

The Politics of Heritage in the West Balkans:

**The evolution of nation-building and the invention of
national narratives as a consequence of political changes**

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Title page: The image represents a detail from the Skull Tower in Niš, Serbia. Erected in 1809 from 952 heads of the local rebels against the Ottoman rule during the First Serbian Uprising. It is used here as a reminder that the West Balkan heritage emanates from the memories of suffering of the local people – memories, which are in turn transferred into the nation-binding myths. Without exception, each observed nation and state insists on the suffering of their own co-nationals from the hands of conquering, frequently neighbouring, “Other.”

Summary

The growth of a nation-state in the 19th century led to the protection of heritage as a distinct discipline. Initially, the prime objective was physical protection and conservation of archaeological and architectural monuments valued for their aesthetic and historic importance. However, the 20th century practice of imposing nationalist ideas onto communities and cultures which share the same territory, but not religion and/or language, brought into prominence a discipline of heritage management. One of the main characteristics of heritage management is its interpretation in national terms which, when used for nation-building purposes, often becomes the subject of contested grand narratives; i.e. ethnically, religiously and socially divisive tool in the hands of political elites interested in securing and maintaining their powers. Historical changes of political systems and state ideologies, however, witnessed the lasting impact on the interpretation of heritage over *la longue durée*, almost always with negative outcomes.

The Wars of Yugoslav Succession during the 1990s resulted not only in the creation of new nation-states, but also their own new national narratives and languages, often rooted in flagrant revisionism of the interpretation of historical sources and surviving heritage. This thesis examines the evolution of national narratives in five ex-Yugoslav republics and Albania from the time of their individual inception until the present. It employs chronologically juxtaposed nation-building processes in the observed states and points to the differences in interpretation which usually coincided with changes of political systems. It also highlights the contemporary interpretations of the heritage as understood by both local and international researchers and publicists, affected by the surrounding political atmosphere. It explores the destruction, vandalism, and “culturcide” and their condemnations and justifications by the media and biased scholarship. The thesis also points to the negative influence of the external political factors in heritage management through the extensive production of poorly and/or partially researched publications. Finally, it concludes that the (re)interpretation of heritage is a recurring process, which will be employed every time when the balance of power in Europe changes and almost always with detrimental consequences for the local population.

Foreword:

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing taken from the work of others, except where indicated by specific reference. No portion of the work presented has been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award. The views expressed here are mine. The thesis exceeds the extended word limit as applied for in July 2015. The change was kindly accepted by both examiners before and during the viva in December 2015. I wish to express my gratitude to Dr Peter Guest for supervising this work with great patience and understanding. I also wish to acknowledge Dr Niall Sharples for advising on it.

As the text of this thesis represents the summative overview of the nation-building processes in the six West Balkan states, much of it reads as a regional historical time guideline, which some readers may find disputable or worthy of polemics, however appropriately referenced. To facilitate the understanding of arguments and allow discourse, the chosen bibliography includes the most prominent works on the subject, easily accessible to those interested in it. Since sometimes pictures speak more than words, the selection of photographs used to supplement the text are also those from the public domain easily accessible to potential readers.

I have strived throughout this work to produce an objective account of the comparative nation-building processes against the widely popularised single-sided accounts that were disseminated over the past three decades. In order to achieve objectivity I examined a range of sources in English, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Italian and, where no translator was needed, in the German languages. The documents on Albania and the Albanians were only those available in English in various British libraries. However, I do not believe that lack of Albanian sources in the Albanian language jeopardised the overall clarity of argument and its objectivity. By juxtaposing the nation-building processes in the West Balkans, I attempted to direct further research towards comparative analysis which, in my opinion, is the correct approach when studying such a complex ethnic and religious territory.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this work to Dr John R. Whittam, the only father I have ever known, and who had lived just long enough to celebrate the success of this academic effort, as well as to my late mum Danica Lazarević, who was denied even that.

Dragana Lazarević

Bath, July 2015

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1. The Objective of the study: The West Balkans Demystified

Nearly two decades after the wars of the 1990s, the nations and new states that cover the map of Former Yugoslavia and Albania today are still relatively unknown to the world beyond the Balkans (Map 1.a16). Those few, who were acquainted with the region, frequently accept as verbatim simplified and often deliberately misinterpreted national narratives firmly established during the wars. Even though there is much talk about reconciliation and the establishment of democracy in the Western Balkans, the reality differs significantly from political empty phrases emanating from European and American centres of power; the states and nations created during the war still struggle to achieve the level of recognition and co-existence acceptable for all. Serbia, Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, with their politically and economically underdeveloped communities, entwined and frequently mutually violent histories filled with tense religious and ethnic conflicts, are often considered part of the same cultural *milieu*, so distant from modern European definition of a civilized civil society, modelled on the notion of a civic society, consisting of allegedly equal citizens, which regardless of race, religion, gender, language or ethnicity are loyal to the territory of the state.¹ Passionate national feelings expressed in the past twenty-five years by various West Balkan ethnic groups and augmented by Western media and scholars, became a synonym for the negative interpretation of nationalism and national ideas, now considered remnants of the remote 19th and early 20th centuries.² However, the question about the appearance and nature of nationalism in the Balkans remained prone to misrepresentation and mystification due to the partial and/or biased approach of researchers.³

¹ Ignatieff, M. – *Blood and Belonging*, London, 1993, 3

² One of the best representations of the ultimately biased approach by the western media was the award-winning BBC series *The Death of Yugoslavia* (1995) with the accompanying book of the same title, sponsored by the Soros Foundation and authored by journalists Allan Little and Laura Silber which was later used as evidence during the Hague Tribunal prosecutions for war crimes in Former Yugoslavia.

³ Studies of nationalism in the West Balkans were influenced not only by various theories advanced over the decades, but by political and personal backgrounds of the authors. For example, one such scholar, Ivan Čolović, an author of the frequently cited *Warrior's Brothel* (*Bordel ratnika*, Beograd, 1993) and *The Politics of Symbol in Serbia* (*Politika simbola u Srbiji*, Beograd, 1997) connected the subcultural forms of criminals and sport hooligans with the intellectuals from modern national institutions – equalizing the cultural identity of the entire nation with the sub-group identities. To create this equalisation, Čolović used the interpretation of Serbian nationalism devised during the existence of Communist Yugoslavia which essentially banalised the 19th century nation-building process as backward and shamefully wrong. Čolović, a fervent student of official Yugoslav narratives in his youth, supported his work with a range of prominent Communist authors (Latinka Perović, for instance) whom he proclaimed “democratic” in order to sell his work to the more lucrative Western publishers. See

Although there has been a significant number of scholarly works both on the history and nationalism of individual Balkan states and on the region as a whole, there is still no single volume on the comparative development of nationalism, national narratives and nation-building of all the contemporary nations that inhabit the Western Balkans: the Former Yugoslavia and Albania. This is not intentional. The outside perception of the Balkans as a whole was for too long frozen in time. As Maria Todorova argued, there is an enduring “evolutionary belief in the superiority of orderly European civilization over barbarity, archaic predispositions, backwardness, squabbles, uncomfoting and unpredictable behaviour – tribalism.”⁴ The notion of tribalism, she continues, relegates the Balkans to a lower civilizational category, which is in itself “intrinsically passive, incompatible and imitative in nature.” This perception enables the maintenance of imperial principles towards the Balkans and “releases the civilized world from any responsibility or empathy that it might otherwise bestow on more reasonable people.”⁵ Similarly, Balkan tribalism became “a convenient substitute for the emotional discharge that *orientalism* provided, exempting the West from charges of racism, colonialism, eurocentrism and Christian intolerance towards Islam.”⁶ On the other hand, Todorova argued that modern Balkan historiographies stem from the unconsolidated nation-states and social identities in crisis.⁷

Todorova’s analysis of the Western perception of the Balkans is generally correct. However, following the end of the wars and instalment of nominally pro-European governments at the beginning of the 21st century, a somewhat nuanced approach to the various West Balkan states was applied by the Western governments. Croatia, almost completely ethnically cleansed during the wars was considered to be well-prepared to join the European Union on 8 July 2013. Its poor record of human rights and unprocessed war crimes were largely ignored by the responsible administrations in the key European capitals. Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the direct control of European bureaucrats who make strenuous efforts to maintain its unity, is in every aspect a failed state, deeply divided along ethnic and religious lines. Montenegro has been ruled for a quarter of a century by the same nomenclature of

Čolović, I. – *The Politics of Symbol in Serbia: Essays in Political Anthropology*, London, 2002, p. 70-71 as well as Čolović, I. – *Bordel ratnika*, Beograd, 1993, the whole book.

⁴ Todorova, M. – *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford, 1997, 185

⁵ Ibid, 185

⁶ Ibid, 188

⁷ Ibid, 183

corrupt politicians who ruthlessly exploit all available resources to retain power. European advice on political plurality and ethnic and religious freedoms, so common in some other parts of the world, is noticeably absent in Montenegro. The deep ethnic tensions between Macedonian Slavs and ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, burdened by the dispute with Greece about the name of the state and the Bulgarian programme of awarding Bulgarian citizenship to all Macedonians who declare themselves ethnic Bulgarians, are artificially contained by the promise of potential integration into the EU. Serbia, even though officially proclaimed a candidate for membership to the European Union is still under a rigorous regime of punishment. The EU is seeking not only the further disintegration of the state after supporting the unilaterally proclaimed independence of its southern province of Kosovo and Metohija by demanding that Serbia officially recognizes the occupation of its territory, but there are indications that the new requirement of separating the northern province of Vojvodina will soon become part of the negotiating process.⁸ Kosovo and Metohija, after proclaiming independence from Serbia in 2008, has achieved partial international recognition. The province, after expelling most of its remaining Serbian population, is controlled by former Albanian terrorists and corrupt European bureaucrats and military.⁹ Albania, with its endemic corruption, shows little signs of economic recovery. Supported by the West, the government in Tirana makes significant efforts to promote the future unification of the Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia with the state of Albania, thus fuelling anti-Albanian sentiments in four neighbouring countries.¹⁰

With such a complex inheritance of the post-Communist conflict of the transitional years of the 1990s, the region of the West Balkans is left in a state of unresolved ethnic and territorial disputes. Even though there is no danger of an immediate new conflict, the majority of analysts of the region agree that such an option

⁸ Serbia applied for the EU membership in April 2008 after the pro-Western government led by Boris Tadić won the elections. Barely a year later, Vojvodina had the status of an Autonomous Province restored. The status of autonomous province it initially held under the provisions of the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution until it was cancelled by the government of Slobodan Milošević in 1989. The upgrading of Vojvodina's judicial and economic powers was accompanied by diplomatic recommendations of the key Western ambassadors in Belgrade, which all coincided with the application for the EU membership: <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/Politika/1603795/Skup%C5%A1tina+Vojvodine+usvojila+Statut.html> – Accessed on 22/05/2014

⁹ In 2014 serious allegations about corruption among the Kosovo and Metohija's politicians and the European mission appeared for the first time in Western media. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/06/eu-accused-over-kosovo-mission-failings> - Accessed on 06/11/2014. Similarly, Hashim Taçi, the former Prime Minister of the so-called Kosova state was accused by the Council of Europe for trafficking organs of the Serbian prisoners.

¹⁰ Petiffer, J. and Vickers, M. – *The Albanian Question – reshaping the Balkans*, London, 2009, Preface

in the foreseeable future cannot be excluded.¹¹ Therefore, the investigation of the states and peoples who currently inhabit the Western Balkans, and their changing perception of history, identity and nationhood are necessary to explain the persistent revisionism and misrepresentation of facts and events that will lead to new disputes and conflicts.

1.1 The Western Balkans, European but “Other” – The revisionism as a norm

The changed political situation in Europe at the end of the 20th century led by the idea of a pan-European economic empire demanded the *rapprochement* and embellishment of the views of recent common history of the leading states of West Europe and Germany. One aspect of this political interaction between former political and military adversaries included the revision of the traditional historical interpretation of German responsibility for the two world wars as well as finding a convenient substitute narrative.¹² The disintegration of Yugoslavia presented a convenient case for politically motivated historical revisionism. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Serbia was promptly chosen as the “rogue state,” because it was perceived as neither democratic, nor European. Owing to the traditional European view which labelled all Balkan states as “inadequate Europeans,” Maria Todorova in her analysis of Kennan’s conclusions argued that “the development of the earlier ages of the Balkans, not only of those of the Turkish domination but of earlier ones as well, had the effect of thrusting into the Southern Europe reaches of the European continent to the present day to preserve many of its non-European characteristics.”¹³ However, despite the summative view of the Balkans as the “alien anomaly” of Europe, some differences were made between the ethnic groups and nations when Yugoslav disintegration began.

This trend of historical revisionism that appeared parallel with the interventionism in Former Yugoslavia, termed “normative history” by Mark Mazower, used the linear approach of historical evaluation of the 19th century intellectuals and historians as generally accepted and transferred them to the end of the 20th century.¹⁴ For this purpose, the *political intent* hidden behind the tools of *normative*

¹¹ In all personal contacts with both Balkan and foreign scholars, professionals and journalists encountered over the past seven years, the opinion is unanimous: the 1990s conflict was poorly handled by the International Community and the possibility of new conflict is real and present.

¹² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-one/10249760/Germany-intervenues-in-WW1-commemoration-debate.html> - Accessed on 18/08/2013

¹³ Todorova, 1997, 5

¹⁴ Mazower, M. – *The Balkans – A Short History*, London, 2000, 17; Ković, M. – *Saznanje ili namera: Savremena svetska istoriografija o Srbima u XIX veku*, Sociologija, Vol. LIII, Beograd, 2011, 402

historiography,¹⁵ carefully selected and distinguished between those nations and ethnic groups that were “European enough” to be immediately admitted to the new pan-European family of states: Slovenes, Croats, Romanians and Bulgarians. Those responsive to dictated changes, such as the Montenegrins, ready to evolve from being considered “Highland Serbs” into the “Docleans” in just one decade were treated favourably.¹⁶ Those that were not “entirely European,” but could serve as the showcase for European tolerance and inclusiveness were the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, now renamed Bosniaks, and Albanians, both because of their Muslim faith, were also treated as “pet-nations.”¹⁷ Finally, those that were “not European:” Serbs, because of their traditional links to Russia and Macedonians, because of their argument with Greece about the name of the nation, were treated with an exceptional political cynicism. In making such distinctions, the entire historiography, interpretation and, in some cases, complete invention of national narratives of the regional nations and ethnic groups was re-modelled along those lines and established as a norm.¹⁸

The international condemnation of the Serbs for the outbreak of war in 1991 and the ensuing conflict within Yugoslavia led to intensified interest and new research into the Serbian position within the region. The view of Serbian culpability swiftly spread through the media, academic works and reports of war correspondents. From 1991 onwards a countless number of books in all major languages dealing with Serbian history, nationalism and politics were published through predominantly Western universities as an academic supplement to justify all actions taken against Serbia during that period. This began with the *Balkan Ghosts* by Robert Kaplan in 1992 and *The Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel P. Huntington in 1993, through works by Noel Malcolm *Bosnia: A Short History*, 1994 and *Kosovo: A Short History*, 1998 and James Gow *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 1997. These all appeared before the end of the wars. Continuing with Sabrina Ramet’s *Thinking about Yugoslavia*, 2005 and all of her other

¹⁵ *Normative history* accepts one model of historical evolution as universal and then explains historical deviations. See, Mazower, 2000, 17. Similarly, *normative historiography* transposes traditional interpretative methods to define tradition through the prism of modernity.

¹⁶ See further discussion.

¹⁷ A term introduced by Rebecca West in the Prologue of her inter-war travelogue published for the first time in 1942. See West, R. – *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon, A Journey Through Yugoslavia*, London, 2006, 20

¹⁸ The non-academic writers, mainly journalists and some diplomatic spouses with often superficial knowledge of the land and history, but well-connected to the mass-media, contributed greatly to dissemination of incorrect and biased revisionist accounts of the recent times. See further discussion.

works related to the same region, a revised history of the Serbs became deeply rooted in the modern western academia, successfully overturning all previous academic studies dealing with the subject. The perception of the Balkans as the “alien other” depicted the Serbs as “Nazis” responsible for genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo.¹⁹ Unlike for the rest of the Yugoslav successor states, Serbian nationalism²⁰ was most frequently presented as *primordialist*, negative and threatening the stability of the region, because it has been based on the “collective mental state” which represents “a classic case of a people with damaged self-esteem.”²¹ According to this approach, Serbian nationalism is entirely a product of the revived and badly implemented ideas of the 19th century applied at the end of the 20th century.

