the fact that tiny remnants of the Ustasha units have called themselves Crusaders, and under this name they are killing peaceful peasants and travellers? In the name of God, in the name of Pavelić, in the name of Maček they are calling deluded people to join their ranks. Under whose influence? Under the influence of various old, unsuccessful politicians and propaganda, similar to the pastoral letter. . . This is harming the consolidation of our country. This is spreading hatred among the people, especially when interpreted by the priest who support the Ustashes. It is bringing unrest among the people, which may lead to terrible consequences if this harmful propaganda is not timely stopped" (p. 127). Near the end of the article, Tito personally calls Stepinac out: "From the statements made by Mr. Archbishop Stepinac and other Church dignitaries, saying that they are prepared to persist in their struggle even at the cost of personal sacrifices, I can draw only one

conclusion: all of them accepted the situation under Pavelić, not out of fear, but out of ideological reasons” (p. 128).

In early November 1945, in a statement to the correspondent of the French newspaper *Imanite*, Tito elaborates on some of the questions, clarifying his own views and the political stance of the Yugoslav Communist regime. Among other things, he says, “The Orthodox priesthood to a great extent is devoted to the people and has a loyal patriotic stance. A part of the Catholic clergy, particularly the senior clergy and the Church dignitaries, played a role unbecoming to them during the war. These people were inspired by clearly fascist tendencies before the war. During the occupation, they co-operated with the occupying forces and consorted against the people. Some of priests, in co-operation with the occupying forces and the Ustashas, committed criminal acts, particularly against the Orthodox population, the Serbs and the patriotic Croatian Catholics. This should be taken into account. In our country, the Catholic Church has been powerful when it comes to its organization, and it has the Vatican’s support. It is the main reactionary force, since fascism had been destroyed here. This talk about the persecution of the Church in Yugoslavia is meaningless. After the liberation, no one persecuted the Church; nobody persecuted the priests or congregation. Nonetheless, we have a strict stance towards the known criminals, the priests who have committed or led massacres of Yugoslavs. Our task is to punish them. This is what the people have requested anyway. We have not even touched any other priest, although many of them worked for the benefit of Ustashas, and blessed the slaughtering fascist gangs. We have only persecuted the ones who, weapon in hand, went after the people who were fighting the occupying forces for the liberation of their country” (p. 134).

#### **n) Collaboration with the Germans and Ustashas**

Although he always accused Draža Mihajlović and his Chetniks of collaboration with the occupying forces, Tito himself had begun collaborating with the Germans and Ustashas. The information about this had been concealed for decades, and after Tito died it was published by Vladimir Dedijer, only for Miša Leković to write a book about the so-called March Negotiations from 1943. After the great German operation “Weis I”, the leadership of the Partisan movement offered its co-operation to the Germans, and a non-aggression pact, so they could have a face off with the Chetnik units undisturbed. At the time, both the Germans and Partisans were most apprehensive about an Anglo-American landing on the Adriatic coast, whose forces the Chetniks would most definitely join. That is why a confrontation with Mihajlović was the priority for the Germans, but they had not given up on eliminating Tito’s forces afterwards. On 19 December 1942, Hitler’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, *von Ribbentrop*, told his Italian counterpart Count Ciano that the Chetniks were more dangerous than the Communists. During 1942, Partisan forces were in a critical situation, as they were detested by the Serbian people. This was largely due to the fact “. . . that the Supreme Partisan Headquarters and Josip Broz Tito had personally initiated a course of fierce confrontation against all ‘current and existing’ enemies of the Partisans. The consequence of this course (called the ‘left turn’, i.e. ‘left deviation’), which was wrong in every possible way, was that the Partisans were completely disabled in Montenegro, Herzegovina, Sadžak and Eastern Bosnia” (Kazimirović, gen. quote., Book Four, p. 1046).

The German operation “Weis II” pushed back all Tito’s forces onto the territory between Glamoč, Livno, Jajce and Bugojno, threatening them with complete destruction. The subsequent termination of the Chetniks had been planned as well. Tito, through the captured German Major Stricker, got in touch with the German command and offered a truce. Fearing the Soviets’ reaction to this collaborationist act, and perhaps as a precaution, which ensued from an inborn fear for his own safety (fearing for his own safety, he would, during the fighting, move bigger units from one position to another several times), Tito did not personally sign the offer to the Germans for the commencing of the negotiations. The offer was not even sent in the name of the Supreme Headquarters, but in the name of one military unit” (p. 1056-1057). He offered the Germans a Partisan retreat from several of their key strategic territories, an end to violence and a focus on the complete destruction of the Chetniks. “Coming from the very intent of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters, that was a major event – huge – which was for various reasons kept quiet in Yugoslavia for several decades. When people started to write about it, everything was done so the entire case would be presented as a singular insignificant episode, hardly worth mention” (p. 1058).

However, this was not even the first case of Partisan collaboration with the Germans, and it is very significant that in that regard, the instigator was always Tito. Kazimirović points out that, “. . . just before the offer of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters to the Germans for the commencement of the negotiations for a truce (and exchange of prisoners, among other things), in March 1943, the Main Partisan Headquarters of Slovenia had established contact with representatives of the German military intelligence organization (*Abwehr*), the purpose of this contact being to reach an agreement on a truce between the Partisans and the Germans. As the German historians who have focused their research mostly on the activity of the military secret services *Wehrmacht* write, the opinion in that circle was that all the conditions had been met for a Partisan arrangement with the Germans, since Tito had ‘started feeling abandoned by the Russians’ since the end of 1942. Referring to a report by Professor Burger, a representative of *Abwehr* in Klagenfurt, the historian **Leverkin** claimed that the Slovenian Partisans in the first meeting had already stated that ‘under the certain circumstances, Tito would be prepared to stop the fighting against the Germans’. Contrary to the wish of the Slovenian Partisans, the representatives of *Abwehr* in Klagenfurt showed no interest in the continuation of the once-commenced talks. This was because in the meantime, they had been so ordered from ‘higher up’, with the explanation that ‘very soon, Tito will be liquidated one way or another’. It must be said that the contact of the representative of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters of Slovenia, as well as the contact of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters, were not the first nor the last ‘peaceful dealings’ between the Partisans and the Germans. The first significant contact was established in the summer of 1942, near Livno, and after the negotiations in March 1943, there followed continuous contacts which lasted until the very end of the war” (p. 1058-1059).

To the attempts of the Communistically-oriented historians to condone Tito’s collaboration as a tactic, a diplomatic evaluation of the enemy, buying time, warning the western Allies, etc., Kazimirović replies, “From German documents (by the way, other document do not even exist), it is plain to see that, firstly, the negotiations between the representative of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters and the Germans (regardless of the fact that the Germans did not consider them to be negotiations) had a strong foundation

Comment [Z42]: Translator’s note. Spelling of this name was not confirmed



and could not be classified as just a common 'contact-ploy'. The very fact that there happened to be two senior Partisan leaders, Milovan Đilas and Kosta Popović, in the Partisan's delegation for the negotiations with the Germans suggests such a conclusion. Likewise, such a conclusion is suggested by the very record made in Gornji Vakuf, where it was precisely noted what the Partisan delegation wanted to talk about, and what it was proposing. If we add to this the orders given to certain units by the Supreme Partisan Headquarters to cease all attacks on the German military force and to halt the destruction of the Belgrade-Zagreb railway tracks, then everything receives completely specific dimensions. These dimensions, in fact, that the explanation for the decision of the Supreme Partisan Headquarters for the agreement with the Germans in March 1943, can only be found in Josip Broz's estimates that the war was drawing to a close, and the Germans were facing the final defeat, hence the Germans were no longer the main enemy, but rather the members of General Mihajlović's army, who could, aided by the Allied forces (in whose landing Tito himself believed at the time), easily re-establish the old government in Yugoslavia" (p. 1059-1060).

In order to establish a favourable arrangement with the Germans as soon as possible, Tito had been convincing them that there were no reason for him to fight their army, and that the Partisans had only taken part in these conflicts in self-defence. He promised that all the Partisan units would fight the eventual Anglo-American invasion of the Adriatic coast with all their might. Tito's delegation in Gornji Vakuf officially announced to the German officers that, "We see our biggest and most dangerous enemy in the national Chetnik movement, as the Chetniks want to create a Greater Serbia, and push us out. Under such circumstances, we have no reason to fight the German army, nor to inflict damage to the German interests in the country – of both a military and economic nature – as well as the interests of transportation. We are not looking for a favour in return. We only need to be given an opportunity to fight the Chetniks, so we can destroy them" (p. 1064). The official record containing all the elements of the agreement was published in full for the first time in the 1980s in several historical works, in the second volume of Dedier's *New Appendices to the Biography of Josip Broz Tito*. Tito himself, sensing that he would soon become the topic of discussion, mentioned these negotiations in a speech he made before his death at the anniversary of the Battle of Neretva, on 12 November 1978, claiming that their purpose had only been the exchange of prisoners, and he accused his associates of over stepping their credentials. Not until four years later, when Tito was gone, did Kosta Popović dare to say that Tito's allegations were unfounded.

In his book, Kazimirović gives broader excerpts of one previously little-known official German record from 31 March 1943, made by Abwehr officers based on talks with Tito's envoy, Vladimir Velebit. "In that act, it was noted that Velebit, among other things, said, 'According to our opinion, and as we have been unofficially informed, the Germans have no territorial aspirations whatsoever on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and they only have strategic and economic, and eventually political interests. Hence, they will, regardless of the war's outcome, be leaving the country when it is over.' Pointing out that the national liberation movement advocates for a free Yugoslavia, where all the Slavic tribes should have equal rights, and the Serbs would not be the only ones to rule, Velebit said, '... this is why the People's Liberation Movement sees the national Chetnik movement as their biggest and most dangerous enemy, who is trying to create a 'Greater Serbian state.'

“The next thing Velebit told the German officers of the secret service was: ‘Under the circumstances, we have no reason whatsoever to fight against the German army anymore, nor do we want to inflict damage on the German interests in the country, be they of a military or economic nature. We are not asking for a favour in return. We only need to be given the opportunity to fight against the Chetniks, so we can destroy them. Sadly, the Italians could suffer, but such is the fate of the ‘Alliance!’ In Sarajevo, Vladimir Velebit also said that, ‘. . . the desire of the Supreme Headquarters of the People’s Liberation Army of Yugoslavia is to retreat into one particular area, most likely to a Chetnik region. Geographically, this could be a region in the west with the Neretva as its border, and on the north in the direction of Konjic-Kalinovik-Foča’” (p. 1071-1072). The remainder of the official record consists of Velebit’s detailed disparaging of the Chetniks and Mihajlović. Tito’s faith in the Germans soon led to the Partisan fiasco at Sutjeska.

### **o) Strengthening the Communist Dictatorship According to the AVNOJ Anti-Serbian Recipe**

After Tito’s units had entered Belgrade in October 1944, they started wide-scale mass executions, not only of their enemies, but of all ideologically suspicious and untrustworthy citizens throughout Serbia. Three hundred thousand new fighters were forcibly recruited in Serbia and without any training were sent to the Srem Front, where many died. In his book, Vasa Kazimirović points to the testimony of Boško Čović, who had at one point been Tito’s personal companion, which he gave concerning the close ties between the Vatican and his Supreme Commander, which must have been linked with allegations made by Zoran Nenezić that Tito was a Mason and belonged to a highly-secretive Vatican lodge, which was of an extreme reactionary nature. According to what Boško Čolić told Pavle Popović Crni, who published it in the article *Secret Journey to Vatican* on 1 May 1994, in Belgrade’s daily *Politika*, and subsequently passed on by Kazimirović, “. . . he accompanied Tito when he had in great secrecy travelled to the Vatican for talks with the Pope. It appeared that the Pope had obliged Tito (at an undisclosed cost, as Pavle Popović Crni claims): 1) to not liberate the Jasenovac concentration camp, 2) to use his known influence on Churchill to deter the British forces from bombing Zagreb, and 3) to convince Churchill that Belgrade should be bombed (supposedly because of the Germans). Pavle Popović Crni, completely believing Boško Čolić’s story, says that the information that was revealed ‘represents a kind of black box’, and that because of this secret, Čolić was, in the time of Informbiro, severely tortured at the island Goli Otok: they would put a marble stone weighing over one hundred kilos on his bare chest while he was laying down. His arms and legs bound, while he gasped for air, others would pound the marble stone with a huge hammer’ (p. 1369).

Since King Petar II Karađorđević, compelled by Churchill, had ensured the international legal continuity of the Yugoslav state, and had legalized AVNOJ, Tito organized, in orchestrated circumstances, parliamentary elections, forged the results, and strengthened the Communist dictatorship using the AVNOJ anti-Serbian recipe. “In fact, the decisions made in Jajce were the bases of the territorial division of Yugoslavia by the Comintern plan; the division was directed at the suppression of the ‘Greater Serbian idea’ and the ‘Greater Serbian hegemony’ in Yugoslavia. The decisions in Jajce, in line

with the Comitern, created the conditions for the suppression of the Serbian factor and disabled the Serbian nation from integrating into one unit. All things considered, the consequences of the 'AVNOJ federal formula' would be, at a given moment, the placement of Serbia under the control of an anti-Serbian coalition, first by the Constitution of 1963, followed by the Constitution of 1974, and then the transforming of the AVNOJ administrative borders into state borders – when the second break-up of Yugoslavia happens, the republics would be declared national states with elements of political, economical and cultural sovereignty. In fact, starting with the AVNOJ decisions and the Constitution of 1974, the European Community created its plan for removing Socialist Yugoslavia from the historical stage and geographical map” (p. 1322-1323).

The post-war normative and political realisation of the decisions of the Second Session of AVNOJ was detrimental for the Serbian nation. “When we take into consideration what the decisions of AVNOJ in Jajce actually meant, and bearing in mind what eventually happened, it seems that the Serbs, without who AVNOJ would never have happened (in the time of AVNOJ the Serbs made 90% of the Partisan forces), actually fought the war against their own interests, and mostly in favour of the ethnic and territorial unification of the Croats, Slovenians and Muslims. In this light, the decisions of Jajce meant a massive victory for the anti-Serbian forces. Undoubtedly, this victory, however, would never have happened, and in the least in could not have been this big if it were not for the support that the Serbian Communists provided the anti-Serbian forces. They themselves strived to prove that Yugoslavia, which was created in 1918, was a ‘Versailles creation’, dominated by the ‘Greater Serbian hegemony’. At the founding congress of the Communist Party of Serbia, held in May 1945, all this was stated and even concluded – that even in the circumstances of the new Yugoslavia, ‘the fight against the Greater Serbian hegemony is one of the main tasks of the Serbian Communists’. Regardless of the stance held and acquired by the Serbian Communists, or rather the Communists of Serbia after AVNOJ, and to what extent they were non-critical towards the decisions made in Jajce, a single truth survived to fight the darkness of forgetfulness. And the truth is that the decisions of AVNOJ in Jajce, contrary to general claims that they had finally resolved the national issue in Yugoslavia, had in fact reopened-the Serbian issue” (p. 1325).

The AVNOJ decisions were the most politically beneficial for the Croats; to the same extent, they were detrimental for the Serbs. “Mostly because these decisions had paved the way for the second Croatian state (after 1941), out of which, after Yugoslavia has been destroyed, will surface a third one – established as the first contemporary Croatian state, a state of Ustashas, with help from abroad. According to Franjo Tudjman, if it were not for AVNOJ, ‘the destiny of the Croatian people would be terrible’. As far as the Serbs in Croatia were concerned, they relatively quickly able to see for themselves where AVNOJ had taken them. In spite of the declarations and various proclamations of the party, the Serbian nation in Croatia would, a decade after the session of AVNOJ in Jajce, lose the right to the official use of its language, its alphabet, the right to have its own schools, its own press. . . . During the session of AVNOJ in Jajce, when brotherhood and unity were regarded as everlasting achievements, the Croats and Serbs were further apart than ever before in their entire history. The vast majority of Croats still supported the Ustashas state, which had caused so much evil for the Serbs, supporting it primarily with weapons in their hands, fighting in Ustasha

military formations, gendarmerie and Home Guard regiments and divisions, and sometimes even on the side of the enemy army and SS units. Even in the final days of the war, just before the Partisan units entered Zagreb in May 1945, several times more Croats fought under the flag of the Independent State of Croatia than in the army under the command of Marshall Josip Broz Tito. Of course, taking this into consideration, it follows that, with the decisions of AVNOJ in Jajce, in fact, the Croats (with them the Muslims, as well) were rehabilitated – for their treason of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, for fighting on the side of Germany, for the genocide committed against the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. Notwithstanding this, it is stressed that by the AVNOJ decisions, the Independent State of Croatia had been rehabilitated – the state which had officially been at war against Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. To the Soviet front were sent both ground troops as well as air force units. Owing to the decisions in Jajce, the Ustashes state continued its life in a different form, within the Yugoslav federation” (p. 1335).

When the King had transferred his constitutional rights to the Royal delegates, and Josip Broz Tito was given the mandate to form a new coalition royal government, “. . . the People’s Liberation Movement, organized and led by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, could triumph after all. The decisions in Jajce would become the country’s first law, although they, as time will tell, planted the dynamite into the foundations of Yugoslavia, which will eventually destroy it, once again putting the Serbian nation through an ordeal. The dynamite was the creation of the type of federal units, like, for example, Croatia and Slovenia were, where separatism continued to exist, was getting stronger and was only waiting for the right time to be activated in full strength. The opportunity eventually presented itself” (p. 1337).

#### **p) The Institutional Dissolution of the Yugoslav State as a Preparation for a Break-up to Serbia’s Detriment**

The collapse of the Communist Yugoslavia and the break-up of the union, above all of the Serbs and Croats, was inevitable. The Croats never really wanted the state, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia could not have been consolidated, and under the Communist regime, the authorities systematically, with open terror, superior propaganda and constant transformations of the Constitution and laws toward the disintegration, quickened the disintegration process so it was unstoppable long before the social situation became critical due to the deep economic and debt crises. The ideological monopoly of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which had been strengthened for decades, had prevented entire generations of intellectuals from openly thinking about and discussing the state and future of a multinational and multi-religious society, so the public was successfully silenced by the artificially created illusion that the exceptional self-governing socialist social model is the best and only one possible. While the American financial support of the dictator Tito, as the only triumphant rebel against the almighty Stalin, lasted – expressed in \$100 billion in non-refundable aid – Titoism and its propagators could successfully control each and every social and political action, compelling millions of people to at least pretend to have an unshakeable belief in the fundamental ideological postulates, although a number of people under the constant propaganda and indoctrination, in their stupidity, ignorance and naivety, honestly believed what Tito and his satraps explained and promised them. In a closed totalitarian

society of the Communist type, the ruling ideology, which cannot accept any other alternative thinking and behavioural patterns, was more important than the economy, science, and culture.

The collapse of Eastern European Communism found Yugoslavia in the state of a deep economic and moral crises, of shaken political authorities and a normative legal structure, which had been in due time conceptualized and projected by someone who had desired the future break-up of the state, mostly to the detriment of Serbian. The self-governing model of a fixed economy, whose actors were under the strict control of the local and regional party committees, in the deciding moment did not have anyone to redirect it towards reaffirmation, market economy and private property. The hatred between the ethnic communities – mostly caused by the genocide which the Croats primarily committed against the Serbs in World War II, forcibly hidden for decades and hushed up – was constantly increasing in the meantime, because of the unresolved relations and evasion of the truth, and finally erupted at the most critical moment. The third key factor in all this was the strategic goal of the Vatican and Germany to divide the Yugoslav state along the stitches timely prepared by Broz, in order to reduce the Serbian territory as much as possible. At the time of the mobilisation, with the massive foreign aid to the Slovenian and Croatian separatist movement, the federal state bodies had been efficiently weakened, and were disabled by normative obstacles from stopping the collapse of the state system. The decision-making apparatus was so complex and instilled with blocking instruments, that the governing body of only one federal unit could have stopped the actions of any state institution in a legal way.

The economic pragmatism within the sphere of economy in the decisive moment could not overpower the party's ideological monolithism regarding the destiny of self-governance and the prejudice about its superiority. The Slovenians and Croats – to which Kardelj, as the main architect of all Tito's constitutional projects, had given the decisive institutional advantage – did not accept in any form the rehabilitation of the federal state, nor the revision of any achievement of the Communistic voluntarism, especially the arbitrary borders between the federal units and the possibility of the creation of new autonomous structures on the territory, for instance, of the Croatian federal unit. Considering that the League of Communists, as the ruling political party in a strict one-party system, was the concentrated face of power, while the state institutions prescribed by the Constitution existed to execute the political will of the party, the break-up of the party has shown that not one Yugoslav state institution can continue functioning. In addition, the pressure by the International Monetary Fund to lead a restrictive economic policy was revealing the basic exploitation relationship between the developed and undeveloped federal units, which had gone on for decades; which meant that Slovenia and Croatia were in a privileged position compared with the rest of Yugoslavia. Although, according to the Constitution of 1974, Slovenia was in the most privileged position, separatism ignited there first and continued to generate political crises until the Yugoslavian state collapsed. That means that the Slovenians chose a national objective before economic prosperity, or perhaps that they were aware that the exploitation of the undeveloped southern part of the country could not be kept up, given that they had started protesting against the apparent inequality and injustice. The Western forces, who wanted the controlled and quiet separation of the Yugoslav federal units, promised large sums of money for this project to be realized peacefully, to the

extent that it was possible. The Serbs as a nation could not be bought with money, since they have interests and ideals worth much more than material ones.

The institutional dissolution of the Yugoslav state led to a situation in which the only integrative factor in Yugoslavia was Josip Broz; after his death, the politicians' only fear was that a new Tito would not appear and assume the leadership role.

This fear was the reason why the Slovenian, Croatian, and Vojvodina supporters of autonomy; the Muslim and, to a certain extent, the Montenegrin and Macedonian Communists, strongly reacted when Slobodan Milošević appeared on the Serbian political scene. The existing confrontations concerning the issue of the necessary revision of the federal Constitution deepened and, to the ultimate consequences, caused a polarisation within the Communist structures into the supporters of the rehabilitation of the federal state, and the ones in favour of the further dissolution, which benefited the separatist tendencies. His growing influence among the Serbian people was especially worrisome, something the rigid bureaucratic structures were terrified of. For the first time since the victory of the Communist revolution, politics had escaped from the dark offices and Tito's two-headed, fawning circles, and got out to the streets, thus inspiring the restoration of the awareness of democracy as a government of the majority; not as the ritual following of the will of a self-proclaimed proletarian vanguard. The Communist political elite of the time simply could not come to terms with the fact that one of its members in the inter-party tussle had the national masses for an ally. When it became apparent that the Communist dictatorship must in some way transform into a parliamentary democracy, the followers of the Broz-Kardelj anti-Serbian course refused, at all costs, to first hold – which would have been the logical thing to do – federal parliamentary multiparty elections in order for the federal state to acquire democratic legitimacy, and then have elections in the federal units. Only the later was possible, and the federal government was still infamous among the international circles for being Communistic, which is why it had no actual legitimacy nor practical authority.

Tito's and Kardelj's systematic and continual reforms of the Yugoslav Communistic federalism from a stabile federation into a loose confederation did not encounter opposition, given that under the totalitarian dictatorship, real political life did not exist; the citizens had lived in fear of the very thought of the free public expression of their personal opinions, while the political elite, established on principles of unconditional obedience and negative selection, saw their purpose in the blind execution of Tito's orders. Occasional instances of disagreements within the elite usually ended in the political marginalization and elimination of the participants; and in the cases of direct opposition, there was a danger of long-term imprisonment, testified of by numerous rigged political trials. The Serbian Communists, nevertheless, incessantly competed amongst themselves over who would betray or submit the Serbian interests more, since Serbian nationalism, in the view of the ruling ideology, was the biggest enemy. The Communistic bureaucrats were concerned only with their privileges; and in the same deafening, chorus-like voice, they would recite their infinite loyalty and devotion to Tito and his ideological, empty phrases. Tito all this time acted like an undisclosed Croatian nationalist and an anti-Serbian chauvinist. For three full years, Tito actively supported the nationalistic "mass" movement in Croatia, but when the anxiety of the Serbian public opinion threatened the supremacy of his position of absolute authority, in a single stroke he politically eliminated the protagonists of the "mass" movement, only to realise all their political ideas by a constitutional amendment within a few years.

I have analysed many aspects of Titoism and his political practice in my earlier works, which I have systematized in the definitive issues of my books *Time of Re-evaluation* and the *Campaign Against the Heretic* (Vojislav Šešelj: *Collected Works*, the Serbian Radical Party, Belgrade 2000, Book I and Book II). I don't find the essential opinions stated in them outdated or obsolete even today, so for reasons of space and economy I do not repeat them here, although they represent an account of the historic actions of a complex individual, the Croat Broz, who, if we analyse him individually, caused the most harm to the Serbian people in all of history up to this point.

### **III. Franjo Tudjman and the Renewal of the Croatian Ustasha Clerical-Fascist State**

#### **1. The Developmental Path of the Accomplisher of the Vatican's Anti-Serbian Programme**

Preparing for the projected break-up of Yugoslavia within the fundamental destruction of the Eastern European Communist system, the Roman Catholic political circles and Western intelligence services played the card of the former Communist general and later nationalistic dissident, Franjo Tudjman (1922-1999). Tudjman's personality, character, mental make-up and ideological prejudice is the authentic expression of the Croatian national consciousness and political course of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also of the secret efforts of his Vatican, German and American mentors. He was born in Veliko Trgovište, in the Hrvatsko Zagorje region, as the son of a prominent member of the Croatian Peasant Party; so in his family home he was raised in the spirit of Radić's and Maček's ideological views and political objectives. The Croatian historians are not quite sure, even now, whether the origin of the Tudjman family is German or Hungarian, but it is certainly not originally Croatian. After Franjo Tudjman finished four years of elementary school, he continued his education in Zagreb, since he received a scholarship from the Roman Catholic parish, as the parish priest had raised the necessary money. It is probably worth telling that Franjo's father Stjepan had sometimes organized acts of retribution against his political opponents, by cutting down orchards and vineyards owned by the supporters of the regime and in other ways abusing the members of the Yugoslav Radical Union, who in the tense political atmosphere often did not dare publicly manifest their political opinions.

The turning point in Tudjman's life happened when he was about sixteen years old; since his mother had died when he was seven, his father remarried, and then at the peak of his puberty, Franjo started a love affair with his stepmother. It went on until his father caught him red-handed, in bed. Franjo Tudjman had to leave the family home for good, and this traumatic experience would follow him until he died. The feeling of guilt completely psychologically disturbed him, and in his conscience brought on the strengthening of the cult of his dead mother, subsequently strengthening the Oedipus complex. Having lost his father emotionally, he became completely obsessed with the faint memory of his dead mother; not even a single photograph of her existed. Just before World War II, he was intensively reading Marxist literature; in 1941, despite his father's disagreement, he joined the Partisans, and then in 1942, he joined the Communist Party. When, in 1943, it became apparent that the political option of the

Ustashas was the losers' option, Tudjman's father, Stjepan, joined the Partisans, and became, as a supporter of Maček, a representative in the First Session of ZAVNOH. Tudjman himself had never taken part in the actual fighting, but exclusively engaged in political and conspiratorial activities. Thus, he was building his typical commissarial mentality. His war friends did not give him the "Partisan Memorial of 1941", thus lowly grading his contribution to the first year of war. Only after much difficulty did he manage to get a hold of the important revolutionary medal. Nevertheless, his ambitiousness, negative selection of human resources and nationality enabled him to become a colonel of the Yugoslav People's Army.

As his most extensive biographer to date, Darko Hudelist writes: during the war Tudjman was prone to irresponsibly and greedily dealt with the money from the Partisan treasury; he would make black lists for assassinations of Ustashas and their associates, including the names of people for completely personal reasons, against who he felt personal animosity; and after the war as the manager of the Institute for the History of the Labour Movement of Croatia, he forged the originals of historical documents while preparing them for print. He did not refrain from denouncing his fellow fighters and associates to the higher party organs, if it was to his benefit and could be successfully ideologically explained. He seized the opportunity to destroy a number of the documents that were compromising to him. The gifted "schemer", as Hudelist calls Tudjman several times, often expressed one of ". . . the distinctive features of his character: he eventually reinterprets certain episodes from his life in the light of the current political circumstances, in order to use them for his own political promotion" (Darko Hudelist: Tudjman: The Biography, Profil, Zagreb 2004, p. 50).

As his fellow fighters testify, Tudjman several times acted like a big coward, and since on several occasions he was treated as incompetent, later he would spread rumours about himself that in 1942, he was on the verge of committing a suicide. With extensive research and questioning, Hudelist found out that in the time of war, ". . . one of the main features of his particularity was the feeling of absolute superiority towards the ones who were subordinated to him, and at the same time expressing absolute servility for those who were above him. When he was making his reports, it is quite certain that Tudjman was not particularly preoccupied whether some of his colleagues-fighters or commanders in the unit would be hurt by the reports, but he was very much interested in impressing the party leaders, whose opinion would determine his future war career. The result of such actions was expected, and the only one possible: Tudjman advanced in his career, but his colleagues from the unit started to loathe him. . . Tudjman was unpopular because of his conceit and unsubstantiated heroism" (p. 133).