This revised history written since the early 1990s by West European and American scholars was criticized by Serbian academics, who argued that the majority of foreign historians writing on the subject had neither visited Serbia nor could speak contemporary Serbian/Croatian languages or read the Serbian redaction of the Old Church Slavonic or Slaveno-Serbian of the 17th and 18th centuries. Equally, they argued that these new works show little use of Serbian archives and sources. The sanctions imposed on Serbia in April 1992 severely restricted Serbian academics from presenting their works in international conferences; this widened the gap between the Western and Serbian scholarly debates. Since the official ban on Serbian academics ended in 2002, there is a slow movement towards a more balanced view of the role of Serbian nationalism, with an increased use of materials and sources written in the Serbian language. However, the revised version of Serbian history and historical narrative of the 19th and 20th centuries by the Western and some non-Serbian Balkan scholars, had an enormous impact by branding the entire Serbian nation with the label of “Nazism” which in reality never existed to the extent that existed in Germany and its satellites during the Second World War. Nevertheless, behind the revisionism that is frequently explained as “groundbreaking and brilliant historical record-

¹⁹ Ramet, S. – *Thinking about Yugoslavia – Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* – Cambridge, 2005, 80

²⁰ The term *nationalism* throughout this work is used in order to determine actions taken in the name of the nation and has neither a positive nor a negative connotation. However, there is an increased misinterpretation of the term in a negative connotation, even among academics writing about the subject, which is in my opinion wrong – the negative perception of nationalism has often been defined as *chauvinism*. In this work, all negative aspects of nationalism will be termed as *chauvinism*.

²¹ Schoenfeld, C.G. – *Psychoanalytic Dimensions of the West’s Involvement in the Third Balkan War* in Meštrović, S. – *Genocide after Emotion: The Post-Emotional Balkan War*, London and New York, 1996, 160 quoted in Ramet, 2005, 306

straightening,”²² there is a subtle line of distinction between the real *academic knowledge* and the *political intent*. Whilst behind the *knowledge*, as argued by Miloš Ković, there exists the need to *understand the past*, the *intent* is led solely by the need to *evaluate and misuse the past*.²³ This definition is what distinguishes the works of proper historiography to that of sensationalist journalism.

However, it would be incorrect to place the revisionism and invention of new historical narratives exclusively on the *political intent* of the West. Supported by the West and for their own political interests, various Balkan nations and ethnic groups used the political situation to assert their own versions of normative historiography in order to define their national identity, national narratives, state borders and justification for territorial expansion. Unsurprisingly, their desires were frequently influenced by the forces and ideas from outside the Balkans: they either went along the wishes of the West or against them, depending on the perception they held of each Balkan nation.

The objective of this study is to present the evolution of national ideas and nation-building in the Western Balkans as they progressed in time and point to the defining moments when they intertwined or diverged from each other. This is to avoid falling into the trap of *normative historiography*, as described above. The *political intent* was for far too long the guiding principle in the interpretation of the history of the region, that it became almost its foundation block. Because of this, it was deemed necessary to deconstruct the processes of national consolidation and enable some future researchers to base their argument not on traditional misconceptions, but on the evaluation of the material facts that surround these processes.²⁴

No account of the Balkans written so far is without bias. The mutual exclusivity of native authors and the outside influence proved to be more to the detriment of the overall argument than to its benefit. This work has no ambition to reconcile the irreconcilable, but to point to the facts and discrepancies in interpretations of national narratives as they evolved from the time of their conception to the present. As such, it

²² These words were used by the revisionist historians, politicians and publicists commenting on the works of their colleagues who support the same line of argumentation. In this case, the words under quotations appeared on the overleaf of both Malcolm’s books.

²³ Ković, 2011, 402

²⁴ National history and historiography cannot be understood without being placed in wider international framework which would enable comparisons. Therefore, individual histories of various Balkan peoples can be understood only through comparisons for which the Balkans represent the minimal geographical and cultural territory. See, Ković, 2011, 405

will probably be accused of being biased as well, but the main objective is to create a basis for some future detailed factual research based exclusively on material evidence, rather than on probabilistic and selective reading of the available sources.

1.2 Methodology and the strategy of inquiry

This work attempts to give a summative chronology of developments of national ideas and identities in the West Balkans and indicate their mutual causality. The analysis is based on the key features of the nation building process of each individual nation. This will include definitions of national name and territory, the formulation of the guiding national narrative and, finally, the confirmation of the first two notions by the acquisition of material evidence inherited from the past and the creation of a new public heritage, particularly architectural and monumental, both as an expression of a unique national culture, as well as deliberate statements of possession of certain territories. The states under survey are: Serbia, Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in their currently recognized international borders. Slovenia, even though once part of Yugoslavia, is excluded from the analysis for two reasons: firstly, geographically it belongs to the Balkans only in its southernmost parts and secondly, with less than 2 million people of which more than 83% declare themselves ethnic Slovenes, national tensions are not as prominent as elsewhere in Former Yugoslavia.²⁵ Albania, with its 3 million people of which 95% are ethnic Albanians is included because it is the centre of gravity for the sizeable Albanian population with separatist tendencies in Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.²⁶ Except for Serbia and Montenegro, within the borders different from their current ones, all other West Balkan nation-states date back no earlier than the mid-20th century.²⁷ Similarly, the nation building process in all observed states, except in Serbia and Croatia, did not start prior 20th century; in the Albanian case in the 1900s and after 1945 in all others. Therefore, the comparative analysis of nation-building processes discussed in this work draws on the modernity of the nation, as defined by Eric Hobsbawm.²⁸

²⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/si.html> - Accessed on 06/04/2013

²⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/al.html> - Accessed on 06/04/2013

²⁷ For definition of the term Nation-State, see *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 78

²⁸ Hobsbawm E. and Ranger, T. – *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983, Introduction, viii. Also, see further discussion, *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 68-68

Initially, the nation-building processes in the observed area were to be analysed through the role of the surviving cultural heritage of all three religious denominations, dispersed in clusters over the vast territory. However, the latest change of interpretation of the national narratives of the newly established states and nations witnessed not only the physical destruction of the original historical and much later memorial-type heritage, but also the blatant misrepresentation of their meanings. The upsurge in the deliberate construction of new monuments conforming to new interpretations, based solely on post-1990s scholarship, and its sheer scale, altered the main idea of analysing the “wars of the monuments” which took place in the West Balkans in the aftermath of Yugoslav wars. Competitive nation-building processes which claimed ownership of the various West Balkan territories began long before the escalation of the Yugoslav crisis at the end of the 20th century. However, they were carefully controlled by the authorities during both Yugoslav periods and it was deemed necessary to give a general overview of the historical and political circumstances which caused them to conflict in the first place and contributed to the survival of the old national grievances. For this purpose, the applied analysis concentrated on three key-steps in nation-building: 1) the needs for national self-identification and circumstances which caused them; 2) the formulation of national narratives and their political justifications and 3) the materialization of nation-building processes through the establishment of national institutions and construction of imposing public monuments.

During the wars of Yugoslav succession, the cultural heritage and its multiple meanings were prime targets in the post-Communist West Balkan societies seeking new identities through conflicts. In the aftermath of wars, political, academic and professional arguments regarding the surviving heritage represent the continuation of ethnic conflicts, only without military engagement. The historical controversies and mutually contested narratives involving the heritage on common territory observed in this study, not only indicate the extent to which politics has on national histories, but also on national myths.²⁹ These controversies stem directly from the levels of public representation, such as historical sites, media reports, literature and other activities in which *selected aspects of past were made present again*.³⁰

²⁹ Berger, S. and Niven, D. – *Writing the history of national memory* in Berger, S. and Niven, D. – *Writing the history of memory*, London, 2014, 150.

³⁰ Fulbrook, M. – *History-writing and ‘collective memory’* in Berger and Niven, 2014, 70

At this point, it should be noted that the definition of “cultural heritage” used in this work is Article I of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention 1972:

- *monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*
- *groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*
- *sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.*³¹

Since, with some remarkable exceptions, the 1990s scholarship dedicated to the West Balkans is predominantly based on the *political intent of normative history*, the analysis of heritage in that region as distinct from the development of the national narratives was considered pointless. As most of the newly created national narratives claim to be critical examinations of the surviving historical documents and the remaining heritage, the aim of this study is to point to the discrepancies in interpretation and to put into historical context some of the earlier interpretations on which the contemporary narratives are now based.

The survey is structured chronologically, dating from the period when all elements of the independent national consciousness, followed by the nation-building agendas first appeared in individual states, until the present. It follows the evolution of national ideas from the earliest stages to the currently accepted national narratives, with particular attention being paid to the key moments when the national narratives were subject to revision due to the demands of the political situation at the time. As the current state borders in the Western Balkans do not correspond to the ethnic borders and the population displaced in the 1990s have still not returned to their ancestral homes, the overview of the historical creation of national narratives was given according to the geographic distribution of the ethnic groups in Yugoslavia and Albania in 1990 (See Map 1. and Map 2). However, the changed ethnic structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo and Metohija during the 1990s strongly

³¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/> - Accessed on 31 August 2011

influenced the formulation of the modern national narratives of the Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Albanians, based on the current political situation and against the background of the 1990s civil wars that brought into existence the current border re-configuration.



Map 1: Ethnic composition of Yugoslavia – 1990



Map 2: Ethnic composition of Albania – 1989

For clarity of argument, the analysis of the development of national narratives was centred on the main national cultural centres, which are in most cases national capitals. Other cultural centres and significant places of heritage are duly mentioned as their role in creating the national narratives changed in history.

Since the formulation of these narratives usually originated in the minds of the national intellectuals and precedes the material confirmation of the existence of the nation, a significant part of the analysis is dedicated to the appearance of the nation-building ideas amongst the intellectuals now considered to be “the founding fathers” of their respective nations. Furthermore, it will be pointed out that in all observed cases, the “ideas of nationalism” were frequently initiated by foreigners and implemented from outside the national core territories. Todorova argued that modern Balkan historiographies were shaped in the century of the national idea and under the strong influence of the then dominant trends of romanticism and positivism, only to develop as national accounts primarily plagued by their “relative parochialism with little knowledge of the history of their neighbours in the same period.”³² This assertion can be partly accepted, as Todorova examined the Western perception of the Balkans

³² Todorova, 1997, 183

as a whole, without taking into account the ethnic groups that were proclaimed nations in the 20th century; except for the national movements of the Croats and Serbs, which originated in the 19th century concepts of a nation, all others were 20th century products: Albanian national narrative appeared on the eve of the First World War while those of the Macedonians, Montenegrins and Bosnian Muslims after the Second World War.

The analysis here is primarily focused on the most prominent individuals and events that influenced the initial formulation of the national ideas and on the key-events in the 19th and 20th century that influenced the evolution of these ideas. This is because, as the majority of the accounts since the outbreak of war in Yugoslavia in 1991 tend to place the personalities and the events from the 19th century within the context of the political developments of the late 20th century. A similar tendency is noted with the presentation of the 19th century general concept of nationalism, which in its formative decades had a positive and emancipatory role. The new accounts tend to analyse the personalities, writings and events of that period through the prism of the modern negative interpretation of the term nationalism, which is not only academically questionable, but prone to politicization. Therefore, all individuals and their contributions mentioned have been analysed against the historical circumstances and influences of *their own* time. The influence they exercised on the later generations of intellectuals and their later re-evaluations are again put into the context when those later authors produced their works. This approach was considered to be logical and on the side of objectivity, despite the fact that a number of surveyed authors had to be limited only to the most prominent ones and those who created significant controversies.

1.3 Nature of the evidence

The historical documents and material remains that could be ethnically related to the West Balkan nations vary in numbers, quantities and qualities in case of three nations that existed prior to the 20th century: Serbian, Croat and Albanian. These three nations had their national narratives formed before the beginning of the First World War either by the pioneering national intellectuals emulating the interpretative methods of the great European national intellectuals or by the foreign intellectuals whose research was led either by an academic curiosity or by the political interests of their sovereign states. The originators of the Serbian, Croat and Albanian national

narratives evaluated and interpreted surviving cultural heritage using the techniques available in their own time. Being the first to formulate the national narratives of respective nations, the conclusions of these early intellectuals remained undisputed for a long time. Indeed, the 19th and early 20th century translations of the surviving documents and inscriptions in Latin, Greek or Old Church Slavonic differ little from modern translations. However, they received significant changes in interpretation by later researchers, who operated in different political circumstances. Thus, the written evidence used for this study is not an attempt to re-interpret current reading of the original historical manuscripts or inscriptions, but to record the development of representative national interpretations of these originals and point to the omissions and misinterpretations.

The chronology of national narratives of the Macedonians, Bosnian Muslims and Montenegrins is much more straightforward, as these are entirely a product of the recent decades and there are no existing original historical documents relating to them. The written evidence for the development of narratives of these three nations had to be based solely on the interpretations of the gaps within the original historical documents or richness of imagination of their creators.

The analysis of material heritage and its interpretation, both historical and recent, follows the same chronology as that of the national narratives. Here, too, the given examples of the material heritage originating from the pre-nationalist period are within the context of when they were discovered and first interpreted. Those created during the nationalist period, when they served the specific purpose of nation-building, are also put within the political context of when they were presented to the public. As the nation building process is impossible without the creation of national styles in art and architecture, this study will look into the originators of these styles, rather than their aesthetic valuation. The utter scale of the “war of the monuments” that is currently taking place in the Western Balkans was chosen to be presented only through the most representative examples of public monuments because of their scale and visual exposure. This includes: the analysis of the modelling of the urban centres both traditional and recent, according to the prevailing understanding of national culture and history, the development of the national and quasi-national architectural styles, as well as the deliberate erection of public monuments dedicated to the various events and personalities from national histories.

Particular attention is given to the formation of national cultural institutions and their changing role as the national narratives changed. The time and events surrounding the establishment of the most representative national institutions, such as the National Museums and National Libraries, as the keystones of nation building, have been included in the analysis, but in-depth analysis of their collections is omitted for two reasons. Firstly, the interpretation of the moveable cultural heritage would further complicate the inquiry because of its scale and complexity. Secondly, the exclusion of the moveable heritage from the general discussion is not considered to be detrimental to the overall argument, especially as some prominent national museums, with the largest collections are closed to the public.³³

This analysis also includes the most prominent examples of religious architecture, as religion became the defining element of the nation-building process amongst the West Balkan nations. Clearly, the most important religious monuments inherited from the Early to Late Middle Ages and the Ottoman period are given due attention, especially as they are currently subject to great disputes between the competing national narratives and claims to their ownership. These monuments, as expected, represented obvious targets during the wars in the 20th century and their symbolic interpretation was revised as national borders changed. The architectural design of those monuments and their aesthetic value are discussed in general terms, covering the architectural styles in which they were built and describing the main features that give them national characteristics. Only exceptionally, architectural details that are interpreted in specifically national terms are given greater attention in order to illustrate the established arguments of their national origins. The religious artefacts being built after the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s are discussed only as the case studies of national delineation in the territories that are now ethnically divided. Most of these, irrespective of religious denomination, are rarely of significant aesthetic or architectural value, but are important as public statements of national defiance to neighbours considered to be a threat to national security.

³³ The National Museum in Belgrade has been partially closed since 1997 and completely since 2002, while the Land Museum in Sarajevo partly closed in January 2012 and completely in October of the same year. The National museums of Croatia and Montenegro are placed in several different locations in Zagreb and Cetinje and contain various numbers of artefacts, frequently scattered in different buildings, which makes the analysis of this type unnecessarily time-consuming. The National museums in Tirana, Podgorica and Skopje have been established relatively recently and their collections still do not match the collections in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo.

Finally, the analysis contains a general overview of modern endeavours to build new nations and national territories in the Western Balkans. This part is particularly related to the nations established after the Second World War. As there is no material evidence that would unquestionably confirm their separate national identities, attention is drawn to the *imagined interpretations* of the existence of these nations, as defined by Benedict Anderson.³⁴ These newly devised, followed by the erection of new monuments and the acquisition of the traditional heritage are discussed according to their modern interpretations. As the majority of these narratives have rarely published critical assessments of the intellectual and aesthetic values of such monuments, this part of the analysis had to rely on media accounts and the personal observations of the author.

1.4 The Outline of the study

The thesis consists of six chapters and two Appendices, which discuss the nation-building process of each individual state of the Western Balkans, chronologically as national ideas and identities first appeared. Two important parts of the thesis: the *Historical background* overview and the *Theories of Nationalism* theoretical discussion on applied definitions of nationalism appear as appendices in order to allow fullest investigation of individual “national” case-studies. Therefore, following this *Introduction*, Chapters I to VI, are given in chronological order as national ideas and identities first appeared: *The Serbs*, *The Croats*, *The Albanians*, *The Macedonians*, *The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (now renamed *Bosniaks*) and *The Montenegrins*. As noted above, the analysis is structured around the current state-borders, but the ethnically non-homogenous territories belonging to the neighbouring states are discussed according to the ethnic distribution dating prior to 1991 and the internationally recognized borders of each state at present. Each chapter has the same outline that includes:

- 1) the question of territoriality – geographical distribution of the named population, irrespective of the current borders, including the comparative census data and the question of national identification,
- 2) the imagined aspects of each respective nation – the first mentioning of the nation under its current name and political circumstances that caused it,

³⁴ Anderson, B. – *Imagined Communities*, London, 1995, 44

- 3) the analysis of the most important historical documents related to the first mentioning of each nation and the question of their validity – scarce contemporary written documents surviving from the period of nation building are widely used and misused for the creation of national narratives; this posed the question of their validity, especially amongst the revisionist historians, who in most cases tend to read them selectively or completely dismiss them as “historically inaccurate.”