Tudjman's father Stjepan, having transformed into an ultimately rigid Communist, suffered a nervous breakdown, thus in 1946 he killed his wife and subsequently committed suicide. Although he was very well informed of the circumstances of the family tragedy and had attended the funeral, upon his return to Belgrade, Tudjman ". . . started spreading a different story: he would say that his mother and stepmother had been killed by Ustashas. More precisely by the Ustasha crusaders. And then in the second half of the 1980s, before the break-up of Yugoslavia, he would change the story and launch a diametrically opposite 'theory': his parent had been killed by the members of the Communist secret police, the so-called '*Udbaši*'. According to the new version, his father had died because he did not agree with the new Communist regime, especially not with the way the new authorities had treated Croatia and the Croatian national



interests. In fact, the Ustashas from the original 'theory' had been substituted with the members of the *Udba*, while the story line remained the same: his father and mother were victims of someone else's crime. That Tudjman had very serious intention concerning this is shown by the fact that he appeared with his new interpretation of the tragedy before the masses, before the broad public – before his numerous voters at the pre-election gatherings of the Croatian Democratic Union in the spring of 1990 . . . then, he started writing about it. The controversy peaked. The final version of the deaths of Tudjman's father and stepmother eventually became the official version" (p. 161).

Hudelist had many difficulties to get to the truth, as he himself says, "It was not easy – in the 1990s this was one of the biggest taboos in the Republic of Croatia" (p. 192). Tudjman had persistently represented his father as a devoted follower of Radić and Maček, forgetting that later, ". . . his father had transformed into a Communist and a Partisan. And not just any Communist, but the sternest and most rigid in the entire Hrvatsko Zagorje region. He kept quiet about this. It was evident that he wanted to use his family and its tragic fate in the days following World War II to create a myth – a myth by which he would, supposedly, additionally confirm his validity as the first president of the Croatian state in the post-Communist period. A state which had separated itself from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In short, the President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tudjman, decided on a comprehensive revision (many would call it a 'fabrication' or 'cleansing') of his biography – his own, as well as his family's. It was completely unnecessary – he could have and should have done without it. But once started, it could not have been stopped. The reality succumbed to the myth, and what is even more, to an entire series of new myths. The myth about his father who was, and remained, a member of the Croatian Peasant Party, followed by the myth of the tragic death of his father and stepmother in 1946, and then the myth of his considering suicide in late 1942. . . A whole variety of myths had been made, with a common but yet essentially grounded political goal: it was to prove that among all those fanatical 'Yugo-Communists' and 'Croat-eaters' in the Hrvatsko Zagorje region, the Tudjman's during and after the war were the only 'true Croats'. And for their Croatianhood they had to pay with their lives – or they did pay for it, it depends on who you ask. The fact that it did not happen that way – all the worse for reality" (p. 162).

Working in the Human Resources Department of the Yugoslav People's Army in the 1950s, Tudjman had the opportunity to manipulate the personnel, especially when he gained the support of the powerful Ivan Gošnjak, thus he immensely tried to suppress the Serbian officers and open the door for the Croatian ones, who were in most cases less competent and sometimes completely ignorant, like he himself had been when it comes to historical science. A real opportunity for his careerism, condescension, hypocrisy and denouncing personality to shine presented itself with the start of the elimination of the officers who were exposed as the supporters of Đilas's stances, published in a series of articles publicised by the party's daily newspaper *Borba*. Tudjman flourished, in the real sense of the word, and with great zeal he started the persecutions, which usually ended in firing officers with significant revolutionary pedigrees from the service. As Hudelist writes, "We can summarize the reasons why Tudjman, in the dispute between Tito and Đilas, so passionately and uncompromisingly took Tito's side, even with so much passion, that he was the unquestionable leader in the persecution of Đilas' supporters within the party organization of the Yugoslav People's Army. He did it for two reasons. The first one was of a careerist nature; Tudjman was

just a 'hard-liner (Titoist)', and he wanted to show it to everyone, especially to his superiors. The statement by the Executive Committee of the Central Committee Communist Party of Yugoslavia from 10 January 1954 was a signal what he should do and when he should do it. He got down to business. Party investigations were not unfamiliar to him in the least – we found that out during World War II" (p. 203).

The second reason is no less important. According to Hudelist, it is the "... moral-political structure of Tadjman's character. This is a structure which had not changed significantly, not even then when Tadjman, at the turn of the 1950s into the 1960s, started his transformation from a Titoist into 'Croatian Nationalist'. Tadjman had always been impressed with totality. For him, totality was everything, while a human, a man, an individual, a person – we cannot say they signified anything for him, but that they were far less important than totality. In his lifetime, in different periods of his life, Tadjman devoted himself to two separate totalities. The first one was the Party, and the second one, when he had rejected the Party, was Croatia and its nation-building interests. In both cases, there was never enough room for the individual. Not in a single part of his life was Tadjman liberal, or a liberalist – logically, Dilas was something foreign to him, distant, strange, unfamiliar; at the end of the day, uninteresting. And most of all, dangerous and hostile. Thus in that dispute in 1953, he was 'a bigger Catholic than the Pope'. In fact, he was a bigger Titoist than Tito was. He had an additional motivation, which the others probably did not have. He would change a little later – a lot later, and only partially. Even in the late 1980s, when, as the President of the Croatian Democratic Union, he openly propagated free elections and pluralism, he would be miles away from Dilas. For, Dilas had rebelled against the existing Communist system, because he was deeply convinced of all the advantages of pluralism and liberal democracy of the Western European type; Tadjman in pluralism saw, most of all, a tool for bringing down one totalitarian system so he could establish a new one – with Croatia as the new totality at the core of it. He would never step out of the territory where totality was not the supreme principle. God made him that way, and anyway his father was the same" (p. 204). Tadjman adored Tito then, later he would imitate Tito's manners even more.

Darko Hudelist also considers Tadjman's post-festum insistence that he had acted as a Croatian nationalist his entire life myth-o-maniacal. He is convinced that Tadjman's big ideological transformation from a Communist into an internationalist happened exclusively for the reason that in Belgrade he could not realize his personal megalomaniac careerist ambitions. Had someone offered him then, for instance, a position in the General Staff, the people who knew him are convinced that Tadjman would have remained a Titoist and a super-Yugoslav for the remainder of his life. His evident Croatianhood would not have been an obstacle, since Tito's regime was never anti-Croatian, but always extremely anti-Serbian. However, Tadjman's even faster progress was hindered mostly by his character flaws, by his smugness, narcissism, narrow-mindedness selfishness and his dandy mannerisms. According to Hudelist, "Tadjman became a 'Croatian nationalist' in Belgrade in the late 1950s, because he suffered from a 'peripheral complex', i.e. he knew and he could never come to terms with the fact that his Hrvatsko Zagorje was on the periphery of the People's Liberation Movement in World War II, and that he himself was a peripheral, marginal and in fact irrelevant person. A person that could have been done without in the war. In fact, it was as if he had never even taken part in the war. Tadjman equals zero. The same Tadjman whose ambition had always been to be the first" (p. 237). Tadjman was hurt the most

when his superiors, prominent Partisan commanders, mocked him, while he considered himself much more intelligent, educated and competent than they were.

## 2. A Multiple-Time Plagiarist Rehabilitates the Ustashas

Tudjman hired a dozen people to write his first book of some 700 pages, which was published under his name in Zagreb 1957. He titled the book *War against War: The Partisan War in the Past and Future*. There are some indications that he got the initial idea from Gošnjak himself, the federal secretary for national defence, at a time when people started thinking about the concept, doctrine, and system of the general national defence. Regarding the book, Hudelist particularly warns of a characteristic factor: “Tudjman had written somewhere that the Chetniks of Draža Mihajlović were ‘the most evident form of cooperation with the enemy forces opposed to the People’s Liberation Movement and with the occupying forces’. This is a very important thesis and a significant moment in Tudjman’s transformation. To say for the Chetniks that they were ‘the most obvious form of cooperation with the occupying forces’, without saying the same for the Ustashas, who in the Independent State of Croatia closely cooperated with the Germans, would at least mean being one-sided. Nonetheless, Tudjman knew why he had written this. By so doing – for now very cautiously and just in hints – he is making foundations for his future grand ‘message’ and his ‘national concept’ of the national liberation war, and also of the entire history of the people of Yugoslavia, which he would more seriously and meaningfully build on in his later works. The essence of the concept is in the interpretation of the Partisan war exclusively in light of its confrontation with the Greater Serbian and Royalist forces (mostly Chetniks), and at the same time minimizing or exaggerating the actions of the anti-Partisan forces of the domestic, Croatian ranks – the Ustashas and *Domobrans*. While the ‘national’ concept somewhat saves the domestic ‘bad guys’ from more serious critics, it puts ‘the bad guys’ on the other, the Serbian-Montenegrin side, at the forefront. ‘The Centralist Unitarian’ historians, as Tudjman had named them, did the same thing but with the opposite prefix” (p. 250).

Tudjman’s first book received mixed reactions, while the second one, *The Creation of the Socialist Yugoslavia*, from 1960, caused an even greater polemic. In it, Tudjman differentiated the national liberation struggle into federal units, propagating and representing Croatia in a positive light. “As soon as the national criteria, and not the territorial ones, became important to him, the national ones in fact became the only ones that mattered – he opened the door for the rehabilitation of everything that had happened in Croatia during the war on the other side, the side that was opposed to the Partisans” (p. 261). He started the rehabilitation of the *Domobrans*. Besides that, he exposed himself as a copier and a bare plagiarist, “. . . thus some parts he simply copied, without citing sources, from other publications, including the two volumes of the book by the Military Historic Institute, *The Liberation War of the Nations of Yugoslavia 1941-1945*” (p. 264). Although he used to continually attack the political role of Vlatko Maček, arguing with the critics, he started giving positive opinions about him. Hudelist thinks that his ‘reliving’ into Maček meant the coming on to stage of the Croatian conservative historiography (and the corresponding ideology) of times prior to World War II, in fact, the abandoning of the revolutionary and Communistic and ‘winners’ historiography, which at the time, as the adopted standard, was the only one allowed” (p. 265).

A military historian and general, Fabian Trgo, was the first one to point out Tudjman's plagiaristic work, who in the *Military Historian Gazette* published a review of Tudjman's second book. Among other things, he states that Tudjman, "Copied entire paragraphs or pages from others' works without citing the source, giving the impression that the work was the result of his scientific research. That method is not allowed in any creative work, especially if the work is called a study, as the author himself wrote on the first page of his own book" (p. 277). Stealing from many authors, "Tudjman would simply, while copying the original text, 'translate' it to the ijekavian dialect, or he would drop or slightly reformulate some sentences, so they would not be copied verbatim" (p. 277).

The second "methodological" procedure Tudjman used in every one of his books was the hiring of other people who would, as requested, write certain parts or translate extracts from other languages. As plastically described by one of the "writers" of Tudjman's first book, Artur Takač: "Tudjman gathered a true support-team and organized the people who would at a record pace bring in the material! Similarly, like in a village, the hay is given with pitchforks to the farmer standing in the horse-drawn cart, and he makes a haystack with it. Tudjman thus 'carved out' this book, as thick as a national cook book, which is in fact a mixture of all sorts of things!" (p. 275). Hudelist comments that this is the reason why Tudjman's books ". . . in most cases are difficult to read, not to say tiresome. A bigger torture than reading Tudjman's books does not exist. The controversy of the topic he would choose was always in an inversely correlated to the excitement and flow of the text, since the text, or most of it, was written mechanically, like an endless repetition of the same plains, or simply and in a base way, just citations" (p. 274). A famous historian, Ljubo Boban, systematically proved that the entire text of Tudjman's dissertation was a primitive and obvious plagiarism. He was such a daring plagiarist, that he would copy entire paragraphs from the works of his political opponents and personal enemies.

It seems paradoxical that Tudjman had been at the position of a general 15 years, but did not succeed in getting a hold of the rank of a general himself until the public opening of his plagiarist affair. Vladimir Bakarić thought that he would be of more use in Zagreb as a moderate nationalist of unquestionable Communist orientation, so he agreed with Gošnjak that he was to be promoted to a general, then to leave the military service and become the director of the Institute for the History of the Labour Movement in Croatia. In Zagreb, he moved into a villa which the regime had taken away from a Jewish family, and entered the informal intellectual political circle gathered around Miroslav Krleža. A known academic swindler, otherwise a Serb, Vaso Bogdanov had arranged that in Zadar Tudjman was to receive a PhD on the bases of obvious plagiarism. Tudjman and Bogdanov became close friends. "Their spiritual union started in the 1950s, when they did not even know each other, and turned into true 'partnership', thanks to Krleža as an intermediary. However, it was not just the pro-Croatian national orientation that brought them together. Both were, according to their pass-times, in fact quasi-historians and great improvisators – in any case they were more that, than they were serious scientists (though Bogdanov, compared to Tudjman, was well read and more knowledgeable). They wrote, mostly, on the bases of impressions and a priori opinions, and frequently with prejudice, so the 'real' historians of the College of Philosophy in Zagreb, led by Jaroslav Šidak, not only did not respect, them but they despised them. Both were quasi scientists for them. Bogdanov was even mocked by the students at the college, since his

lectures were way below par of the university educational level. On top of all that, Bogdanov was remarkably adaptable, so, although his political opinions were unusual, he could cajole the ones in power, especially Bakarić. He loved comfort and leisure, he dabbled in all sorts of things (he was called ‘Vaso the Dabbler’ for a reason), but most of all, along with money, he loved women. The couch was the most important part of the inventory in his professor’s office at the College of Philosophy. This Bogdanov, however, knew how to impress Tudjman better than all the respectable Croatian historians together; that is why on one hand, he was making him a star, on the other hand, he skilfully used him, receiving large fees in the Institute, for his own personal interests. In addition, Bogdanov in him saw his own son. He felt that that which he had not been able to accomplish, for many reasons, with his ‘political experience’, General Tudjman could accomplish now in Zagreb. Their lives were remarkably parallel. Both became ‘great Croats’ in Serbia, (Bogdanov in his home in Vojvodina, and Tudjman in the Yugoslav People’s Army), and both continued their pro-Croatian campaign in Zagreb. They met, as if connected by some higher power, with the same ideas in the same place. This power was Krleža, actually” (p. 313-314).

### **a) A Conflict with Bakarić and its Consequences for Tudjman**

Tudjman had a conflict with Bakarić in 1964, when he started to praise the Cvetkovic-Maček Agreement and the formation of the Banate of Croatia as the way in which the Croatian issue was generally resolved. Since, having been warned, he continued to propagate the thesis, the following year a party process was launched against him. “The disagreement between Bakarić and Tudjman on a key controversial question from the most recent Croatian history was not, of course, a scientific polemic between two historians. It was a conflict between two politicians: of one who already was a politician and who had a firm grasp on power in the Republic, and the other one who will become that in the future – in the formal sense of the word. Both of them were defending their ‘coordinate system’, their ideology, their policy, their option, their own self. Bakarić however was theoretically more knowledgeable, rational, intellectually mature; while on Tudjman’s side was the passion he expressed when he talked about the ‘liberal creation of history’. . . Tudjman was unstoppable. His fundamental methodical position was ‘living history’, the way he personally saw it, relived and realized. He completely identified himself with Maček. He transformed him into himself and let him talk through him and think in him. Tudjman was Maček – but in different circumstances and times. This is how Tudjman lived the history. He did not just ‘study’ and ‘interpret’ it, but by annihilating the time barrier between the past and the present, he projected certain strategic problems and events of the past into the time in which he lived and worked. He never even considered being an impartial investigator of history, a ‘small-time clerk’ who distanced himself from the subject he was interested in; on the contrary, he was an active maker and producer of history. A new history, his history. His treatment of Maček was uncritical, he approached Maček for himself. And that was that. Bakarić would not nor could he understand that. He wanted to and could have done something else: to stop Tudjman in his intentions of the ‘liberal creation of history’ – to take away this freedom of his, before it was too late” (p. 334-335).

Tudjman started the gradual rehabilitation of the Independent State of Croatia by rehabilitating the *Domobrans* (Home Guards) and deducing that the crimes had been

committed by the Ustashas as the instruments of the occupying forces, who did not have strong support among the Croatian people. At first he did not negate the criminal character of the Ustasha's quisling creation. "But, behind this declarative condemnation, he still put two significant features of the Independent State of Croatia in the forefront, which he did not support outright, but the impression was that he did not object them at all and in fact he was impressed by them. The first one was that the Independent State of Croatia was the expression of the breaking up of Yugoslavia, i.e. the separation of Croatia from Serbia (more precisely: of the Croats from the Serbs). The second was that, in a territorial sense, it represented 'Greater Croatia', which comprised Srem, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandžak. The breaking up of Yugoslavia, i.e., the separation of the Croats from the Serbs, and the territorial expansion of the 'Croatian pretzel' at the expense of parts of the territories of the other Yugoslav republics would be the key elements of Tudjman's future political activity, ending with the founding of the Croatian Democratic Union. However, during this 'historiographic phase' in the first half of the 1960s, Tudjman was content with their 'bare' mention, along with a declaration of condemnation of the fascist and criminal character of the Independent State of Croatia. Now, in the mid 1960s, in the peak of his conflict with Bakarić, Tudjman decided on his next move, a new phase of revision of the official interpretation of the Independent State of Croatia, and this phase was the relativism of the crimes, that is, of the war victims, committed in the Independent State of Croatia – most of all in Jasenovac, as the biggest Ustashas concentration camp. Tudjman set a showdown with the Jasenovac myth as his new big goal, which was the core of the concealed or public Greater Serbian views of the People's Liberation Struggle and the war history of the people of Yugoslavia" (p. 404-405).

When in late 1966, Ljubo Boban publicly and argumentatively attacked him as a plagiarist, simply tearing apart his doctor's dissertation, most likely on Bakarić's personal order, Tudjman lost his head and accused Bakarić himself of being a 'Ranković follower'. He did that because he lacked arguments, since he could not compete with Boban on a scientific level, so he transferred the polemic over plagiarism to the political field. Mentally shaken, as Hudelist explains, ". . . those days Tudjman saw conspirators everywhere around him, he suspected everything and everyone. He fell into a state where he had difficulty in controlling himself. He probably sensed that there was a noose around his neck, and his days, in fact, were numbered. He found a wall before him, an impenetrable one; and since, simultaneously, he became euphoric – since he was that messianic type of person – he propped himself on the pedestal of the only real and true fighter against Ranković and '*Rankovićevština*',<sup>40</sup> he saw 'Ranković's in everyone who would oppose him, regardless of the reason, even if it were a trifle thing – propagators of '*Rankovićevština*'. His world, actually his vision of the world, had been reduced to a black and white picture. You are either a 'Ranković follower' or the greatest opponent of '*Rankovićevština*'. If you are with me or for me, it means you are 'anti-Ranković': if you are not with me or you are against me it means you are for Ranković. There is nothing in between. That sounds familiar – from a period long after this when Tudjman was the Croatian President. But back in 1967, to write a sentence or a paragraph, or several paragraphs, suggesting that in Bakarić he saw a man who was on

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<sup>40</sup> "Rankovićevština" – the politics of Ranković.

Ranković's side and a supporter of '*Rankovićevština*' was utter stupidity, and above all a lie that was simply too much" (p. 425-426).

Bakarić had always been vengeful towards those who personally opposed him, so he did not hesitate to bring the showdown with Tujman to the very end. The ideal opportunity was provided by the feigned campaign that the Croatian Communists launched against the Croatian nationalists in 1967, on the occasion of the publication of the Declaration on the Name and Position of the Croatian Literary Language. Tujman was forced to resign from the position as the Institute's director, and then was expelled from the League of Communist. This meant complete social and political marginalization. Tujman later established closer ties with the Ustasha emigration, and in 1969, he welcomed Dobrica Ćosić into Zagreb, with whom he had discussed the likelihood of a new historic agreement between the Serbs and the Croats by which the Yugoslav territory would be rearranged. A few years later, he met with Milovan Đilas for the same reason.

In 1970, Franjo Tujman became a member of the Executive Committee of *Matica Hrvatska*. There, he quickly came into conflict with Grgo Gamulin, because Gamulin supported the recognition of the Muslims as a nation, while Tujman claimed that 80% of Muslims are of Croatian ethnic origin. *Matica Hrvatska* at the time was quickly increasing its membership, becoming a populist political party in the true sense of the word, and the leader of the Mass Movement. The conflict in the leadership of the Communist Party and the elimination of the leadership of the League of Communists of Croatia from the political scene would cost Tujman nine months in prison. After he came out of prison he would occasionally spend time with the prominent 'Mass Movement followers', who in general considered him to be of an overly extremist disposition. As Miko Tripalo had said to Darko Hudelist in 1993, the Mass Movement followers had already by the 1970s discussed the forthcoming break-up of Yugoslavia and considered the potential cooperation with some of the other factors. "Nevertheless, there was no agreement with Tujman. He believed that Bosnia should be split with the Serbs, and he was consistent in his opinions. He said that these kinds of 'humanitarian relocations' had already happened in history. When I objected that it would be impossible to move two million people, he responded: 'But why? Turkey and Greece carried out relocations after World War I, and what is wrong with them now? And the same is happening in Cyprus now!' His idea of splitting Bosnia and Herzegovina would always be linked to these 'humanitarian relocations'" (p. 492).

### **b) The Formation of Tujman's Intellect Under the Influence of Friar Mandić and the Ustasha Luburić**

In the late 1970s, Tujman finished writing, and in 1981, in an emigration issue, his book *National Question in Contemporary Europe* was published. With careful analyses, Hudelist reveals that Tujman in this book had taken the basic ideas of Dominik Mandić. Concerning this, he says, "Its very obvious that the core thesis in his work *National Question in Contemporary Europe*, the one which distinguishes this book from his previous works, is the thesis on the civilizational established differences between the Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia – which Tujman simply took over from Herzegovinian Franciscan Friar Dominik Mandić, one of the prominent figures of the Herzegovinian friar community on the North American Continent. That means that he came under the

influence of the Herzegovinian friars in the second half of the 1970s, in fact a decade before he would form a kind of a historical ‘pact’ with them and their political sympathisers and followers during his great tours of Canada and USA in 1987, 1988 and 1989, on the eve of the break-up of Yugoslavia. Since Friar Dominik Mandić was a person of immense importance, not only for the world of the Herzegovinian Franciscans but also for the political development of the future Croatian President Franjo Tuđman (from the late 1970s and onwards), it is necessary to say something about him and his activities. . . How significant he was for the Croats of the western Herzegovina – both in homeland and in emigration – is shown by the fact that Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, in an article in the magazine *Drina*, described him as the ‘Herzegovinian Vatican’. More precisely, what the Pope was for the Roman Catholics, Friar Dominik Mandić was for the Herzegovinian Croats, at home and in diaspora” (p. 510-511).

After a thorough overview of Mandić’s biography and an overview of his main works, Hudelist defines his impact on Tuđman. “Overall, Franjo Tuđman took four capital theses from Friar Dominik Mandić. The first thesis is that the differences between the Croats and the Serbs were caused by the differences between two civilization types or codes – the Western and the Eastern – which ensued as a consequence of the Great Schism of 1054. The second thesis is that the Croats and the Serbs cannot live together in the same state. The third thesis is that the Muslim nation (or Muslim religion) is an integral part of the Croatian nation or corpus. The fourth thesis is about the need for the creation of alleged ‘clean national territories’ in the Yugoslav region, or as Tuđman preferred to say, ‘humanitarian relocations’. These theses were defined by Mandić in various phases of his life, at first while doing pastoral and political work, and subsequently historical work. When he died in 1973, Tuđman had a starting point and, in the somewhat altered circumstances, a point from which to continue his learning. However, it should be mentioned that Tuđman himself had made the reverse influence on Friar Dominik Mandić in the later years of his life. In his work *The Croats and Serbs: Two Old, Different Nations*, Mandić referred Tuđman’s book from 1969, *Big Ideas and Small Nations*, several times. If in the 1960s, while Tuđman was the director of the Institute for the History of the Labour Movement, there was an unbreakable spiritual unity between Vaso Bogdanov and Tuđman, in the 1970s it had been extended to Friar Dominik Mandić, but also to one significant Herzegovinian Croat, Vjekoslav Maks Luburić” (p. 513).

This means that Tuđman’s intellectual maturing was significantly influenced by one quasi-academic thug from Zagreb and the two most prominent Ustasha ideologists. “From Luburić, Tuđman took two strategic ideas: concerning Croatian reconciliation (*pomirba*), and the creation of an all-Croatian political organization of planetary proportions, which would unite all the Croats in the mother country and the expatriates into a singular movement for the creation of the national Croatian state” (p. 513). Although he had never met with Mandić and Luburić, since Luburić was killed by the Yugoslav secret police in 1969, and Mandić died in 1973, Tuđman’s spiritual unity with them became indestructible. “Tuđman was, therefore, their heir, synthesiser and sublimator – but also their accomplisher in practise, from the late 1980s onwards; of course, just partially, when he began the execution of his plan, inasmuch as he was allowed by the international circumstances. Moreover, they were not very favourable. Nonetheless, the main terms used by Tuđman, Luburić and Friar Dominik Mandić were: ‘nation’, ‘state’, ‘borders’, ‘differences’, ‘divisions’ and as Tuđman’s specificity,



‘special conditions’. Within these coordinates, they were developing their key political views and concepts, and depending on the situation, actual political actions. However, there was one more thing that linked Tudjman with Mandić: loathing of the ‘cold’, academic, overly critical professional historians, who in their work exclusively relied on facts and verified historical sources. Both Mandić and Tudjman advertised one quite different, ‘warmer’ approach to history, which contained a lot of passion and ‘affection’ toward the subject being written about. While Tudjman called valued, neutral, positively orientated historians (like Jaroslav Šidak and Mirjana Gros) ‘small-time clerks’, Mandić and his sympathisers saw them as ‘frowning policemen” (p. 513-514).

Since Tudjman’s passport had been taken from him, for several years he was not able to travel abroad or get in touch with his emigrant mentors in person. Still, once he illegally went to Sweden, using a forged passport. In 1982, he was sentenced to three years in prison for the then-infamous criminal act of “hostile propaganda”, for which he received a five-year ban on public appearances. During the trial, Tudjman held his head high, but when he got into prison his whining and pleading to the high state officials started. Asking for mercy, he incessantly called on his revolutionary contribution and practically swore by the AVNOJ principles. “Tudjman writes like this when he has his back against the wall. He calls on the People’s Liberation Struggle, the Revolution, the Party, AVNOJ and the Constitution – both the Yugoslavian and Croatian ones. This was the case in the 1960s in his repentant letters to Bakarić, and it was the same now, in the 1980s, in his letters to Špiljak and Vrhovac” (p. 521-522). Finally his sentence was reduced, so he served only seventeen months in prison. Having been given back his passport in 1987, he could embark on a tour across the Atlantic.

Tudjman’s first overseas destination was Canada, and his main goal of the time Hudelist defines as follows: “Making contacts, and subsequently actual deals and arrangements with the most powerful and influential community of the Croatian expatriates in the world – the community of the Herzegovinian Franciscans (Friars) and their numerous followers, sympathizers and associates, who were all of Herzegovinian origin, connected with the Friars by the homeland interests and political link. The community had been established in the 1950s and 1960s by the most important Herzegovinian Franciscan of all time, Friar Dominik Mandić (1889-1973). . . Since, on one hand, the Herzegovinian Friars were the strongest Croatian community in the world, it had two main centres, one in Široki Brijeg, and the other in Chicago (Drexel Boulevard 4851), and since, on the other hand, Franjo Tudjman had imagined his future political organization, the Croatian Democratic Union, in a worldly proportion, with the centre in Zagreb, ‘the capital of all Croats’ – it could have been expected that, in some way, one day they would unite, since in all the important things they had the same political opinions, they would try to accomplish their fundamental political goal – the creation of an independent Croatian state on the Territory – with joined forces” (p. 590). Tudjman wanted to, by presenting his books, attain as big an influence as possible within the emigration, connect with his sympathizers and collect large amount of money. “The motives behind the Herzegovinian-Franciscan community for cooperation were, however, more complex and sophisticated. They simply needed a national leader who lived and worked in the homeland, and with who they could, as the most powerful and organized force in the Croatian emigration, realize their strategic political interests” (p. 590-591).

### 3. The Pro-Ustasha Climate After the Formation of an Alliance Between Reagan and Wojtyla

At the time, the Ustasha emigration had abandoned terrorist methods as the instrument of the struggle and adopted political propaganda, since the US and Canadian authorities had started an energetic suppression of any type of terrorism on their territories. A huge boost for them was the alliance of Reagan and Wojtyla for the purpose of coming down on Communism and atheism, which in a way started a new kind of Crusade. “Of course, the Herzegovinian Friars, who despised Communism as much as Reagan and Wojtyla, could not and dared not miss this great opportunity. They put their own political interests in the service of the world-wide process of the destruction of Communism, behind this, pragmatically connected, stood the Vatican and the USA., They proclaimed the destruction of Communism in Yugoslavia as their fundamental political goal. Precisely that: the destruction of Communism in SFRY, and not so much (certainly not as the primary goal) the destruction of Yugoslavia as a state. But, for their plans to be a success, they needed the ‘right’ person in the homeland, someone who would have enough desire, strength and determination to rally the masses (the Croatian nation) within Croatia itself. For, without the expansion of the front in Croatia, the diaspora could not do anything. Franjo Tudjman had been chosen – even before he, in the beginning of June 1987, landed in Canada for the first time. Intelligent and cunning, extremely talented in political analyses, and even in psychoanalyses – almost like some kind of special, remarkably trained secret police – the Herzegovinian Friars picked Tudjman for their strategic partner in the homeland” (p. 592).