These are followed by the analysis of the nation-building process. Chapters *I* and *II* (*The Serbs* and *The Croats*) contain a somewhat extended analysis of the nation-building processes, which include the question of language and national myths, which precede the appearance of nationalism. Both of these nations can claim full historical continuity dating back to the early Middle Ages and their appearance in the historical sources is unquestionable. However, as both nations possess a substantial literature and material heritage related to all aspects of their respective nation-building processes, this discussion concentrates on the most important events and personalities in the chronological evolution of their national ideas and narratives. Since the Croat-Serb dichotomy marked the 20th century and continues until the present, the general outlines of these two chapters underline the main disputes between the two national narratives and territorial pretensions, as defined in their “myths of the Golden Age.” As both nations played pivotal roles in the creation and destruction of the Yugoslav idea and state, the creation of the Bosnian Muslims, Macedonians and Montenegrins as separate nations is understood to be the by-product of these clashes; the discussion of their respective nation-building is given in relation to the Serbs or the Croats and, in case of Macedonia, to the Bulgars, Greeks and Albanians.

Albanian nation-building in *Chapter III* is presented in relation to the neighbouring states and the question of the growing territorial pretensions caused by migrations and demographic fluctuations.

The *Conclusion* discusses the deeply embedded external influence on each observed nation regarding Europe, European values and European perspectives of the region as a whole. It attempts to assess the future intra-Balkan developments arising from the *political intent* of current *normative historiography* sanctioned by the prevailing national narratives. Because nationalism as an idea was born and developed in the environment of the relatively prosperous and independent societies of the

enlightened European countries over the course of two centuries, this analysis asserts that versions of nationalism in the Balkans had a much shorter “natural” evolution owing to the political circumstances both within and outside the peninsula at various times. Therefore, the development of national ideas in each Balkan country in its historic context cannot be discussed without taking into account the historical events that moulded the idea of nationalism locally. If the future academic debate is still to be guided by traditional misconceptions, the process of re-shaping and re-naming of the Balkan nations and their states will become a never-ending process. The conclusion, therefore, contains a pessimistic view of the future of the Western Balkans, despite the current pressures to consolidate the area and put it under the jurisdiction of the European Union.

Appendix I – Historical Background is a short historical survey of the region, relevant for understanding the context in which the West Balkan nations and states have built and continue to build their own identities and claim national territories.

Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism is a general overview of the theories of nationalism, with a discussion on their applicability to the territory in question. As already indicated, the chosen model of the development of nationalism in the Western Balkans relies on Hobsbawm’s and Anderson’s premises of the modernity of the nation and its “imagined character.” However, some elements of ethno-symbolism as argued by Anthony Smith were also taken into account, especially in the discussion of the development of Serbian and Croatian nationalisms.³⁵ Except for the definitions given by the authorities on studies of nationalism and its theories, it also includes some adjusted definitions of the terms *nationalism*, *nation*, *state*, *nation-state*, *ethnic*, *memory* and *heritage*, as used throughout this work. The chapter also includes a brief discussion of the newly invented definitions and theories devised by the revisionist historians in order to justify their accounts.³⁶ As most of these still do not have confirmation in practise, this analysis opted for the combination of well-established definitions.

³⁵ Smith, A. – *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Oxford, 1999, 9

³⁶ Such was the definition of “continuity-in-discontinuity” adopted by Alex Bellamy in his study of the formation of Croatian national identity. See, *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p.73

The Serbs

Together with Greek nationalism, Serbian nationalism has the longest history in the Balkans. However, its development was affected on three levels. Firstly, at the time of the birth of nationalism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Serbs lived divided between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, which caused not only an uneven economic and cultural development, but equally uneven development of a national idea and identity. Secondly, the appearance of the Yugoslav idea (mid-to-late 19th century) and the potentially all-inclusive Yugoslav nationalism¹ took an independent developmental path from that of the Serbian nationalism. Until the creation of Yugoslavia, the Serbian and Yugoslav national ideas coexisted without contrasting each other. Thirdly, the communist regime between 1945 and 1990 attempted to suppress all forms of Serbian and Croatian nationalisms in order to preserve unity in communist Yugoslavia. In doing so, the regime enabled the development of smaller nationalisms by carving the groups of specific provincial characteristics previously identified as the Serbs. The creation of new nations of Montenegrins, Macedonians and Muslims significantly contributed to the final dissolution of the state in 1991.

The aspects of Serbian nationalism and its development need to be examined on three levels. Firstly, its early stages and growth throughout the 19th century will be analysed in the context of the time when they occurred, scrutinising the actions of the 19th century nationalists from the perceptions of the nation-building of this period and the events that influenced them. Secondly, the recent manifestations of Serbian nationalism will be analysed by the events surrounding the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which, in turn, coincided with the development of modern studies of theories of nationalism – for which the contemporary Serbian nationalism provided a good example. Thirdly, during the past two decades Serbian history underwent significant revision by predominantly foreign authors, who in process affected current manifestations of Serbian nationalism. All these aspects cause difficulties in assessing accurately its future form.

¹ There were attempts in Yugoslav academia, especially after the Second World War, to place the appearance of proto-Yugoslav ideas and feelings as early as the 16th century. However, full development of the Yugoslav idea occurred during the 19th century and will be used in this context throughout this work.

1.1 Territoriality of Serbian nationalism

The territory of the current Serbian state, according to the official census of 2011⁷ counted just fewer than 7.2 million of which nearly 83% (nearly 6 million) declared themselves Serbs.⁸ However, after the disintegration of Yugoslavia, a significant number of Serbs, just over 1.7 million,⁹ remained outside borders created during the communist period, in the territories of Yugoslav successor states, with an additional 1.5 million living in Diaspora worldwide.¹⁰ Similarly, the mass displacement of population in the 1991-1999 war period drastically changed the ethnic structure of all newly created states. This is further complicated by the revisionist accounts that appeared during the war and in its immediate aftermath explaining the causes of the last ethnic cleansing, offering controversial and often dubious comparative analysis, which will certainly create future academic disputes.

The territoriality of Serbian nationalism represents a problem that is difficult to resolve politically both inside the Balkans and in the wider international context using the existing models of state-creation. Traditional 19th century ideas of the nation-state were inapplicable then due to the historical circumstances, as indeed they are now, being regarded as superseded. The Wilsonian principles of self-determination, applied during the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1919 and justifying the dismantling of Austro-Hungary, were again inapplicable, as allowing self-determination to one Balkan ethnic group would inevitably have to be at the expense of another. The term self-determination, much used and abused by all parties involved in the wars of Yugoslav succession in the 1990s and early 2000s, deprived the Serbs of this right and left the Balkan conflict for re-consideration in the future. Even though the outcome of the 1990s wars is carefully supervised re-building of the

⁷ http://popis2011.stat.rs/?page_id=2162&lang=en – Final Results of Census 2011 – Accessed on 06/03/2012

⁸ Data from the disputed territory of Kosovo and Metohija province are not available

⁹ http://www.bhas.ba/obavjestenja/Preliminarni_rezultati_bos.pdf - Preliminary results of 2013 census in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed on 26/01/2015 – In Republika Srpska, the Serbian entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to this census live around 1.3 million of Serbs. After ethnic cleansing in Croatia, the number of Serbs there counts nearly 200,000, according to the 2011 Croat Census, whilst in Montenegro the number of Serbs dropped from over 200,000 (32%) to 180,000 (28.7%) in less than a decade due to the pressure to declare themselves Montenegrins. See official statistics on [http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf). In Macedonia, the number of Serbs have been in steady decline since 1945.

¹⁰ The exact data on number of Serbs living in Diaspora are not available. The estimations are between 1.5 and 3.0 million. In Serbia itself, the 2011 Census points to the decline of nearly 300 000 people of the overall population of Serbia, between 2002 and 2011. Similar trend is noticed in all other neighbouring countries.

broken contacts between the former Yugoslav republics under the firm control of the European Union, there is little doubt that the *status quo* created after the NATO intervention in 1999 will be sustainable in the long run. Firstly, there are signs that the EU might expect a further break-up of Serbia, by signalling the possibility of the secession of the northern province of Vojvodina and demanding special status for the region of Raška (Sandžak) with its sizeable Muslim population. If this actually happens in the foreseeable future, the territory of the state of Serbia will be returned to its early 19th century borders (the Belgrade Pashalik), from which the building of the Serbian national identity and state began in 1804.¹¹

1.1.1 Historical spatial distribution

On the eve of the First Serbian Uprising in 1804, the territory of the Belgrade Pashalik within the Ottoman Empire roughly corresponded to the territory of the Serbian Despotate conquered by Sultan Mehmed II in 1459 (Map 1.1). With the fall of the last mediaeval capital of Smederevo, a seat of the Branković family, the state of Serbia ceased to exist until the early 19th century. The name of the state, its people and changeable borders, however, survived and were better preserved in the works of European cartographers rather than in the Ottoman administrative system.¹² One of the earliest European maps showing *Servia*, albeit within the Ottoman Empire, is preserved in the *Hall of Geographical Maps* in Palazzo Vecchio, in Florence, painted by Danti in 1563-1575 period. Similarly, in Mercator's compilation of maps of European lands from the early 1570s the map of Greece also includes a reference to *Servia*,¹³ positioned further south in comparison with Danti's map.¹⁴ Apart from the cartographical works, a number of written sources containing references to the Serbs and Serbia appeared between 1459 and 1804 in various languages, by both Serbian

¹¹ The pre-condition for Serbia to begin negotiations for an EU membership was to accept the unilaterally proclaimed independence of Kosovo in all but name. Chapter 35 of the negotiations for joining the EU contain this requirement. An alternative does not exist at the moment, as key EU countries and the US force even the ethnic Serbian regions to distance themselves from the Serbian core by providing the economic aid to those agencies and individuals ready to support further disintegration of Serbia. See article by Jelena Popadić *Ko su najveći donatori srpskog civilnog društva*, 29/12/2015 - <http://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/346286/Drustvo/Ko-su-najveci-donatori-srpskog-civilnog-drustva> - Accessed on 29/12/2015

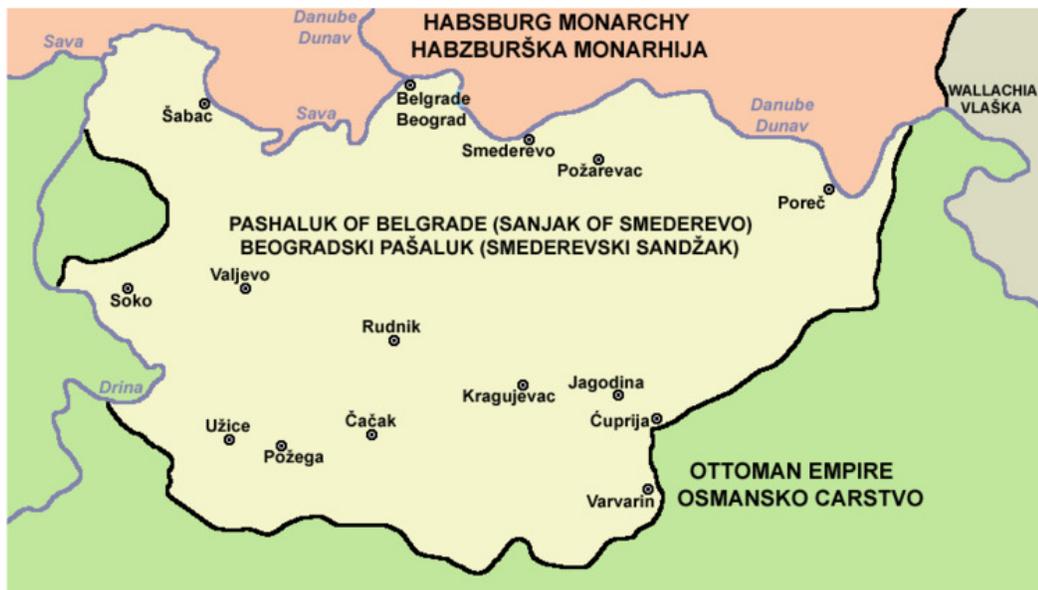
¹² Ćirković, 2004, 111

¹³ <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/mercator/accessible/images/page40full.jpg> - Accessed on 08/03/2012

¹⁴ The imprecision of those maps indicates not only the lack of knowledge of those early authors, but also the spatial distribution of the peoples inhabiting the area.

and foreign authors, mostly clergymen of both Christian denominations and travellers, but none of them came from the territory of the Belgrade Pashalik itself.

After the Ottoman conquest, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the main bearer of literacy, became impoverished and was severely restricted in its actions.¹⁵ This resulted in a rapid decline of church activities and the overall literacy rates amongst the clergy. The literate Serbian Christian nobility and merchant classes were annihilated within a generation after the conquest. Those who survived either converted to Islam or left the territory of the Despotate, crossing into the neighbouring Christian territories. The first wave of the Ottoman conquest moved Christian Slav population of the Balkans northwards, into the sparsely inhabited marshlands of southern Pannonia, then part of the Kingdom of Hungary.



Map 1.1 – Belgrade Pashalik within the Ottoman Empire on the eve of the First Uprising in 1804

When the Military Frontier (Map 1.a.11) was established on the southern edges of the Pannonian Plain in 1522, the key-defence of the Habsburg hinterland consisted of the Serbian and Croat military units.¹⁶ Religious affiliations had less prominence than the common goal of defending from the advancing Ottomans. Nevertheless, by the time the frontier stabilized on the banks of the Sava and Danube rivers at the beginning of the 18th century, the Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats, Hungarians and in greater numbers migrating Germans lived in the mixed

¹⁵ Ćirković, 2004, 133

¹⁶ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 32

communities in the Military Frontier. This territory became a focus of national and ethnic disputes between Serbian and Croatian academics and politicians, from the early 20th century onwards fuelled by disputes over the religious and ethnic affiliations of the population between the Middle Ages and the time of the abolition of the Frontier in 1882, when it was renamed into Croatia-Slavonia and re-incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary. There is no available data on this matter for the period predating the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699). The earliest reliable census sources date from the 18th century and show predominance for the Serbian Orthodox population at that time.¹⁹ Croatian authors explain this as a consequence of the immigration influx of the Orthodox Slavs and Vlachs after the end of the 17th century, which “forever shattered the integrity of Croat people’s ethnic territory.”²⁰ Serbian scholars, on the other hand, explain the shifting of the religious affiliations in favour of Catholicism over the course of the 19th century as a result of the Habsburg policies that endorsed the conversion of the Orthodox population to Catholicism.²¹ The political outcome of the Treaty of Karlowitz triggered divergent paths of cultural development between the Serbs who remained inside the Ottoman Empire and the Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy. It was precisely the “Habsburg Serbs” who were the originators and main bearers of the Serbian national idea. From the Serb populated territories of the Military Frontier, the ideas of nationalism spread southwards into the revolutionary Belgrade Pashalik in the early 19th century. The 17th and 18th centuries Migrations which contributed to the consolidation of the Serbian population in Slavonia and what was later to become Vojvodina, played a crucial role in adoption and application of Central European cultural models to the Serbian ethnic community within the Habsburg Empire.

¹⁹ See, for example, the official census of the Habsburg Monarchy. As late as 1846, the Orthodox population counted 48%, as opposed to 41% of the Roman Catholics. The data is taken from *Übersichts-Tafeln zur Statistik der österreichischen Monarchie*, Vienna, 1850, 2. The rest of the population were the Protestants, Uniates and the Jews.

²⁰ Banac, 1986, 493, quoted in Fine, 2006, 175

²¹ The extensive works on the Military Frontier were written in the 20th and 21st century by Serbian, Croatian, Austrian, Hungarian and other foreign academics. Depending on the sources used and personal affiliations of the authors, they adopt one view or another. The sheer number of works is evidence in itself that the question of the Serbian-Croat ethnic dichotomy in the territory of the former Military Frontier will remain unresolved.

1.1.2 The Migrations controversy²³

While some Croat scholars argue that the Serbs appeared north of the Danube and Sava only as late as the early 18th century, Albanian colleagues deny that there was any migration at all, in response to the Serbian assertion that after the Migrations the territory of Kosovo and Metohija was repopulated by the Albanians in the 18th and 19th centuries.²⁴ The Albanian and most Western revisionist-historians since the early 1990s frequently disputed the number of 37,000 families migrating northwards.²⁷ They argued that the number of migrants was much smaller or, that the migrations did not happen at all because of the discrepancies observed between the Ottoman and Habsburg accounts.²⁸ This obvious lack of consensus among the scholars coming from different ethnic backgrounds is the best indicator of the selective approach to the studies of nationalism in the West Balkans.²⁹ Recently, a modern British scholar Frederick Anscombe used a limited selection of available Ottoman documents, *defters*, and works of modern scholars to explain the consequences of the ethnic change in the region in the period prior to the appearance of nationalism. Relying on the works of another modern British scholar Noel Malcolm, Anscombe asserted that “the great Serbian migration, like the events of the battle of Kosovo Polje is the stuff of legend, rather than history.”³⁰ Ignoring the existing extensive Habsburg records now situated in various European archives, as well as the 16th century Ottoman *defters* that show a predominance of the Orthodox Christian population with Slav names in Kosovo and Metohija,³³ Anscombe and other revisionists aim to promote a vision of the past suitable for the modern political usage that would justify the political campaign against the Serbs that took place during the wars of Yugoslav succession and destructive role the West had in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the revision goes as far as to label all earlier scholarly analysis of the documents previously accepted by the

²³ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p.34

²⁴ Compare Ivo Banac, quoted above, and modern British scholars writing about the history of Kosovo and Metohija.