Hudelst then analyzes in detail the six reasons, which, in his opinion, were decisive for the Friars’ choosing Tudjman. “The first and foremost was the reason that Tudjman’s character was of an extreme narcissistic type. It had been amazingly well observed. He was exactly what they needed: someone who thinks that he is ‘the most beautiful’, ‘the smartest’, ‘the best visionary’, and generally ‘the best’; someone who is ‘the most’ in everything. They believed that this was the only psychological make-up suitable for the creation of the myth of oneself. Of course, not just any myth, but the myth of a leader, the myth of a charismatic leader. The Friars believed that the future Croatian president must be, apart from being a real person, a myth as well. The myth was sublimed into a phrase that would be later frequently used ‘the father of the homeland’. Partially with flattery and cajolery, while meeting him in Canada, the Friars managed to win him over. Of course, he did not put up any fight. Secondly, as a two-time political prisoner, Tudjman had the indisputable dissident credentials, which was also an important precondition to be a serious candidate for the president of the Croatian state in the near future. Thirdly, apart from all this, Tudjman was a scientist as well. At least he declared himself one. He had ‘scientific’, ‘historian’ credentials – like his old role model had, the first great leader of the Herzegovinian Friar community in America, Friar Dominik Mandić. Fourthly, he was a general as well. Moreover, a general of the Yugoslav People’s Army – also important for the goals set. For, there was a presumption that some of these goals perhaps could not be accomplished without military actions: without a war, in which the Yugoslav People’s Army would take part. Fifthly, he supported Luburić’s concept of a Croatian reconciliation or a Croatian *pomirba* – as was his expression in the 1990s when he was the Croatian President. The Friars adopted this

concept in 1968 (although, previously, they had heavily opposed it, since they simply could not comprehend how and why they could reconcile with the Communists), and from then on it became a principle for them. Sixthly, Tadjman was a propagator of 'Greater Croatia', which was to be established by adding in the territories outside the Socialist Republic of Croatia where the Croats were the majority – in the first place, of course, the territories in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (p. 592-593).

Having explained the reasons of the Friars' orientation to Tadjman, Hudelist explains why they had such an appeal, almost a magical one, on Tadjman. "In his eyes, they were a powerful structure, which combined three elements of critical importance. The first element was politics. The Friars are, by definition, people of the Church, and as people of the Church they have an 'inborn' gift for politics. Politics are and remain the essence of their seemingly strictly pastoral work. The Friars' political goals and Tadjman's implicit political programme in the late 1980s were the same. The second element was the Church. The Catholic Church, of course. It was of extreme significance for the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Croatia, which, not even in theory, could be won without the direct support of the Church. By the Croatian Catholic missions (for the most part associated with the Friars), the Church had control over about 600,000 of Croatian expatriates across the world. And the third element was money. Business. The Herzegovinian Friars, among other things, are skilful businessmen, entrepreneurs who know how to turn money. And they were willing to share it with someone who wanted to join them, and who was worthy of their company. And Tadjman needed the money – for the election campaign and for other purposes.

"The deal that the Herzegovinian Friars (and their followers) and Franjo Tadjman had forged, in the period from 1987 to 1990, consisted of two fundamental imperatives. The first imperative was the destruction of Communism, i.e. socialism in Yugoslavia. This was in complete accordance with the world-wide process of the destruction of Communism in Eastern Europe, launched as a joint venture of the USA and the Vatican. The second imperative was to destroy Yugoslavia itself. The destruction of Yugoslavia, therefore, was the secondary, but no less important goal. Nevertheless, the first goal was the destruction of Communism. Of course, if followed that with the destruction of Communism, Yugoslavia would collapse as well" (p. 593).

There were more concrete, prosaic Friar interests in this game as well. "The Friars knew that after the collapse of Communism (socialism) in Yugoslavia, and therefore in Croatia, capitalism would be re-established, and in the new independent Croatian state a process of so-called transition would begin. Their ambition was to be the ones to manage the process – the Herzegovinian Friar community in the broadest sense of the word, and with their entire network of associates, recruited on the principle of the homeland. And Tadjman had to agree to this; he had to promise that they would have the dominant impact on the forthcoming transition process in the independent Republic of Croatia" (p. 593). For that reason, Tadjman was given a task to, without delay, cleanse the circle of his political associates from all the members of the former ruling nomenclature who would one day be an obstacle for the Herzegovinian interest group. Savka Dabčević-Kučar, Miko Tripalo, Vlado Gotovac, Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, Dražen Budiša and others were considered that type of potential hindrance. "As soon as he had returned to Croatia, Tadjman put up a wall between himself and these people, who were undesirable for the Herzegovinian Friar structure. Not one of them could even accidentally become a member of the Croatian Democratic Union, let alone something

more. Tudjman was making the Croatian Democratic Union with 'new' people, who were not a thorn in the side of the Herzegovinian structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in diaspora" (p. 594).

Tudjman's visit to Canada had a double character: the outward, manifested one, with contacts with less problematic persons; as well as the conspiratorial character, with the Herzegovinian Friars and fanatical Ustasha circle, led by Gojko Šušak and Ante Beljo. "It is as if the Herzegovinian Friars were made for conspiratorial actions, that is, for the type of actions which are more behind the scenes and almost never in the first row. Friar Ljubo Kراسić was proficient at this, when in the late 1980s he took over the most important Franciscan centre in Canada, the Croatian social and cultural centre in Norwell, situated on a large farm some forty kilometres from Toronto. Kراسić and the others did not brag much about the contacts made with Tudjman. They did not brag at all. On the contrary, they did not said a word about it" (p. 594-595). According to the testimony of an emigrant, Dragutin Hlad, Friar Ljubo Kراسić believed that ". . . a man like Tudjman was necessary for the future independent Croatian state, as camouflage. For, the Ustashas cannot just come and take over the state, but someone from within must be appointed, someone who was a Communist general, someone acceptable to the army, the Serbs and therefore for the Communists. And then again, he must have national legitimacy, which was not an issue with Tudjman, since he was thrown in jail twice" (p. 596).

Friar Ljubo Kراسić was the real, undisclosed and unquestionable chief of the Ustasha emigration. His brother, Friar Petar Kراسić, as his Norwell counterpart, had formed the conspiratorial Ustasha centre in the monastery of Masna Luka, under the mountain Vran near Duvno. The main Ustasha hotbed remained the Franciscan monastery in Široki Brijeg. Hudelist states that ". . . the most powerful Franciscan in Široki Brijeg as early as the early 1980s was Friar Jozo Zovko (who, among other things, had 'created' Medjugorje), while the most distinguished in the USA and Canada were Friar Mladen Čuvalo, Friar Vinko Dionizije Lasić, Friar Berto Dragičević, and the youngest among them, Friar Ljubo Kراسić. We can consider all four of them heirs of the main founder of their community (although it had existed before he came to the USA), Friar Dominik Mandić" (p. 597). Čuvalo used to organize Ustasha terrorist actions, like hijackings. The system of the emigrant organizations, led by the Herzegovinian Friars, clearly resembled a mafia system, especially in the methods they applied; but the thing that differentiated them from the real mafia was the fact that they were all legal and always registered as humanitarian or cultural organizations.

Out of the multitude of shocking details Tudjman presented in his overseas lectures, according to memory of the witnesses, Hudelist selected the views and opinions ". . . that Tito had never visited Jasenovac, because he did not agree with the exaggerated figures of the crimes against Serbs in the concentration camp; that in the Socialist Republic of Croatia, the Serbian paper *Prosvjeta* had been cancelled in the 1970s, while *Matica Hrvatska* continued to exist, at least in a state of vegetation; that the state had intentionally not been investing in the regions in Croatia predominately inhabited by Serbs, so the Serbs would move out of those areas in greater numbers and as soon as possible, etc." (p. 608). However, the most striking thing was Tudjman's persistent insistence on Luburić's political concept, which impressed the emigrant Ustasha circles the most. "In the late 1980s, it could not be distinguished who was a bigger Luburić follower: Franjo Tudjman on the one side, or the Herzegovinian Friars on the other.

Everyone adapted the idea for themselves: Tadjman in the homeland, and the Friars in diaspora. Their union and historic deal, from 1987-1989, in a way had a ritual characteristic. Although they were thousands of kilometres apart – they lived on two separate continents, on different ends of the world, and had never had any physical contact whatsoever – Tadjman and the Friars became one in the end. And they could become that precisely because one common idea of Maks's was bringing them together. Had Maks been alive in the late 1980s, he would have written panegyrics about himself. By forming an alliance with the Friars on the platform of Luburić's concept of the Croatian reconciliation, Tadjman in fact experienced his definite political initiation – before the soon-to-come taking-over of power in Croatia, and before taking over the position of the first true 'all Croatian' president in the history of the Croatian nation. The President of all Croats in the world, in the homeland and in diaspora" (p. 642).

Aware that Tadjman's direct association with the infamous Ustasha butcher and founder of the Jasenovac concentration camp, Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, could be politically detrimental, Tadjman's later panegyrists launched a thesis that the idea had actually been defined by Bruno Bušić, a member of Tadjman's staff at the Institute, who later emigrated and was assassinated by the Yugoslav secret police. "The idea absolutely came from Maks Luburić; Tadjman had been adopting it in the homeland, partly as a historian, partly as a politician, and he operationally defined it in Canada between 1987 and 1989, with Friars and their political sympathizers. This is the essence of the story. Bušić was not much of a nuisance, but he did not contribute much either. Everything would have happened the same even if he had not existed. However, his name is not mentioned by accident. The creators of the myth of Tadjman 'as the father of the homeland' (and some of those creators were the Franciscans) thought that it sounded a lot better that, regarding the idea of national reconciliation, Tadjman's name be associated with the young, handsome romantic, and even martyr, Bruno, than to the infamous Ustasha butcher and founder of the Jasenovac concentration camp, Luburić. It was like history would be more bright and 'rosy' if Bušić was in the forefront, and Maks somewhere in the background or on the margins – or nowhere. Unfortunately (or fortunately), history is not something one would like it to be, but what had really happened, and what in reality took place. Therefore, it is, in the very least, unfair towards the historical truth, and finally towards Luburić himself, to diminish or even suppress his crucial impact on Tadjman, while exaggerating the contribution of someone else, who only played a supportive role in the events" (p. 624).

The association of the Croatian Democratic Union and the Roman Catholic Church was already very strong in 1989. An official statement by Tadjman's party, calling for financial aid, was sent to several thousand addresses of the Yugoslav Roman Catholic institutions and Croatian Catholic missions across the world. Hudelist calls the results of this financial campaign fantastic. "Not only had a relatively large amount of money had been collected, but, what is even more important, by this the Catholic Church in its entirety had been linked with the Croatian Democratic Union's triumphant quest to power. Their coming together was in fact mutual. The Church had, even back then in the summer of 1989, recognized the Croatian Democratic Union as by far the most serious oppositional political organization in the Socialist Republic of Croatia (at least from a morals and values point of view), while the Democratic Croatian Union and its president, Tadjman, were aware that without the direct support of the Church, victory at

the forthcoming parliamentary elections would not be possible. This meant that the party or alliance that had the Church on its side would win” (p. 647-648).

### **a) A Direct Operational Link to the Roman Catholic Church**

Regarding the association between Tudjman and the Roman Catholic Church, Hudelist explains the opinion of one of the founders of the Croatian Democratic Union, Perica Jurić. Jurić believed that this association was “. . . decisive for the ultimate victory at the elections. The Church is a powerful organizational system in which the opposition could find refuge. The Church had been building that system for decades, across the world, and now when free elections could be sensed, it should be used for a political purpose. Working with the Church, the Croatian Democratic Union had created its own bases all over Croatia, and even outside of Croatia. It is universally acknowledged that there is no diaspora without the Catholic Church. Using its remarkably mobile Catholic missions, the Church has been gathering and organizing hundreds of thousands of Croats on every continent. This resulted in a retroactive effect in Croatia itself. Among all the individuals from the Church, Bishop Đuro Kokša invested the most effort in all this. He was the key figure in the communication between the Church and the Croatian Democratic Union, that is, Tudjman. Živko Kustić was extremely important, since he was the editor of the only real oppositional newspapers in Croatia, *The Voice of the Council*. *The Voice of the Council* was at odds with everyone in the Socialist Republic of Croatia, but only when it came to concrete issues. Kustić was the creator of the new method of political struggle: never enter the frontal war, but rather fight only for the most concrete things. Unlike Kustić, Archbishop Franjo Kuharić always acted positionally, never directly. He is to be credited for the great Eucharistic congress in Marija Bistrica in 1984, at which around 400,000 Croats gathered. Although seemingly religious, it was actually a political gathering” (p. 648).

Back in 1989, it became visible that Franjo Tudjman was politically more moderate than the Roman Catholic Friars whose instrument he had become. When he visited them with Dalibor Brozović in the end of the same year, in Norwell, Canada, “. . . the Friars were in favour of a Croatia up to the Drina River, while the ideal option of Tudjman and Brozović was the Banate of Croatia (or something similar to this territorial entity). This might be the only significant difference between the points of view of Franjo Tudjman and Dalibor Brozović on the one hand, and the Herzegovinian Franciscan community in Canada and the USA on the other” (p. 653). According to what Martin Špegelj had discovered when he stayed in North America several years later, “Tudjman promised the Friars acknowledgement from the Independent State of Croatia and the annex of at least a part of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia, while the Friars, in the name of the pro-Ustasha emigration, promised ‘soft’ treatment of the Communist and former Partisans in the future independent Croatia – consistent with the spirit of the idea of the Croatian reconciliation” (p. 653).

The Roman Catholic Friars launched a slogan about Tudjman as the “father of the homeland”, taking over that designation from Ante Starčević, who had held it in the past. He did not deserve it for having destroyed Communism nor for breaking up Yugoslavia. According to Hudelist, Communism and Yugoslavia would have collapsed anyway, even were it not for Tudjman. In the Friars’ view, Tudjman deserved to be called the ‘father of the homeland’ because he had liberated Croatia from the Serbs, who

were its constitutive nation until then. “One does not have to be a prophet to see that this definition of Tudjman as the ‘father of the homeland’ was based on Luburić’s idea of the Croatian reconciliation, which says that all Croats, regardless of their ideological or political past, have to unite in order to defeat their common enemy: the Serbs. By this he means the Serbs who have lived or used to live in Croatia itself (as well as in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina for which it is assumed, or was assumed, that they should be annexed to the Croatian state). In other words, Tudjman is the ‘father of the homeland’ because, once and for all, he managed to resolve the Serbian issue in Croatia” (p. 680). And he himself once said that there no sum of money could match the satisfaction of Croatia ridding itself of the Serbs from its territory for good.

### **b) An Ardent Follower of Luburić’s Concept of inter-Croatian Reconciliation**

Tudjman primarily opposed the AVNOJ and ZAVNOH concepts, by which in the Socialist Republic of Croatia, “. . . the Serbs, along with the Croats, were a constitutive nation. He felt that this must no longer be the case, and that Croatia should be a national state of the Croatian people only; to be precise, a state where the Croats would be the only constitutive nation. Of course, the precondition for this was that the share of the Serbian population in Croatia be decreased from 12.2%, which was their number according to the census from 1991, to less than 5%, making them just one of the national minorities, who would never even dare consider getting the status of a constitutive nation (or something similar). Tudjman wanted to accomplish this goal swiftly and by so-called ‘humanitarian relocations’. . . But since the deal with Čosić soon failed (the Serbian president Slobodan Milošević opposed him), Tudjman had to look for new ways and methods of decreasing the numbers of the Serbian population in Croatia. The most effective way turned out to be military the operation ‘Storm’ in August 1995, after which 200,000 Serbs were driven out from the Krajina. . . Tudjman’s strategic political goal was an ‘extended’ Croatian state (on the Territory), with a significantly decreased share of the Serbian population (between 3% and 5%). If that is not understood, then Tudjman’s entire work and that which he had done during his life as politician and a statesman is not understood” (p. 682).

Tudjman accomplished this goal by systematically presenting to the world that he was the only one fighting Milošević’s “aggression”. As Hudelist concludes, “We could say here that, the ‘Zagorje shrewdness’ of Franjo Tudjman was displayed to the maximum extent, and also one of the significant principles of his political work – that what he does indeed appears to be maximally legitimate and could be defended as a legitimate act” (p. 684). The German, US and Vatican policy and the public opinion orchestrated by them were in his favour. And here he had proven to be a faithful follower of an Ustasha colonel and *Domobran* general, Luburić. “To be a Luburić follower does not mean to be something ‘in between’ – in between the former Partisans (antifascists) and the Ustashas – it means to be in a qualitatively completely different position; in relation to both antifascism and the Ustashas, in the original meaning of the word. To be a Luburić follower means to be an adherent, and in Tudjman’s case, an implementer as well, of one completely defined idea and of one completely defined concept. It is a matter of the concept of the Croatian reconciliation, which had been theoretically (programmatically) defined in 1964 by Vjekoslav Maks Luburić and his

assistant, Miljenko Daba Peranić, in Franco's Spain; which in 1968 was adopted by the Herzegovinian Friars in the USA, led at the time by Friar Dominik Mandić. . . Luburić, using his own military logic, had concluded that the Croats would be able to create the independent Croatian state – and a state, for that matter, in which the Serbian issue would be resolved once and for all (since Luburić was not interested in any other Croatian state) – only when these two fronts stop fighting, and focus on only one front, the one where their enemy is their biggest and common enemy, the Serbs – the Serbs, of course, from Croatia and also Bosnia and Herzegovina, since Luburić imagined Croatia spreading to the Drina River, as it was the case in the Independent State of Croatia. Luburić wisely concluded that the Croats would not be able to accomplish their state-building goals if, besides the Serbs, they were fighting between themselves because of the ideological division between the (former) Partisans and Ustashas; but they should bury the hatchets of this ideological type and commit to fighting the only real enemy who might endanger the creation and survival of the future independent Croatian state. The idea of Croatian reconciliation originated from an anti-Serbian character. The essence of the idea was that the Croats should simply reconcile, since there is no point in arguing and then fighting about something that belongs to the past, and that the reconciled and united Croatian people will defeat the Serbs” (p. 684-685).

Darko Hudelist counters all eventual objections that he is exaggerating Luburić's ideological role with the following explanation: “Vjekoslav Maks Luburić was absolutely one of the central figures of recent (post-war) Croatian history, and in my opinion one of the three most important ones. If I had to pick the three most significant Croatian politicians in the period after World War II, I would choose Josip Broz Tito, Vjekoslav Maks Luburić and Franjo Tuđman. If someone thinks that Luburić does not belong in this distinguished company, I would say just this: if it hadn't been for Luburić, the Herzegovinian Friars would not exist (in the present political meaning of the term), nor would there be HISAK (the Croatian Emigrant Schools of America and Canada – note by V.Š.), nor Southbury, or Norwell; there would not be Šušak, nor the Croatian Democratic Union, nor Tuđman (politically defined as he was), there would be nothing. Everything would have happened differently than it did. Everything that Tuđman created as a politician and subsequently as a statesman, he created on Luburić's (and Luburić-like) foundations. In that he was not even original: consequently, almost like a 'nerdy student', he followed his ideas and beliefs – of course, with one difference: he did not blindly follow the original Ustashas and also Luburić's principles, which alleged that the territory of Croatia spreads up to the Drina River. When it comes to this, he would always stay behind his Maček (and his epigone Bogdanov), believing that the true eastern borders are at the Vrbas and Neretva. The party or the movement which propelled Tuđman to power in Croatia, the Croatian Democratic Union, is a copy of the political organization – or more precisely, of the idea of this organization – which was defined in Luburić's 11<sup>th</sup> 'fundamental principle' of his *Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Duties of the Croatian Fighters for the Liberation of Croatia*, from 1960 (therefore, three decades before the Croatian Democratic Union was founded!). . . This is why Tuđman would, on the verge of becoming tedious, constantly repeat that his Croatian Democratic Union was not just a political party like any other on the Croatian political scene, but a 'central' or 'pillar' political organization of the entire Croatian people, in the homeland and in diaspora” (p. 686).



### c) Drastically Diminishing the Number of Jasenovac Victims

Tudjman's most important published work is definitely the book *Wastelands of Historical Reality: A Treatise on the History and Philosophy of Violence* (Nakladni Zavod, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 1989). It was written with evident philosophic-historic pretensions, but the author was not able to surpass the level of an ideological tractate, limited by daily political needs. The main subject is Tudjman's attempt to destroy "the myth about the Jasenovac victims", within which "was an attempt to scientifically prove the theory of Croatian propensity to genocide", as he says, by the hegemonist-unitarian re-evaluators of historic events and individuals (p. 10). He turns his destined connection with the disproving of the "myth" into lamentation over himself: "Since, several decades ago, within the general discussion of the fundamental issues of contemporary national history, I had opposed the manipulation of this myth, which is based on an unprecedented case of multiplication of the already huge numbers of victims of the fascist and Ustasha terrors, I found myself in the focus, unfortunately, not as much of the scientific discussion on the issues, but under the grindstone of the 'power ratio' of the competition, and even a showdown, or political concessions, different tendencies in the social and political life of the Yugoslav community" (p. 10).

Just in case, Tudjman explains that different interpretations of history are normal, that this happens because of national belonging or historians' philosophical approach, followed by the inconsideration of the winners and confusion of the defeated in the biased eyes of the actors themselves. He attaches totalitarian Stalinist views and methods to Yugoslav historiography, as well as a non-Marxist approach and lack of open discussion on difficult issues. "The issue of war victims in general, and particularly the victims of Jasenovac, is just one example, but the representative one, of this state. And since I had realized long ago that the Jasenovac myth was intended to get the supporting role in the twisting of the views on the recent history of the Croatian nation in the Yugoslav Community, which would be expressed in Terzić's various interpretations – I inspired his scientific research a quarter of century ago. The reasons why I had been stopped in this institutional endeavour will be stated here as well. In the meantime, in my reviews and works, befitting the judgements on the controversial issues, I had out-rightly stood up to the one-sided approach to war victims, particularly to the Jasenovac myth, because it was used to systematically create a hostile atmosphere, and the historical awareness was distorted, under the impression of which befell many well-intended public workers and historians, or they would support it from opportunism" (p. 12).

Claiming that in the campaign against him there were methods of political and psychological terrorism used, as his enemies did not have relevant counterarguments, Tudjman attacks the printing of the new issue of *Magnum Crimen* by Viktor Novak as a pure anachronism from a scientific aspect. This "... means a return to the discussion of the Croatian issue with pretended clericalism or even the infamous 'clerical-nationalism' and 'clerical-fascism', on the level of post-revolutionary fighting against the 'vicious forms' of real or imaginary counterrevolution is of particular significance for the state of historical awareness. It, in fact, appears on the level of reanimation of those aiming to, at all costs; fight any form of Croatianhood which does not fit into their vision of Yugoslav

unity” (p. 14-15). Apart from Viktor Novak, Tudjman criticizes the books of Velimir Terzić, Vladimir Dedijer, Veselin Đuretić and Vasilije Krestić. “The persistence in the attempt to scientifically theoretically prove the Jasenovac myth – even after arguments were presented that it was unfounded – shows the level of distortedness of the historical awareness, in the established atmosphere where rational discussion about the merits of the problem is still not allowed” (p. 15). He particularly emphasises the alleged, “. . . manipulation by Dedier of the propaganda information and his ‘Lord Russell’s War Crimes Tribunal’, as well as his effort, by criticizing Vatican, to contribute to the strengthening of the Jasenovac myth” (p. 15).

For the Antun Miletić’s book of documents on the Jasenovac concentration camp, Tudjman claims that it is the expression of a deranged and oppressed historical awareness. “For this twisted historical awareness and poisoned atmosphere, it is characteristic that it desires its immortalization, abusing ideological and political frames and various manipulations of science to the very end for the pretended verification of its content. In the case of Jasenovac, we are still in such a state that certain individuals can afford the pogrom-branding of all those who would stand in their way. Studies are being organized, expert discussions, and even international scientific summits, where certain political guests, either from unfamiliarity with the problem, or trying to prove their ‘ethics’, repeat the ‘verified’ truths of ‘at least 700,000’ people executed, while the present historians and scientists would not dare to openly oppose the manipulations and misinterpretation of different sources, suggesting further investigation of the document archives and interdisciplinary examination. With this kind of struggle for the truth, they are relieving their soul, and what can I do if someone thinks that in this way they will come upon an even larger number of victims?” (p. 16).

In order to authoritatively prove his own stance and further disprove the “Jasenovac myth”, Tudjman calls on Miroslav Krleža, with whom he had a “close friendship” for an entire decade. “Krleža’s estimate of our historical situation could be summarized as this: a blind and worrisome continuation of mutually incompatible and destructive tendencies; a strengthening of the retaliatory myth, forgetting the fact that the Ustashes did not come out of nowhere, nor were they the only nationalist fanatical chauvinistic example in these parts of the Balkans; the loudest are always the ones who were not capable of learning from history that nothing is left unpunished, so lacking historical wisdom, calling firstly on the liberation merits or oppression of victims, they are firing up primitive passions, poisoning the atmosphere to the point of breaking and a new cataclysm” (p. 19-20). Tudjman heavily criticizes his former colleague, Jefta Šašić, because in the preface of Miletić’s book, he questioned the directory of victims of World War II, published between 1964 and 1966, which states that the total number killed is 600,000. Šašić believed that this incompetent and incomplete directory was a “green light for the criminals” to launch a real campaign of deceiving the public that the earlier official numbers were intentionally exaggerated. “Is there a better or more convincing proof of the level of distortion of historical awareness and clouded reason, from this branding of the pre-war Marxists, fighters and revolutionaries, writers and humanists, as ‘anti-Communists and enemies of the People’s Liberation Struggle’, as ‘criminals’?! Isn’t it a clear warning that unethical dealing in historical matters has given predominance to those movements about which Krleža said that, after Tito, they will be in such a state that he was happy he would not be there to see it? One of these unethical dealings with far-reaching consequences, undoubtedly, is in the first place the toleration

of the existence of the Jasenovac myth – regardless of whether it is by Terzić’s or Šašić’s reasoning – and disallowing and stopping the creation of the historical truth; there was not a doubt for this for Krleža or any other man, who thinks in a historical way, worried about the movements on this unstable soil” (p. 20).

With this type of reasoning, Tujman gets to the crucial question: “Is not the systematic exaggerating of the Jasenovac myth done for the purpose of the creation of a dark legend about the historical guilt of the entire Croatian nation, which is yet to be examined?” (p. 21). He believed that this myth would inevitably lead to a generalization of the historical guilt and chauvinistic opinion that all Croats are Ustashas. He analyses this problematic matter at length, giving a breakdown of his personal political case, trying to represent the campaign against ‘*Tudjmanovština*’<sup>41</sup> as a hidden preliminary attack on Tito himself. He directly attaches this intent to Vladimir Terzić, who, in his book, had efficiently proven that the Croats contributed the most to the quick collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the April War in 1941. “He still,” writes Tujman, “refrained from directly accusing Tito, but his sympathizers and followers would soon do so. And since I myself – in those critical years of the Informbiro threat up until the adoption of the strategy of general national defence – was one of the first opponents of Terzić in the historic-theoretic field, and being the youngest, I became a lightning rod for all his lightnings and stormy rages, which back then could not be directly poured on the head of Gošnjak, and let alone Tito” (p. 27).

In fact, Tito’s behaviour, for Tujman, was the crucial evidence that proved his thesis on the exaggerated number of victims of Jasenovac. Thus, he says to his opponents in a criticizing voice, “Have they even wondered; and those who have (and I know some such people), have they searched out and received the right answer to the question: why had Josip Broz never visited Jasenovac?! For, he did visit almost every relevant battle field of the People’s Liberation Struggle in all the Republics. Since this architect of both the People’s Liberation War and the revolution, and of the new Socialist Yugoslavia, of course, cannot be accused of being biased and soft on the Croatian sins (if it were not for him, Hebrang would not have been eliminated in the war, and the persecution and change of the leadership in Croatia in 1971 would not have happened), regardless of the part the others played in these cases, there must be stronger reasons for this. The answer to this question, I believe, is probably in the fact that he, as a historic figure, being familiar with historical facts, with the instincts of a great politician and statesman, sensed where the raging of the monstrosity of the Jasenovac myth would lead: in the very least, to the shaking of the very foundations of his work and the questioning of the purpose of the enormous victims of the war and revolution” (p. 57). Tujman was completely right here about one thing. Tito felt the same as Tujman when it comes to Jasenovac, but he did not dare say it publicly.

In the next phase, Franjo Tujman disproves other facts about Ustasha crimes committed against the Serbs in other places. First, he attacks the memorandums of the Serbian Orthodox Church from 1941, and subsequently authors such as Konstantin Fotić, Jovan Dučić, Dedijer, Đuretić, Kurcie Maloparte and others, degrading their writings and documented descriptions of the horrors of the specific crimes. He insists on data that had not been written in 1941, but quite later, and draws far-reaching conclusions. About this, among other things, he writes, “Apart from the given account and multiplication of

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<sup>41</sup> *Tudjmanovština*-Tudjman’s politics.

the war victims during the war, we should remember the fact that in that time, Jasenovac did not have anything to especially distinguish it. Therefore, it is not mentioned as any particular, out of the ordinary gallows during the entire duration of the war. Only in defeat would it be given that role, the one the overall victims had during the war. Then, the monstrosity in the description of the methods of the execution of the crimes would be substituted by no less of a monstrosity in the multiplication of the number of victims in Jasenovac itself. The reasons are more obvious than incomprehensible. The place of establishment of the overall war victims, in all the concentration camps, gallows and places of execution across Yugoslavia, the crime was mythically concentrated on one place for a reason, and intention, and there was even a saying about it from the very beginning of the manipulation of the tragedy of war-time events” (p. 89).

Tudjman, a priori, proclaims all facts about the Ustasha crimes propaganda fabrications, and along the way, he admits that some of the crimes did happen, thus creating artificial symmetry. According to Tudjman, it must be indicative that in the beginning, there was not much talk about Jasenovac. Thus he continues, “. . . only in subsequent analyses will Jasenovac be given the meaning of an example, the kind of which has not been seen – not only for the ‘history of Europe’, but in the history of the world as well. Of course, it would be interesting to establish who, when and for what reason did this. It could be assumed that the patriarchal-folklore tradition of reducing the historical event to myth-o-maniacal legends played a part, but it is more likely that in the systematic creation of the Jasenovac myth, two otherwise opposed participants in the historic events found a defined common purpose, or at least an unspoken equivalence of political interests. This suggests the described course of testimony, the said exaggeration of the horrors of war crimes overall, as well as their focusing exclusively on the myth about the Jasenovac gallows” (p. 90).

#### **d) Tudjman’s Equalling of Jasenovac and Bleiburg**

In order to give the illusion of an unbiased approach, Tudjman criticizes the exaggeration of the number of Bleiburg victims, thus bringing it to the same level as Jasenovac. He ascribes the guilt for the creation of the alleged “Jasenovac myth” to the twisted historical awareness of the Communist ideological monopolists and Serbian hegemonists. “This is the source of the systematic (premeditated and planned out) creation of the dark legend about the historic guilt of the entire Croatian nation. Since, if the numbers of the Ustasha crimes reach hundreds of thousands, and even a million victims, and on the other side, if at the same time there is no comparison whatsoever with the crimes of their enemies, then the accountability does not rest only on a handful fanatical Pavelić’s followers, blinded by the desire for revenge, but on the entire Croatian nation. That is the origin of the logical, mostly implicit, but also explicit, equation of Croatianhood with the Ustashes, which were branded worse than fascism or nationalism in its original and worst operational form” (p. 118). It hurt Tudjman the most when the German philosopher Ernst Bloch, in an interview in *Spiegel*, called all the Croats fascists, leaving a possibility that a few, perhaps, were not.

He then points out that in the 1980s, there occurred, “. . . frankly, not by chance but with predictable legality, to the greatest proportions, and to the broadest abuse of the Jasenovac myth, for old and new historical events. The Jasenovac myth about the Serbian victims served as an actual pretext for the whole theory on the genocidal

character of Croatianhood, as well as the thesis for the unfeasibility of the ‘equalling of the guilt’. Its presence is evident in the thesis of the disproving of the conclusions about the Greater Serbian hegemony in the Versailles Yugoslavia, since the judgement about ‘the prison of the nations’ was the Comintern’s fabrication, and not reality. This mythical shadow could not be disregarded, under any circumstances, not even in the estimate of the AVNOJ historical juncture, or the historic role of Josip Broz Tito. Especially not in the orchestrated discrediting of all the components of the Croatian historic life, including its Communist movement. What is even more, the myth-omaniacal evaluation of history caused the culmination of historical guilt. Apart from Jasenovac, the Croatian nation could be guilty of all other historical ‘evildoings’ – the ones that, using it and its representatives, were caused on the South Slav territory by the Vatican, as the eternal archenemy, and the Comintern as this century; and even more defined: for everything unacceptable for the enemies of the AVNOJ principles and constitutional provisions from 1974!” (p. 120).

### **e) Justification of genocide with religious citations**

Tudjman most strikingly expresses how his personal views on the alleged fabrications and exaggeration of Ustasha crimes are unfounded and unsubstantiated, by calling on the Bible and Plato, insisting that one should be careful when discussing old crimes, so the desire for vengeance would not be awoken. He then moves directly on to a justification of genocide by finding a foothold in the Old Testament. He emphasises the example of Moses and his belief that the enemies of his people are God’s enemies as well, and this justifies the war waged against them. Thus, Israel’s wars are interpreted as God’s wars – even the conquests – with the purpose of the extinction of entire nations in order to rob them of their territories. He gives examples of cruelty and the calls for the killing of children in their cribs, massacres, throwing people into pits, etc; he also supports rape. Tudjman meticulously notes this and concludes, “All biblical ‘historical’, ‘prophetic’ and ‘wisdom’ books are full of accounts of actual historical events and prophecies. There are no boundaries to the crimes, which, in their ‘just’ rage and anger Jehovah and his chosen people would commit against their enemies. ‘The sky will shake and the earth will move’. And their warriors: who they catch will be stabbed: who they grab hold of will be slashed with a sword; in front of their very eyes their infants will be crushed, houses plundered, women raped’. ‘The people will be burned by fire, like a burning cut thorns’. The purpose of this bloodthirsty fighting is that ‘everyone returns to his own people, and be forced to ‘flee to their own land’ . . . to be precise, the achievement of an ethnically clean state, since the foreigners always want to make it their own. Since the extinction of a foreign, hostile and rebellious nation is not an easy undertaking, it could not be done in one way, so Jehovah gives the instructions: ‘burn one third with fire across the grave . . . the second third slash with the sword throughout the town, the last third throw with the wind’, make them flee, but the plague and wild beast will be released after them” (p. 130-131).

The recipe is everlasting, thousands of years old. If Moses could apply it, why could not Pavelić? If the Jews are the chosen people of the Old Testament, then the Croats are in the same position now, since for centuries they have been “the strongest defence” of Christianity – the Western version of it, which ruthlessly insists on the exclusiveness of its mission. The Croats began committing mass crimes, fulfilling their “divine mission”,

but their enemies retaliated with crimes. The biblical example, in Tadjman's interpretation, testifies that this was inevitable. "They lie and deceive the people when they say 'peace, where there is no peace', not wanting the 'wall fortified' but 'to put a little plaster on it', which caused the raging winds to bring it down. . . To work until Jehovah's will is fulfilled: 'the sword kills everything around'. 'The Philistines extinct, Tira and Sydon destroyed,' 'to erase the people of Moab', to 'make wastelands where the enemy territory used to be', to 'scatter their citizens', so 'nobody could gather' the refugees. 'Get up, attack the peaceful people who live without fear – is the word of Jehovah'. Since 'not only the king of Babylon', but every enemy 'wishes you harm, plots the assault'. Hence, 'attack Babylon', so 'nothing remains of it', 'nobody escapes'. In this act Israel was only the 'sword of Jehovah' and his 'arm in the war', 'with you, I killed nations, destroyed I kingdoms with you. . .With you, I killed a man and a woman . . . an old man and a child . . . a boy and a girl . . . a shepherd and his flock'. In the end Jehovah will undoubtedly know, what all that was about 'and you who fled the sword, do not stay here'. However, in this historic fight to life and death, the enemy responds the same. When Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon finally captured Jerusalem and imprisoned King Zedekiah, first 'he slaughtered Zedekiah's sons in front of his very eyes, and killed the Judas princes in Riblah, 'took out Zedekiah's eyes and put him in chains and threw him into a dungeon for the rest of his life, and made slaves of those who remained'" (p. 131).

Tadjman finds these holy instructions in Christianity; and anyway, the practice of long Crusades and pogroms of the Inquisition are proof of this, at least in the case of the Western version of Christianity. Tadjman writes about this at length, "In Moses' Decalogue is presented the co-accountability of the individual and the people for every act. Jehovah gave rights to his chosen people, but also to its every member. If one sins against a commandment of the Decalogue, the sin will be in a way expanded to the entire nation, in all social communities, and the individual was responsible for his own actions, but indirectly, spiritually responsible for the sins of the others, as they were accountable for the acts of each person towards members of other nations" (p. 131). This is why the Serbs are accountable for what happened between the two wars, "the Greater Serbian hegemony", the "oppression of the Croats", "the murder of Stjepan Radić", as well as the disregard of the Croatian state-making right under the Austro-Hungarian authority, when they continually acted as the "unsettling factor" in the political life of Croatia and Slovenia. Christianity, according to Tadjman, had not changed much in the application of the principle. "Christ's New Testament approach of God's selection and the uniqueness of the Israeli people into Christian universalism brings in important changes in the Old Testament perception of the historic existence of man and nation, but by no means does it cancel them, and even less in the third case when it comes to the alteration of a historical action. At the same time, and in spite of the establishment of 'God's people' in every nation across the world – the divisions, disputes, hatred and violence do not disappear. At first, they turn against the Christians, and then the oppression goes on, only in a different intensity and among the Christians themselves, together with other worlds: the Muslims, Buddhist and the remnants of the polytheists. On the other hand, perhaps with the atheists this is illustrated by even greater violence and animosity towards other worlds and within the 'chosen people themselves'" (p. 131-132).

According to Tudjman, Christ's sacrifice was worthless, since humanity is still governed by the principles of Old Testament: by cruelty and the savage fight for survival. Therefore, the Croatian mass crimes against the Serbs are quite natural, and it might be said, inevitable. Why is the present Croatian generation incessantly being reminded of them? Those who we killed, we killed – be quiet now so you don't cause new killings with your incessant whining over the past victims. The modern world is governed by “. . . the instinct for self-preservation, vanity, cruelty and lust . . . these urges are the sources of conflicts, wars and various crimes; this means: either for survival on their own territory, or for prestige and a conquering encroachment. Both biblical and modern history testify: from the beginning of time until this very day, the relations between Israel and other nations – related or not – can be established – perhaps not singularly but mostly and primarily – on the level of hostility. If the period of the Old Testament had verified the principle that the Israeli people must be strictly separated from other, foreign nations in order to preserve themselves from their lewdness . . . then the New Testament's history and overall history of the world unequivocally testify that this separation was the precondition of its survival and reestablishment of its state. Therefore, its subjectivity in the human community. On its own it, definitely, it suggests that there was no adequate resolution of the antagonism between Christ's Jewish roots and the purposefulness of his Christian universalism. Two thousand years later, his Marxist negation and its socialistic world will be increasingly confirming that on the other spiritual level, with the idea of socialist internationalism, they are even less bridgeable, and the national peculiarities even harder to erase, as the unalterable elements of the world's very existence” (p. 132).

#### **f) Tudjman's Public Call for a New Massacre of the Serbs**

The message is clear. The Croats, at all costs, must be separated from the Serbs, even if they need to kill them or drive them out from the territory they claim, so they could establish their state and attain subjection in the community of mankind. This view is not in conflict in any way with the principle of Christian universalism, at least not in its Roman Catholic version. Only, the one thing he would add to the Old Testament's law of retribution is the principle of the justness of revenge. The human or social-historic evil, according to Tudjman, is constant and unalterable. “Not a single higher level in the development of the spiritual and productive forces of the human society has essentially contributed a thing to its elimination. What is more, since the transition from the savage prehistory into barbaric history, savage violence survived. Moreover, not even the progress of civilisation, which was marked with the substitution of the pagan polytheism by pluralistic monotheism, could not remove the barbaric savagery from the Hellenic and Roman civilizations. Similarly, the expansion of the universalistic monotheistic religions (Christianity and Islam), and subsequently the atheistic ideologies (from rationalistic enlightening cosmopolitanism to socialist-Marxist internationalism, as well as from different types of democracy up to the fascist and Communist totalitarianism) did not contribute to the elimination of, but helped the multiplication of crimes – including the ones with genocidal significance and dimensions” (p. 132-133).

With a concealed justification of the Croatian genocide against the Serbs during World War II, or at least by belittling its forms and consequences by relativism of the seriousness of the crime and the accountability of the wrongdoer, Tudjman calls on

many known acts of genocide from prior history. What the Croats did to the Serbs was not a historical precedent or something unheard of in the history of humankind. In the same sense, he mentions the Roman plundering and extinction of entire tribes and nations during their conquests. The barbarians later retaliated to the full extent. Why then are we so preoccupied with the still-fresh Croatian crimes, if that is something that the histories of other nations are filled with, and not many care about it? If great nations are meticulously prettifying their past, accentuating triumphs and accomplishments, compared with moral degradation and demonstrated cruelty, why could the Croats not do the same? Tadjman alleges that history “. . . is ruled by a strict rule, that every single national history is preoccupied, if not singularly, then predominately, with the beautiful, creative side of the historical existence of its people, disregarding or putting aside, as allegedly irrelevant or uninteresting, the other side – the conquering and confusing, and violent and assimilatory side – not comprehending, or daring to admit, that both sides make a whole. Therefore, in an ongoing conflict of the different ethnic communities, if, in the corresponding force, the other, dark side was not simultaneously represented, shown by aggressive or defensive motives and acts, there was no survival for the first side. Non-violent forms of the historical life could have ‘ruled’ only when they had the backing of the power of its force, in the shelter of safety” (p. 133-134).

At this point, Tadjman directly calls on the social Darwinist theory to explain how the Croats had been killing the Serbs in a bare struggle for the survival of their nation and state – the same way tigers or wolves slaughter among themselves in their fight for hunting grounds, that is, for territory. “In that regard, in the eternal law of self-preservation in nature and society, the historical ethnic communities are no exception. However, in spite of this, in most historical analyses and deliberations, this valid fact is disregarded mostly due to moral reasons. Thus, it is usually the cause of an incomplete and faulty interpretation of specific historical episodes and events, and even of their biased judgement of their consequences. Then, of course, of making faulty judgments even of crucial events in the life of certain nations, and then of historical existence in general. That escape from historic reality and the shutting the eyes of reason before the actual reality happens, understandably, on the line of moral and ethic principles in the necessity of opposing any type of violence and condemning of all acts, and particularly genocidal ones. It, of course, cannot change or affect the historic reality. However, the biased enlightenment of the levels of the historical events – either for reasons of prettifying the bright sides, or by vilifying the wrongdoings – the real reasons behind the historical reality are being clouded, no matter how cruel and horrifying that reality is. Moreover, by this, of course, there is no contribution to any type of enlightenment, particularly of the dark historical horizon; regardless of the subjective desire and intention” (p. 134).

In order to effectively back up this view with actual historical facts, Tadjman claims that genocide was used in the extinction of the Illyrian Celtic tribes, whose territory the Croats inhabited; that in the Croatian-Franco wars in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, both sides resorted to acts of genocide; that genocide was common in the Crusades and the Western European pogrom of the Jews, etc. “Since in the Crusades, Christianity as a whole attacked Islam as a whole, then the causes of different criminal acts are at first glance predominately in the disagreements and the mutual denial of different civilizations; in this case in the irreconcilableness of their religions, the sole principles and ideas of past times. Apart from this, the intentional stimulus of war, what is more, the approval of



war, on both sides, by raising the killing of the enemy to the level of forgiveness of the sin and divine merits (for 'eternal life'), was supposed to serve the purpose of strengthening the inner unity of these separate civilizations of the West and East.

"However, not even the century-long war for the destruction of the hostile, world civilizations had removed the interethnic and social conflicts within them, nor were the occurrences within the civilization violence, when it comes to the method and content of the evildoing, in any way on a smaller scale. On the contrary. The treatment by the spiritual authorities and worldly oppressors of their own heretic renegades and opponents in their ranks in general, was even crueller. For, they had no chance of defending themselves with the use of the 'true faith' as the members of the enemy camp could do, and the broken repenters were of little use to anyone. Hence the horrors of the inquisition torture chambers and torching 'witches' alive and also those possessed with satanic ideas. Especially in times when the heretics and false prophets of hell are the learned people and people's leaders, such as Jan Hus, or entire ethnic communities, in which Judaism was just an exception, since it was spread everywhere like a foreign body, while the fighting among others was in the form of neighbouring or conquest competition" (p. 136).

### **g) Tudjman's Theory of the Purposefulness of the Extinction of the Serbs and Their Own Guilt for Their Ill Fate**

On this presumption, Tudjman defines the conflict between the Serbs and Croats as a clash of civilizations, an unrelenting fight between Orthodox Christianity and Catholicism, where the extinction of the Serbs is purposeful and enables the strengthening of the eastern borders dominated by the Roman Church, and a springboard for further expansion. In his ideological vision, the Orthodox Serbs are 'schismatic' and 'heretics', therefore their fate is no different from the treatment of the heretics in past centuries. This is just an offshoot of the Crusades led against *Albigensi*, Bogumils, Hussites, Huguenots, and Byzantium as well. Tudjman gives a detailed description of the reality that in all religious wars, mostly the civilian populations were slaughtered, plundered, starved, and suffered from epidemics. He adds that the mass crimes committed on both sides were committed in peasant uprisings, regularly followed by plundering and rapes. Using the basic reasons for the persecution of the Jews as an example, Tudjman explains that the Serbs are to blame for the genocide that the Croats committed against them, since they would not allow themselves to be assimilated, hurting by their very existence the wellbeing of the Croatian people, and endangering its sovereignty. Tudjman literally writes, "The Jews caused the hatred upon themselves by maintaining their ethnic and religious characteristic while living among foreign people, even if they were zealous promoters of cosmopolitan international ideas. What is more, their universalist action was seen as non-national, and sometimes even antinational; sometimes this was the real cause of their castigation. By looking into the wider historical context, it could be said that only those ethnic minorities that willingly and without much resistance succumbed to assimilation by the majority people escaped the ill fate of the anti-Semitic pogroms among other nations; alternatively, those whose existence in no way harmed the wellbeing of the homeland nation, nor endangered its sovereignty" (p. 140). The last sentence of the citation is otherwise an example of Tudjman's warped style, which is in abundance in his book.

Like the Jews, it is the Serbs' fault that the Croats had to kill them so massively. The Jews are most often accused of killing Christ, and the Serbs for not accepting the Pope as Christ's emissary on earth. Tudjman went on to reducing the number of Jewish victims in World War II, claiming that the official numbers were too high. He claims ". . . that the given estimates of losses up to six million dead are founded on emotionally subjective testimonies and the one-sided and exaggerated information of post-war summaries of the war crimes, and on getting even with the defeated perpetrators of war crimes" (p. 156). Tudjman's following "theoretic" view shows that the mass killings of the Jews and Serbs was justified: "When a certain movement or nation, state or alliance, religion or ideology, have before them an enemy that is detrimental for their survival, or the main obstacle for its domination, they will do anything in their power, and will use all available means, to subdue and destroy it, if there is no other way to conform it to its will. They can only be deterred from this intent if their people are endangered by its fulfilment" (p. 161).

Tudjman gives particular significance to the historic precedent set when the international legislature, by an agreement of the world powers, legalized the extradition of the German national minority from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary – in fact, its forced relocation to Germany. That example was followed by Yugoslavia, which banished half a million Germans, who were its citizens. "By this decision of the Allies, a right to reprisal was formally sanctioned. Its execution received the features of a pogrom extradition and fleeing of people deprived of their rights before the vengeful violence on a large, almost unprecedented scale" (p. 163). The idea of similar treatment of the Serbs who lived on the 'Croatian' territory seems to have possessed Tudjman for decades, before he, finally launched its implementation in the 1990s. The method was appealing for him as a form of a final resolution of the national issue, in a favourable situation with the international forces. "Caused by a history in amassed interethnic unbridgeable differences, which were by war actions brought to the level of bursting, all this reciprocal pogrom violence against great and sometimes several-million-strong multitudes of foreign populations always had an 'ultimate' solution as its goal: the removal of the foreign, perhaps not hostile, element, but for some reason a historically separated and inharmonious element from the ethnic territorial corpus of one's own national being. Observing from this point of view – and only in it can the explanation for the continual recurrence of this historical emergence be found – the violent and genocidal changes that were carried out after World War II, have twofold consequences. On the one hand, they are deepening the historical divides, stirring up hatred between nationalities and inspiring vengeful impulses, by all this contributing to the tension between the nations and to a start of new conflicts. On the other hand, they are causing the ethnic homogenization of certain nations, greater harmony in the national make-up of the citizens and state borders of individual countries – which might have a positive impact on the future direction in the sense of diminishing the causes of new violence – and reasons for new conflicts and international disturbances" (p. 163-164).

Pointing out that the winners after the war exclusively prosecute the losers for aggression and crimes against humanity, although they themselves committed these acts too, Tudjman concludes ". . . that everything is relative in historical reality, and most often it is in complete opposition with the generally accepted moral and ethic principles; it seems that of all the factors of the international life, those principles are usually and almost exclusively subjected to one's own advantage. In order to prove the

aforementioned, let's consider more examples of the implementation and understanding of the 'ultimate solution' of the unwanted religious orientations" (p.164). Tadjman gives the example of returning of the Uniate in the Soviet Union and Romania to Orthodox Christianity because of the mistrust that the authorities of these countries were feeling towards the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope, as well as the statement by the Romanian Patriarch that in his country, the former Greek Catholics are completely integrated into Orthodox Christianity. "Every opinion – and so is the opinion of the Church – especially when it is subjected to state totalitarianism, has as its starting point, if not personal gain, then the personal experience and preconditions of personal existence or danger. From this point of view, at the time, the Croatian Catholic newspaper, certainly with the full right to point out the difference of the opinions of the Romanian Patriarch and those in Yugoslavia, who in the name of the Serbian Orthodox Church, as well as in alleged unbiased and Marxist science, are reinstating the question of the accountability of the Cardinal A. Stepinac, and the entire Croatian nation for the crime of the conversion of 200,000 Orthodox Serbs into Catholicism in the first year of the Independent State of Croatia" (p. 165). The case here is the writing of the *Voice of the Council* from 1987, in which the case about the forcible conversion of the Serbs during the war was compared with the post-war conversion of the Ukrainian and Romanian Uniates into Orthodox Christianity, so he disapprovingly concludes that "no one was tried then, nor was this forcible conversion called a war crime or a genocide." (p. 165).

Thus with historical retrospection of the genocide, Tadjman makes the Croatian historic guilt relative, and negates accountability for the genocide against the Serbs. Simply, what happened was something that used to happen to others as well. Bygones. He defines his personal approach to relativism by four basic conclusions: "First, history is full of attempts of 'ultimate solutions' of the foreign and unsubordinated racial and ethnic or religious communities by extradition, extinction, and conversion to 'the true faith'. Second, there are numerous examples which suggest that these crimes, which can be categorised as genocide, were in their dimension and variety much more military than the war itself, since the winners could, unrestrained, execute their will, which during the war had been limited by the very undetermined outcome of the war conflict. Third, the attempt to determine the regularity of all or a certain type's genocidal methods in a certain historic period is quite a useless endeavour. Since, from the beginning of the world, they existed in various forms with the same effect, considering the territory and time span, regardless of all apparent and corresponding differences. And fourth, it is completely wrong and insensible when to historical reality comes the wisdom that the propensity to genocide, as well as the causes and objectives, are given to certain nations and racial-ethnic communities, to only specific cultural-civilization spheres and social revolutionary movements, or to specific religions or ideologies" (p. 166).

Tadjman proved firstly that the Croatian nation is not the sole genocidal nation, that the Roman Catholic Church is not the sole genocidal Church organization, as well as that the ideology of the Ustashas is not the only one governed by a genocidal programme, politics, and practice. Then comes the main thesis of the next phase of 'the analytical' examination of the fact that the Croatian nation is not genocidal: the genocide is not the purpose in itself for the Croats, but just the instrument used to resolve the fundamental existential problem: to get rid of the Serbs. As soon as they solve the problem, the Croats would give up on any other genocidal form of behaviour, and would

even become the zealous opponents of genocide. This view is the basis of the following excerpt from his book: “The violence of genocide, as an eternal and all-civilizational occurrence in the human society, decreases and is more limited, or of course, completely disappears in certain parts of the world, and certain periods of history. It vanishes in places where the reasons for its existence and resurrection are removed from the relations between nations, as is the case in the Scandinavian and Swiss part of the European continent. Alternatively, the that and then, where and when; the reasons vanish, or the possibility of competition between the states and the conquest-imperialist encroachments vanish, like it happened in history in the cases of England and France, and recently between Germany and France. Always in places where, with the removal of the threat for a particular social-ethnic community, and the disappearance of the reason for the employment of the evildoing against another – the preconditions are being created for the defeat of the historic madness and for a well-thought search for ways and methods of a harmonized life in peace of the organized international order. However, in the circumstances of the highest achieved level of social and cultural development, and consequently the highest awareness of the need for historical wisdom, it is difficult and highly unlikely to completely destroy the bloodthirsty urges from men’s character, and the blind destructive force from the history of the human society – we are clearly reminded of those traits by things such as the madness of the variety of terrorist attacks in Italy and Germany, as well in Sweden, and not only across the world. Or perhaps the breakouts of the insanely aggressive instincts, if not elsewhere then on sports fields, as it was horrifyingly displayed by the bloodshed between the English and Italian football supporters during a football game in Brussels (p. 167).

Insisting that violence is simply a historical necessity, and genocide only its supreme form, Tudjman tries to justify it on the mythological-religious and ideological-philosophical level. According to Tudjman, “. . . genocide is a natural occurrence, in accordance with the human-social and mythological-divine character. Not only is it allowed, what is more, it is recommended and commanded by the almighty Jehovah, when it is purposeful for the survival or the reinstatement of the realm of the chosen people, or for the preservation or expansion of its only true religion” (p. 178). From this follows the foundation of the proclamation of one’s own enemies as God’s enemies, and the employment of all means against them. This is how Tudjman directly bases his own war philosophy and justification of genocide on the Bible adding, “Preconditioned by the state that its people were in, the biblical Jewish idea made God into a frightening warrior who in favour of Israel killed the Egyptians firstborns, demanding anathema, that is, the destruction of the enemy – living beings and material spoils. The massacre of the defeated enemy becomes one of the religious rules of the holy war, which should not be broken, because if the opportunity to destroy the enemy is missed, it brings as sacrilege punishment and defeat. To intensify the hatred towards the enemy, the enemy is equalled with a lion and wild beasts. God himself will used the threat of wild beasts in the implementation of his curse against Egypt and every single unfaithful man. And the frightening picture of ravaged towns and habitats, handed over to the wild beats, images of the pogrom of the entire human communities and nations” (p. 173). For every single stance of his own interpretation, he cites the reference of the biblical verse he refers to.

Since the Croats in Tudjman’s version are the righteous people, violence and genocide as instruments of the fight for their cause are essential and justified, however unpleasant. “Since the genocide, besides conquering desires, is born of vengeance as

well, the biblical idea allows revenge in the sense of the reestablishment of justice and its victory over evil” (p. 174). Although the New Testament idea softens the cruelty of the Old Testament’s, Tadjman believes that it essentially does not change much except for the fact that it insists on deeper moral justification for the employment of violence. The basis for the justification of genocide he seeks in Brahmanism, Buddhism, Hinduism and other Asian religions, and he spends some time on the analyses of the Koran’s suras. The Koran is important for him to the extent that it contains the justification for religious intolerance and waging wars on that basis. As he states, “. . . for the members of Islam, the Muslims, ‘the Holy War’ against the ‘infidels’ was not only a way to extract the benefits of the earthly gentry in the expansion of Islam and the conquest of foreign countries, but also the best way to attain the ‘heavenly’ life (and avoid hell) in eternity. Since the Koran itself prescribed its ‘prophets’ to fight against the ‘infidels’, ‘whose habitat is hell’, ‘with all their might’, and ‘to be tough on them’, the war conquests of the Muslim conquerors usually had the form of extremely cruel and vicious violence towards the citizens and entire nations of the conquered countries” (p. 177).

### **h) Calling on Machiavelli in the Justification of Massacres**

Tudjman’s role model is also Machiavelli, particularly one of his views, which he interprets in the following way: “. . . the human passion and instincts are always the same, as the struggle for self-preservation and dominance is reflected in nature. If the force and violence, including all kinds of deceits and murders, lead faster to success, than truth, gentleness and fidelity, then they are more purposeful for the ruler and the country that is at risk from barbaric advances” (p. 202). He then goes on to give an extensive presentation of the opinions by leading theoreticians of war; Tudjman pays the most attention to apologetics of war, also giving a lot of space to the political concepts of Hitler and Mussolini, and their philosophical role models and ideological followers. Since Tudjman’s main preoccupation is the attitude toward the war enemy and justification of crimes and cruelty directed against the enemy, he looks for footholds in literature as well. “All spiritual representatives of a nation and the age they lived in, and even the greats of culture, celebrated in their works, in peace and in war, even when the motives were taken from times long past and faraway places, the fight for liberty and justice of their people, and they called on vengeance and destruction of the cursed enemy. Which means this: they in fact encouraged, if not openly called for, the hatred and extinction of one another, regardless of how much they otherwise promoted peace and brotherhood among the people and swore on universal human ideals” (p. 267).