²⁷ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p.34

²⁸ Pro-Croat Western historians strongly argue that the Serbs in Slavonija and Vojvodina are there *because* of the Migrations. See, for example, Bellamy, A. J. – *The Formation of Croatian National Identity – A centuries Old Dream?*, Manchester, 2003

²⁹ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 129-134

³⁰ Anscombe, F. F. – *The Ottoman empire in recent international politics – II: The case of Kosovo – The International History Review* 28 (4) 758-793, 2006, 792

³³ Катић, Т. – *Опширни попис Призренског Саџака 1571. године*, Историјски институт, Београд, 2010 – The Serbian translation of one of the three preserved *defters* for the 16th century Kosovo and Metohija.

Western historians, as “the Serbian account.”³⁴ This method of historical revisionism, as Ković observed, clearly indicates the *political intent* behind *normative historiography*.³⁵ As such it is not only academically misleading, but potentially dangerously suggestive, because it justifies the ethnic cleansing of the Serbs both in Slavonija and Kosovo and Metohija.

Regardless of the exact numbers, the migrations did happen and resulted in two significant outcomes. Firstly, the Serbian ethnic core moved northwards and secondly, it enabled the Habsburg Serbs to preserve their Orthodox faith through the institution of the Serbian Orthodox Church, remaining at the same time exposed to European cultural influences, amongst which was the birth of the national idea in the 19th century. From there, the idea of nationalism spread to the revolutionary Belgrade Pashalik in the first half of the 19th century. Accordingly, it could be argued that Serbian nationalism developed from the periphery of the national territory towards its centre.³⁶ Strengthened by the Migrations, this northern national periphery became the originator of nation-creation.

1.2 Historical and academic settings for the formation of Serbian nationalism – Pre-Romantic national period and the diverging aspects of Serbian nationalism

The re-conquest of Ottoman territories north of the Danube after the 1683-1697 war established Habsburg administration over the new territories now incorporated into the Military Frontier. The Habsburgs had not only efficiently expelled the Muslim population, but conscientiously destroyed most of the Ottoman religious and administrative symbols of power. They reinstated the Catholic Church and supported the spread of Central European culture. However, as the majority of the Serbs were Orthodox, Leopold I (1658-1705) issued a *Charter of Privileges* in 1690, granting ecclesiastical rights to the Serbs. Several additional charters followed, one of which

³⁴ Anscombe, 2006, 770 – For example, Anscombe words his argument as follows: “...until now, Malcolm, like other Western historians, had previously accepted the Serbian account.” Anscombe’s negation of the Migrations, directly supports the Albanian national claim to Kosovo and Metohija in stark contrast with Banac’s claim that the Serbs occupied Croatian national territory through the 17th and 18th century migrations. If the Serbs never left Kosovo and Metohija, how could they appear in Slavonija in such a great number? On the contrary, if they left in great numbers, how many Albanians lived in Kosovo and Metohija prior to the Migrations?

³⁵ See *Introduction*, p.5-6

³⁶ Serbian nationalism, therefore, displayed ethno-symbolic characteristics, as explained by Smith, but its implementation required Breuille’s “some form of political independence,” which was at the time in the backward Belgrade Pashalik, later Serbian Principality. For the theory, see *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 65-70.

downgraded Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević to the status of Metropolitan of Karlovci (Karloowitz) in 1703. The ensuing political and religious distrust that arose between the Catholics and Orthodox in the Military Frontier where the Serbs were now majority, led to reconfirmation of privileges by Maria Theresa (1740-1780) in 1745.³⁷

These new Habsburg territories, largely swamps and marshland with a few towns situated along the trade and military routes, suffered great destruction during the Habsburg-Ottoman wars in the 17th and 18th centuries. After the Ottoman retreat, there was neither urban infrastructure nor road networks in place. The re-establishment of the Military Frontier and Viennese policies for urban landscaping and re-settling of populations (mainly Germans from Swabia) enabled faster economic growth and the development of the whole region, including the Serbian merchant and military class. The Viennese court awarded noble titles to distinguished soldiers for military services.

However, as there were no educated Serbs among those who migrated in 1690 and no educational infrastructure, two decades passed before the firm establishment of the first Serbian primary education. The Metropolitans of Karlovci understood the importance of education as means of advancement within the Habsburg Empire. The Metropolitans Mojsije Petrović (1726-1730) and Vićentije Jovanović (1731-1737) issued a series of “pronouncements” requesting bishops and lower clergy to found schools and supply teachers. However, the church visitations of 1733 revealed an astonishingly low level of literacy amongst village priests. Therefore, they introduced foreign Orthodox teachers, mainly from Russia.³⁹

The coming of the Russian teachers, who brought with them contemporary Russian books, created confusion, as the spoken language differed from the language used in these books and there was no standardised orthography. By the late 17th and early 18th century the Russian and Balkan Slav language groups diverged to such an extent that they became almost mutually incomprehensible. The *ad hoc* created orthography for use amongst the Habsburg Serbs was a hybrid of the Mediaeval Old Church Slavonic in Serbian redaction, Russian and Serbian vernacular. Its very name, *Slaveno-Serbian*, derived from these early Russian books brought to the Habsburg Serbs at the end of the 17th century. In the mid-18th century it was adapted for easier

³⁷ Ćirković, 2004, 156

³⁹ From Peter I, successive Russian emperors provided financial support. This coincides with the rise of Russia as a European power and her growing interest for the key-strategic points in the Straits. – Ćirković, 2004, 163-164

use by Gavriilo Stefanović-Venclović (1680-1749), who first introduced a form of phonetic orthography. The *Slaveno-Serbian* differed to a certain degree from the language spoken by the common people and became the language of the educated elite.

From the beginning of the 18th century a number of Serbian schools opened in the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy. By the end of the century, the Serbian Metropolitan's seat was permanently settled in Karlovci, where the first Serbian Metropolitan's seat was permanently settled in Karlovci, where the first Serbian gymnasium opened in 1792, modelled on the contemporary Austrian gymnasium. The language of instruction was Serbian, in Slaveno-Serbian redaction and orthography, but German and Latin were compulsory for all students. There were university educated Serbs, but there were no Serbian universities as such.⁴⁰

1.2.1 The Habsburg Serbs

The cultural impact and modern education originating in Vienna began influencing the Habsburg Serbs in the early 18th century. Gavriilo Stefanović-Venclović translated many manuscripts into Slaveno-Serbian from mediaeval Old Slavonic and introduced the first language reform. The first attempt to write about Serbian history in the Serbian language and modelled on contemporary scholarly historiography, rather than on mediaeval hagiographic patterns that were until then maintained by the Church, can be assigned to Count Djordje Branković (1645-1711). He left several volumes of *Chronicles of the Slavs of Illyricum, Upper Moesia and Lower Moesia* in Romanian and Slaveno-Serbian languages, written during his time as a political prisoner in 1689-1711 period.⁴¹ In 1765, Pavle Julinac (1730-1785) published in Venice *A short Introduction to the History of the Slavo-Serbian People*, whilst Hristofor Žefarović (1700-1753) published in Vienna in 1741 *Stemmatographia*, mainly Serbian and Bulgarian heraldic collections. Zaharije Orfelin (1726-1785), a poet and architect, left a collection of elementary works in astronomy. Being an excellent calligrapher, he published his *Caligraphies* in 1778, which brought

⁴⁰ Ćirković, 2004, 167 – Most of these 18th century intellectuals were educated in Halle and the first Serbian doctoral thesis, printed in Latin, dated from the mid-18th century.

⁴¹ Бранковић, Ђ. – *Хроника Словена Илирика, Горње Мезије и Доње Мезије – приредила Јелка Ређен*, Нови Сад, 1994, 5 – Branković claimed ancestry from the last mediaeval Serbian ruling family of the same name, which died out in the early 16th century, during the Ottoman conquest of Hungary. Naturally, his claims were not well accepted in the Habsburg Monarchy.

him membership of the Viennese Art Academy.⁴² By far the most influential historian was Jovan Rajić (1726-1801) who wrote *History of various Slavic peoples, most notably Bulgars, Croats and Serbs* written in 1768, but published in four volumes in 1794-1795 (Fig. 1.1).⁴³

However, the most outstanding Serbian intellectual of the 18th century was Dositej Obradović (1739/42-1811), a teacher and a polyglot, educated in Vienna, Bratislava, Halle and Leipzig. He was the first to embrace the ideas of Enlightenment and rationalism during his travels around Europe and introduced them to the Habsburg Serbs. He advocated the education of the masses, based on scientific principles and in a language spoken by the majority of people. Dositej Obradović (Fig. 1.2) spent nearly thirty years working as a tutor to the children of wealthy families all over Europe. As he spoke Classical languages, but also German, French, Russian, Italian, demotic Greek and English, he was frequently employed by the nobles and communities all over the Holy Roman Empire. This funded his travels and enabled him to write and translate many classical works of literature and philosophy into Serbian.⁴⁴ In 1793 he published a collection of works on philosophy, ethics, history and aesthetics, based on German, Italian, French and English scholarly traditions. He was well-respected among the Serbs of the Habsburg Monarchy, but his work also influenced some of his non-Serbian contemporaries.⁴⁵

All these 18th century intellectuals and artists embraced the Western cultural models: from baroque to the enlightenment. However, it was impossible for them to expand their work south of the Danube, as Ottoman authorities did not allow any cultural exchange across the border.

In terms of quality of life, Habsburg Serbs were also in a slightly better position than their co-nationals south of the Sava and Danube. After 1690, the Habsburgs dismantled Ottoman heritage north of the Danube. The old towns, together with newly established ones, were re-modelled on the baroque principles of Central Europe. Viennese policies of settling the Germans brought with them their architectural

⁴² Марковић, М. – *Развој знања у Србији после Првог српског устанка* in Аврамовић, З. – *Два века образовања у Србији – Образовне и васпитне идеје и личности у Србији од 1804 до 2004*, Београд, 2005, 15

⁴³ Деретић, Ј. – *Кратка историја српске књижевности*, Београд, 1990, 87

⁴⁴ Around 1784, he spent a year in London learning English, thus becoming the first Serbian immigrant in the British Isles. In 1788 he translated and published in Serbian the fables of Aesop, Phaedrus, La Fontaine and Lessing.

⁴⁵ <http://www.dositejeva-zaduzbina.rs/dositej/dela.html> - The official web-site of the Legacy of Dositej Obradović – Accessed on 14/03/2012

traditions and building skills. By the end of the century, the urban structure of the Military Frontier was transformed, with nothing left to remind of a century and a half of Ottoman rule. However, because of the military nature of the region, the early baroque features incorporated into the newly built towns were somewhat limited and restrained – provincial versions based on Viennese models. By the time baroque had fully established itself in the Military Frontier, elsewhere in the Empire it was replaced by rococo and neo-classicism.

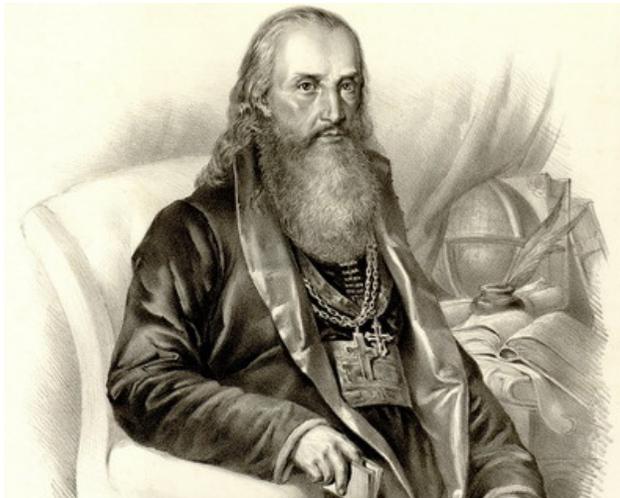


Fig. 1.1 – Jovan Rajić (1726-1801), the most prominent Serbian historian from the pre-Romantic national period.



Fig. 1.2 – Dositej Obradović (1739-1811), the first Minister of Education in Karadjordje's Serbia.

Until the 18th century, when the influx of Germans brought European tendencies in building and lifestyle in the Military Frontier, Serbs kept to their mediaeval tradition of church-building. However, from 1726, apart from a few surviving mediaeval monasteries on the Fruška Gora, just outside the new town of Novi Sad,⁴⁶ baroque began penetrating Serbian ecclesiastical architecture. When the new metropolitan church in Sremski Karlovci was built by Zaharije Orfelin in 1758-1760 on the initiative of the Metropolitan Pavle Nenadović (1703-1768), baroque was finally officially accepted by the Serbian Orthodox Church (Fig. 1.3).

⁴⁶ Novi Sad (German: *Ratzen Stadt*, English: *the Rascian City*, from the mediaeval name Rascians, meaning Serbs – Raškani). The location of the city was inhabited since the Celtic period, but during the Ottoman rule, the Christian population was not allowed to reside within the city walls. The mediaeval town was destroyed by the Ottomans in 1526, the Ottoman town destroyed in 1683-1690, so a completely new urban structure was laid down in 1694. Novi Sad is now the capital of the province of Vojvodina.



Fig. 1.3 – Saborna Church in Sremski Karlovci, after Zharije Orfelin, built in 1758-1760.

The growing Serbian middle classes lived in planned urban areas, in large town houses, built in bricks and consisting of one or two floors, with horizontally and vertically emphasised facades, achieving symmetry and rhythm through the repetition of windows and decorative stone plastic. These also followed provincial baroque forms, but as the century went on, the neo-classicism and rococo began slow appearance and the fusion of architectural styles could be easily traced in the surviving buildings from that period. Representative examples of such town architecture are the house of Count Gražalković in Sombor (built in 1763) and the house of Dimitrije Anastasijević (built in 1766) in Sremski Karlovci (Fig. 1.4). In the ethnically mixed Military Frontier, the nobles and the rich merchants of all ethnic backgrounds built palatial residences in the 18th century neo-classical style in the countryside. The expression of national feelings through the means of architecture, sculpture, public monuments and other visual mediums was not prominent as the idea of national identity was still nearly a century in the future.



Fig. 1.4 – The house of Dimitrije Anastasijević, built in 1766 in Sremski Karlovci. The agreement to found a Gymnasium was signed here in 1791.

1.2.2 The Ottoman Serbs

The situation in the Belgrade Pashalik was quite the opposite. From the early days of conquest in 15th century, town structures were converted for the use of the Ottomans. Most Christian population was driven out of the towns and only small non-Muslim communities were allowed to reside within the city walls. The urban principles of the conversion of towns were based on Levantine models: apart from the main mosque, the main town features included bazaars, domed marketplaces (bezistans), public baths (hammams) and, if the town was near the main caravan routs, inns (caravan-serai). Depending on its size, legal status, economic and military role, the population was segregated with the small Christian and Jewish population living inside their designated quarters.⁴⁸

Town churches appropriated immediately after the conquest were transformed into mosques. Even though the Christian religion was not banned, the construction of new churches was not permitted, but dilapidated and crumbling churches could be repaired under certain conditions and with official approval. Church bells could not be

⁴⁸ Миљковић-Катић, Б. – *Структура градског становништва Србије средином XX века*, Београд, 2002, 18

rung. One of the rules of Islamic tradition held that churches would not be destroyed if the town surrendered, and they were to be appropriated if it was taken by the sword.⁴⁹

On the eve of the final Austrian-Ottoman war in the 18th century (1788-1792), in all towns of the Belgrade Pashalik there were in total 670 Serbian houses.⁵⁰ As there were no schools, it can be concluded that, by the end of the 18th century, the Serbian Christian population of the Pashalik was nearly 100% illiterate. Additionally, 98% of them were rural, as the town populations were almost exclusively Muslim and, in smaller numbers, Jewish and Greek. A very small percentage of Serbian merchants allowed to work in the Belgrade Pashalik was exclusively involved in trade of pigs (which the Muslims did not rear and did not trade), whilst other merchant enterprises and crafts were exclusively in Ottoman, Jewish and Greek hands. The pig-merchants were rarely literate and if they had some knowledge of reading and writing, this was at a rudimentary level.

The change began with the outbreak of the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813), led by Djordje Petrović Karadjordje (Fig. 1.a.11).⁵¹ Traditionally, the period of the First Uprising is regarded as the beginning of the re-building of the Serbian state.⁵² Having killed a Turk in his youth, Karadjordje fled to the Austrian territory north of the Danube and joined the Habsburg army in the area around Syrmia (Sremska Mitrovica). During his Austrian engagement, Karadjordje gained military experience and encountered officers and the literate civilian Habsburg Serbs. The level of his literacy remains unclear, but it appears that he became aware of the importance of education during this period. After the peace in 1791, the Porte pardoned the rebels' participation in the war on the Austrian side, enabling Karadjordje to return to the Belgrade Pashalik where he worked as a pig-merchant exporting to the Habsburg Empire, until the outbreak of the uprising.