Since hatred and other passions are natural and inseparable human characteristics, Tudjman believes that war creates the conditions in which they find the maximum discharge through crimes and destruction. “Because of these instinctive inclinations of humans and nations towards hatred and the raging of passion, any war in itself means the adding of fuel to the fire. In cases of war conflicts, in which reasons for stirring the fanaticism and bloodthirstiness of the people are found, although their foundations might not be rational, but only irrational, an outbreak of uncontrolled violence and evildoings takes place” (p. 268). Therefore, according to the new leader of the Ustashas, the Croatian war crimes and Jasenovac are no international-historic exception, and can be justified with careful analysis of the war context they took place in and the political

events of the pre-war life which caused them or motivated their actors. Besides, according to Tadjman, “. . . the promoters of the Jasenovac myth, from the very beginnings until now, persist on the fact that the Jasenovac concentration camp was established with the sole purpose of the elimination of all prisoners, and that on a daily basis the massacres of hundreds, and even thousands of the Serbs, Jews, Romanies and Communists were performed. While the truth is that Jasenovac was organized as a ‘labour camp’ with a multitude of agricultural and manufacturing work units. Individuals, and at the most small groups of a couple of dozen or hundreds of thousands and even tens of thousands of unfortunate people were delivered to the camp, but also released and sent to camps and to labour in Germany. The prisoners were exhausted and tortured constantly, working in unbearable and unhygienic working conditions, at the same time they were tortured and killed for the smallest disobedience, individually – especially the weak and old, and occasionally, usually with the excuse of reprisal for killed Ustashas or attempted escapes; they were brutally executed in smaller or larger groups (of dozens and even hundreds of people). In this manner in the Jasenovac concentration camp there were actually killed a few (probably 3-4) tens of thousand of prisoners. Mostly Romanies, then Jews and Serbs, and Croats. I am convinced that the number could be accurately determined – except perhaps for the number of Romanies – with further systematic investigation” (p. 316).

In the continuation, with unconcealed sarcasm, Tadjman describes how a true concentration-camp ‘self-government’ was at work in Jasenovac, where the Jewish prisoners had the leading role, and would even substitute the Ustashas in committing crimes. As he claims, “. . . some of the Jewish prison functionaries were armed and even took part in the executions. What is more, they were in charge of the ‘choosing’ or the selection of prisoners for ‘elimination’, and partly for the execution itself” (p. 318). He goes on to accuse the Jews of stealing goods taken away from other prisoners, and even of taking a large quantity of the repossessed gold coins. Besides, they were the main spies and traitors. And since the Ustasha crimes cannot be completely denied, Tadjman minimizes them by claiming that they “cannot be differentiated from the no-less genocidal crimes of the Chetnik movement” (p. 326). The alleged creation of the Jasenovac ‘myth’ Tadjman regards as the expression of the political factors “. . . in need of the Jasenovac myth so they could keep Croatianhood on a leash, and those who needed the legend of its historical guilt to direct Serbdom against Croatianhood in general and against the negligence of the federative and socialist Yugoslavia. However, the allowance and encouragement of the Jasenovac myth objectively, both within and outside of those calculations, has one more purpose. By the recognition of the Jasenovac horrors, the bureaucratic-dogmatic forces were compelling the Serbs (especially those living in Croatia) to cooperate, practically making them their support, since – what would have happened were it not for this kind of policy, not allowing the Croats to stand up and even adding new burdens in the historical guilt?” (p. 328).

Arguing with Velimir Terzić, Tadjman exclusively attacks his thesis that Jasenovac is an expression of the Croatian clericalism and national doctrine, which had been developed in a straight line from Ante Starčević to Ante Pavelić. Tadjman believes that Starčević’s views on the national issue are in accordance with Lenin’s, while he denied Serbdom, defending the Croats from Vuk Karadžić. “While Starčević’s philippics against the Slavic Serbs were directed against those Croatian politicians who were ready to blend Croatianhood into the Yugoslav idea, which was rejected by the Serbs and

Slovenians, and who were eager to serve Vienna and Pécs. Starčević's denial of Serbdom equalled Vuk's denial of Croatianhood, but in the 1870s, he abandoned his exclusive stance and started to write positively about the Principality of Serbia, about Miloš, etc. He would have a negative opinion only of the Serbs who lived in Croatia, who were working against its interests. That Starčević's views were historically based, and democratic in the spirit of the time can be deduced from the fact that they had a crucial influence on the Croatian intellectuals and were accepted by a number of Orthodox Christians; and some of them became prominent supporters of Starčević's Party of Rights. Bearing this in mind, associating Starčević with the Jasenovac victims, as Terzić did, is a sign of either historical ignorance, or negation of the Croatian national being, whose main expression in the past century was Starčević" (p. 356).

### **i) Tudjman's Fanatical Defence of Croatian Clerical-Fascism**

By attacking Vasilije Krestić for his studies on the genesis of the Croatian genocide against the Serbs, Tudjman denies that the "Vlachs" who were settling the previously emptied "Croatian" lands, who were Serbs in the true sense of the word, but claims that they are a completely different nation both ethnically and by national awareness. "Only a fraction of them were ethnic Serbs, and the idea of Serbdom was expanded to the others by equalling it with Orthodox Christianity, which was encouraged by acquiring special privileges from Vienna in the Krajina, and from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also by public and secret actions from Serbia. Besides, in connection with the settlement of the Orthodox Vlachs in Croatian lands, it cannot be unilaterally judged in a negative way in regard to how they were treated by the Croatian feudal class as Krestić did. By receiving the privileges of the freemen, they were not only disturbing the existing feudal order, but were also benefiting the separation of the border area of the Military Krajina from the authority of the Croatian Parliament and ban. The Vlachs served the purpose of weakening the sovereignty of the Croatian authorities, and the partition and militarization of the territory of Croatian lands, and by this, the strengthening the Vienna centralism in regard to ban's authority, weakened by the Military Krajina. The antagonism towards the Vlachs for the said reasons would later, after the introduction of dualism and the separation of the Krajina, grow, particularly because of the cooperation of the Serbs with the Hungarian hegemonic policy of limiting and diminishing Croatian autonomy. In this sense, we should not forget that in Dalmatia, the Serbian politicians for a while, along with '*Talijanaši*', were against the union of Dalmatian Croatia with Croatia Proper, not to mention the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (p. 358-359).

Not denying a certain soundness of Krestić's allegation on the readiness of the Croatian feudalists during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century to commit genocide against the Orthodox Serbs who inhabited their former estates, not accepting the obligations of the serfs, Tudjman insists that those feudalists were not religiously exclusive. "The decision of the Croatian Parliament from 1608, which says that the public rights on the territory of the Croatian state are recognized only for the Catholics, does not support this. It was not exclusively directed against Orthodox Christianity, but it was brought in order to defend the Croatian sovereignty, since the Military Command, by spreading Protestantism in the Croatian regions, aimed at the weakening of Croatian unity and the strengthening of Viennese centralism" (p. 359). Tudjman does not deny the problematical statement of the administrator of the Zagreb Diocese, Ambroz Kuzmić,

who said that the Vlachs are better slaughtered than settled, and then comes the change of his thesis on the principle – we Croats are genocidal, but you Serbs are too. Thus he criticizes Krestić that it had not crossed his mind “. . . to mention the extinction of the Muslims from the Serbian lands and to condemn the Serbian class for religious exclusiveness. Of course, there it is not a genocide, but an act worthy of glorification in the greatest Serbian epic *The Mountain Wreath*, the untouchable poetic work and the greatest moral theology which generations learn by heart. The core of Krestić theory on the genocidal character of Croatianhood is the one which is the birth of the Croatian ‘political’ nation” (p. 359).

The point of Tudjman’s deliberations on this subject is that the Croats are not the main guilty party for the genocide against the Serbs. The victim is guilty, since with his previous actions he caused the reprisal against himself, motivating the criminal. Apart from some Serbian intellectuals who for decades had been writing negatively about the Croats, the genocide against the Serbs was logically caused by “. . . some thirty thousand imprisoned and beaten up Croatian peasants upon their unification, because of dissatisfaction over the substitution of the money and the forcing of Vidovdan centralism: the assassination of the Croatian leadership (Radić and others) in the middle of the Belgrade Parliament building, thousands of persecuted and imprisoned during the January 6<sup>th</sup> Dictatorship, when no family existed, that did not feel some type of terror and abuse because of its Croatianhood; the murder of the Croatian history professor Šufraj on a Zagreb street, and a similar attempt at the murder of the writer Budak; the victims of Sibirj and Senj and other victims; and the Golgotha of the economic and political emigration should not be forgotten, where Pavelić set up the foundations of his Ustasha movement, and to where the Croats left out of desperation, not seeing any other way than the painful abandoning of their country or accepting the battle until annihilation. The Croatian side – not just the Serbian one – had strong reasons for ‘reciprocal retribution’, in personal experience and the irrational accumulation of dissatisfaction and hatred, which was brought to a boil in the circumstances of the occupation, the creation of the Independent State of Croatia, and the uprising against the ‘Croatian state’, etc.” (p. 370-371).

Attacking Nikola Stojanović for his article in the *Serbian Literary Herald* from 1902, Tudjman focuses on negating his thesis on the equalling of Croatianhood with regressive clericalism, which he feels was reborn in the Serbian intellectual elite in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. “The promoters of this thesis forget that a retrogressive clerical course never played a significant role in the Croatian political life. Croatia is one of the rare European Catholic countries in which, despite the parties – Starčević’s rights party and Radić’s peasant party – the forming of a stronger Catholic party never occurred. The Croatian People’s Catholic Party was quite irrelevant, and soon disappeared. The participation of a significant number of priests in the Starčević’s Party of Rights at the time of the creation of modern Croatian national awareness in the previous century was more of a proof of the advanced national democratic orientation within the Church ranks and not of an alleged regressive clericalism of that party which emerged with national liberal-democratic programme. Therefore, when Stojanović suggested the need for the destruction of clericalism as a precondition for the collapse of Croatianhood, he only expressed his belief that the idea of the Orthodox Greater Serbdom would be capable of overpowering Croatianhood when in its level it could manage to break Catholicism” (p. 377).



Tudjman accused Vladimir Dedijer of being the contemporary propagator and successor of Stojanovic's anti-Roman-Catholic ideas. "In his books and speeches on Stojanović's thesis on interdependence – the existence and collapse of 'clericalism' and Croatianhood adds new 'arguments' and the accountability of the Catholic Church and the Vatican: for the collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, for the genocide of the Ustasha authorities and danger not only for Serbdom but for the entire Orthodox Christianity on the Balkans. Similarly, as the Jasenovac myth serves the general anti-Croatian direction for a drumming, deafening illusion, the same in the quest against the Catholic Church, as the personification of its own accountability is presented in Alojzije Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb as the 'Croatian metropolitan'. Since the blaming of Stepinac had even weaker foundations than the Jasenovac myth, it is evident that Dedier and his sympathizers do not give the issue of connection between the Catholic Church and Croatianhood any more significance than their predecessors, otherwise they would start transparent historical accusations" (p. 377). According to Tudjman, the essence of the Ustasha ideology is not anti Orthodox Christian but anti-Serbdom, so he claims that Aleksandar Karadžević made Ante Pavelić, and that the Chetniks had produced the Ustashes. He criticizes Dragoljub Živojinović for supporting ". . . historical judgements, courts and verdicts with a far-reaching purpose, attempted at the determination of the historical culpability and accountability of the Croatian nation for the war crimes on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, not just by the one-sided account of Pavelić's Ustasha movement, but also of Maček and the Croatian Peasant Party, and particularly of Stepinac and the Catholic Church" (p. 409).

Defending Stepinac and the Roman Catholic Church from the accusations that they were directly as well as indirectly involved in the Ustashes' crimes, Tudjman disproves the mass forced dislocations of the Orthodox Serbs and justifies the violent creation of the 'Croatian Orthodox Church', which was done by Pavelić in order to increase the denationalization and assimilation of the remnants of the Serbian people. His reasoning is, that ". . . they, who the Catholic Church and particularly the Croatian primate Stepinac accuse of the crime of genocide, because of the religious conversion of the Orthodox Christians into Catholicism, forget the given war circumstances, forgetting the role of the Church, as well as some other factors which have to be bore in mind in order to make a correct judgement in this case. Above all else, we think of the negative inheritance from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, where St. Sava's ideology of Orthodox Christianity was the bases of the hegemonist policy which was also reflected in the religious field. Because of the regime's policy of favouritism, by small concessions and blackmail, and especially by mixed marriages of the representatives of the military and white collar class in the space of two decades, some two hundred thousands Catholics had abandoned the Catholic Church and converted to Orthodox Christianity. For the purpose of giving the state as big as possible stamp of Orthodox Christianity; the intention was to create the need for the building the Orthodox church as the symbol of 'national statehood'; this is why the Orthodox Church was built even on the island Vis. It is understandable that these types of religious conversions caused the dissatisfaction with the 'foreign', predominately Serbian composition of the military and administrative-police class, since they were the predominant expression of the assimilating-unitary policy. Because of this we can assume that a part of the Catholic population with malice awaited the changes of 1941, as it is likely that the memory of

the events motivated a part of the Orthodox Christian population to find refuge by converting to Catholicism, or moving to Serbia” (p. 414-415).

In regard to “the Independent State of Croatia” Tudjman incessantly insists on differentiation of the “state” creation itself from the regime that was established in it. He consistently criticizes the regime, but also insists that the Croatian people were satisfied with the creation. “It is not an issue that the Croatian people, in general, accepted the break-up of the hegemonistic Yugoslavia as a rescue from ‘the dungeon’, and it was plain to see. It was the same when it comes to the proclamation of the independent, free state of Croatia, which at first glance signified the fulfilment of the ‘eternal dream’, dreamt by the national as well as the class revolutionaries” (p. 434). This is the convergence point of Ustashas and Communists, which is the basic thing their views had in common. Tudjman directly associates the new Serbian insistence on the Jasenovac victims and the Croatian genocidal character with Tito’s death and the attempts of questioning his political legacy. “Appearing within the historically inevitable scientific re-evaluation of the revolutionary past, these views are the expression above all of the tendencies that cannot come to terms with historical results of the revolution. Their purpose is precisely to devalue its unquestionable historical value: the Titoist-AVNOJ foundation of the relationship between the nations in SFRY” (p.480).

Tudjman is particularly sensitive when it comes to the historical guilt, because the pro-Croatian bias and participation in genocide is attached to the Roman Catholic Church. “Whatever the accusations aimed against Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole were, their target is Catholicism and the Church on the Croatian soil. Regardless of how much the religious foundation and reasons are in the Orthodox-Catholic rivalry, their background is of a national character. To be more precise: they originate from the existence of two historically different, egoistical national beings and the opposition of their historical interests, as well as the state-political ideas of the Croatian and Serbian people, which, under the circumstances, happened to find themselves on the dividing line of the great Church schism, taken to the most extreme forms in their religious determinant” (p. 415-416). He explains the reestablishment of the original opposition in present times in the following way: “Both the old, suppressed by revolution, but historically un-lived beliefs, and the fresh neo-hegemonist and socialist-integralist tendencies, needed the Jasenovac myth, and on it they based their theories on the genocidal character of Catholicism and Croatianhood, as a very useful, terrifying and impulsive instrument for the direct restraint of the desire for the realization of the rights for equality and sovereignty, as well as for the bringing down from the throne, both of the individual, as well as the historically responsible principles of federalisation” (p. 416).

#### **4. Croatian Sources on the Coordination of Action Between Tudjman and the Vatican**

In contemporary Croatian political journalism and memoir literature, there is a huge number of personal accounts on the Vatican’s crucial role in the support of the separatist aspirations and the anti-Serbian efforts. Hence, Stipe Mesić in his book *The Demise of Yugoslavia* (Mislav-Press, Zagreb, 1994), describes how in late May and early July of 1991, during a visit to Italy, “. . . particularly the Holy Father John Paul II and Archbishop Sodano received President Franjo Tudjman in a manner no other previous

Croatian delegation, nor anyone else from the Yugoslav Republics had ever been received”(p. 18). On the occasion of the Pope’s first visit to Zagreb, the commander of the head body of the Croatian Army, general Janko Bobetko, in a commemorative speech on the occasion of a navy holiday in Split says, “The recent visit of the Holy Father to Croatia and the fact that one million people took part in a Mass in Zagreb shows the unity and cohesion, determination and calmness of the Croatian man” (Janko Bobetko, *All my Battles*, published by the author, Zagreb 1996, p. 168). The Croats really could be calm and peaceful, aware that the Roman Pope would win all their battles for them, and to this end he would employ his powerful allies, in the first place the Americans and Germans.

The Vice President of Tudjman’s government of “democratic unity”, Zdravko Tomac, in September of 1991, attended the summit of the Transnational Radical Party, in Rome, which completely supported Croatian separatism. Although his visit to the Vatican was not prearranged, he managed to be received in the Vatican, and describes it in as follows: “The Ambassador of the former Yugoslavia to the Vatican, Dr. Ivica Maštruko, helped me a lot to have talks in the Vatican, although unannounced. I was also helped by Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, who was also at the session of the Federal Council of the Transnational Radical Party. From the Yugoslav Embassy in Rome, he phoned the nuncio in Belgrade so he could help me to be received. Since I had asked to be received the same day, the only possibility was, considering the engagements of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to be received in the late evening hours, as all the appointments had been booked. Ambassador Maštruko, now the Ambassador of Croatia in Italy, told me that this was a precedent and that he could not remember if anyone had ever been received after 8 p.m. The assistant to the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Zoran Taler, who was also present at the session of the Federal Council of the Transnational Radical Party, begged me to take him with me, and at dusk we, which was creating a remarkable atmosphere, in a car of the Yugoslav Embassy – the driver was a Serb from Bosnia – set out to the Vatican fortress. This was a unique experience. Probably even more unusual since everything had been happening at dusk, at the time when the premises of the Vatican were deserted and when everything seemed even more otherworldly and surreal. Looking at these walls, the Swiss Guard, the space where the Head of the Catholic Church and his assistants work, feeling the peace and quiet, I started to understand the passing of life and the insignificance of each and every one of us” (Organizator, Zagreb 1992, p. 102-103).

The account of the reception itself is even more impressive. “Archbishop Toran and his associates received us cordially. I saw that they respected Ambassador Maštruko. The interpreter, Iva Grgić, also acted as if she were at home, since she was the interpreter at the meeting of President Tudjman and the Holy Father, the Pope. It seems that I was the one who was most excited, since I could not have even dreamt of finding myself one late evening in this role, conversing with the Minister of Foreign affairs of the Vatican. I introduced myself and stated my reasons for coming. I pleaded energetically in the name of those who were still alive, and who would be killed, massacred and driven out from their homes if nothing was done, that by the Vatican’s secret diplomacy, there be done as much as it is possible. I asked for the Vatican’s support in our definite decision that on 7 October, to not renew the moratorium for the coming into effect of the Declaration of Independence and Sovereignty of Croatia as an Independent State. I asked the Vatican to, by employing its powerful secret diplomacy,

convince the political leaders of the world to stop the pressure on Croatia to renounce its sovereignty, since I had information that in some countries there were plans of implicit agreement with the Army to forcibly break down Croatia and keep it in Yugoslavia, while Slovenia would be allowed to separate. I talked at length particularly of the risk for the democratic forces in Croatia, which were led by President Tudjman, persistently pleading for peace, negotiations and political solutions, if we were not given the support for ending the moratorium. I even presented strong arguments that if that happened, the democratic government in Croatia would fall. I pleaded with the Vatican to, with its secret diplomacy, influence the Eastern European countries and specifically the USSR, so it would be understood that Yugoslavia could not be preserved by force. I expressed gratitude for everything that the Church had done for Croatia and the things it would do, but I put a particular emphasis on the moral and any other accountability of the politicians in the West and the world organizations, who did not bring the decisions they had to in order to save human lives and stop a potential catastrophe. I was extremely satisfied with the thing I had been promised. I was told that the Vatican had been doing everything in its power, using its secret diplomacy both in the East and the West in order to stop the war, and that a number of countries were going to instantaneously recognize Croatia and Slovenia and other republics upon their request. It was promised, which was realized later, that the Vatican as a state would set a precedent and be among the first group of countries to recognize Slovenia and Croatia” (p. 103-104).

Not long after his return from Rome, Tomac, on 2 October 1991, met with the Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić. Although he regularly overstated the importance of his personal role in the political events of the time, this part of his memories is also interesting. Tomac writes, “Before the conversation with the Cardinal, I was very excited. At the entrance I was met and cordially greeted by the nuns, and the Cardinal’s secretary. I was asked to wait a few minute, since the Cardinal was in a meeting with the representatives of the Croats from Vojvodina, headed by Bela Tonković. After a couple of minutes, the Cardinal came out and cordially greeted me and suggested that I should enter and attend the final part of the conversation with the representatives of the Croats from Vojvodina. At this moment, an extremely cordial and friendly atmosphere was created. Upon the departure of the Croats from Vojvodina, we were left to converse alone for more than two hours. I informed the Cardinal about the conversations in the Vatican and the promises I had been given: that the Vatican with its secret diplomacy will especially act in Eastern Europe and the USSR in order to help that this part of Europe accept the inevitability of the recognition of Croatia as a sovereign and independent state as soon as possible; that the Vatican will be making a precedent and will be among the first groups of countries to recognize the new state; how they will do anything possible in order for peace to come as soon as possible. I introduced the Cardinal with my private conversations with the Italian Prime Minister, Mr. Andreotti, as well as of the conclusions of the summit of the Transnational Radical Party in late September in Rome, with the participation of parliament members from forty European countries. It was the first significant meeting at which it was clearly stated who the aggressor was, and who the victims were, that is, the recognition of Croatia as a sovereign state was requested. However, the topic of our conversation was the situation in Croatia and then Bosnia and Herzegovina. I personally expressed my gratitude to the Cardinal for everything he was doing in those difficult circumstances” (p.105-106).

The account of his first meeting with Kuharić for Tomac served as an opportunity to emphasize his own, typical Croatian stance on the different ways the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Christian Church led their Church politics. Tomac gives his personal memories and impressions: “I expressed my gratitude especially for his humanism and the huge efforts invested by him and the Church in order to preserve the soul of the Croatian people and to stop us from responding to hatred with hatred, crime with crime, and murder with murder. Our next meeting occurred during a Mass in a ‘church cathedral’, something I have also written about in this book. We also had a cordial meeting after the Christmas concert in Cibona’s arena. Afterwards, we ate codfish in a newly opened restaurant, ‘Maksimo’. I was sitting next to the Cardinal and there was enough time for us to have a cordial conversation on everything we had gone through, and the things that were before us. It is evident that the creation of the Croatian state was marked by the name Franjo, since besides Franjo Tudjman and Franjo Gregurić, a third Franjo had a no less important historical role: Cardinal Franjo Kuharić. Several times in my speeches I have emphasized, and particularly at the theological stand at the Kaptol, the importance of the Church’s role in these critical historical moments of war without rules and with an incomprehensible quantity of crimes and violence. I believed, and I still believe, that we can win only by being different from our enemies. Without the Church’s role, in the manner in which it is led by Cardinal Kuharić, this would not have been possible. That is why the Orthodox Church, which is trying to conceal the crimes and the Greater Serbian politics, bears a huge responsibility for everything that happened. Cardinal Kuharić once even wrote a letter to the Prime Minister, protesting against the individual occurrence of crimes against the civilian Serbian population committed by our side. He asked for an energetic intervention by all available means, understanding the risk for the Croatian nation if it accepted the enemy’s strategy, if we did not have enough strength to oppose the few who had accepted this strategy” (p. 106-107). Therefore, according to Tomac’s interpretation, Kuharić exhibited a hypocrisy very similar to that which Stepinac had shown in his time.

There are numerous testimonies on the complete integration of all the structures of the Roman Catholic Church into Tudjman’s completely mafia-like system of power, where especially the Herzegovinian Franciscan Friars represented an additional powerful factor of the criminalization of the society. As it is pointed out by a renown Zagreb publicist, Denis Kuljiš, in his book *Monkeys, Gangsters and Heroes* (Globus Internacional, Zagreb 2001), the concept of Tudjman’s *Luburićevstina* as the dominant ideology “. . . includes the ‘national reconciliation’ with the dark *Ustashija*<sup>42</sup>, the legalization of the ultra-conservative clerical fascism-philia<sup>43</sup>, of all that ‘Norwell’ darkness, which, being held underground, were set free, like Baš-Čelik<sup>44</sup>, by the fanatical martial Friars from the Shaolin of Široki Brijeg” (p. 399) The Friars took hold of the main financial flows, the smuggler network, the propaganda apparatus, and directly made decisions in the human recourse policy. They were not reluctant to promote notorious criminals into army generals, if that was backed by their specific and base interest. For any kind of actual advance, the candidate would first have to gain “. . . the support of the Franciscan order, the Monastery of Sinj and Herzegovinian province, and in the ‘Norwell’ inner circle, in the refuge of Masna Luka were the united former

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<sup>42</sup> Members of Ustasha ideology

<sup>43</sup> Love of fascism

<sup>44</sup> A character from a Serbian fairytale

emigrants and minorities, priests and *Udbaši*, the miracle workers of Međugorje and the Herzegovinian statesmen; however, this was not a conspiracy of Mount Sinai, but simply a meeting of the executive board of a company in control of the major interests: a well organized pilgrimage which put out hundreds of millions of marks, a ministry with a war budget of eight billion kunas, not counting the huge business with drugs, apartments and real estate, extortion, smuggling and other criminal activities. The men who had gathered here had the entire para-state military force, and several secret services at their disposal. If one wanted to come even close to this centre of power, he had to be subjected to an X-ray examination of the soul, a confessional test, from the day he was born” (p. 481-482).

Many, even the most banal, of the regime’s propaganda activities, announcements, proclamations and events had the “. . . the mark of the Friar teachings and patriotic zeal of the Herzegovinian Franciscans. The Franciscan priests from the minority order of the Province of the Accession of Mary, who specialize, nonetheless, in composing anonymous political libels, like the vitriolic epistle in the name of the deceased Mato Boban, at the time sent to the former Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Kuharić. They are always revealed by the use of the present continuous tense (before the January elections they said, ‘we are promising 200,000 new jobs’) and constructions foreign to the everyday use of the modern, new shtokavian literary standard (‘by intentional alterations of the Constitution, they would, indeed, eradicate the freedom and state from us’), which is continued in the spirit of Friar Didak Buntić, Mostar’s enlightenment writer of gleanings and meaningless works. In short, this is typical Medjugorje babbling from the pulpit in the shrine where, for twenty years, every evening, the Blessed Virgin Mary has been appearing, who takes part in the local church play which has been shown more than *Mousetrap* by Agatha Christie in the London West End. Politically, this is the same Dubravo-Herzegovinian, Friar tear-jerking subversive operation, behind which, it seems, stands the very prince of darkness, Markica Rebić, and finally his tool of Lucifer, Beelzebub, Doctor Ivić Pašalić” (p.353-354).

The apologetic approach to the Pope and his policy, which Stipe Mesić represents in the already mentioned book, should be analysed in the same light. According to Mesić’s interpretation, “The Holy father did everything in his power to stop the war destructions in Croatia. In the beginning of August, for this purpose, his emissary, Secretary of the International Relations Department of the Vatican’s State Secretariat, Toran, visited Belgrade. State Secretary Lončar informed us that ‘J.L.Toran has expressed his delight for his mission in Yugoslavia, emphasising its principally ecclesiastical character. He stated that the Pope had chosen him to convey to the Bishops in Yugoslavia the Pope’s preoccupation and concern with everything that had been happening here, and his desire for dialogue and peace to be established as soon as possible, since the war did not solve, but created problems. His visit to Croatia was instigated by the fact that in this part of the Catholic family is in a most difficult situation. During the previous day (6 August), he held talks with all the Bishops from Yugoslavia and had heard from them the disturbing testimonies, not only from Croatia and Slovenia, but from other regions where trust had been disturbed. However, he was impressed by their composure and the lack of any type of vengefulness; and in that he saw the hope for the reestablishment of trust. Unfortunately, from conversations with them he had concluded that the representative of the Orthodox Church on the field did not fully respond to the offered initiatives. Nevertheless, he told them that regardless of all the difficulties, they have to

persevere in their attempts to develop cooperation. Today, he repeated the same thing to the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Pavle, but from the conversation with him he had the impression that within the Orthodox Church there was too much reminiscence of the past problems, which was complicating the current cooperation more and hindering the building of the new relationships between the Churches” (Mesić, gen.quote, p. 201) .

Therefore, according to one of the senior Roman prelates, the ugly parts should be forgotten as soon as possible, and people should act as if nothing had happened. The Serbs should forget their victims and Jasenovac. This is why Mesić points out that when it comes to the other Western forces and the European Community, in 1991, the Croats were closer to “. . . the international campaign of the Holy See, which persistently called on the Helsinki Final Act (Rule VIII) on the right of the people to make its own decisions, ‘when it wants and the way it wants, in its interior and exterior political system’. Closely following the development of the Yugoslav crisis, which is a great concern of the Holy See, the Vatican will send a particular memorandum to all member countries of the CSCE: ‘Faced with the ongoing, heavy fighting in Croatia’, realizing that ‘the time has come for the international recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia’, since ‘in reality, several elements are in favour of momentary recognition: a) the Constitution of the Yugoslav Federation considers the option of the secession (separation) of an individual republic ‘on the bases of the right of every nation for self-determination, including the right for separation’, b) it can be determined that the present reality of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia does not correspond to the Constitution itself, since the Federal government does not represent the political and ethnic reality of Yugoslavia’, c) this type of formal recognition could be conditioned by the better assurance of the respecting of the obligations accepted within CSCE, particularly when it comes to the protection of the national minorities with residence in these two republics” (p. 271).

The identicalness of the ideological pattern which was used by the Vatican’s and Croatian politics had enabled the firm coordination of their presentation on the international political stage, and the Western countries gradually accepted the skilfully spread propaganda slogans and anti-Serbian prejudices they were stirring. Within this, the status of the Serbs as a constitutive nation in the Croatian federal unit was systematically disproven, so they could be treated as rebels from abroad, instrumented against the “legal” government. Answering the direct question by Lord Carrington on 22 November 1991: “Does the Serbian nation in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as one of the constitutive nations of Yugoslavia, have the right for self-determination?”, Stipe Mesić responds, “The Serbs living in the Republic of Croatia are not and cannot be a constitutive nation. That is why they are not given the right for self-determination in the Republic of Croatia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims are completely equal when it comes to the right for self-determination” (p. 314). In fact, the “right” for separation had been completely fabricated, since the Constitution of the time was unfamiliar with it. Whoever felt the Vatican’s strong wind blowing in his fully stretched political sails, could launch a military secession and expect the Roman Pope to ensure him at least illegal international normative recognition. “The Holy See believed that the formal recognition, agreed and multilateral, would aid peace, since it would provide the basis for the creation of the conditions where the rights of everyone would

be recognized and protected by the community of the country-members of the CSCE” (p. 271).

Moved by this Papal concern for his “chosen” Croatian people, Mesić in a special note states, “Some time before the Holy See had sent the memorandum to the countries participating in CSCE, I had sent a greeting card to the Holy Father John Paul II on the occasion of the anniversary of his being ‘the first among equal’ in Vatican (22 October 1978): ‘On the occasion of the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the pontificate of Your Holiness, I am sending you my personal wishes for good health, for the success of your peace initiatives and actions for the wellbeing of the entire mankind’. . . In November, on the occasion of my first visit of the Holy Father, instead of who, together with the Monsignor Milan Simčić, who for same ten years has been living and working in Vatican (the Vice Secretary of the Congregation for the Clergy), I was received by the universally informed, towards me remarkably open, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, State Secretary of the Vatican, who promised me ‘the most influential intervention of the Holy Father with all the ambassadors to the Vatican for the recognition of Croatia’” (p.272).

### **a) The Ideological Similarity of Broz and Tadjman**

The extent to which Tadjman was connected with Broz by his ideology and destiny is shown by Ivica Radoš in his book *Tadjman Up Close: Testimonies of Associates and Opponents* (Profil Internacional, Zagreb 2005), by stating several characteristic indications. When in 1972, Tadjman was arrested and sentenced to two years in prison, and then his sentence was reduced to seven months, the amount of time he had served during the investigation, he had been personally rescued by Tito on Krleža’s intervention. “Tito and Kardelj had actually, previously, in certain situations used Tadjman and his studies in their struggle against the unitarianists and Greater Serbians. They supported Tadjman in the creation of the concept of the general national defence while he was in the General Staff of the Yugoslav People’s Army, but also his studies and the interpretation of the role of the Croats in the People’s Liberation Struggle. It appears that Tito also supported Tadjman in the struggle against Rankovic’s Greater Serbs, who in 1965 on the occasion of the anniversary of twenty years since the end of the World War II, wanted to organize a great political meeting at Jasenovac and set up a plaque with the inscription that in the concentration camps of the Independent State of Croatia, 800 thousand Serbs had been killed. Tadjman, owing to Tito, had better treatment in the investigative detention than the other suspects from the Croatian Spring” (p. 7). As stated by the student leader of the time and convict, Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, “Tadjman, in the events preceding 1971, was not an insignificant person, but he was not in ‘the major league’. After the 1970s, he had distanced himself in a way from other participants of the Croatian Spring, especially from those who had spent time in prison, since he himself had been rescued from prison by Tito and Krleža” (p. 8).

When in 1977, Franjo Tadjman was writing the draft of the program and principles “of the Croatian national and socialistic movement”, he had shown his devotion to Tito, putting him in the ranks of the main Croatian national ideologists: Ante Starčević and Stjepan Radić. Here, “. . . the ideological foundations of the future party – Starčevićanstvo, Radićevština and Titoism – are mentioned for the first time” (p. 15). As Radoš writes, Tito’s “. . . bust takes an honorary place in the hall of the Presidential Palace. Hrvoje Šarinić claims that the President also wanted to place the bust of Ante



Pavelić” (p. 48). Hrvoje Šarinić himself, who used to hold the office of the Prime Minister, Tudjman’s advisor and the Head of Office for National Security, describes it in the following way: “In the entrance hall of the Presidential Palace there are the busts of the people who have marked Croatian history, in one way or another. There are the busts of Radić, Starčević, Stepinac and Tito. He wanted to put the bust of Ante Pavelić as well. He said that he had marked part of Croatian history; that we here were not deciding on who is good or who is bad, but were giving one historical overview. ‘He is one link of the chain’, responded the President. I said, ‘Mr. President, I am not a historian, but for heaven’s sake, you must be aware of the consequences of placing Pavelić’s bust?! All the ambassadors come here, presidents pass through! I think that would be a scandal!’ Eventually, he did accept this opinion. I added, ‘Mr president, you gave me the duty to try to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, or at least to be the wheel in the process of establishing diplomatic relations – and we are putting the bust of Ante Pavelić here!? I am telling you right now, I will no longer negotiate with them’” (p. 48).

In his own political practice, Tudjman had harmonized Pavelić’s and Tito’s ideology to the very limits. Pavelić, he did not praise much, at least not in public appearances, while when it comes to Tito he did not hold anything back. Appraisal of Pavelić, of course, would not be politically beneficial from the aspect of the reaction of the international public opinion, and with his positive stance on Tito, Tudjman was standing up to the anti-Communist exclusiveness of his followers, who were disregarding the fact that the half-century Communist regime had actually paved the way for the Croatian secession by its anti-Serbian policy. According to Radoš’s newspaper polls, “. . . the ones who knew Tudjman well say that he never uttered a single critical word against Josip Broz Tito, the Communist power-holder responsible for the crimes against prisoners of war and ethnic cleansing of the German and Italian national minorities on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Some people claim that Tudjman reacted that way out of personal gratitude toward Tito, who did not allow Tudjman to be sentenced to prison because of his part in the *Matica Hrvatska*, but also for the fact that he held Tito’s role in history in high esteem. The answer to the question why Tito did not allow his agents and judicial system to persecute Tudjman might be concealed in their common friend Krleža” (p. 51).

However, this explanation is too simple and fragmented, since, undoubtedly, Tudjman’s attitude toward Tito has wider ideological implications. Another student leader of the ‘Mass Movement’ and political prisoner, Dražen Budiša, with his testimony substantiates this type of reasoning: “When in Tudjman’s house in early 1989, I read the text, the credo of the Croatian Democratic Union, I stated two reasons why I refused to sign. The first, in this first text there was one affirmative sentence about Tito. And the second, there was a programme of uniting the three components of Croatian politics in the last one hundred years – the Party of Rights’ ideology, *Radićevština* and the left national component. I would have accepted these three components, although I expressed my reservations, since I said that we are not forming a political party for the synthesis of Croatian history, but for the Croatian future. Eventually it was proven that Tudjman was right, but for me it seemed like an idea that would not attract the masses, since it encompasses things that do not go together. But, considering the task that was before Croatia, the hardships, this was a fruitful idea. The uniting of these components was unacceptable for me, particularly in was unacceptable for me to be talked about Tito in a positive context. Tudjman told me that I was acting from an anti-Communist

position. I told him that I would not stand behind that, that I was Tito's prisoner. However, my animosity towards Tito was not as pronounced as Tudjman saw it, as a kind of repulsion towards the left idea. This is the way Tudjman saw me, but I was never to that extent overwhelmed by the anti-Communist idea as much I was by the anti-Yugoslav idea" (p. 51).

On Tudjman's great admiration of Tito, which he expressed in many private conversations, also speak Andrija Hebrang, the son of the murdered Croatian Communist leader, Perica Jurić, first head of the Service for the Protection of the Constitutional Order; as well as the wife of the Defence Minister, Gojko Šušak-Đurđa. The most extensive description, once again, is provided by Hrvoje Šarinić, "Tudjman used to say how Tito, had he been in America, with that kind of political stature would have been the most successful President of the USA of all time. But, small countries had their own destiny, added the President. Tudjman used to say that it was questionable whether Croatia would have returned Dalmatia, and what part of Dalmatia, were it not for Tito. I disagreed, 'Yes, but in the same time he is guilty of the island Goli Otok and the Path of the Cross! As soon as I uttered it, I got to meet a new Tudjman, the one who did not react in the way I was used to. He was extremely sensitive to any kind of pain of a person, a lost life. . . However, when speaking about the Goli Otok and the Path of the Cross, he had a different opinion, miles away from Hebrang, who was an anti-Communist, for familiar reasons. Tudjman said, 'You know, these things happened, but when we take into consideration the positives. . . Even in the Goli Otok, Tito had to solve the problem of the Informbiro, since the survival of the regime was in question, so it cannot be graded as something negative.' This was a shock for me. Then, about the case of Hebrang, Tudjman said that Tito probably had not known about it, which was very strange for me. I told him, 'Mr President, for heaven's sake, Tito knew everything, and for a man like this, who in the beginning was his first associate, he could not have not known.' Tudjman defended Tito also in places when it was difficult to defend him. He was so obsessed, which might be a strong word, but he esteemed his political work so much, his political views and everything that he had accomplished, that Tito was undeniable number one in his estimation of the political personalities in Croatian history. After Tito, he esteemed Starčević the most, and then Stjepan Radić; and Maček was not to be mentioned to him, he simply erased him, by saying that he had made wrong decision in critical times and had fled. He also held Stepinac in high esteem, since like it or not, the position of the Archbishop, particularly in those difficult times, was political. Tudjman held these four men in high esteem, but Tito above anyone else. Tito had said, 'Do not frame Tudjman.' He told me that there is only one photograph, he showed it to me, that as a general he was photographed next to Tito. Tito did not have Tudjman's culture acquired during education, he was a machinist. It is hard to compare him with Tudjman, who had a PhD in science, a historian. But Tito had the incomprehensible instinct of a politician. Tudjman used to say how one is born with it. Either you have the instinct of a politician or you do not, regardless of education. He would frequently give the example of how foreign statesmen, like Churchill, accepted and appreciated Tito" (p. 53).

The memories of other prominent figures, when it comes to the question of Tudjman's estimation of Tito and historical role, correspond to Šarinić's. As the actor Zlatko Vitez remembers his conversations with Tudjman, "Two times I asked him, 'Mr. President, tell me who is the most deserving individual in the history of the Croatian

people?’ Two times, he told me, ‘Josip Broz Tito. If it were not for Josip Broz, had he not created the border as it is today, we would not have a state, nor could we ask for a state’. Besides that, he used to keep Tito’s bust in the villa, an Augustan type” (p. 53). Of course, the testimony of Stipe Mesić on Tudjman’s attitude towards Tito had particular significance: “He had a very nice opinion of Tito,” says Mesić, “he considered him a great politician, and that the bad things that happened in his time were the result of that time. Tito was a dictator, but he always made democratic concessions, and this is what Tudjman was thinking. When the West applied pressure, or the circumstances in the country were of that kind, he would make concessions. Nonetheless, it is obvious that he was a visionary when he created the Non-Aligned Movement, and Tudjman accepted and praised this. Secondly, he praised Tito’s entire strategy during the war, especially that he had led Yugoslavia out of the war as federative, and on this basis in 1974, he effectively created a confederative Yugoslavia, and the Constitution which was the basis for the world’s recognition of our independence. In any case, Tudjman held Tito in high esteem, and he would always point out Krleža as a great intellectual and writer; he considered him the Croatian Ibsen” (p. 54).

Interpreting Tudjman’s opinion, the former deputy Minister of Defence, Krešimir Ćosić, describes how much Tudjman respected Tito in regard to the military: “In the circumstances of the structuring of the former Yugoslav Army, Tito played a major part in preventing then, immediately after the war, the Yugoslav army from turning into a Chetnik army, or becoming an exclusively Serbian army. For that matter, he, with his authority, regardless of the position which was for him also problematic and extremely difficult, defended certain prominent Croatian army and political high-ranked officials, and this was evident” (p. 54). The former Minister and Head of Tudjman’s cabinet, Ivica Kostović, agrees with these opinions. “He talked about Tito’s greatness, and I have asked him several times if Tito’s greatness was in the fact that he was responsible for the crimes of Bleiburg. He was unhappy with these type of questions, thus he would say, ‘Don’t, Tito was a great Croat, do not tell me that’. He would talk about how Tito wanted to lead a kind of Croatian politics, that he was respected as a statesman, and so on. For Tudjman, the great Croatian politicians were Starčević, Radić, Hebrang and Tito. I travelled to Moscow with Tudjman, when he met with Yeltsin. In the museum in the Kremlin, Tudjman saw that only five people had received the Medal of Alexander Nevsky, and among them was Tito. Tudjman was delighted. It meant a lot to him” (p. 54).

As the former Prime Minister Nikica Valentić says, “Tudjman regarded Tito as the Great Croatian politician, not Yugoslav, but Croatian. Tudjman’s thesis was that Tito on the territory of former Yugoslavia to the greatest extent, as much as it was possible, had neutralized Serbian nationalism, and afterward federalized Yugoslavia and gave autonomy to Kosovo and Vojvodina. According to Tudjman, had it not been for Tito’s support, there would not have been the elements for the statehood of the republics in the Constitution of 1974. I questioned Tito’s contribution, saying that he was a Communist after all and that Bleiburg could not have happened without his knowledge and command. Tudjman claimed that Tito did not know everything about Bleiburg and that this was a game the English” (p. 55).

In this regard, the testimony of the general and the Hague suspect, Slobodan Praljak, is also interesting, who said that Tudjman had looked at everything in a historical context: “As far as I have understood, this historical relation goes like this: the Partisans

and antifascist have preserved the existence of Croatia – something I agree with. Had it not been for the antifascism among the Croats, and if all had been Ustashas, defeated on the world level, there would not be a Croatia. This is Tudjman's view. But, with the emergence of Communism, the crimes in Bleiburg and the Path of the Cross started happening, but it could not be sensed with Tudjman that Tito had approved this in any way. His opinion was that Tito took part in the movement in a way outside of that, apart from that, above that. Tudjman considered them simply the collateral damage of history, that such things happen, while, in fact, Tito starts to play a positive role since he was suppressing the Serbian hegemony. According to Tudjman, Tito defeated Ranković; with the Constitution of 1974, he ensured Croatia's equality, survival – to the Macedonians as well – he gave the Muslims their nationality, autonomy for Vojvodina and Kosovo” (p. 55).

Tudjman's confidante for Istria claims that Tudjman, above all else, in Tito saw a great Croat, someone who contributed immensely to the fact that Istria and Dalmatia were joined to Croatia. “Tudjman had a habit while sitting at his table to explain to his guests and associates why he had kept the bust of Josip Broz in the office of the President. He presented arguments that Tito, above all, was a Croat, that in the circumstances he had lived and worked in, he had more success than it was thought, that the progressive left values and ideas, built in the antifascist struggle, actually produced long-term results. He considered that progressive and beneficial for Croatia, so he considered them to be a part of his work. In this period he saw some precious stones for the Croatian national idea” (p. 55-56). Eventually, Ivica Radoš said to Zlatko Mateš, the president of the Croatian government, that Tudjman “. . . said bluntly that regardless of the Banditer Commission, Croatia would not have achieved international recognition if Tito had not federalized Yugoslavia in the Constitution of 1974” (p.56). As Mateš himself narrates, “The incentive for our conversation was Tito's bust, which was always and remained in the Presidential Palace. He appreciated Tito because in his time and with his agreement, Croatia within Yugoslavia was positioned in a way that would enable it to, in a constitutionally legal way, exit Yugoslavia. He believed this was not done without Tito, without his knowledge, and this is his absolute contribution, since, regardless of Banditer and everything that had happened, Croatia would not have with relative ease attained recognition on the international level” (p. 56).

### **b) Tudjman's Role Model, the Spanish Dictator Franco**

Although Tudjman had come to power firstly because of the unquestionable support of the Roman Catholic Church, and with its help had realized the Croatian separatist project, he was never a true believer in practice. The Church was his instrument for the realization of his political ambitions, but it had also made him into its own tool, a lever for the realization of the essential Church interests. As his minister and Vice President of the Croatian Democratic Union, Jure Radić says, “Tudjman as a person had never had that which a Croatian believer feels. He did not have a believer's bud, nor a believer's fibre. Nevertheless, he was a man of immense life, political and historian experience, and he understood the importance of the Catholic Church for Croatia. Had he been asked which institution was most important for the Croatian nation, he probably would have put the Catholic Church at the top. He knew its importance, but was not completely

familiar with it. For the purpose of his plans, he wanted to include the Catholic Church. He knew that the people would rather listen to the Church than politics” (p. 178).

When it comes to world leaders, Tudjman esteemed the Roman Pope John Paul II the most, and when it comes to the European political leaders, he showed the most respect towards the Spanish fascist dictator Francisco Franco, who filled him with admiration in regard to politics and the military. Concerning this, Perica Jurić says of Tudjman: “He highly respected Franco, he idolized him, had taken him as his role model. He used to say how Franco had reconciled the irreconcilable, the Communists and fascists; by this he meant mostly the people, not the ideologies. Franco was his role model, for sure. Tudjman always looked for role models corresponding to the historical situations he was in” (p. 152). On the European political stage, Tudjman and his party were energetically supported by the Central European Christian democrats in 1991. Mate Granić says how in early September of the same year, “. . . the first meeting of the Christian democratic parties of the Central Europe was held, when the declaration was adopted concerning the clear and unquestionable support of Croatia. The big parties in this meeting were represented by the state secretaries. For instance, the Austrian People’s Party was represented by Busek, while the Christian Democratic parties of Central Europe, the transitional countries, were represented by party presidents. As the war went on, the sympathies for Croatia were growing. What is more, Genscher and Chancellor Kohl resolutely supported Croatia and its journey to independence. Genscher, with the help of Austria, Mok and Denmark, winning over and pressuring others to recognize Croatia” (p. 133). When it comes to the role played by Genscher and Kohl, the Prime Minister of Croatia at the time, Josip Manolić, agrees with Granić’s opinion: “Genscher was an important figure at the moment of international recognition of Croatia, and Helmut Kohl, as the holder of power in Germany. They, with their authority, their domination in Europe, were of immense help to our recognition” (p. 133).

Nonetheless, undoubtedly in the process of recognition, the Vatican’s precedent had the crucial role. As Jurica Radić explains, the Roman Pope John Paul II “. . . always talked about the just struggle of the Croats, their right to freedom, but also about the reconciliation. Back in 1990, as soon as he became president, Tudjman visited the Pope and invited him to visit Croatia. Nikola Eterović, was one of the people who deserves the most credit for the recognition. He was one of the people close to the Pope. There were a few Croats there: Simčić was in the rank of the assistant to the minister in the Holy See, we could say to the Minister of Interior Affairs, Josip Uhač was the Ambassador of the Holy See in Germany and long-time secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, who was nominated as a Cardinal by the Pope. He passed away between his nomination and proclamation as a Cardinal. Eterović was then in the College of St. Jerome. Now it is evident who Eterović is: he became one of the key figures in the Vatican, he became the secretary of the Synod of Bishops, which is in the rank of the chairman of the assembly or parliament of a country” (p. 134).

Apart from the recognition of Croatia, the Vatican’s crucial role was in the internationalization of the Yugoslav crises and the international satanisation of the role of the Serbian factor. Tudjman insisted several times that the Pope should directly support the Croatian war efforts. As Jure Radić continues, “. . . then in 1994, there was a sudden news (it was summer) that the Pope would like to come to occupied Croatia and express his support for the survival of the country. For Tudjman, the Pope’s visit was of

immense importance; he entered the spirit of it, focused on it. On that occasion, the Pope visited the President in his office; he did not visit Mesić, but asked him to come and meet him. The details represent the relations, the protocol means something: this did not happen by accident” (p. 134).

## 5. Šušar’s Criticism of Tudjman’s Neo-Ustasha Regime

One of the most persistent and consistent critics of Franjo Tudjman and his regime, Stipe Šušar, calls the period of Tudjman’s rule “the third period of fear”, after the first post-war period, when the Communists were severely fighting their ideological opponents: and the second one, when they were fighting among themselves politically, getting rid of the “*Informbirovci*”<sup>45</sup>. According to Šušar, the third, Tudjman-like period of fear, “. . . judging by the consequences up to now, does not fall behind the period after 1944-1945 in any way. In Croatia, at least 300 thousand people were removed from their jobs, because they were not nationally and politically convenient. Around half a million either lost their jobs, and being jobless went abroad looking for work, or had to go into early retirement. . . . Many people were killed, while the murderers were not brought to justice. Around ten thousand houses, mostly Serbian, were mined; mostly it was done expertly, in towns and villages far away from the battlefield of the Croatian-Serbian conflicts. Raids in the apartments of ‘inconvenient’ citizens and forcible evictions, which the state bodies did not suppress, but, in fact, were behind most of them, reached the level of an epidemic, and have not ceased to exist. Some ten thousand people lost their citizenship and thus became aliens in their own country, without receiving an explanation. This was the atmosphere of suspecting people who allegedly do not behave like good Croats, who remained ‘Comms’, and of all those who dared to publicly criticize the actions and intentions of the current regime. The Serbs were suspected in many ways – publicly or concealed –,being abused for the very fact that they were Serbs. The Istrians who support the Istrian Democratic Assembly are being accused of virtually preparing the separation of Istria from Croatia. Staged trials for the Dalmatians who support the Dalmatian Action are being prepared, in order to prove their terrorist intents. . . . And for verbal offences under ‘the new regime’ tens of thousands of convictions were made” ( Stipe Šušar, *The Croatian Carousel. Appendices to the Political Sociology of the Croatian Society*, Razlog, Zagreb, p. 15-16).

Listing numerous examples of the neo-Ustashization of the Croatian public life, Šušar also mentions the extradition of the former administrator of the Jasenovac concentration camp, Dinko Šakić, in 1998. “The extradition of the married couple Šakić served in fact as the pretext of presenting them as Croatian heroes, and for the spreading of claims which by many times diminish the number of victims of the Ustashes’ crimes in Jasenovac” (p. 42). Apart from this, Šušar points out the fact that Tudjman’s party at the election had won a small or just a relative majority, mainly by votes from the diaspora, mostly by the Herzegovinian Croats, but also to the fact that most of the Serbs were driven out, so they could not vote. “The Croatian Democratic Union and Franjo Tudjman, however, won this relative majority in the first and all subsequent elections with the almost unconcealed help of the Catholic Church, which has a significant political influence on traditional believers; but a number of the enlightened Croatian

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<sup>45</sup> Members of Informbiro

men and women went their way, since the events in the former Yugoslavia and Europe, and the World itself, were simply, on one hand, disturbing them, and on the other hand giving them hope. . . In Croatia, the provoked conflicts with long-lasting consequences contributed to the fact that the majority, even if it did not vote for the Croatian Democratic Union and Tudjman, supports their ‘state-making’, nationalist and xenophobic politics, and the shutting of eyes when it comes to the greediness and haughtiness of the new ruling class, the class of the Croatian capitalists, whose establishment was under the personal control of the Croatian Head of State, Franjo Tudjman” (p. 49).

Tudjman’s parliamentary epistle from January 1996 served as a pretext for Šušteršič to, with valid arguments, point out the manipulation of factual and fabricated statistical figures which he readily employs. “For instance, the number of Serbs who fled before the attacks ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’ were reduced by several times. The facts and figures on the killed, murdered, wounded and the missing are provided only for those who, during the war, were on the Croatian side, and for whom Croatia (was) the homeland and whose citizens they were in 1991. President Tudjman in his speech numbered all the victims of ‘the Croatian people’ in various conflicts from 1991 to 1995, without saying a single word about the crimes against the Serbian population on the territories the ‘Storm’ swept through, not even the unprecedented plunder, torching and fragmentation of once social property, and now state property, which is still going on. However, the facts and figures spread all over the world, and that is why Croatia was disgraced and because of that (although not only for what had happened and has been happening in the wake of the ‘Storm’), it is still in the waiting room of the European institutions: between two and four thousand Serbs were killed, 1,500 were imprisoned under the indictment of war crimes, 85% of the Serbian houses were destroyed, and all were plundered. These facts and figures were not fabricated and broadcast into the world by some kind of an internal enemy, they are found in the reports of the international institutions and organizations whose men came and visited this vast area which today resembles a wasteland” (p. 98-99).

### **a) Franjo Tudjman, Disposable Material of the Roman Catholic Church**

In all the Croatian political events in the 1990s, the dominant role had two Franjos – allies and ideology like-minded. They are Franjo Tudjman and Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, the Archbishop of Zagreb and the chairman of the Croatian Bishops’ Conference. They have corresponding leadership ambitions and manners of political behaviour. “We do not know whether the head and leader, Franjo Tudjman and Archbishop and Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, had been acquainted and were meeting before the first did not become what he is today. However, since they were concurrently in leading positions: one the head of state and the other the head of Church of Croats, from 1990 onwards, the two of them, for all of us in Croatia, for the Croats and especially for non-Croats in ‘our beautiful country’, are destined – are they not? Only the Holy Father is sending the virtuous Cardinal Franjo Kuharić into retirement soon, while the majority of the citizens,

it seems, will re-elect Tudjman as ‘the leader of all Croats’. Without the support from the Church among the Croats, Franjo Tudjman and his movement – the Croatian Democratic Union would not have won the 1990 elections, nor would they remain in power to this very day (Šuvar wrote this article in 1996 – note by V. Š).

“The two Franjos in the beginning, after we had all exited ‘the Communist hell’, and Croatia escaped from the ‘Yugoslav dungeon’, seemed to walk side by side, in triumph and in glory, in harmony and love, fortunately, if not for the entire, then probably for the majority of the Croatian citizens. The Cardinal himself rushed to request, for instance, in a sermon on the occasion when he was made an honorary citizen of Jasterbarsko on 21 October 1990, for Croatia to be God’s state, in the same way Alojzije Stepinac had requested, whose cult the Church was persistently creating, and even managed to create it earlier during the atheistic Communist rule” (p. 110).

The cult of Tudjman as well as that of Kuharić was at the same time gradually, but persistently and systematically, developed. As Šuvar notices. “In Jastrebarsko, actually, by proclaiming at the same time Franjo Tudjman and Franjo Kuharić honorary citizens, it was said that the Croatian nation, therefore, has ‘two great masterminds’, who complement each other in their roles: ‘Mr. Franjo Tudjman as a secular leader and politician has successfully been finding the best solutions for Croatia and all the citizens who see it as their country’, while ‘the virtuous Mr. Cardinal Franjo Kuharić, politically not a member of any party (and is it necessary for him to be a member of a political party? – our note), nonetheless, with his proven immeasurable devotion to his people, by constant emphases on peace, love and harmony, he inspires amazing power, and impacts the spiritual stability’. That is why ‘It is great fortune for Croatia to have given birth to these two powerful but different personalities at the same time; this is a rarity’.

“As time passed by, it seems that the idyllic relationship between the two Franjos has vanished. Yet, the matter here was about two different egos, but the bigger reason was that Franjo Tudjman, who we can describe with the saying ‘I am the state’ did not always in all matters meet the demands and hopes of the Croatian Church. And then again, Cardinal Kuharić and other dignitaries within the Church, one of the most conservative and most provincial in the Catholic world, at least in Europe, were not that careless to stay behind Tudjman’s manner of rule to the very end, especially having seen that the support of the Croatian citizens’ (not-so-) ‘young Croatian democracy’ under Tudjman’s management is withering after all, and that both Tudjman and the Croatian Democratic Union are still there because of the laws of social-historical inertia. That is why it happens that the Cardinal is not always answering the calls of Tudjman’s protocol, neither is Tudjman, as a new believer, always coming to the celebrated Masses and to the Zagreb Cathedral. However, we who are not overly impressed with the role of the Kaptol in the Croatian history, nor overwhelmed by the smell of incense, and who soberly look at the matters, from the corner, having been temporarily both isolated and marginalized, have to warn of the power of the ‘field’ conjunction of the secular and Church authority: there is not a single event, no matter how insignificant it is, that the Croatian Democratic Union’s authority stands behind, that some Catholic priest is not present and there to give blessings, and on many occasions a Bishop. What is more, in the everyday life of the community, school, institution; the role of the judge, and behind the scenes, was played mostly by the clergy relying on nuns and laymen. Probably, on any other state television in Europe, and in the world, there are not so many scenes of



Masses, pilgrimages and prayers being shown, as there are on the Croatian television, etc.” (p. 110-111).

It is obvious that Tudjman had served the Roman Catholic Church as disposable material in a single, but crucial, episode of its long-lasting endeavours. When he was used up, when he had achieved everything that was expected of him, the Church prelates could dispose of him. Had his death not been timely, it is evident that he would have been politically defeated, humiliated and rejected. However, the one thing that is the main achievement of Tudjman’s regime, the Roman Catholic Church devoutly preserves and defends. “The Cardinal gives the President unequivocal support at least when it comes to his politics in the wake of ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’! Allegedly, the virtuous Franjo Kuharcic got upset, when in August of 1995, just after the ‘Storm’ had passed, and he was in the God-pleasing visit to Okučani, he was informed of the torching, plundering and killing the Serbian civilians that was taking place. Nevertheless, almost a year afterwards, at a moment when Europe was holding Croatia in detention for misbehaving when it comes to the treatment of the Serbs who fled and those who remained in the areas where ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’ had taken place, Cardinal Franjo Kuharić presents the state of affairs as President Franjo Tudjman himself sees them or would like to see them. In fact, at the European Bishops Conference in Mariazell in Austria, on 1 June 1996, Cardinal Kuharić (according to the report of the Croatian Informative Catholic Agency-IKA), had informed the (un)informed Catholic dignitaries from all of Europe, that ‘the Serbs were fleeing because they could not accept the reality of the Croatian state’. In ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’ the Serbs took flight, claimed the virtuous Cardinal, for three reasons: ‘they were ordered by their authorities to retreat, and they were also advised by their Church; psychologically they could not accept the reality of the Croatian state, since they were the whole time brain-washed by the propaganda that these territories are Serbian; and many had taken part in the plundering and demolition of the Croatian homes and Catholic churches’. And what were the Croats doing, according to Cardinal Kuharić? Franjo Tudjman was ‘repeatedly pleading to the Serbs to stay peacefully in their homes and that their safety is guaranteed, and also freedom and peace’. But, the Serbs, being Serbs, ‘would not listen’. The Croatian Army, Cardinal Kuharić reassured the European Bishops, did not touch the Orthodox churches and the Serbian houses, and only later ‘would the individuals and groups come, who looted the Serbian houses and set them on fire, even murdering a number of Serbs who had not fled’. Then the Cardinal said that the Church in Croatia had protested against this, and then he praised the authority of the country for ‘stopping these crimes’. Anyway, ‘the case here was not one of systematic destruction, as was the systematic destruction of the Catholic churches and Croatian houses during the occupation’” (p. 111-112).