Swift military victories over the Ottomans under Karadjordje's leadership early in the Uprising, enabled the establishment of closer links between Habsburg and

⁴⁹ Ćirković, 2004, 133

⁵⁰ Миљковић-Катић, 2002, 21

⁵¹ Black George, from Turkish *kara*, meaning: *black*

⁵² There are some modern tendencies to interpret the First Serbian Uprising as a distant echo of the French Revolution which triggered the sweeping changes that engulfed much of the European continent at the time, but essentially, it was a rebellion against the unbearable economic conditions that Christians suffered under Ottoman rule. Even though contemporary interpretations of the turbulent Balkan history of the early 19th century aim to reflect and incorporate a wider picture of the international politics taking place at the time, assigning the adopted ideas of the French Revolution to the leaders of the First Serbian Uprising is probably unsound.

Ottoman Serbs. The formation of basic state institutions and the foundation of the first schools in the Belgrade Pashalik began immediately after the Ottomans were ousted. As there were no literate Serbs amongst the rebels, the Habsburg Serbs had to assume responsibility for education. A rudimentary form of government was established in 1805, under the name *Praviteljstvujušči Sovjet Serbski*, which consisted of regional leaders of the Uprising.⁵⁵ In 1811, it was re-organized into six ministries (попечителства, porečiteljstva). The first Minister for Education was Dositej Obradović, who came to Serbia in 1806 on the personal invitation of Karadjordje, in order to organize the foundation of a school system. Dositej's arrival in Serbia in 1806 marks the moment when the link between the Western and Central European cultural values of the late 18th century and the Serbian population inside the Ottoman territories was established.⁵⁶

In November 1807, the Sovjet issued a proclamation urging the founding of schools. According to Vuk Karadžić, “*prior to 1804, one could not find one school in a hundred villages, but Black George ordered the schools to be established in every town and even in some villages.*”⁵⁷ In August 1808 Velika Škola (the Grand School) in Belgrade opened.⁵⁸ Its founders and first teachers were Habsburg Serbs, responsible for sending the first generation of students born in the territory of the Belgrade Pashalik to foreign universities.⁵⁹ Dositej Obradović was, of course, their most prestigious colleague. The first students that entered the Grand School were sons and nephews of the leaders of the First Serbian Uprising, but the school was not exclusive. Anyone could enrol, as the only requirement for entering the school was the ability to read,

⁵⁵ *Правителствујући совѣт сербскій (Правителствујучи совјет сербски)* - The Slaveno-Serbian orthography of the time (the title in brackets is according to the modern orthography adopted in 1868). The Latin version is also according to contemporary orthography and is given here for better understanding of the English readers. Further mentioning of this early government will be referred to as Sovjet (meaning: *Council*).

⁵⁶ Марковић, М. – *Развој знања у Србији после Првог српског устанка* in Аврамовић, З. – *Два века образовања у Србији – Образовне и васпитне идеје и личности у Србији од 1804 до 2004*, Београд, 2005, 15

⁵⁷ *Vuk Karadžić*, quoted in Поткоњак, Н. – *Допринос српских интелектуалаца утемељењу и развоју школства у Србији у протекла два века* in Аврамовић, З. – *Два века образовања у Србији – Образовне и васпитне идеје и личности у Србији од 1804 до 2004*, Београд, 2005, 45

⁵⁸ This was not a proper university, but a combined institution, as it included subjects studied in both gymnasiums (History, Geography, Mathematics, German Language, Stylistics) and universities (State Law, International Law, Ethics and Philosophy).

⁵⁹ The founders of Velika Škola were Ivan Jugović (1775-1813), a historian and a secretary of the Sovjet and Dimitrije Davidović (1789-1838), the founder of the Lyceum in Kragujevac, in central Serbian region of Šumadija. Kragujevac was the capital of Serbia during the first reign of Miloš Obrenović (1815-1839)

write and a basic knowledge of mathematics. The school functioned until the First Uprising was crushed in 1813 and during this short period had nearly 40 students.⁶⁰

The early primary schools opened in the Pashalik between 1804 and 1813 had little facilities and lacked libraries, so most of the lessons consisted of the teachers giving lectures and pupils and students taking notes or, in some cases, learning them by heart. Clearly, this could not last, so the books used by the Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy were brought in to support the nascent school system. All these books were in Slaveno-Serbian. However, in 1810, another Habsburg Serb, Savo Mrkalj (1783-1833), published in Buda a manifesto on language, requiring the reduction of the current alphabet from 40 to 26 letters.⁶¹ The main message of his manifesto was a phrase: “Write as you speak!” which was a direct call for freeing the language from archaisms and foreign words.

1.2.3 Vuk Karadžić (1787-1864)

The turbulent years of the First Serbian Uprising and the gathering of the educated Habsburg Serbs around Karadjordje, launched the long and revolutionary career of Vuk Karadžić, the man solely responsible for the creation of the modern Serbian language (Fig. 1.5). From his humble origins in western Serbia, then part of the Ottoman Empire, he grew into an academic revered across Europe. Born into a poor and illiterate peasant family originating from Herzegovina⁶² Karadžić’s early education was sporadic and incomplete. As a boy, he acquired basic literacy from his relative Jevta Savić, the only literate merchant in the region. At the outbreak of the Uprising in 1804, his father sent him across the Danube to Karlovci Gymnasium in order to prevent young Karadžić from joining the rebellion. However, by then he was 17, too old to attend regular education. He spent some time in the nearby monastery, where he learnt German and Latin, then returned to Belgrade to the newly opened Grand School. He worked in schools and as a customs officer until the Uprising was crushed in 1813. In the same year, Karadžić crossed the Danube as a refugee and joined the South-Slav community in Vienna, where he encountered the imperial censor for Slavic literature, a Slovene philologist, Jernej Kopitar (1780-1844).⁶³ As a highly

⁶⁰ Поткоњак in Аврамовић, 2005, 46

⁶¹ Марковић, 2005, 15

⁶² Vuk Karadžić was proud of his East Herzegovinian and Montenegrin origins. He spoke the dialect and, later, during his language reform, he took this dialect as the basis for the standard language.

⁶³ Singleton, F. – *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, Cambridge, 1985, 88

educated man, Kopitar (Fig. 1.6) was well acquainted with the new ideas of national culture that were spreading throughout Europe. He was particularly interested in the vernacular Slavic languages encouraging Karadžić to collect and publish traditional folk literature, as well as to work on language reforms.

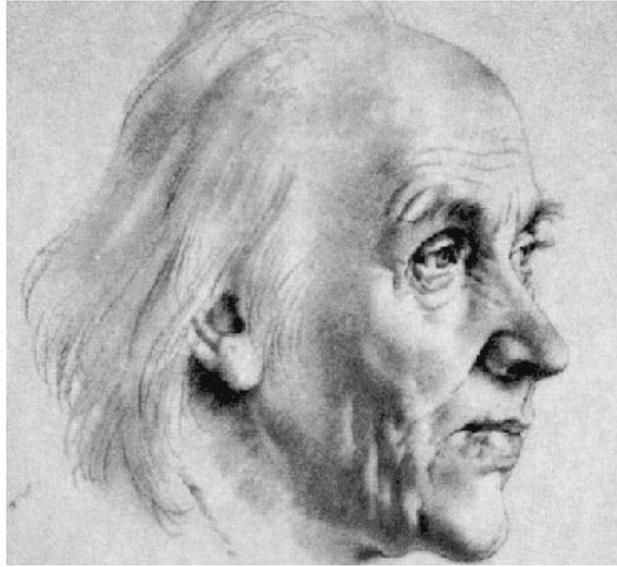


Fig. 1.5 – Vuk Karadžić (1787-1864) Fig. 1.6 – Jernej Kopitar (1780-1844)

Inspired by Herder's *Stimmen der Völker*, Karadžić published in Vienna a small collection of Serbian epic poetry and a book of Serbian vernacular Grammar in 1814, which was followed by the Dictionary in 1818. Well acquainted with the works of Venclović and Mrkalj, to whose maxim, he added: "Read as it is written!" Karadžić established the modern Serbian phonetic principles. Guided by the theory that each sound should be represented by its own sign, he reduced the number of letters to 30. However, his collections of epic poems which he wrote down from the bards during his many travels around the region were the main interest for the European romanticists. Publishing these poems created a sensation amongst the European cultural elite, most notably from Jakob Grimm (1785-1863) who highly praised Serbian poetry.⁶⁴ This led a number of early national writers and poets of the period from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds to translate Karadžić's German editions of Serbian folk poetry into their respective languages. The enthusiasm of

⁶⁴ Ibid, 89

Jacob Grimm, Lamartine and Sir John Bowring⁶⁵ were very much in accordance with the predominant ideas of romanticism and national re-discovery.

Some modern Western revisionists portray the overwhelming admiration and support that Karadžić received from the prominent foreign intellectuals of his time as “the propaganda of Serbian nationalists who fought for the formation and expansion of the Serbian nation-territory.”⁶⁶ However, these claims, written against the background of the 1991-1999 wars, reflect modern international political attitudes towards Serbia. Back in the early 19th century, the interest of intellectuals for national re-discovery, including those of the other peoples, was a matter of culture and new philosophical and historiographical theory coming from German philosophical and linguistic traditions – *historism*.⁶⁷ Nationalism in the early days of its development had a positive role emancipating those peoples living under the non-native rule. Modern interpretation of those early national ideas and how the intellectuals embracing and promoting them might have understood them are separate concepts very prone to manipulation. In reality, Karadžić’s ideas did not differ from those of his European counterparts.

Being a man of strong beliefs, Karadžić did not compromise. His advocacy of language reform alienated him from the main Serbian cultural institution: the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Because of his friendship with Kopitar, attendance at various European universities from 1814 onwards and, finally, his marriage to a Viennese Anna Krauss, the Metropolitan Stefan Stratimirović (1757-1836) and conservative circles around him, saw him as an instrument of Austrian policies for the unification of the Catholic and Serbian Orthodox churches. His clashes with the church and Serbian intellectuals of the Habsburg Empire against the language reforms are well recorded and lasted for most of his life. Eventually, they ended in his victory in 1847, when four crucial works on language reforms were published in Vienna: his translation into a vernacular Serbian of the *New Testament*, the polemical *War for Serbian Language and Orthography* by Karažić’s disciple, linguist Djura Daničić (1825-1882),

⁶⁵ According to George Barnett Smith, in his article published in 1885, Sir John Bowring was fluent in Serbian - <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/people/bowring.htm> - Accessed on 15/03/2012

⁶⁶ Di Lellio, A. – *The of Kosovo 1389 – An Albanian Epic*, London, 2009, Introduction; Malcolm, N. – *Kosovo, A Short History*, London, 1998, 79

⁶⁷ Макуљевић, Н. – *Уметност и национална идеја у XIX веку*, Београд, 2006, 181-185. The word *historism* derives from German *historismus*. Hegel formulated the main ideas of *historism* which had great influence on 19th century philosophers. One of the main advocates of *historism* was a famous German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886).

the collection of poetry by one of the early Serbian romantics Branko Radičević (1824-1853) and, finally, the philosophical epic *Mountain Wreath* by the Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Peter II Petrović Njegoš (Fig. 6.2).⁶⁸

Nor did Karadžić receive much help from Serbs within the Ottoman Empire. After the First Serbian Uprising was crushed, the return to the pre-1804 situation was not possible. Even though an amnesty for all rebels was announced, the Ottoman authorities did not implement it and their attempt to restore full control over the Belgrade Pashalik was followed by the retaliations. After several local rebellions in 1814, the Second Serbian Uprising began in the spring of 1815 led by Miloš Obrenović (Fig. 1.a.12). As political relationships among the Great Powers after the Congress of Vienna allowed a possibility for the Russian army to intervene, the Porte undertook to resolve the problem by pursuing a more diplomatic approach, after the initial victories of the rebels. Obrenović had participated in the First Uprising, but did not play a prominent role under Karadjordje. When the leaders of the First Uprising went to exile in 1813 he, at the risk of execution, remained the only leader left in the Pashalik. This act brought him respect among the people and put him in a position to negotiate with the Ottoman authorities. He was aware that fighting could result in a great loss of life, so he too preferred the diplomatic option. By the end of 1815, a verbal truce was agreed, leading to negotiations. The process was slow and required both a humble approach and some unpopular measures. He ordered the execution of Karadjordje on his return to Serbia in 1817 to take the leadership of the uprising. Eventually, Obrenović negotiated some form of self-government, including tax collection by Serbs themselves and the opening of the Peoples' Office in Kragujevac, a basic court that dealt with legal disputes among Serbs.

1.2.4 The creation of the modern state

The Ottoman authorities still held the town fortresses, but the troops were not allowed to enter the villages. Despite the Ottoman presence, the ethnic structure of towns began to change. During the military operations 1804-1813 all towns suffered great damage and some were totally destroyed by the Serbs, because they were bastions of Ottoman military supplies.⁶⁹ The Muslims were killed or expelled and in

⁶⁸ Karadžić's reform of orthography took shape in 1847, but was finalized a few years later. For Njegoš's adherence to Karadžić's endeavours on language reform, see *Chapter VI – The Montenegrins*, p. 463.

⁶⁹ Миљковић-Катић, 2002, 17

1815, when this violence threatened to repeat itself, the Muslims who had been driven out of towns did not return and the Christians were allowed to settle and undertake some of the crafts and merchant jobs that were previously exclusively in Muslim hands. Despite being illiterate himself, Miloš Obrenović, like Karadjordje before him, understood the significance of education and initiated the negotiations on re-opening of the schools. The Ottoman authorities were reluctant to allow this, as they feared the encroachment of Habsburg influence into Ottoman territories, through educated Serbs who had entered the rebellious province during the First Uprising. Similarly, the Habsburg authorities were also against this request, as they themselves feared that the rebellious Serbs from south of the Danube might inspire the Habsburg Serbs to begin a rebellion of their own. This question was left pending for another fifteen years, when Serbia officially gained autonomy, following the Ottoman defeat from Russia.

The First *Hatt-i-Sharif* of 1830 gave the Serbs in the Belgrade Pashalik autonomy and confirmed Miloš Obrenović as ruler of Serbia, with the hereditary title of Prince (*Кнез*, *Knez*). The Ottoman troops stationed in Serbia were now officially restricted only to major towns. This enabled Miloš to take full control of the Serbian population. He tended to act as an autocrat, but understood the importance of civil servants for maintaining order. Because most literate Serbs left in 1813 for Habsburg territory, in 1815 there were only 24 literate civil servants in the Pashalik.⁷⁰ However, Obrenović re-started the sending of young Serbian boys to the Karlovci Gymnasium which created the first educated class in the Pashalik. By 1830, there were already 245 literate civil servants, whilst in 1838, the year when Miloš founded the first Serbian Lyceum in Kragujevac, there were 850.⁷¹

In 1830, the decision to expel the remaining Muslim population from the towns where no Ottoman troops were stationed accelerated the process of urban restructuring.⁷² In the first years of autonomy, urban areas, including those that still had a Muslim population, counted for only 2.25% of all habitable settlements. However, from 1830, the intellectuals and craftsmen from the Habsburg Empire began returning to the Principality. Obrenović's government knew that waiting for the local students to finish their education abroad needed time, so they invited in a number of Habsburg intellectuals, working primarily in Serbian Gymnasiums in Karlovci and Novi Sad.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 40

⁷¹ Ibid, 146

⁷² Ibid, 20

These educated professionals were not exclusively ethnic Serbs, but also Czechs, Slovaks, Poles and Germans. The state provided the houses and various benefits for those who accepted to come and undertake professional posts, so the Principality became attractive for them, as they could bring the skills and knowledge that was lacking and thus obtain comfortable lives relatively quickly.⁷³ Educational activity was revived and in 1832 Obrenović issued a decree which required that a copy of every book brought in and printed in Serbia should be sent to the Ministry for Education, for record and archive. This decree marks the foundation of the National Library.

It was not only the educated people pouring into the Principality. The peasant Serbs from other parts of the Ottoman Empire, mainly from Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and Macedonia also began entering. Their reasons were also economic: they were automatically being freed from feudal ties and awarded land.⁷⁴ Both Uprisings abolished Ottoman feudalism, as their leaders needed strong support from the people during the hostilities. Promising freedom also stimulated population growth, allowing them to become self-sufficient and pay taxes. As the territory of the Pashalik had suffered endemic depopulation since the early 18 century, Obrenović's policies of ensuring that all Serbs in the Principality had enough land prevented the creation of an aristocratic elite and made Serbia "a European uniquely peasant state."⁷⁵ The state also encouraged the immigration of people involved in trade and crafts. With them, the European norms of business and lifestyle began to penetrate post-Ottoman society. However, the state was far too poor, still dependent on the Porte, and with such a small professional class to be able to undertake any large scale industrialization.

The merchants and civil servants, returning to Serbia after gaining education in Europe, began building their houses based on Central European models.⁷⁶ The new Serbian authorities were determined to depart from the Ottoman heritage in order to emphasize its Christian identity. Already in 1833, a Viennese architect was commissioned to design the new Prince's palace in Smederevo, followed by another one in Belgrade, both of which were to be modelled "in the European manner." A modest number of public buildings began to be built, all designed by the foreign

⁷³ Ibid, 177

⁷⁴ Ibid, 25-26

⁷⁵ Palairot, M. – *Rural Serbia Reshaped and Retarded, 1739-1914* in Dogo, M. and Franzinetti, G. – *Disrupting and Reshaping – Early Stages of Nation-Building in the Balkans*, Ravenna, 2002, 67-76

⁷⁶ Милковић-Катић, 2002, 126

architects and all in the late neo-classical style that was still dominant in Europe.⁷⁷ Similarly, with the departure of the Muslims from towns and destruction of mosques, the erection of new churches in towns became one of the primary enterprises. The earliest architects employed for this task were all foreign and followed the neo-classical style of Orthodox churches erected in the Habsburg Empire in the previous century. One of the earliest, the Saborna Crkva in Belgrade (Fig. 1.7), built in 1838, was designed by Friedrich Kwerfeld (1774-?) and served as a model for churches in several other Serbian towns.⁷⁸



Fig. 1.7 – Saborna Church, erected in Neo-Classical style with some Baroque elements in 1838-1840 period, after the design of the Pančevo born Adam Friedrich Kwerfeld (1774-?).

The opening of the Lyceum and the state Printers in 1838 somewhat eased the shortage of books for primary education, but the network of schools and the use of unified orthography was still disorganized. By then, Vuk Karadžić had achieved a great respect amongst the European cultural elite and advised Obrenović to form a state-funded body to accelerate the spread of education. Obrenović refused, arguing that Serbia lacked a sufficient number of educated people to be of any benefit.⁷⁹ Personal enmities between Vuk Karadžić and Miloš Obrenović resulted in Karadžić's language reform being forbidden and all his work denounced. However, Obrenović's

⁷⁷ Макуљевић, 2006, 202

⁷⁸ Ibid, 202

⁷⁹ Марковић in Аврамовић, 2005, 19

autocratic rule was opposed by many members of the *Sovjet* and in 1839 they provoked the political crisis using as a pretext the two constitutional crises in 1835 and 1838. The 1838 Constitution, drafted by the Ottoman authorities⁸⁰ and supervised by the Russian and Habsburg Empires, was resisted by Prince Miloš, who was consequently removed from power in 1839 and replaced by his son, Mihajlo (1823-1868). As prince Mihajlo continued his father's policies of autocratic rule, only three years later, in 1842, he was exiled and Karadjordje's son, Aleksandar Karadjordjević (1806-1885) was chosen to be the Prince of Serbia. Prince Aleksandar was educated in Russia and accepted the Turkish Constitution and the role of the *Sovjet*. His reign between 1842 and 1858 was known as the reign of Constitutionalists (*Уставобранитељи, Ustavobranitelji*). The period of the Constitutionalists marks the beginning of building the Serbian nation-state and of the formulation of Serbian nationalism.

1.3 Establishing the Serbian national programme

The Constitutionalists endorsed policies for the Europeanization of the Principality and brought in a series of laws to found schools of further education. Already in 1842, the professors of the Lyceum established the *Society of Serbian Letters* (*Друштво српске словесности*) aiming to systematise the language and orthography and increase literacy among the Serbs.⁸¹ The *Society* consisted mostly of educated Habsburg Serbs working in the Principality, but it included well-respected Slavic linguists and philologists: Jernej Kopitar, a Slovene, Ján Kollár, a Slovak, Pavel Šafárik, a Czech, Ljudevit Gaj, a Croat, Prince Bishop Peter II of Montenegro and, of course, Vuk Karadžić himself. By this time, Pan-Slavic ideas were spreading throughout Europe and a number of various Slavic societies of similar nature were established amongst different Slavic ethnic groups within the Habsburg Empire.⁸²

North of the Danube, a similar society, *Matica srpska*, was founded back in 1826 on the initiative of wealthy Habsburg Serbs in the Pest palace of nobleman Sava Tekelija (1761-1842).⁸³ Towards the end of the 18th century, Tekelija abandoned his post in the Hungarian court and dedicated himself to philanthropy. A friend of Dositej

⁸⁰ In literature known as the *Turkish Constitution*

⁸¹ Марковић in Аврамовић, 2005, 17

⁸² Following the trends, upon its formation, the *Society of Serbian Letters* began publishing its own newspaper the *Herald* (*Гласник, Glasnik*).

⁸³ The palace, *Tekelijanum*, still exists in Budapest and was returned to the Budim Eparchy of Serbian Orthodox Church in 1996.

Obradović, he became interested in Serbian matters from the beginning of the First Serbian Uprising, which prompted him to award scholarships to poor Serbian students.⁸⁴ The idea for *Matica srpska* materialized after the newspaper *Chronicle* (*Jlemonuc, Letopis*) was first published in Novi Sad in 1824.⁸⁵ Tekelija (Fig. 1.8) was its president for life and on his death he left all his possessions to *Matica srpska*. *Matica* became a focus for the majority of Serbian intellectuals from the Habsburg lands, who in turn maintained contacts with the new Serbian authorities and the *Society of Serbian Letters* in the Principality. The exchange of ideas between the members of *Matica srpska* and the members of the *Society of Serbian Letters* introduced the new ideas of nationalism and national awakening. By the 1840s, the first generation of Serbs who were born in the territory of the Principality but educated abroad was able to undertake the task of building the state and its national programme. The *Society of Serbian Letters* through its periodicals acted as an early academia and started the programmatic development of the humanities. The young intellectuals returning from abroad were, clearly, the first recruits for such tasks.



1.8 – Sava Tekelija (1761-1842) supported Serbian national programme by supplying necessary funds for work of *Matica srpska* in Pest and Novi Sad.

⁸⁴ The *Tekelijanum* was a type of boarding school for the Serbian students from all Serbian lands, which enabled them University education in Pest through organized scholarships. It particularly helped educating young Serbs from the Principality and introducing the new ideas of Romantic Nationalism to them.

⁸⁵ <http://www.maticasrpska.org.rs/matica/index-eng.html> - The official web-site of *Matica srpska* - Accessed on 18/03/2012

1.3.1 The *Draft*

1844 is the best year for dating the birth of Serbian nationalism. Apart from its work on language systematization, the Society initiated in 1844 the first legislation on civil and educational laws. On 10th May 1844, the Ministry for Education issued an order to local authorities to collect “ancient artefacts” and give them to the Society for recording and keeping in the newly established National Museum.⁸⁶ The idea for the formation of the Museum originated amongst the intellectuals from the *Matica Srpska*, but it took another four decades before they were interpreted in national terms.⁸⁷

In the same year, the Interior Minister Ilija Garašanin (1812-1874) produced for Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević a confidential document intended to be the guideline for future Serbian foreign policies (Fig. 1.9). The document, simply titled *Draft* (*Начертаније*), was influenced by the ideas of Polish émigré in Paris, Adam Czartorisky (1770-1861), who in 1843 sent his Czech follower František Zach (1807-1892) to Serbia to propagate Pan-Slavic ideas. Zach (Fig. 1.10) befriended Garašanin to whom he expressed his views on the position of the Southern Slavs under Ottoman and Habsburg rule. However, Garašanin’s *Draft*, even though exclusively based on the writings of Zach, was adapted for Serbian national ideals which hoped to resurrect the glory of the Serbian mediaeval state that would include all South Slavs.⁸⁸

Essentially, the *Draft* represents a first geo-strategic analysis of the political situation in the region written by a Serbian, rather than a foreign diplomat. The document gave a relatively accurate assessment of the power-politics surrounding the Balkans at the time and predicted the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, whilst remained aware of the power politics of the Russian and Habsburg Empires, their treatment of small nations and the attitude of Britain and France towards them.⁸⁹ This is probably the reason why it remained secret until 1906, even though the contents of the document were known to the Viennese authorities already in the 1880s.

⁸⁶ <http://www.sanu.ac.rs/Clanstvo/Hronologija/Hrono.aspx?arg=dss,1844> – The official web-site of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts – Accessed 18/03/2012

⁸⁷ Novaković, P. – *Archaeology in New Countries in Southeastern Europe: A Historical Perspective* in Lozny, L.R. – *Comparative Archaeologies: A Sociological View of the Science of the Past* – New York, 2011, 387

⁸⁸ http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/garasanin_nacertanije.html - Accessed on 18/03/2012

⁸⁹ http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/batakovic/batakovic-nacertanije_eng.html - English translation by contemporary Serbian historian Dušan Bataković, initially published in periodical *Balkanica*, vol. XXV-1, Belgrade 1994, pp. 157-183. – Accessed on 18/03/2012



Fig. 1.9 – Ilija Garašanin (1812-1874) based the *Draft* on writings of Zach.



Fig. 1.10 – František Zach (1807-1892), a true author of the *Draft*.

The tone of the *Draft* was very much in tune with the growing ideas of nationalism in Europe. It envisaged the liberation of all South Slavs by invoking the tradition of the great mediaeval Serbian Empire of the 14th century, which the Principality sought to continue, as “*the Serbs were the first, of all the Slavs of Turkey, to struggle for their freedom with their own resources and strength; therefore, they have the first and foremost right to further direct this endeavour.*” The document clearly stated that after the revival of the Serbian Empire, “*other South Slavs will easily understand this idea and accept it with joy; for probably in no European country is the memory of the historical past so vivid as among the Slavs of Turkey, for whom the recollection is intense and faithful to the celebrated figures and events of their history.*”⁹¹ The document was later to become one of the main arguments against the Serbian nationalism throughout the existence of Yugoslavia, up to the present day.⁹²

⁹¹ *ibid*

⁹² Modern Western revisionists often refer to the document as a guideline for the “Greater Serbian expansionism.” This interpretation does not stand as in 1844 Serbian Principality was not even an internationally recognized independent state. An autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire with limited political influence could not effectively call for the “Greater Serbian Expansionism.” In this sense, the *Draft* should be viewed as a document of wishful thoughts, rather than the state plan for future political and/or military actions.

1.3.2 Nation-Building Programme – 1844-1882

The real nation-building of the modern Serbian nation was a state programme in autonomous Serbian Principality initiated by foreign, mainly Pan-Slav, as well as native intellectuals educated abroad, endorsed by all Governments of the Principality throughout the 19th century. By 1846, the National Library had in its catalogue nearly 1500 books, and there was a growing interest in discovering and recovering old mediaeval books and manuscripts.⁹³ This was a programmatic task which prompted the *Society of Serbian Letters* to submit to the government a proposal for “*recording, examining, research and protection of old Serbian manuscripts and artefacts.*”⁹⁴ In the same year, a Lyceum professor and a nephew of Pavel Šafárik, Dr Janko Šafárik (1814-1876), undertook on behalf of the Ministry of Education the first scientific recording of the old monasteries, churches, city walls, tombs and frescoes in the Principality. He submitted his findings to the Ministry in September 1846, recommending the need to preserve old frescoes and monasteries, as they were in danger of disappearing. He advocated that “*...the Church in Manasija...may serve as an exemplar of how to build an eastern church and how to decorate it. From this monastery, thus, but from Žiča, Ravanica and others....the Serbs should take the plan, when they start building their new churches.*”⁹⁵

By 1849, the *Society* was expanded and re-organized into five departments working exclusively with national disciplines, of which the language and history were the most important.⁹⁶ It is no coincidence that the programme on national culture and history published by the Society and the support it received from the Serbian government occurred during the revolutionary year of 1848.

Upon receiving news of revolutions in Paris and Vienna in May 1848, Serbian representatives in the Hungarian court and some intellectuals gathered in the *May Council (Majska Skupština)* in Karlovci, demanding language and religious rights and the restoration of privileges granted by Leopold I in 1690. The regions of Srem, southern Banat and Bačka, until then still within the Military Frontier, united to

⁹³ The timing of these endeavours coincides with various national movements taking place throughout Central Europe.

⁹⁴ Белић, А. – Српска краљевска академија – посебна издања, књига СХVI – Споменице књига 7, Београд, 1939-1941 – *Педесетогодишњица СКА (1886-1936), књига 1 – Извештај о раду поводом педесетогодишњице Српске краљевске академије*, Београд, 1941, 19

⁹⁵ Шафарик, 1846, 11-62, quoted in Макуљевић, Н. – *Уметност и национална идеја у XIX веку*, Београд, 2006, 185

⁹⁶ Белић, 1941, 19

proclaim a Duchy of Serbia (Srpska Vojvodina).⁹⁷ The participants of the Skupština demanded the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć, and there were calls for unification with the Principality of Serbia, despite the fact that it was still not officially independent.⁹⁸ There was also an expression of solidarity with the Croats and representatives were sent both to Zagreb and to the *Pan-Slavic Congress* then taking place in Prague. Using Serbian and Croatian disappointment with the Hungarian attitude, Vienna at first allowed these expressions of national aims, but, by 1849 the revolution was crushed and the policies of controlled centralization were introduced under the firm hand of Alexander von Bach whose cultural and political measures prompted Habsburg Serbs to turn towards the backward Principality.⁹⁹

One explanation of this action was that the Serbian government at a time, even though relatively poor and politically controlled by both Russia and the Habsburgs, supported the national cultural programmes and worked to promote them without much interference from these powers. The *Society for Serbian Letters* had already undertaken the task of collecting and recording the surviving mediaeval manuscripts relevant for Serbia and Serbian lands, not only in the territory of the Principality, but also in foreign archives. For these tasks, Serbian students abroad were engaged in recording and transcribing archival materials from the great European libraries. In the 1850-1862 period, a number of historical documents, translated into Karadžić's reformed language were published.¹⁰⁰ Not even the change of dynasty in 1858 and the return of Miloš (1858-1860) and Mihajlo (1860-1868) stopped this programme, as both the Obrenović and Karadjordjević Princes shared the enthusiasm for national culture, so popular throughout Europe.

However, the physical transformation of the Principality following new national lines was much slower. The reasons were primarily economic: public buildings were expensive to build and required time for both educating native architects and the actual construction. After the initial influence of post-baroque and neo-classical architecture in church building, public buildings were modelled on corresponding buildings elsewhere in Europe. The Principality could not rely exclusively on foreign architects, so in 1846 an Engineering School was founded in Belgrade, where the first lecturers

⁹⁷ Thus, the contemporary name of the Province.

⁹⁸ Singleton, 1985, 93

⁹⁹ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 151-152.

¹⁰⁰ Белић, 1941, 29

were graduates from European universities. Even though Miloš Obrenović ordered the paving the town streets as early as 1837, little was done prior to the 1860s when real urban planning took place following the departure of the last Ottoman troops from the towns.¹⁰¹ When the new street grid was laid down, a series of neo-classical private houses were built around the Kalemegdan Fortress, beginning the transformation of Belgrade into a European city. By now, the ideas of *historism* were dominant in Europe, and Serbian students acquired them from their foreign teachers. However, the early *historism* in Serbia was heavily influenced by the *historism* in Europe. For example, a new National Theatre in Belgrade, built in 1869, was modelled on La Scala in Milan (Fig. 1.11 and Fig. 1.12).



Fig. 1.11 – The original façade of the National Theatre in Belgrade, built in 1869 by Aleksandar Bugarski (1835-1891) was modelled on the Italian *Teatro alla Scala* in Milan.

¹⁰¹ Миљковић-Катић, 2002, 67-70



Fig. 1.12 – The National Theatre, modern façade. After the destruction in the First World War, it was rebuilt on a more modest scale. Damaged again in 1941.

By the late 1860s and early 1870s a second generation of intellectuals educated abroad returned to the Principality influenced by the national movements and the events in Italy, Germany and Poland. The ideas of “a national golden age” in those respective countries inspired similar ideas in the Principality. In January 1864, the *Society of Serbian Letters* awarded honourable memberships to Garibaldi, Cobden and Girardin, which upset the Serbian government, concerned that this was a political act not to be tolerated by Vienna. For the court in Vienna, the acceptance of the three well-known European liberals by the *Society* which was supported by the Serbian Prince meant that the Prince himself was anti-Habsburg. The *Society* was duly suspended by Prince Mihajlo, only one day after announcing the names of its new honourable members.¹⁰²

The growth of political discontent split the *Society* into two factions: one that adhered to the application of modern scientific principles in research and factual analysis (the second generation of its members) and another that still wanted to concentrate on expansion of literacy among the people (the first generation).¹⁰³ The

¹⁰² Белић, 1941, 38

¹⁰³ Ibid, 7

questions of the new political ideas that penetrated the work of the *Society*, threatened the delicate position of Prince Mihajlo, so in July 1864 he re-established the Society under a new name: the *Serbian Learned Society* (Српско учено друштво), drawn from the older, conservative generation, interested in increasing literacy and spreading education in the Principality. Its new Statute underlined that the “*Society was a scientific institution primarily concerned with the Serbian people and its lands.*”¹⁰⁴ The study of international relations was excluded, because the government wanted to avoid diplomatic problems with Vienna.