With the sarcastic and humorous comment which follows, Šušteršič points out that Kuharić is only a representative of a particular way of thinking and Church policy, which among the Croatian Roman Catholic prelates is deeply rooted in history. “Why does the head of state not send the Cardinal to Strasbourg, to explain to those Europeans who are unfriendly towards us Croats how our Croatian politics are spotless and that the Serbs are guilty for everything? Has the head of state got a better advocate than the Cardinal? About Franjo Kuharić, the 74<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Zagreb (Archbishop) should be written in the same way Miroslav Krleža wrote about the 71<sup>st</sup> (Stepinac – note V.Š.), except it should be shown that he, compared to his predecessors, lacks in his power of intellect, but is not behind them when it comes to cunningness and hypocrisy. And what

is being preached now, in our time, is only the continuation of the policy of the Church to the Croat, that he should more play the role of the national leader, then to actually convey religious matters, the spirit of peacemaking and Christian forgiveness. Of course, the virtuous Cardinal is not a loner at the head of the Church of the Croats. By the hypocrisy of his personal messages, he represent the spirit in this Church, which has been accumulating for a long time, and is expressed by the resistance to all intentions of the reconstruction of the council, from the 1960s onwards. The things that Cardinal Kuharić is saying in his typical, confused way, someone like Živko Kustić, for instance militantly acknowledges in the role of the most agile Catholic publicist of the time. And those who both as priests and as believers would like a humble and peacemaking Church of Croats, are themselves exposed to anathemas” (p. 112).

By giving a precise diagnosis of the social behaviour of the Croatian Roman Catholic prelates, Šuvar inevitably starts, in the very least, a partial analysis of the political role of Pope John Paul II. The Christ’s alleged emissary on earth and prominent Church conservative, “. . . visited Croatia for the first time in 1994; four years later, he would return, this time visiting besides Zagreb, Marija Bistrica, Split and Solin. After his first visit, he said that nowhere was he welcomed like he was in Croatia, except for in his homeland, Poland. And now he stated how he would love to come again to ‘beloved Croatia’” (p. 144). A shocking historical coincidence is that after the ecstatic reception of Hitler’s forces in Zagreb in 1941, it was often stated that nowhere in Europe were the German troops welcomed in a better way by the local population, except for Hitler’s birth place in Austria. “These two visits to Croatia by Pope Wojtyla happened not only because of the persistent invitation for him to come, but also because of his intention, that he had some remarks to express here and make some moves, in concordance with the Vatican’s overall interest and needs. In fact, the invitations used to be sent from the highest state positions from the former Yugoslavia, as well, but in that time, no one even dared to think that Stepinac should be beatified or to express the delight of the Croatian believers with the Pope and everything that the Holy See does and wants” (p. 145).

Actually, these visits of the Pope’s to Croatia point out a huge contradiction in the Vatican’s overall policy. The Pope behaves one way towards the amassed negative historical inheritance of the actions of the Roman Catholic Church among the Croats and towards the Serbs, and in a completely different way in regard to the rest of the world. “The spirit of the time and the inevitable changes in the relations between the people and their consciousness, perhaps more than his personal longings, compelled Pope John Paul II to make decisions and moves by which he attempted to rehabilitate the Church for everything it had been doing or failing to do during its two-thousand-year history, everything from failing to condemn the Holocaust of World War II. He completed the revision of Galileo’s trial, he cancelled, for instance, the regulation that the Pope is carried above the heads of the believers (he himself likes to go mountain climbing, drives in the Pope-mobile and flies from one end of the world to the other in supersonic aeroplanes, and if he were younger, he might have even boarded some kind of artificial satellite, to speak to his congregation from above!), he was the first Pope who entered a synagogue and apologized to the Jews for the passive attitude of the Catholic Church at the time when they were being destroyed by the German and other fascists. Desiring to introduce the Roman Catholic Church into the third millennium, the Pope Wojtyla insists on a new evangelization and the Church’s responses to the greatest challenges of

humankind and man at the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> into 21<sup>st</sup> century. Under his apostolic guidance, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (the former Inquisition) and Cardinal Ratzinger at its head are working on a document by which the Church will plead forgiveness for all its sins in history, for the wars and massacres that it itself initiated (like the Night of Saint-Bartholomew, or the quests against the reformation), the setting of witches on fire on the verdicts of the Inquisition, witch hunts, colonial conquests and conversions, up to the persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust” (p. 144-145).

However, on the other hand, it had not even crossed Wojtyła’s mind to kneel down on the Jasenovac gallows of the hundreds of thousands of Serbs in whose execution many Roman Catholic priests personally participated. At the same time he beatifies Cardinal Stepinac, the ideologist of the Ustasha authority and the instigator of the genocide against the Serbs. “His first visit to Croatia in 1994, when a quarter of the territory was under control of the rebel Serbs, and there was not even an inkling of ‘Flash’ and ‘Storm’, has caused the eruption of happiness and delight of the Croatian authorities and millions of Catholics (although on the Zagreb hippodrome had gathered half a million people at most, not a million as the state media had claimed). And the Pope made it up to them in cautious words of appreciation of Croatia and the Croats for the role they played in history, but also in today’s freedom and democracy” (p. 145). On that occasion, he also called on the Balkan peoples for cooperation and religious toleration, something he would leave out in 1998. “In the eight speeches he made, the current Holy Father, of course, was preaching for peace, tolerance, and forgiveness on this occasion four years afterwards, but he did not repeat his memorable messages of the previous visit. The explanation might lie in the fact that, on that occasion, for the purpose development and the Church’s influence on the Croatian congregation, he had to undertake the beatification of Cardinal Stepinac. And speaking about Stepinac as a prelate loyal to the Church to the end, for whom Croaedom meant as much as the religion, is easy – but speaking about him in the context of inter ethnic and inter religious tolerance is not so easy, is it” (p. 146).

The political implications of this quasi-religious ceremony were of great importance for Franjo Tuđman and his neo-Ustasha regime. As Šuvar further comments, “The Pope Wojtyła did not compliment the obtrusive Franjo Tuđman, who acted as though he himself was being beatified along with Stepinac. But, nor did he say a single reproachful word, even implied at the very least, against the current Croatian regime, concerning the ongoing events in Croatia, which are being criticized and condemned around the world. Even more so, it could be said that the Pope’s visit was a visit of support for Tuđman and this Croatia that he had modelled. Let’s take one of Wojtyła’s statements for instance, “The Christians on the territory of Croatia, are today invited to give a new face to their country, by supporting the reestablishment of ethic and moral values, which were undermined by the former totalitarianism and war violence. This is a task of the utmost urgency since, without these values, there is no real freedom or true democracy”. Therefore, the former totalitarianism and violence are culpable for everything and, on the basis of this formulation, one might think that they didn’t exist on the Croatian side. And the Pope still asked the Bishops in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to follow Stepinac. “I urge you to still follow in the footsteps of those who, like the Good Shepherd and the beatified Alojzije Stepinac, gave their lives for the Christ’s flock and who worked on the establishment of Church unity”. From this formulation – that it is necessary that “the Church in Croatia strengthens the unison of all its forces in order to

accomplish the goals standing before it, in today's light of freedom and democracy" – it actually means that freedom and democracy exist, here, in Tudman's Croatia. Although his second visit to Croatia, in the Pope's own words, was just one apostolic journey, he still agreed to be used as the instrument of the current Croatian regime" (p. 146).

The regime used the Pope's visit, and especially the main ceremony, to the maximum for propaganda purposes. "The meetings in Marija Bistrica and on Split's Žanj were, in fact, religious-political, or Church – state manifestations which were ended by the national anthem and the anthem of the HDZ<sup>46</sup> *God Save Croatia*. In that sense, it might seem that the Roman *La Republica* was correct when reporting on the Pope's visit, "Croatia has to beatify Cardinal Stepinac and President Tudman. The Pope had beatified the martyr of communism. The head of state, the former communist Tudman, had beatified himself by stepping onto the podium where the altar was placed. The powerful sounds of the national anthem while Tudman and the Pope were standing together facing the crowd, and with Cardinal Sodano and other prelates pressing their right hand to their hearts, marked the event". The best-selling Italian newspaper added "a similar ending to the mass celebration, with the head of state and the Pope together in triumph, has never been seen in the some 80 of the Pope's journeys so far".

The second visit of the Pope John Paul II to Croatia, apparently, had three purposes: the beatification of Alojzije Stepinac once again on the scene and perhaps for the last time – fighting communism, which was destroyed in Croatia, the entire area of former Yugoslavia and the entire area from the Adriatic Sea to the Pacific Ocean in the sense of regime and practice; as the support of the reaffirmation of the Church among the Croats and its arbitrary role in every pore of the nation and its life, even in the form of 'Stepinac's Church' – all for the purpose of preventing, in the foreseeable future or ever again in Croatia, any kind of left-orientation from coming to power; and the restitution of the financial solidity of the Church in Croatia, hence, for that purpose the agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Croatia was prepared, by the agreement the Church not only will be given back everything it was taken from it during nationalization or will be reimbursed, but from the state budget, without the introduction of the church tax, will be given significant sums of money" (p. 146-147).

Actually, the treatment of Stepinac's role and his beatification are the most indicative of the event, which completely exposes the Vatican's politics. "The beatification of Stepinac was a matter of routine for Pope Wojtyła, something he often does. So far he has beatified 804 people (making Stepinac the 805<sup>th</sup>). He has canonized 279 people. By the way, the Croats already had four beatified and two saints. When beatifying Stepinac, the Vatican did not investigate his life and behaviour before 1945. The purpose of the investigation being to determine whether he was a martyr of communism. Stepinac was beatified only for his actions during the period of the new, communist regime, from May 1945 until his death in 1960 under house arrest after he had been found guilty in the 1945 process. All fourteen points of argumentation in favour of the beatification are related to this period. On the part of the Croatian regime, the Pope's visit was intended, once again (also for the final time), to awaken religious national euphoria, which is the key for the preservation of the movement/party in power with the catchword 'it is known'. No Croat in all history, from the 7<sup>th</sup> century to this very day, from Branimir and Zvonimir until Stjepan Radić and Ante Pavelić, has courted

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<sup>46</sup> The Croatian Democratic Union

the Holy See and glorified the Vatican and papacy as is done nowadays by the former communist and atheist Franjo Tuđman... The regime wanted to use the Pope's visit to the maximum extent, for the purpose of falsifying recent history and for conversation on the communist crimes, while the NDH<sup>47</sup>, Pavelić and even Stepinac's delight in the advance of the Ustasha regime were, of course, never even mentioned. The culmination of these unscrupulous fabrications could be especially seen in the documentary about Stepinac directed by Jakov Sedlar, with a script by Živko Kustić, which was shown on television on the eve of the beatification. However, it would turn out that not even the cult of Stepinac could help the regime of an aged recycled Catholic like Franjo Tuđman" (p. 147-148).

Šušvar's final observation on this matter in fact represents an evaluation of the wider social repercussions of this manner of the Roman Catholic spiritual fathers. He writes, "Let us, finally, take a look at the behaviour of the domestic clergy. They are euphoric in the wake of Stepinac's Church. The clergy do not actually distance themselves from the current government and the things this government is doing or fails to do. They show traits of greediness, which is especially obvious in their behaviour in Split. They did not ask for more moderation from the state when it came to the expense and splendour in welcoming the Pope. They also did not distance themselves from the police questionings of the people in places where the Pope was coming to or passing through, asking are they or aren't they Croats. The formulation on 'the sin of the structures' in last year's Christmas message from Archbishop Josip Bozanić remained almost the sole clear condemnation of the greediness and haughtiness of the current Croatian government. Nevertheless, Bozanić's messages - present messages, speeches and interviews on the topic of the Pope's visit - are not giving any reason for optimism that the Church among the Croats (and the one in Bosnia and Herzegovina) will lose the character of a provincial Catholic Church, the most conservative in Europe, any time soon. Although the Croatian men and women - the great majority who believe in and belong to the Catholic Church - are today feeling a great joy and happiness that Pope Wojtyła has, yet again, praised Croatia as, presumably, the most Catholic country in the world and the most devoted to the Holy See, and placed Stepinac to the pedestal of the beatified, we have to be aware that, in the outside world, this decision of the Pope was, nonetheless, interpreted as a gesture towards one of the most controversial persons in the difficult events in the region, in Europe and the world, in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. That is why is the 'Stepinac's Church' is not one that the new generation of Croat men and women - infatuated Catholics - could carry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (p. 148).

### **b) The Conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism in Tuđman's NDH**

In a separate chapter, Šušvar gives an analysis of the phenomenon of the "conversion of the Orthodox Christian (Serbian) children to the Catholic faith (with which they are tacitly accepting the Croatian nationality)" (p. 211). In addition, during a parliamentary discussion on this issue in 1994, an incident occurred - a verbal and physical fight - while the MPs were arguing about "whether there are and how many Serbian Orthodox Christian children are forced to take up the Catholic catechism" (p. 211). A fierce public campaign in the Croatian media ensued and "many strong comments categorically rejected the allegations that Serbian children have to attend Catholic education and that

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<sup>47</sup> The Independent State of Croatia

there were any cases of conversion” (p. 211). The leaders of the Croatian Roman Catholic Church were disturbed by the arguments and that is why Cardinal Kuharić asked the parish offices to provide statistical information so it could prove with quantification that the episode was insignificant. “As is known, forcing the Orthodox Christians to convert to Catholicism is more than a shameful stain on the recent history of the Church in Croatia: at the time of the Quisling NDH, a part of the Catholic Clergy had encouraged mass conversion (around 300,000 people) from Orthodox Christianity to Catholicism and the people were forced at the risk for their very lives. Stepinac’s supporters in the Church did not condemn it, on the contrary, they tolerated it and with the clarification that, in this way, it was helping the endangered” (p. 211).

According to Šuvar, this problem cannot even be disregarded today “since, in the last three years, it is noticeable that, in the atmosphere of fear in the society and among the parents, the children of non-Catholic parents and atheists, mainly the anabaptized, are hurried to the Catholic catechism. It seems as if the figures of more or less 11,000 or 14,000 children who are forced to attend Catholic education, were arbitrary and without prior research and survey. Well, the information, even if finally collected, is not in itself the most important thing. The emergence of mimicry in catechism regardless of the number of children or parents, regardless of what caused it, should not worry us as much as the generally difficult and complicated position of the Serbs in the Republic of Croatia – and not on the grounds of whether they are believers or atheists, are in mixed marriages, are loyal citizens and to what extent, not because they have ever or in any way offended the state, regime, neighbours, those they live with, work with and happen to meet on a daily bases” (p.212).

That even Šuvar underestimated the dimensions and political character of the conversion to Catholicism, is shown in the events of the next twenty years. In 2006, Metropolitan Jovan of Zagreb and Ljubljana officially informs the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church of concrete examples of the Roman Catholic proselytistic activities in his Metropolis: “In parishes belonging to the Narta parish, the Archpriest authority of Bjelovar, in the Monastery of Marča Lipovčani, Ivanić grad - Graberje and Križ, the authorized priest informs the Archpriest by the official act: in Narta, Marija Žakula converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Lominac, Marija Popović converted to the Roman Catholic faith. Gorica Sredoja converted to the Roman Catholic faith. Several households in the village of Bosiljevo converted to the Roman Catholic faith. Jelača Nevenka and one household in Marinović Donji converted to the Roman Catholic faith. (Đorđe Puvalo and Ljiljana Herceg). In the village of Šumeće, only one house is Orthodox Christian, the remaining five or six households converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Dejanovac, all five or six houses converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In Graberje Ivaničko, three households converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Dejanovac, all the Orthodox Christians converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Blatnica, Milka Vujičić converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In village of Lipovčani, Milan Davidović and two members of his family and Stevo Davidović and two members of his family converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Dragičevac, Josip Golić and two members of his family (who used to celebrate St. Nicolas) converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In the village of Derezi, Nenad Višnjijć and Dušan Radosavac converted to the Roman Catholic faith. In village of Derežani, two households converted to the Roman Catholic faith. The numbered places used to belong to the Severin Eparchy

(subsequently), the Lepavinska Eparchy on whose territory was raging the infamous Union of Marča” (*Orthodoxy*, 15 April 2006, p. 45).

The systematic persecution of the Serbian citizenship in the Croatian federal unit started long before the outbreak of conflict. Šuvar illustrates this with several characteristic actual facts, “Even before the outbreak of any kind of conflict between the Croats and Serbs in Croatia (if we disregard the incidents in the summer of 1989), at the Zadar market, for instance, the regular market vendors, traders and buyers requested the Serbs from the surrounding areas be banned from selling their vegetables and other products at the market - that they simply be banished from the market. We can quote the news that a certain Croatian newspaper published on the subject in spring of 1991. An unofficial war broke out and, in the first months of the escalation, great numbers of houses, shops, cars owned by or in the possession of citizens of the Serbian and occasionally of the Montenegrin or some other nationality (and even of those Croats who were believed to be incorrect or had done something offensive) were blown up in Croatian towns and villages from Osijek across Karlovac to Metković and Dubrovnik. According to the statement by the Croatian Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Mate Granić, around 5000 houses had been destroyed, while the representatives of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights claim that the number is 10000. About the most horrifying thing is that people were vanishing without a trace, devoured by night and sometimes even by day, once again because of their nationality. People who were subsequently found and dug up as bodies – something one rarely dares even to say a word about (with the honourable exceptions of Slobodan Budak, Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, Ante Nobile, Danijel Ivin, and even Josip Manolić and Stipe Mesić, who later made public some facts that they knew when they were prominent figures in the current government), let alone file a record or launch actual and not mock investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice” (p. 212).

For its part, the Croatian state bodies were conducting orchestrated anti-Serbian propaganda that dominated the media for a long time. “From 1990, many lies were told about the dominant representation of the Serbs in the SoPS<sup>48</sup> and the Police, in the media, parliament, city and municipal administrations, the judiciary and in certain companies - although, to a large extent they were indeed represented in some of these services. To this day, thorough cleansings are performed and they were removed from almost all positions with any kind of responsibility, let alone from executive positions. That is why we have doubts about the validity of the allegations we recently heard from the mouth of President Tuđman that the Serbs make up fifty percent of the judges in Karlovac. In some services and institutions, there are no Serbs left or very few. In Parliament, whose administration has significantly increased compared to the one from the ‘communist’ times, there are just seven or eight Serbs among the all the employees there. Recently, in Požega, the last Serb hanged himself, a young man of 28, who left behind two small children and who served (as a guard) in the prison there. Serbs in executive positions and institutions are quite a rarity nowadays, there is one in the Croatian Government, in charge of national minorities, not a single one in the position of ambassador (emissary), among the high ranked army officials (officers) of the Croatian Army, also not a single one (however they make up 5 or 6% of the regular soldiers, therefore the Croatian Army is the ‘structure’ in which the Serbs are represented the

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<sup>48</sup> Secretariat of Public Security

most!). Not to mention the silent policy that the Serbs are not allowed 'to do business' and enter the ranks of the new capitalists in Croatia. And, just to point out the evictions from apartments owned by the JNA<sup>49</sup>, which hurt and still hurt the people of the Serbian nationality to the greatest extent. And just one more thing - not a small number of the Serbs are still being denied citizenship, although they were born in Croatia and their children were born there, and their ancestors lived there for centuries, etc.. A lot more could be said, backed up by evidence and examples, which would prove how there is little truth in the statement by the representative in the Croatian Parliament Šime Đodan that no one will lay a hand on the Serbs in Croatia (it might be true that they wont even touch them, but they were murdered indeed!)" (p. 212-213).

The conflict with the Serbs from Krajina stirred up the 'tendencies on the Croatian side and among the Croats that applied the principle of collective guilt and accountability against the domestic Serbs. Pressured by the circumstances that were in effect from 1990 onwards, a significant number of Serbs in Croatia have tried to adapt by concealing their nationality or have found a way out by fleeing or emigrating. Until the guns started talking, as a bleak atmosphere had since set in and relations became tense. In the spring of 1991, a census was carried out, where some of the Serbs declared themselves Croats especially if they came from mixed marriages. However, if a thorough list was made of all those who had changed their names and forenames in order to hide their Serbian ethnicity, it could be concluded that there are thousands of them. The newspapers wrote that there is a considerable number in Split alone. And not a small number in Zagreb and other larger cities. Finally, according to statements by the UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali in a report of the Security Council in the spring of 1993, the territory of the Republic of Croatia (without UNPA) had 252,000 Serbs left. The overall situation leads to the children of Orthodox Christian parents, and atheists and congregations of other religions, regardless of their ethnicity having to 'voluntarily' attend Catholic education in schools. Since, otherwise they are condemned to boycotting, teasing, scorn, ridicule and abuse - and indeed to come home with their noses bloodied. There are also numerous instances when one or both parents hide from their young children the fact that they are Serbs, so they wouldn't have to live the serious traumas. There are numerous instances when certain parents want to emigrate from Croatia at all cost, even today, in order to spare their children from the horrific repercussions of revealing or perhaps concealing their national, religious, or atheistic belonging" (p. 213).

### **c) Cleansing the Language on Tudman's Orders**

Šušar devoted a solitary article in this collection of newspapers comments to the issue of language - actually, to the systematic action of 'cleansing' the language in Croatia, which reminds one irresistibly of the ethic cleansing already carried out. The statement that the Serbs and Croats from the *Vienna Accord* shared the same standard language is followed by a short historical reminder: "In World War II, with the backing of Mussolini and Hitler, the Independent State of Croatia was proclaimed. In this quisling creation, a language full of archaisms and distorted invented words was propagated, which was allegedly supposed to be the pure Croatian language, from which

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<sup>49</sup> Yugoslav National Army



the ‘Serbian’ words are banished. The older people in Croatia, even today, mention the many ‘products’ of this practice with a snide smile. For example, the word radio was replaced by the word *krugoval*, the word telephone by the word *brzoglas*<sup>50</sup>. When it comes to the so-called doublets, the ‘Croatian’ words had to be used - the words *vlak*, *kruh*, *tisuca*, *prosinac* and not the ‘Serbian’ *voz*, *hleb*, *hiljada*, *decembar*<sup>51</sup>, etc.. By the Agreement of Novi Sad from 1954, the objective was to continue this harmonization, while in 1971, a group of authors declaratively asked for the separation of the ‘Croatian’ standard language from the Serbian, under the pretext of equality. “In Tudman’s Croatia of today the language is again being ruthlessly cleansed of ‘Serbisms’ and the words and practise from the time of the puppet state under Ante Pavelić are making their comeback to a considerable degree” (p. 216).

The process, orchestrated in the highest places in the regime, has extremely wide practical social consequences in the total discrimination of the Serbian people and their perfidious persecution. “In everyday life, the people are at risk that a salesman in a shop, a bank teller or a police officer could not only treat them in a rude way, but could also warn them if they used a word that was indexed as ‘Serbian’, hence not ‘Croatian’. In political life, the favourite words or the artificial language of Franjo Tuđman are being used. School teachers are asked to speak the ‘pure’ Croatian language and thus teach the students as well, on the basis of various instructions and manuals explaining which the words are ‘Croatian’ and which ones are ‘borrowings’ and not ‘in the spirit of the Croatian language’. The Cyrillic Alphabet, which is from the 9<sup>th</sup> century Croatian Alphabet as well, was practically banished from schools and public life, since it is regarded as the Serbian Alphabet (and the Croatian Alphabet would only be the Latin Alphabet), and the books by Serbian authors and all other books printed in Cyrillic were banished from the school, as well as from the public libraries. The state and other offices refuse to receive documents in Cyrillic, even when sent from other countries (since the Cyrillic Alphabet is predominant in Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine, etc.), and even the post offices would reject the postal order of one who dared to fill it out in Cyrillic. A new profession was introduced. Interpreter for the Serbian language. He has to take a test to prove that he knows the differences between the Croatian and Serbian language, learned from a special *Dictionary of Differences between the Croatian and Serbian Language*. The state administration, education authorities, editors, sub-editors, language editors in newspapers and on the radio and televisions launched a real witch-hunt against everything that is not ‘Croatian’ by the dictionary and by pronouncement. New, distorted words are being invented and propagated and a typical Croat is really at risk of not understanding the Croatian language. While there is not a single Croat, of course, who doesn’t understand everything spoken by a Serb coming from a Serbian province! And vice versa! ‘The cleansing’ of the language and totalitarianism in linguistic matters are causes for concern considering the consequences in terms of intolerance and the multitude of ordinary Croats, but nonetheless with a ‘new’ language policy that is at work in Croatia today, not much will be accomplished. It is the subject of sneering from within and of disbelief from abroad. However, it is the fact that this type of language policy turns out to be one of the areas for legitimating the current regime of rigid nationalism nowadays” (p. 216).

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<sup>50</sup> Fast voice

<sup>51</sup> Train, bread, thousand, December

#### **d) Tuđman's Morbid Plans for the Sacrilege of Jasenovac**

In the quest to falsify various items, the dearest thing to Tuđman is falsifying history, since he was most adept in this, following in the footsteps of his role model Friar Dominik Mandić, whom he draws on in several instances in his main work. "One of the morbid ideas of the President of the Republic of Croatia and academician Franjo Tuđman is that the territory of the Ustasha concentration camp Jasenovac, where mass executions of the Serbs, Jews, Roma and Croats themselves were carried out from 1941 until 1945, should be transformed into a 'memorial site for the Croatian war victims'. Besides 'the museum and a monument commemorating the victims of fascisms, the memorial will also find all the victims of communism (by transporting remains and bones from discovered pits) and especially the victims of the Homeland War. For everyone killed for the free Croatia, a memorial-stone (a cross) would be placed with an engraved name". Tuđman presented and elaborated on this idea in the 'report on the state of the Croatian state and nation in 1995' in the final session of both Houses of the Parliament on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1996. In this way, Tuđman feels that mixing the bones of the antifascists and victims of fascism with the fascist murderers in a big common graveyard of Partisans and Ustasha and those who were killed and murdered in the war of 1991-995 on the territory of Croatia (does this cover the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well?) would be 'a demonstration of reconciliation and truth for all victims in the journey of independent and sovereign Croatia'. Repeating his idea in conversation with reporters on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1996, where he said a lot of things that were more than scandalous, Dr. Franjo Tuđman was probably inspired by what El Caudillo and generalisimus Francisco Bohamonde Franco had done when he built Valley of the Fallen in the vicinity of Madrid as a sign of the reconciliation of the Spaniards after the Civil War - whose winner, covered in blood, was he himself. Except that Franco was more modest: under a hill, with a huge cross, a spacious Church/chapel was built with only a grave of the founder of the 'former' phalange. Regardless of the fact that many of those who had died at the hands of the Ustasha in Jasenovac "weren't victims in the journey of the independent and sovereign Croatian State, but were simply innocent victims of a criminal quasi state that was blessed by Hitler and Mussolini. A memorial-stone should be placed for each and every victim (either a Catholic or an Orthodox cross)" (p. 222).

In all this, the absence of any type of more energetic opposition from the Croatian public is most indicative. As Šuvar points out, "In Croatia so far, there really wasn't much excitement regarding Tuđman's ideas on the transformation of Jasenovac. The ones who voiced their disagreement were the leaderships of the Union of the Antifascist Fighters, the Board of Antifascists of the SDU and the Coordination of the Jewish Municipalities in Zagreb. As if the Croatian men and women were largely indifferent when it comes to the destiny of Jasenovac, as they are now to the current pitiful state of the memorial area. As usual, the majority of the Croatian men and women could belatedly realise what they have agreed to with their passiveness and indifference - by accepting to be led by someone and without thinking with their head (like geese in a fog), everything in the name of Croatia, as it is, the state formation with calculations and patriotism with pretences" (p. 222-223).

Actually there were some reactions, although in America. "Lack of appreciation of Tuđman's idea on Jasenovac was expressed by US Foreign Secretary Warren

Christopher while answering a question in Congress. And then Walter Reich, the director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (Tuđman attended its opening, trying to make up for what he had written about the Jews in his *Horrors of War*), wrote in the highly influential *Wall Street Journal* that Tuđman's intent 'must be stopped in the name of the future and the past'. With the intended mixing of the bones of the victims of the Holocaust in Croatia with those of their executors, Franjo Tuđman is trying to alter history with a shovel, Reich claimed. 'It is not only a matter of Tuđman, he says, but also of the Croats who might get the impression that the mass murders on racial and ethnic grounds hadn't happened during the Ustasha regime and that the Holocaust didn't exist. The perjury of the Holocaust in Croatia might make an example for other European countries that might also want to 'alter' their own role in the Holocaust. For that reason, the director of The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington concludes that the Croatian people 'must stop their President before he dishonours their name, by dishonouring the history that he wants question. We do not expect that the Croatian people will stop their President, not in this case, the case of the sacrilege of Jasenovac, just as they hadn't stopped him executing any of his intent. The fact that it couldn't have been expected of the Croatian people to stop Tuđman in the case of Jasenovac, can be deduced from the comment on the front page of *Vijesnik* (in an issue from the 14<sup>th</sup> April 1996), since this more than obedient daily when it comes to Tuđman already knows reliably that Tuđman's idea 'is supported by the majority of the Croatian citizens'" (p. 223-224).

#### **e) Parallels with Radić and Maček**

While discussing the ideological role-models of Franjo Tuđman, in 1996, Šušar noted the following facts, "It is a historical fact that, seven decades ago, Vlatko Maček had pursued a policy that, in many regards, Tuđman, had transposed to the present times, which is why Tuđman himself doesn't seem to like mention of Maček. However, Tuđman has taken many things from the politics of Ante Pavelić as well" (p. 228). It was him that he wanted to rehabilitate by falsifying historical facts. Certain MPs of the Croatian Democratic Union, even academicians, went so far as accusing the communist of committing mass crimes in Jasenovac. "Recent history, therefore, is being falsified to an unprecedented extent and that was starting from the assumption that the people are ignorant and have completely lost any historical memory. The current politics in Croatia in many areas, personified in Franjo Tuđman, has not only 'ideological' but, in certain practical aspects, real and tangible continuity with the politics led in the period between the two wars by the Croatian Peasant Party and Vlatko Maček. Actually, after half a century of existence of the ZAVNOH Croatia and AVNOJ Yugoslavia, the Croatian Democratic Union and Franjo Tuđman in many regards have taken over the argument repertoire in the new historical circumstances - i.e. 'arguments', vocabulary, methods and the actions of the practical policy from the time of Stjepan Radić, and especially from Maček, as well as the experience of forming and the struggle for the 'interior establishment' of the Banate of Croatia 1939-1941. The catchwords of the Croatian shotgun on the Croatian shoulder and the Croatian wallet in the Croatian pocket, which were repeated so many times by the agitators of HDZ before the elections in the spring of 1990, and which Franjo Tuđman had accomplished in 1991-1995, were also uttered by Stjepan Radić and other prominent members and ideologists of the HSS - and in the

years preceding the World War II, Vlatko Maček and the HSS were also governed by them, especially during the (brief) existence of the Banate of Croatia” (p. 229).

Therefore, in Šušteršič's perception, Tuđman is not at all original. His ideological similarity with Radić and Maček is astonishing, with the difference that he managed to realize their ideas in practice since the historical and geopolitical conditions were extremely favourable. “In Radić's and Maček's time, questions were posed on Croatia in the Yugoslav confederation or federation, its borders, the position of the Serbs in Croatia, the relations towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Muslims living there - then the question of the shotgun, wallet, independent diplomacy and even the paramilitary Party Armies (Maček's Civil Defence and Peasant Defence!). And these are the questions asked by the party that came to power in Croatia after the election of 1990 (and by all the other parties with names beginning with the adjectives ‘Croatia's’ or ‘Croatian’, which, as a rule, were more or less in unison with it) - mostly as simple imitation, although with greater emphases on the Croatian road to Europe and with mention of the capitalists rather than some peasant republic, and technocratic diligence and American values in place of peasant honesty and the alleged Slav traits of peacemaking and democracy. Thus equally calling on the glorious Croatian past and belonging to the West - that the traits of the Catholic peoples are more or less the same and nothing has really changed in that regard. In their calling to Europe and in the propagation of the independent Croatian accession to Europe, Franjo Tuđman and the current ‘post communist’ politicians looked up to Vlatko Maček” (p. 229).

For Maček as well, the end goal was clearly the definitive Croatian partition, but within the desired, almost maximal borders. “Like Franjo Tuđman in 1990 and 1991, Vlatko Maček himself, intended to internationalize the Croatian issue in the years preceding World War II. His emissaries had been visiting London and Paris and, after Germany had annexed Austria and arrived at the borders of Yugoslavia, Croatia took over the first place in his foreign policy and contacts. In the interview he gave the Swiss *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, right after the *anschluss* of Austria, he sent a message to the Western democracies that the Slovenians and Croats were the first defence of the West in the south-east of Europe, that they would be defending themselves from pan-Germanism the same as they had done in the past. However, the most important thing was that the Western forces commit to resolving the relations between the Croats and the Serbs. When the Banate of Croatia was established and the Western Allies were already giving in to Hitler, by sacrificing the integrity of the Republic of Czechoslovakia, the example of the ‘independent Slovakia’, under the auspices of the Third Reich was propagated, by and large in the HSS newspapers. And, in the same newspapers, the blatant sympathy for the Axis Forces, etc. was shown. For the state of mind in Croatia in Maček's time, for the methods of the behind-the-scenes actions for the purpose of accomplishing ‘the free and independent Croatia’, where the motto ‘it is crucial to destroy Yugoslavia – the cause justifies the means’, is the symptomatic circular-letter of the Croatian national movement, dated the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1939. It seems that, for a while just before the war, it had been circulating among those it was intended for as a top secret ... The state of mind and methods of political action of 1939-1941 and 1990-1991 match in any case. What Vlatko Maček achieved with the borders of the Banate of Croatia in 1939 was and has remained the guiding thought for Franjo Tuđman in his policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout the entire time of the war and the tussle with the Serbs and the Muslims and negotiations and settlements with Slobodan

Milosević to define the borders and possible split of Bosnia and Herzegovina and ethnic engineering (the flight of the Serbs from Croatia, then the swap of territories and people in the western and northern, and perhaps even in the southern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina)” (p. 230).

Šušteršič focuses especially on the comparative analysis of Maček’s and Tuđman’s paramilitaries. In his book *Occupation and Revolution*, published in Zagreb in 1963, Tuđman himself wrote that, by taking over the administrative apparatus of the Banate, the Ustasas had established their own government on Maček’s call, helped in practice by the Civil and Peasant Defences. Šušteršič explains in great detail what the problem is here, “Back in 1935, the Croatian Peasant Party had begun to organize its party army, or to be more precise, paramilitary formations, as it would be called in the modern vocabulary. The case here concerns the Croatian Peasant Defence and the Croatian Civil Defence, and they were formed, as formulated in the time of Banate of Croatia, ‘for the purpose of protecting the constitutional right of Croatia and the suppression of activities that were subversive and hostile to the peasant movement’. These formations were organized on the principle that they could serve in an ‘interim form until the accomplishment of the ultimate goal’, which was expressed in the thesis that ‘there is no free Croatia until the Croats get their shotgun on their shoulder’. And one more thing: the plan was to lead the politics in the context of the ‘power ratio’, since the ‘ultimate setting up of Croatia, its territory and its place in the state union depended more than anything on the political moment: the strength, awareness and discipline of the Croatian people.’ At first, the members of the Croatian Peasant Guard were suppose to act as security during the meetings and activities of the Croatian Peasant Party in villages, to protect against possible provocation by the political opponents. They did not carry weapons and were armed only with sticks. Still, they got the right to carry weapons in the Banate of Croatia. Đuka Komfelja, one of the commanders of the ‘defenders’ said in 1937 that “The Protection is something like the SS Units in Germany”. A group of pro Ustasha-orientated officers that illegally played a part in the Yugoslav Army of the time, submitted a memorandum to the German Consulate in Zagreb in early February of 1941 with the following allegations: “The Croatian people have created their Croatian army in the Yugoslav state...and named the army ‘Defence’ for the purpose of protecting against the Serbian enemy...The activities of Dr. A. Pavelić’s organization, were going in the same direction as the activities of Dr. Maček. Our two friends have created the army for our struggle, created the Defence as the future army of free Croatia”.

Even if they were not deeply infiltrated at first, the Ustasha ‘elements’ finally took over the leading role in both the Defence formations. In March of 1941, prior to the turbulent events (the 27<sup>th</sup> March) and the attack on Yugoslavia, Zvonko Kovačević, the commander of the Croatian Civil Defence at the time and eventually a Colonel of the Croatian Democratic Union, ordered its members to reject the calls from the units of the regular army. In the days preceding the outbreak of the war in 1941, both Defences were there, so the Ustasha movement could lean on them as it took over the power, although in the shadow of the German and Italian tanks. On 19 April 1941, Slavko Kvaternik, the commander of all armed forces of the so called NDH<sup>52</sup>, made a decision that, for special services for the establishment of the NDH, the Croatian Peasant Defence should be included in the regular units of the Croatian Home Guard” (p. 232-233).

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<sup>52</sup> The Independent State of Croatia

There are more very striking and not in the least accidental similarities: “ The Ustasha and Home Guard formations of the so called NDH were joined, incidentally, by about 3600 officers and non-commissioned officers from the pre-war Yugoslav Army, among them 32 generals, 328 colonels, 245 lieutenant-colonels, 245 majors, 1005 captains and 417 lieutenants. Similarly in 1991, the JNA<sup>53</sup> transferred about seven thousands officers to the National Guard Corps (subsequently the Croatian Army), including the following: the retired commander of the Yugoslav Air Force, general Antun Tus and the President of the League of Yugoslav Communists/Movement for Yugoslavia, Admiral Božidar Grubušić. By the way, at the moment of the proclamation of the so called NDH in 1941, the Croatian Peasant Party disappeared from the scene as a realistic political force that would be deciding the destiny of Croatia and the Croatian people, but the Ustasha movement could count on its paramilitaries and right-orientated nationalist element in its ranks” (p. 233). Evidently Maček had paved the way for Pavelić and Tuđman. “Of course, by indicating Maček as, in a way, the predecessor of Franjo Tuđman, we are bearing in mind that Franjo Tuđman also has some other role-models from the Croatian past. He himself refers to Ante Starčević and Stjepan Radić. But he took many things from Ante Pavelić, especially in his effort to create an ethnically cleansed state and his arrogation of the Muslims, then the resolution of the Serbian issue in Croatia itself. It appears that Vlatko Maček wouldn't have gone as far in certain matters as Tuđman did” (p. 235).

#### **f) Hash Criticism of Yeltsin for his Bestowing a Medal on Tuđman**

Šuvar openly criticises Russian President Boris Yeltsin for bestowing the Zhukov Medal Tuđman for his contribution to the antifascist struggle during World War II. “Regardless of the fact that Tuđman was indeed an antifascist in his youth, in the period since he became President of Croatia, he is both culpable and responsible for a certain rehabilitation of those who, on the territory of Croatia, were not only harnessed into the fascist cart and served to Hitler and Mussolini, but who had also committed horrible crimes against the Croats themselves and especially the Serbs, Jews and Roma... Franjo Tuđman, however, has drawn the reproach of the world on himself - and even contempt - because he is the instigator and propagator of mixing the bones of the dead Croatian Partisans with the bones of the dead Ustashas, since allegedly both fought for Croatia. In the function of the Head, Supreme Commander of the current Croatian Army, he allowed some of the units of the army to be named after the Ustashas criminals and, of course, not one unit or army barracks was named after a Croatian antifascist. He had awarded the rank of general to a man who was an Ustasha in World War II. In Croatia, under the leadership of Tuđman, the great majority of the monuments in memory of the antifascist struggle, the heroes of that struggle and those killed in that struggle - the victims of the fascist, that is, of the Ustashas terrors - were destroyed. And, while the monuments of the fighters against fascism are being destroyed, at the same time, half a century later, monuments to those who fought on the side of the fascists are being put up.

Šuvar says that Croatia is the only country in the world where widespread, determined and open declaration for fascism exists to this extent - mostly by the

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<sup>53</sup> Yugoslav People's Army

rehabilitation of the Ustasha ideology and movement. In the same context, “the purpose of the talk of Bleiburg and Križni - where the number of victims, some of whom were innocent, is multiplied to the extent of the one fifth of all the Croats that lived in 1945 - is to suppress and hide the truth of Jasenovac and the 38 concentration camps on the territory of the so-called NDH, where hundreds of thousand of people were killed under Pavelić’s racial laws” (p. 244).

### **g) A President Worthy of the Croats**

In 1999, near the end of Tuđman’s life, Šuvar says with a huge dose of resignation: “That every people get a leader worthy of them. And the Croats are, it appears at this moment, one extremely conservative, religious and politically backward people, and because of all this, a rarity in Europe. A recent survey has shown that the significant majority have faith only in the Church, army and police. And they are of course, behind Franjo Tuđman nowadays, and the latter two are his” (p. 246). Šuvar says that Tuđman was a fortuitous individual who happened to surface during chaotic historical events, by expressing the state of mind of his social circumstances and its temporal political goals. “Franjo Tuđman took over the initiative since he was the most cunning and ruthless of those who were contenders for the leadership in the restoration revolution, instilled with nationalist ecstasy. And he became the almighty ruler of Croatia under the veil of democracy, anticommunism and antisocialism” (p. 278). He managed to establish a new class of privileged and practically untouchable power-holders after he had adjusted quickly and grabbed the power that was, figuratively speaking, rolling through the streets. “With barely concealed dictatorship methods, he grabbed the power and propped it up, and those who took part in it came from everywhere, both from the homeland and abroad, from the ranks of ‘the reds’, who had been in power until then, and from the ranks of the ‘blacks’, who fled abroad after the war had ended or remained in hiding in the country, conspiratorially networking and waiting for the moment to return to power, wishing for a country that would still just be a copy of the NDH - only now, nothing could be done about it, without the racial laws and the Holocaust (since there is no German Nazism, or any other kind, in the role of support and patron). People in robes could also be seen again, while speaking against the people of other religions even with a gun in their belt. Some literally came from the street, recruited from the social rubbish dump, some came from prisons, where they were placed, for instance, for robbery and murder, while they presented themselves as political prisoners and victims of communism” (p. 278-279).

According to Šuvar, Franjo Tuđman himself “was a man of mediocre capability, without any meaningful education...compulsively obsessed with his own personal greatness. And he himself was convinced that he was the most important figure in Croatian history. And he only had one single vision - of an ethically cleansed Croatia and indeed, for the most part, he did fulfil it” (p. 279). According to the census of 1991, 11.2% Serbs lived in Croatia, 2% Yugoslavs and 9.2% members of other national minorities or those who refused to state their nationality. But it should be taken into consideration that, at the time of the census, Tuđman’s regime had been in power for almost a year and that many Serbs had left the turbulent Croatia, fearing the resurrected Ustashes symbolism and public manifestations of intolerance. “The status of the Serbs, as an equal, constitutive people (nation) in Croatia, had been cancelled; around 350,000

to 400,000 Serbs had fled from Croatia to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Srpska within Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries. Their apartments, houses and estates were mostly taken away from them though, under pressure from the world, a number of these buildings must be returned to them, which almost never happens. The houses and property of the majority of Serbs, who fled before the Croatian Army in 1995 were set on fire and plundered, 140,000 Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vojvodina, Kosovo and other parts of Croatia moved into those that remained. The remaining Serbs in Croatia became by *via facti* second-class citizens, removed from virtually all executive positions and significant jobs. Only a small number of Serbs have returned, normally the old, who had accepted their destiny, wishing to die in the places they were born. Young people of Serbian origin, up to the age of 35, living in cities, often declare themselves Croats; this is the ongoing process of the assimilation of the Serbs and other national minorities...The Catholic Church almost has the status of the state Church, while other Churches cannot even count on catechesis, nor promotion by the state television, radio and the majority of newspapers” (p. 320).

Estimating that 78.2% of the Croatian population in 1991 were Croats while there were almost 92% in 1998, while the number of Serbs had diminished to 3% and all others to 5%, Šušteršič notes that “there is no country in Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century where the creation of a ‘clean’ state-nation was fundamentally accomplished as it happened in Croatia...If the first and second Yugoslavia hadn’t existed and if it hadn’t been for the policy towards them that Pavelić’s 1941-1945 Croatia had executed, followed by the policy of Tuđman’s Croatia from 1990 onward, there would have lived around a million and a half Serbs within the borders of the present Croatia. Now remains - or will remain, after the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem is completed - not more than 150 thousand, mostly scattered in the larger cities, with the future possibility that, in fifty years at the most, none will remain. In the last five of six years, Croatia has quite come within reach of its dream of a ‘clean’ nation/state, where there will be almost no Serbs, who once were its numerous second nation, nor would there be the other national minorities, with the exception of the Italian one in Istria and Rijeka. Because of the powerful ongoing process of the assimilation of national minorities. Few Serbs of a younger age dare to publicly declare their national belonging, fearing discrimination” (p. 359-360).

### **i) Genocide Aided by the West**

For the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbian exodus from the territory of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia was in progress and Šušteršič describes the main courses in the following way: “The decrease in the share of the Serbs in the citizenship of Croatia is the result of frenzied advances of Croatian nationalism, its detonations happened in the beginning, in the middle part and at the end of our century...in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbs were exposed to a witch-hunt, which peaked in the destructive assault on their shops and stores in Zagreb. Then followed treason trials of Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and manifestations of anti-Serbian feelings on the occasion of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the assassination in Sarajevo and the outbreak of the World War I, when they chanted ‘The wind blows, Croatia grows, Serbia falls’ and shouted ‘hang the Serbs from the willows trees’, which was actually shouted for the first time by a Slovenian, Marko Natlačen, in Ljubljana...The painful experience of the first



Yugoslavia had helped the Croatian Ustashas, which, with the blessing and armed forces of Mussolini and Hitler, installed themselves in power in the Quisling Independent State of Croatia, while their strategic goal was the extinction of the Serbs, not only in Croatia but in the area up to the Drina river and the confluence of the Sava and Danube, everything done according to the motto: kill a third, convert a third, drive out a third. That is why the Serbs in Croatia were a group, or a fragment of a nation who, along with the Jews, had suffered the most in World War II on the territory of former Yugoslavia. They were exposed to genocide” (p. 360-361).

For the state of affairs after the World War II, where the Serbs were together with the Croats in an equal constitutive nation of the Croatian federal unit, “many facts and figures could be stated that disprove the thesis of the Croatian nationalists that the Serbs ruled Croatia and in Croatia... The areas where the Serbs were a majority or relatively predominant in the structure of the citizenship, if we exclude Vukovar and Baranja, were and the remained the least developed regions of Croatia as a rule, and the Croatian Serbs have also experienced greater demographic regression (ageing, a low natural birth rate, migration) than the Croats have...The catastrophic outcome for the Serbs in Croatia, which is evident today, could have been sensed in the very coming to power of the HDZ and Franjo Tuđman. In the pre-election campaign in 1990, they did not even mention the Serbs except in the sense of a general harangue... Franjo Tuđman and the movement he created and led also needed the war to once and for all ‘resolve the Serbian issue in Croatia’, more or less in the way it is now ‘resolved’. The Serbs in Croatia today are few, scattered, terrified and prone to assimilation. They are a mostly ‘urban’ population with the likelihood that, in the near future, they would completely disappear. In the beginning, the Serbs weren’t even given the chance for cultural autonomy...In spite of all the pressures from abroad and in the formal declarations of the current Croatian government, the odds of a significant return of the Serbian refugees to Croatia are small. Actually, wasn’t it said by from the top of the current government that the greatest achievement of the so called Homeland War was the fact that the Serbs had left, so they would not be a ‘disturbing factor’ in the Croatian state, or didn’t Franjo Tuđman himself speak on several occasions about the intention that the regions of Croatia that the Serbs had fled from, as well as those conquered but traded with Slobodan Milosevic - the region of the western Bosnia - should be settled by Croats from the homeland and abroad, which would supposedly guarantee the future of the Croatian state in the next centuries. And isn’t this type of settlement in the devastated and plundered areas, where the few Serbs that are left are still being abused, robbed and even killed, being done now?” (p. 361-362).

Even in 1996, Šušar had uncovered operation ‘Storm’ to a great extent, which was glorified by the Croatian generals, politicians and media as the biggest Croatian victory in the entire span of history, and the heaviest defeat to date of the Croatian enemies. Contrasting the media euphoria that was building a new national myth, he explains its essence, the way it was won, its immediate results and its long term consequences in three points: “Firstly, didn’t Croats have bigger victories in thirteen centuries? If this is true, then our history is poor in victorious quests. Secondly, it is hard to say that the ‘Storm’ was exclusively Croatian, when it is no secret that a significant part in its preparation and logistics treated and is still treating the powerful Croats more as patrons than allies. A certain part was presumably played by the retired American officers (who are training the Croatian Army, as stated by the Croatian Defence Minister

Gojko Šušak, with the knowledge and approval of the US Administration). ‘Storm’ was previously blessed by the two most powerful countries of the West - the USA and Germany. Not only did the Croatian Army have aerial videos and extensive information on the position and arms of the Krajina Serbs, but they also bombed and destroyed the main radar centre in the vicinity of Knin. Thirdly, Croatia launched ‘Storm’ with the reliable information that it would only be a showdown with the Serbs from Krajina, that the Serbs, or SR Yugoslavia would not interfere, and that the eventual smaller aid to the Krajina Serbs would be provided by the Bosnian Serbs. That Tuđman knew that Milošević would not wage war for the Croatian Serbs and that he would leave them to Tuđman’s will and mercy, could also be concluded from many of Tuđman’s statements on how he had met with Milošević and what he had talked about during the meetings” (p. 363-364).

The anti-Serbian hysteria that escalated among the Croatian people in 1995, according to Šušar, is stronger than that of 1941. “According to a policy and ideology that starts with Ante Starčević, continued by Josip Franko and Ante Pavelić, to be adopted nowadays by Tuđman, the Serbs are ‘the disturbing factor’ in Croatia - in any Croatia... The first time the rage of Croatian anti-Serbian chauvinism - which especially was produced, inspired and carried by the Clero-nationalistic circles in the Catholic Church from the very beginning - expressed itself was in 1902. The publication of the anti-Serbian pamphlet (a slip by Šušar - it should probably say ‘anti-Croatian pamphlet’ - V. S) in *Srbobran*, a magazine published in the centre of Zagreb, with the message in the title: *Until Investigation, Ours of Yours*, was followed by the demolition of shops owned by Serbian salesmen and traders. Then came new outbreaks of anti-Serbian hysteria in the time of Austria’s annexing of Bosnia and Herzegovina and, of course, after Gavrilo Princip shot the Archduke Ferdinand and his wife Sofia, which was more than welcome as an excuse for World War I” (p. 371). This Roman Catholic factor remains permanent and primary in every subsequent anti-Serbian action. “With the outbreak of World War II and the arrival in power, thanks to Hitler and Mussolini, of the Ustashas in the so called Independent State of Croatia, the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed outside of the law, exposed to severe terror and mass murders and to conversion to Catholicism” (p. 372).

Šušar is evidently aware that conversion is not a lesser evil than terror and murder - that, as far as the Serbs were concerned, they considered it the greatest evil, which is why they often chose death rather than adopt a foreign and, to this extent, infamous faith. “And then came 1990 and the election victory of Franjo Tuđman. In his pre election campaign, he refused to even mention the Serbs, disregarding the fact that they make up a sixth of the constituency. He was speaking of the Croats and ‘other citizens’, and only later started mentioning the Jews, Czechs, Italians, Hungarians and, through tightly pressed lips, would add the Serbs. The abuse and questioning of the people began, for no other reason than that they were Serbs, no matter where they were or what they were doing. Around Jovan Rašković gathered flustered intellectuals or semi-intellectuals, requesting nothing more than cultural autonomy and a special union of the half dozen municipalities around Knin, and they were vilified and laughed at. The Serbs were being threatened in any possible way, only to send the police forces from Zagreb into some municipalities with a predominant Serbian majority, so they could confiscate weapons from the non-commissioned officers in the local police force. And then the ‘Log Revolution’ broke out ... The unfortunate Serbian people, in all the villages and

places that were often homogenous, inhabited exclusively by Serbs, hadn't occupied itself! And it wasn't any more influenced by the Greater Serbian propaganda than it was by the Greater Croatian propaganda" (p. 373).

According to Šušteršič, Tuđman wanted war since only by war could he drive out and banish the Serbian citizenship. "From the very beginning, Franjo Tuđman and the regime he established were doing everything necessary to prevent the Serbs in Croatia from accepting the 'Croatian democracy' that saw the light of day. They wanted Croatia free of the Serbs. Had Tuđman wanted it, he could have avoided the war and all the sufferings of both the Croats and the Serbs within the borders of AVNOJ Yugoslavia, even if Yugoslavia had to collapse. And there wouldn't be any armed intervention from the JNA. After all, it could hardly have provoked itself, even if it had wanted to. Finally, with the blessing and support of the power-holders of the world, who Tuđman still listens to and serves, he had accomplished something he hadn't even dared to dream of in the beginning, although he had been wishing for it terribly: Croatia was free of Serbs. The scattered and terrified Serbian minority in the cities and the few places and habitats where it was preserved, would from now on try harder to hide their identity and preserve it. According to the report of Boutros Ghali from May 1993, 352,000 Serbs had left Croatia so far. After 'Flash' and 'Storm', at most 130,000 remained. At least 15,000 had changed their names and family names. When both their parent were Serbian, children in schools were forced to hide their national belonging and, as a rule attended Catholic education. In Croatian towns alone, from Vinkovci, Osijek and Požega to Metković, some ten thousand houses and apartments owned by Serbs were dynamited. Several hundreds of Serbs in these towns were killed, and no one was convicted for that" (p. 374).

The means of anti-Serbian of repression were systematic and extensive, "Serbs were ejected from 30,000 apartments at least, Serbs who had gone to the 'other side' or perhaps hadn't. And many Croatian women and their children found themselves on the streets just because they were married to Serbs, which was why they were *četnikuše* (Translator's note: Chetnik women). After operation 'Storm', the Serbs in Krajina were additionally convinced of what was awaiting them if the Croatian military and police came. All males between the age of 16 to 80 who hadn't fled were taken to concentration camps, many were beaten up there, and a large number were charged with rebellion against Croatia and also for war crimes. How many civilians were killed then remained a mystery for the Croatian, but less so for the international public (Croatian public didn't even have the opportunity to be enlightened by the report by Tadeus Mozovietski on this subject). In operation 'Storm' and after the Croatian authorities had managed to get hold of perhaps 1000-1500 males, it was reported by Government Vice-President Dr. Kostović that investigations were being conducted against 704, mostly older males. Every Serbian family who had a male family member who carried a gun, of his own will or through force, could therefore count that one or more of its members would be imprisoned. And how serious Franjo Tuđman's guarantees for the safety of those awaiting the Croatian liberators were, was shown by the still uncollected corpses and numerous sites of house fires on the territory of the former Krajina. The same goes for the guarantee of property, which was plundered, and just reimbursement, which no one on the Croatian side even mentions anymore" (p. 374-374). After his triumphant entrance into Knin, in an interview for Split's *Free Dalmatia*, Tuđman mentioned his prior efforts for the 'humane exchange of citizens', then shrugged off what had just

happened, saying that the results were positive regardless of the tragic fate of the Krajina Serbs, considering that the former negative political role the Serbs played in Croatia would never be repeated – a role that, with historical continuity, was dated way back to the time of the Turks. “Everything is said here. The writer of *Horrors of War* is seemingly drunk with delight that he was the one to convey the message of 1941: either they join us or remove themselves!” (p.375). The subsequent events of 1995 revealed that, in that regard, Tudman was only the executor of the strategic plans of his Western masters. After several days of systematic NATO bombing of key Serbian position, the regular Croatian military had taken over large parts of Republica Srpska. “In Dayton, however, it emerged that the conquest of Kupreš, Grahovo, Glamoč, Drvar, Šipovo and Mrkonjić grad wasn’t done for the purpose of the eventual trade of the conquered territories for Bosanska Posavina, but to extend Croatia to the other side of the Dinara Mountain and thus strategically protects itself for future centuries. And when the Serbs were returned Šipovo and Mrkonjić grad, not only were parts of Sarajevo under their control taken away from them, but also to the Bihać-Sarajevo road and railway link was cut - to the Croatian advantage. Perhaps the ‘Croatian’ canton of south-west Bosnia wont attached to Croatia in the foreseeable future, or ever, *de jure*, but this attachment wont be taken away from her without eventual new wars” (p. 379). These conquered and desolated territories of the Serbian Krajina and Republica Srpska, Šuvar calls the Croatian wild east, making a comparison with the past American extinction of the Indians and the colonization of the western territories. “Franjo Tudman himself had taken even the inkling of a hope away from the Serbs that they might return, declaring their property Croatian. One of his servile political followers, State Seal Guardian Ivan Milas, made a name for himself (apart from his other statements) with a statement that the fact that Croatia had liberated itself from the Serbs was the most important event in its history” (p. 380). The Croatian state directly organized the plunder, murder and other *zulumi*<sup>54</sup>, and the firing of Serbian houses was performed selectively, according to a pre-conceived plan. “The fastest to be rebuilt are the destroyed Catholic churches, while the Orthodox Christian ones that were unscathed, remain empty. Generally, the Catholic religious life is flourishing and, when it comes to piousness, the Croatian wild east surpasses the former American Wild West by far. Except for the Orthodox churches, where they still exist, which will presumably remain cultural monuments, everything else that bears the Serbian mark and symbolism is disappearing without a trace” (p. 381).

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<sup>54</sup> terrors

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