After the successful publication on the 1000th anniversary of the monographs on Cyril and Methodius in 1863 and Šafárik’s biography of Methodius, a series of biographies of Serbian mediaeval kings appeared together with modern translations of collected mediaeval sources. This brought into prominence young Stojan Novaković (1842-1915), a philologist, who translated into modern Serbian several charters of mediaeval Serbian and Bosnian kings and princes and gave one of the first descriptions of Old Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Fig. 1.13).¹⁰⁵ The appearance of these works marked the end of the romanticism in Serbian historiography and established the modern scientific approach to the writing of the national history. After Leopold von Ranke published in 1853 *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution* about the First Serbian Uprising, his methods of work were already well-known around Europe.¹⁰⁶ Ranke’s influence on Serbian historiography at that time was significant, as some Serbian historians were his students.¹⁰⁷

Until the mid-19th century, romantic ideas of the Serbian mediaeval history dominated historiography, influenced by the hugely popular Karadžić’s collections of epic poetry. Of particular importance was the *Kosovo Cycle* of poems, which depicted the famous 1389 battle between the Serbs and the Ottomans as the battle between Good and Evil that ended the Serbian Empire. From this time, research and translation of the discovered documents increased interest in Serbia’s 14th century and prompted the *Serbian Learned Society* to send some of its members outside the Principality, into the areas of Old Serbia, then still part of the Ottoman Empire, and engage in the fieldwork.

¹⁰⁴ Белић, 1941, 47

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 49. *Old Serbia* was the term that marked the core-territories of the mediaeval kingdom: Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and northern Macedonia.

¹⁰⁶ Ranke’s approach to historiography insisted on using primary sources and narratives explaining international relations.

¹⁰⁷ Марковић, 2004, 21 – For example, Jovan Ristić (1831-1899), Ranke’s student, a historian and the future Prime Minister, strictly applied his teacher’s methods in his works on Serbian history.

This was not proper archaeological research, as the Principality lacked both the educated professionals and the finances to support such work, but it contributed to the growing interest for the Serbian national resurrection.



Fig. 1.13 – Stojan Novaković (1842-1915)

The eagerness with which the *Serbian Learned Society* undertook recording and collecting material evidence from the past in this period was the enterprise of national self-discovery, a theme dominant throughout Europe at the time. The new Serbian state desperately tried to relieve itself from the Ottoman inheritance and integrate into the advanced European Christian culture by imitating the state and nation-building processes taking place elsewhere in Europe.¹⁰⁸ Still far away from full political independence, Serbian authorities were unable to initiate the liberating movements in the “unredeemed Serbian lands.” Discovering national culture both inside and outside the Principality was an effort undertaken more for the state-building purposes within the Principality itself, rather than national expansionism.

1.3.3 Creation of the Serbian national style in architecture

The initial work of Janko Šafárik from 1846 was adopted and extended by Mihajlo Valtrović (1839-1915) and Dragutin Milutinović (1840-1900) who in 1871 undertook the first scientific recording of surviving mediaeval architecture. The enthusiasm for the surviving mediaeval monasteries, the only reminder of the existence

¹⁰⁸ Modern Western revisionists interpreted these endeavours solely as Serbian expansionism. See works of Hoare, Malcolm or Ramet.

of the state prior to the Ottoman conquest, concentrated primarily on the Nemanjić and Lazarević periods. Of particular interest were the monasteries built in the 14th century, partly because they coincided with the “golden age” of the Serbian Mediaeval state, but also because they were better preserved.

The majority of the surviving monasteries were situated in areas difficult to access, high in the mountains and outside towns, so they suffered less in comparison with town architecture. Generally, the culture and architecture of pre-Ottoman Serbia and Bulgaria was mostly influenced by Byzantium, but from the time of the second half of the 12th century, this influence slowly fused in local ethnic architectural characteristics. In Bulgaria, this was expressed through the *Tarnovo School* of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1186-1396), situated in the vicinity of the then Bulgarian capital Tarnovo. In Serbia, there were three such schools: the *Raška School* (1160-1335), a fusion of the Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture of the Adriatic coast, named after the River Raška valley, where the majority of the surviving monasteries were concentrated and in the vicinity of the then capital Ras;¹⁰⁹ the *Vardarska School*¹¹⁰ (c.1307-c.1395) named after the River Vardar valley where the majority of the surviving monasteries were situated and in the vicinities of the then capital Skopje and the Patriarchal Seat in Peć in Kosovo and Metohija and the *Moravska School* (1371-1459), named after the River Morava valley and in the vicinity of the then capital Kruševac.

The *Moravska School's* heritage was mainly within the territory of the Principality and served as a basis for the newly created national style in the mid-19th century. The architectural features of the Moravska School included an emphasis on the sequential horizontal layers of stone and brick, with the compulsory presence of the stone rosette above the main portal, a clear evidence of the Romanesque influence (Fig. 1.14 and Fig. 1.15). As such details were not in use elsewhere in the Byzantine cultural domain, the 19th century creators of the Serbian national style concluded it to be the authentic Serbian architecture.¹¹¹ As a consequence, in 1862, a new *Act on Church Authorities* prescribed the use of Moravska School for all newly built

¹⁰⁹ Today, the territory of Raška includes the greatest Slav Muslim population outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the Ottoman period it was renamed into Sanjak.

¹¹⁰ Sometimes called *Serbian-Byzantine School*.

¹¹¹ Additional reason for adopting the *Morava Style* was that, despite research of the Serbian old architecture in the Ottoman held southern Serbian ethnic territories, there were no real opportunities to conduct a full-scale examination. On the other hand, Morava Style churches and monasteries within the Principality were easily accessible.

churches. The famous curator of the Viennese Anthropological and Prehistorical Society, Felix Kanitz (1829-1904), after publishing his great travelogue through the Balkans,¹¹² claimed that he personally influenced the Prince for passing this law.¹¹³ Whether Kanitz really persuaded the Prince or not is less important, than the consequence of this law. From that moment onwards, *all* future Serbian churches were built in this style, now renamed *Serbian-Byzantine Style*.

This interest in creating the national architectural style was endorsed by foreign teachers of Serbian students abroad. A key role in promoting the Serbian architectural revival adopted by Serbian students was played by the Viennese architect and university professor Theophil von Hansen.¹¹⁴ Hansen was interested in Byzantine art and culture and introduced his Serbian students to the European understanding of mediaeval Byzantine architecture.¹¹⁵ His theoretical postulates were re-interpreted and applied throughout the Principality, particularly on ecclesiastical buildings. Ironically, the full development of the Serbian-Byzantine style was not reached in church architecture, but in large public buildings erected at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, after the Principality had become the Kingdom of Serbia.



Fig. 1.14 – The court church of Prince Lazar, built in 1375-1378 in his capital Kruševac, marked the beginning of the Moravska School which lasted until the Ottoman conquest.

¹¹² *Die römischen Funde in Serbien*, Vienna, 1861 and *Serbiens byzantinische Monumente*, Vienna, 1864

¹¹³ Макуљевић, 2006, 187; Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 387

¹¹⁴ Among many prominent Viennese buildings (Austrian Parliament, the Arsenal, etc.), Hansen is credited with the design of the National Observatory and the Academy in Athens.

¹¹⁵ Макуљевић, 2006, 189



Fig. 1.15 – The rosettes, reminiscent of the 12th century *Raška School* of architecture were not used elsewhere in Byzantine sacral architecture.

1.4 The fully developed Serbian Nationalism – 1882-1914

The mass Uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875 and the April Uprising in Bulgaria in 1876 re-opened the Eastern Question and prompted the Principalities of Serbia and Montenegro to declare war on the Ottoman Empire. Russia intervened and in 1878 the Ottomans were defeated.¹¹⁶ The peace accords which ended the war extended the territory of the Serbian Principality to the south, gaining four counties.¹¹⁸ The territory of Old Serbia (Raška and Kosovo and Metohija) remained under Ottoman rule. Austria-Hungary acquired the territory of the Bosnian Pashalik¹¹⁹ and the right to station troops in Raška (Sandžak). Austria-Hungary also received the rights for the unlimited use of Serbian resources and imposed on Serbia the duty of building the Belgrade-Niš railway line.¹²⁰ The Serbian Prime Minister Jovan Ristić, aware of the economic catastrophe facing Serbia, refused to sign the commercial agreement that was highly disadvantageous for Serbia.¹²¹ Prince Milan Obrenović (1854-1901, reigned 1868-1889), more of a realist, dismissed Ristić and duly complied with Austro-

¹¹⁶ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 37

¹¹⁸ Vranje, Toplica, Pčinja and Niš – Ancient Naissus, the crossroad between the roads to Thessaloniki and Sofija

¹¹⁹ Modern Bosnia and Herzegovina

¹²⁰ Jelavich, Ch. – *Tsarist Russia and Balkan Nationalism – Russian Influence on the internal affairs of Bulgaria and Serbia, 1879 – 1886* – Re-print of the 1958 Greenwood Press, 1978, 65

¹²¹ Serbia was allowed to tax Austrian-Hungarian imports at a rate of only 3%, whereas Austria-Hungary could impose taxes on Serbian goods at a rate ranging from 5-20%. *Ibid*, 166

Hungarian demands by signing the *Secret Convention* in 1881, which *de facto* confirmed the Serbian vassalage. In return, Milan was awarded the title of King in 1882 and the Belgrade Metropolitanate was allowed to gain independence from Constantinople. Even though the constitutional changes were politically insignificant and economically catastrophic, it contributed to the further development of national ideas and eventually led to Serbia being regarded as the “Balkan Piedmont.”

It seems contradictory that the Kingdom of Serbia was able to develop further its national policies after the restrictions imposed by the Congress of Berlin. The *Secret Convention* prohibited Serbia from interfering directly in the matters of Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the policy of settling the Roman Catholics was introduced immediately after Austria-Hungary took over the administration.¹²² Additionally, the Austrian troops stationed in Raška, prevented the potential linking of the Serbian Kingdom with the Montenegrin Principality, which was one of the war aims in 1876-1878. However, the political climate within the Habsburg Empire was seriously affected by the growth of nationalism. The second largest nation within the Empire, the Hungarians, had resisted the policies of Vienna since the late 18th century, but the discontent seriously erupted for the first time in 1848. The following years were marked by the constant struggle for Hungarian emancipation and eventually resulted in the *Ausgleich* of 1867. This opened up the problem of other national minorities within the Empire, particularly the Slavs. The romantic national ideas of the first part of the 19th century that turned into Pan-Slavism were resented by both Vienna and Buda. By the time of the *Ausgleich* and the Berlin Congress, it became obvious that the romantic national ideas of the individual Southern Slav nations were impossible to achieve. As the Serbian Principality (and later Kingdom) was by then the only independent state with a native dynasty¹²³ and had formal national state institutions – the Parliament (Narodna Skupština), the Government, the Army, the Police and the use of the Serbian language in its educational system – the Serbs living within its borders had no reason to fear for their survival as people anymore, unlike the Serbs outside its borders and the Croats and Slovenes. The Serbs inside the

¹²² Bataković, D. - *The Balkan Piedmont Serbia and the Yugoslav Question*, originally published in *Dialog*, Paris, 1994, 25-73

¹²³ The first Prince of Bulgaria was German, Alexander von Battenberg, of the House of Hesse, followed by another German, Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha; Montenegrin dynasty was also native, but the state was too small and hidden in the mountains to be able to give an overwhelming support to other Balkan Slavs.

Kingdom also had no experience of competitive national ideas and religious discrimination that dominated Austria-Hungary in the second half of the 19th century.¹²⁴ Despite the political dependence on Austria-Hungary, the cultural policies were independent and enabled Serbia to become a focal point for the gathering of South Slav intellectuals. Naturally, Habsburg Serbs were the first to turn their attention towards Belgrade. Belgrade, constantly in need of educated professional class, did not refuse their interest and concentrated its influence on the Habsburg Serbs through language and culture.

During the 1840s, *Matica srpska* in Pest created favourable conditions for scientific evaluation of Serbian literature and formed a library for various literary and manuscripts collections, in a manner similar to that of the *Society of Serbian Letters*.¹²⁵ Indeed, many of the members of the Belgrade Society were Habsburg Serbs and regularly wrote for the *Letopis Matice srpske*. However, after 1848, its position in Pest became difficult, so it was transferred to Novi Sad in 1864, the same year the *Society of Serbian Letters* in Belgrade was transformed into the *Serbian Learned Society* and one year after the new Grand School was established in Belgrade. This Grand School was different from the one formed in 1806, as it was a proper university, consisting of three faculties: Philosophy, Techniques and Law.

The cultural transformations resulted in a more varied political spectrum in the Principality (and later Kingdom). Because Obrenović princes were prone to autocratic behaviour, the second generation of Serbian intellectuals educated abroad began questioning their political conservatism. The main battlefield of the opposing political ideas on the future of the state was not the Parliament, but the *Serbian Learned Society*. Apart from arguing for the Society's work to be the an institution for exclusively scientific research, as opposed to promoting the spread of literacy, this generation of Serbian intellectuals also advocated establishing closer ties with other South Slavs. This was the introduction of the Yugoslav idea to the Serbs in the Principality.

¹²⁴ Rusinow, D. – *The Yugoslav Idea before Yugoslavia* in Djokic, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 17

¹²⁵ <http://www.maticasrpska.org.rs/matica/index-eng.html> - Accessed on 23/03/2012

1.4.1 The road to the South

From the time of King Milan the cultural programmes in Macedonia and Kosovo increased. The *Serbian Theology School* opened in 1871 in Prizren,¹²⁶ and a number of Serbian primary schools were founded throughout Ottoman Macedonia and Kosovo and Metohija.¹²⁷ However, in the years following the Berlin Congress, the position of the Serbian government became. On the one hand, the small Kingdom was economically crippled by the conditions imposed on it by Austria-Hungary that hindered the development of the cities and industry. The populist measures undertaken to ease the burden on peasants resulted in the contraction of the economy and impoverished the majority of the population.¹²⁸ On the other hand, the political support of Orthodox Russia towards which the majority of the population naturally inclined, was completely re-directed towards the new Bulgarian state which, governed by Russian generals, took the initiative in spreading its influence in Ottoman Macedonia.¹²⁹ King Milan (Fig. 1.16), aware of the limited political power of his Kingdom and the overwhelming disrespect of both his enemies and friends, initiated the disastrous adventure of the two weeks war against Bulgaria in 1885.¹³⁰ He was hoping that this would allay the growing public discontent with his ability to rule, but the result was just the opposite. The political struggle between the conservatives, liberals and the newly established peasant-orientated People's Radical Party, only increased and lasted until the end of the century.

Hoping to restore his undermined position, King Milan embraced the ideas of national culture and in 1886 issued a decree which raised the *Serbian Learned Society* to the rank of the *Serbian Royal Academy*. He personally funded the work of the Academy “for studying everything that was related to the Serbs, Serbian land, Serbian

¹²⁶ Kosovo and Metohija

¹²⁷ King Aleksandar continued to support Serbian schools and personally brought to Serbia a 12th century *Miroslav's Gospel*, written in Serbian redaction of Old Slavonic in Cyrillic script for the Nemanja's son, Duke of Zeta (modern Montenegro), a brother of Stephen the Firstcrowned.

¹²⁸ Palaret in Dogo and Franzinetti, 2002, 78-80

¹²⁹ See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 320-328.

¹³⁰ Internally, Milan's reputation suffered greatly following the suppression of the *Timok Rebellion* in 1883, which resulted in banning democracy and the opposition leaders fleeing the country. Externally, foreign ambassadors in Belgrade began showing their doubts about Milan and saw his exclusive reliance on Austro-Hungary in most political decisions as sign of a weak character. See Јовановић, С. – *Влада Милана Обреновића, I-II*, Београд, 1990.

spirit and Serbian character."¹³¹ This decision silenced his political opponents, the liberals, who could no longer express their views through the Academy. The liberals were the greatest promoters of closer links between the Serbs of the Serbian Kingdom and those who lived outside its borders. Obviously, neither King Milan nor his government could support such views openly and there is no evidence that King Milan was against such cultural links between the Serbs. Despite being accused to be pro-Austrian King instructed the Ministry of Education to increase financial aid for financing the cultural exchange between the Serbs in the Kingdom and abroad, especially those still ruled by the Ottomans.



Fig. 1.16 – King Milan Obrenović (1854-1901, ruled 1868-1889)

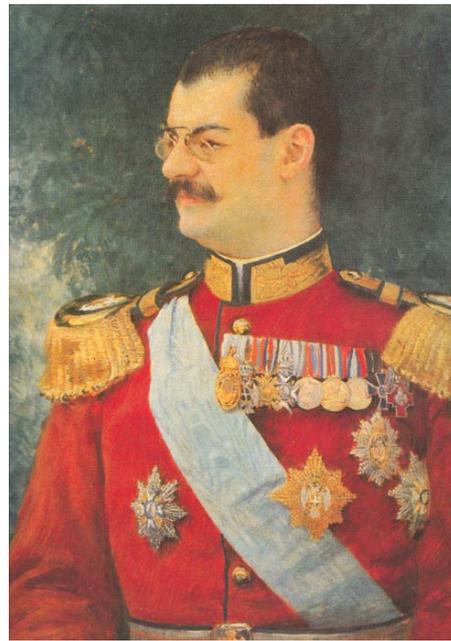


Fig. 1.17 – King Aleksandar Obrenović (1876-1903, ruled 1889-1903)

Examination of the foreign archives began in the mid-19th century during the Constitutionalists, but from the 1870s more effort was put into fieldwork in the territories still under Ottoman rule. The emphasis was still on the Serbian Golden Age of the mediaeval period. During one such enterprise through Kosovo and Metohija and Raška, a Serbian historian Miloš Milojević encountered Sir Arthur Evans, who was then travelling and doing his research throughout the Balkans. Evans, interested only in the ancient past complained that his Serbian colleague was “*obsessed only with*

¹³¹ Белић, А. – Српска краљевска академија – посебна издања, књига СХVI – Споменице књига 7, Београд, 1939-1941 – *Педесетогодишњица СКА (1886-1936), књига 1 – Извештај о раду поводом педесетогодишњице Српске краљевске академије*, Београд, 1941, 128

*Tsarista Milica and King Vukašin.*¹³³ The ancient past, clearly, still did not become the main interest of Serbian historians and first archaeologists. Even though the earliest attempts to research the pre-Slavic Balkans dated back to the 1865, when Šafárik undertook the first archaeological excavation in the mountains of Western Serbia and mapped Viminacium in 1866, no serious work was done prior to the 1880s.¹³⁴ Even though Šafárik founded the *Society for Archaeology and Ethnography* in 1867 which aimed to increase awareness of the importance of the material remains of the past, the full professionalization of archaeology truly began in 1883, when it was transformed into the *Serbian Archaeological Society*.¹³⁵ Mihajlo Valtrović (1839-1915), originally trained as an architect at the University of Karlsruhe, became its first president and the main keeper of the National Museum (Fig. 1.18).¹³⁶

The results of fieldwork research on Serbian mediaeval monasteries, undertaken in 1871-1884 by Valtrović and Dragutin Milutinović (1840-1900), were published in various newspapers (Fig. 1.19). However, in 1884, a specialized periodical *Antiquarian (Starinar)* was established for publishing articles related to archaeological research.¹³⁷ Interest in the Serbian mediaeval past was further increased after the first exhibition organized in 1888 by the *Serbian Royal Academy* which showed the results of research on Serbian churches and monasteries since 1846.¹³⁸ Following the exhibition, the Academy submitted to the government the draft of the *Act on Protection of Monuments*, an updated version of the original 1844 *Act on Protection of Ancient Monuments* and in 1889 a new *Act on State Archives*, originally drafted in 1866.¹³⁹

However, 1889 marks the year when Serbian national revival received its full confirmation. In this year Milan abdicated in favour of his son Aleksandar (1876-1903). The date of the coronation of the young king (Fig. 1.17), 28th June 1889, was specifically chosen to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the most important battle in Serbian history: the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. The celebrations that followed the coronation represented the climax of the work of all Serbian intellectuals from the first appearance of national ideas.

¹³³ Evans, 1886, 171 – “Tsaritsa” Milica was Princess Milica (1335-1405), the wife of Prince Lazar of the Kosovo Battle fame. King Vukašin (1320-1371) died in the Maritza Battle in 1371.

¹³⁴ Белић, 1941, 55

¹³⁵ Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 388

¹³⁶ Макуљевић, 2006, 68

¹³⁷ Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 389 – The *Starinar* is still being published.

¹³⁸ Белић, 1941, 156

¹³⁹ Ibid, 175-177



Fig. 1.18 - Mihajlo Valtrović (1839-1915)



Fig. 1.19 - Dragutin Milutinović (1840-1900)

1.4.2 The Kosovo Myth¹⁴⁰ as the core of the Serbian Nation-building programme

Although Vuk Karadžić died in 1864, his legacy continued to dominate the cultural space of the Serbs and the rest of the Southern Slavs. The international success of the Kosovo epic that he collected and published in the early 19th century influenced following generations of Serbian intellectuals concerned with the historical facts surrounding the myth. Thus, 19th century research of the old manuscripts discovered in monasteries and foreign archives concentrated mainly on the Nemanjić-Lazarević period of Serbian history (1166-1427). Subsequent publications of these documents contributed to the Kosovo Battle becoming a central theme of interest of Serbian historiography by the 500th anniversary of the battle.

The Kosovo Myth had a threefold value in the state- and nation-building programmes of the young Serbian state. Politically, it served to induce a sense of patriotism and national pride among the population of the new European state. Ethnically, it served as a binding force between the subjects of the kingdom. Culturally, its great artistic value was proof that the new state and its people were not philistine. As strengthening of the 19th century state in Europe was achieved by the

¹⁴⁰ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p.27-28.

nationalist usage of traditional mythology, in the Serbian Kingdom historiography surrounding the Kosovo Myth, coupled with the growing artistic and literary interests, provided an excellent starting point for the creation of new national culture, which aspired to depart from the overwhelming Ottoman influence. This aspiration was evident in comparing the quality of life of the Serbs in the kingdom and those who lived in the Ottoman Empire. In the atmosphere of political tensions within the Empire in the second half of the 19th century, the suffering of the Christian population in Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and Macedonia was conveniently compared to the myth surrounding the heroic defence of Christendom and the noble sacrifice of Miloš Obilić. The heroes of the epic, thus, became more important than the surviving material evidence regarding the battle and central to the new national narrative.

Prior to its classical decasyllabic form of Vuk Karadžić, the myth was already formed. The earliest poetic recordings reflecting the events of 1389 date from 1566, when a Dalmatian Renaissance poet Petar Hektorović in his collection of poems *Fishing and fishermen's conversations (Ribarenje i ribarsko prigovaranje)* noted the singing "in Serbian manner" in 14-16 syllabic form.¹⁴⁶ This poetic form prevailed on the Dalmatian coast, where several poems about the Kosovo Battle and its participants were recorded between the times of Hektorović and Karadžić.¹⁴⁷

The myth was not limited to the poetry only. The Serbian Orthodox church maintained the notion of Christian martyrdom throughout the Ottoman period. Apart from the widespread fresco depictions of the rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty in the churches and monasteries, dating back to the time of their rule, some of the mythical Kosovo knights also received visual representations. One surviving representation of Miloš Obilić, painted by an anonymous painter on the *catholicon* of the Monastery of Hilandar in Athos in 1803, preceding Karadžić's popularization of the epic poetry, illustrates well the influence of the myth in the pre-nationalist period and in lands distant from the Serbian core territories (Fig. 1.20).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Bakić-Hayden, M. – *National Memory as Narrative Memory – The Case of Kosovo* in Todorova, M. – *Balkan Identities – Nation and Memory*, London, 2004, 29

¹⁴⁷ Hektorović is now regarded as Croat Renaissance national poet, but his references to Serbia are not included in the literature syllabuses in Croatian schools. In general, Croatian scholarship ignores the presence of Serbian myths in Dalmatia.

¹⁴⁸ Макуљевић, 2006, 79



Fig. 1.20 – Depiction of Miloš Obilić in the Monastery of Hlandar, Athos, 1803.

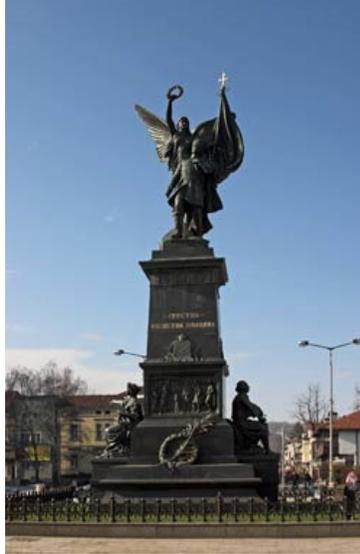


Fig. 1.21 – The Kosovo Monument in Kruševac, erected in 1889-1904 by Djordje Jovanović.



Fig. 1.22 – Detail from the Kosovo Monument – Liberated Serbia calling for liberation of southern Serbian lands.

Therefore, the Kosovo Myth, as the best remembered among the wide and largely illiterate population in the recently established Serbian state was a logical choice for the task of the nation-building programme. The coronation of Aleksandar Obrenović coinciding with the 500th anniversary of Kosovo proved a powerful tool for linking the mediaeval past with the modern state. The day of the coronation, deliberately coinciding with the day of the eponymous battle, Vidovdan, 28 June, was proclaimed a Bank Holiday. The King attended the memorial liturgy in Prince Lazar's court church in Kruševac and planted the foundation stone for the future monument to the Kosovo Battle in the town centre, which still exists (Fig. 1.21). The anointing of the King took place in the Monastery of Žiča (1206-1221), where the Nemanjić kings were traditionally anointed and where the sarcophagus of the first Serbian King Stefan the Firstcrowned (1196-1228, King from 1217) was kept.¹⁴⁹

The Kosovo Monument in Kruševac, designed by Djordje Jovanović (1861-1953), unveiled on the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising against the Ottoman Empire in 1904, contains all the elements of the Kosovo myth.¹⁵⁰ On the northern side, there is a representation of a blind bard, a direct link to the epic, on the western and eastern sides the reliefs depicting the moments of receiving Holy Communion before the battle and the assassination of Murad. The southern side is an allegorical depiction

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 315-316

¹⁵⁰ In 1900 Paris World Exhibition, Jovanović won the greatest award for the "Kosovo Monument."

of Liberated Serbia extending its right hand towards Kosovo and Metohija and Raška – Old Serbia (Fig. 1.22), whilst the top of the monument is again an episode from the epic: a dying standard-bearer leans on *Vila*,¹⁵¹ who receives the Serbian flag to take it to the Kingdom of Heaven.¹⁵²

The monument was a powerful message to post-Berlin Congress Serbia. The Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina made it almost impossible for Serbian intellectuals to spread the message of national awakening amongst Bosnian Serbs. Because of this, Serbia turned towards the Ottoman territory in the south (Kosovo, Metohija, Raška and Macedonia), which was the subject of the myth and regarded as “a still unredeemed Old Serbia.”

1.4.3 Nation-Building in the late 19th and early 20th century – Western *Historism* versus national *Serbian-Byzantine Style*

King Aleksandar actively promoted the modernization of Serbian towns. After the initial church (re)building programme in the early to mid-19th century, the erection of monumental public buildings became a primary tool for modelling Serbia according to European norms. The initially slow penetration of Vienna influenced *historism* in the design of public buildings received a boost in the time of Milan and Aleksandar, both great admirers of Central European culture. A number of municipal town-halls, influenced by *historism* were erected in all major Serbian towns. After building the National Theatre in 1869, its designer Aleksandar Bugarski (1835-1891) was commissioned to build a new Royal Palace in the style of *historism* in 1882 to celebrate Serbia’s new status. Bugarski also built the new town-hall in Smederevo in 1885 in the same style, which enabled him to become a leading figure of the Europeanization of the Serbian cityscape and to influence the next generation of architects who built in the same style. For example, Nikola Nestorović (1868-1957), who designed the town-halls of Kragujevac and Kruševac and Andra Stefanović (1859-1929), an architect of the buildings which now house the *National Museum* in Belgrade (Fig. 1.23) and the *Serbian Royal Academy* (Fig. 1.24).¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Slavic fairy, not to be confused with the “small folk” from Western mythology.

¹⁵² Макуљевић, 2006, 297

¹⁵⁶ Maldini, S. – *Enciklopedija arhitekture: arhitektura, urbanizam, dizajn, enterijer, Volume 1* – Beograd, 2004, 45-60

Parallel with *historism*, the *Serbian-Byzantine Style* developed following Šafarik's and Valtrović's success in the re-discovery of Serbia's mediaeval heritage. The *neo-Moravian school* drew inspiration from the *Moravska School* of the 14th-15th centuries, particularly in façade decoration. The churches were built in this style since 1862, but its full expression within secular architecture was the work of Hansen's student Jovan Ilkić (1857-1917). An early example was a palace of the Grand School, built by the Czech architect Jan Nevola in the 1858-1863 period (Fig. 1.25). Even though the government established a committee for the evaluation of the proposed architectural designs back in 1859, the control of future urban development of Serbia was officially sanctioned in 1882, when the Department of Architecture within the Ministry of Construction was created. The Department consisted of professionals who were openly in favour of the national *Serbian-Byzantine Style*.¹⁵⁷ Not only did the Department supervise the urban development in smaller towns in Serbia, it also supported the erection of buildings and monuments important for the Serbian communities in the deprived areas of Austrian and Ottoman Empires. Beginning from the early 1890s, a number of public buildings in the Serbian Kingdom were erected following the *neo-Moravian school*. This style dominated Serbian architecture until the First World War, after which it abruptly ended (Fig. 1.26).



Fig. 1.23 – The National Museum in Belgrade, initially the Mortgage Bank building, designed by Andra Stefanović (1859-1929) in the style of *European Eclecticism (historism)* with Neo-Renaissance details, erected in 1903.

¹⁵⁷ Макуљевић, 2006, 25



Fig. 1.24 – Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, designed by Andra Stefanović in style of *Viennese Secession*. The works began in the late 19th century, but the building itself was finally erected in 1922.



Fig. 1.25 – The Grand School, designed and erected by Jan Nevola in 1858-1863 represents the first attempt in creation of the Serbian national style in architecture.



Fig. 1.26 – The building of the New Post Office, erected in *Neo-Moravian Style* in 1929 after the design of Momir Korunović, the main architect of the Serbian national revival. Destroyed during the Second World War.



Fig. 1.27 – The new building of the Post Office, erected in the style of *Socialist Realism* after the Second World War, as part of the programme of destroying the reminders of “Greater Serbian past.”

The erection of monuments was another way of building national identity at the end of the 19th century. The best use of the national style for monuments was in building memorial churches and chapels, which symbolized the sacrifice of

forefathers. When the city of Niš was returned to Serbia in 1878 one of the first monuments to be preserved as “a reminder to the following generations” was the infamous Skull Tower (Fig. 1.28). Built by the Ottomans after the defeat of the Serbian rebels during the First Uprising, the Skull Tower was a powerful warning to the rebellious Serbs. The façade of the tower had inbuilt the heads of 952 Serbian soldiers, which were initially forbidden to be removed by the Ottoman authorities.¹⁵⁸ By the time of the liberation, the brick and mud tower with the skulls in it deteriorated, so King Milan ordered its immediate preservation. A small chapel was built around it in *Serbian-Byzantine style* in 1892, symbolizing the sacrifice of the previous generations (Fig. 1.29).

The pattern was repeated when the decision to build a monumental Memorial Church of St.Sava on the Vračar Hill in Belgrade was made. The first Serbian Archbishop Sava Nemanjić (1169-1236), founded the autocephalous Serbian church in 1204 and was canonized after his death.¹⁵⁹



Fig. 1.28 – The Skull-Tower in Niš, built from the heads of Serbian rebels in 1806. From the initial 952 skulls, only 54 remain.

¹⁵⁸ Passing through the area in 1833, the French poet and diplomat Lamartine lamented over the monument in his 1835 *Voyage en Orient*.

¹⁵⁹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 24



Fig. 1.29 – The memorial church built around the Skull-Tower in 1892 in *Serbian-Byzantine Style*.

The Serbian church maintained St.Sava's cult throughout the centuries and by the 16th century Sava was the most venerated saint. The sarcophagus with his remains was kept in the Monastery of Manasija, until Sinan Pasha (1506-1596), crushing the rebellion of the Serbs, ordered the burning of his body in 1595. The burning took place somewhere on the Vračar Hill in Belgrade. As the exact place could not be determined, the highest point of the hill was chosen.¹⁶⁰ The decision was made in 1895, marking the 300th anniversary of the burning of St.Sava's remains. Because of insufficient funding a small chapel was built in the same year, symbolically marking the beginning of its construction (Fig. 1.30). However, the events that followed made the building of the Memorial Church the most controversial, long-lasting construction project in Serbian history which is still under construction (Fig. 1.31).¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ The area of Vračar chosen for the church was called *Englezovac (Englishtown)*, as it was owned by a wealthy and influential businessman Mackenzie, actually a Scotsman, who contributed 8000sq metres of his land and ensured that his name was inscribed on the list of the Great Benefactors. Aleksov, B. – *Nationalism in Construction: The Memorial Church of St. Sava on Vračar Hill in Belgrade – Balkanologie, Revue d'etudes pluridisciplinaires, Vol. VII, No.2, Décembre, 2003, 55.*

¹⁶¹ Aleksov, 2003, 47-72



Fig. 1.30 – Church of St.Sava, erected in 1895 in *Serbian-Byzantine style*. In the background the monumental Memorial Church of St.Sava, still under construction.



Fig. 1.31 – The monumental Memorial Church of St.Sava, built in *Serbian-Byzantine Style* in 1935-1989, after the design of Aleksandar Deroko. With the space capacity of nearly 11,000 people, it is one of the largest church buildings in the world.

1.5 The Dawn of Yugoslavia

The early 19th century romantics' model of the nation as a people united by language and spirit fitted well into the theories of national development. Within the South Slavic language regions that later became Yugoslavia there are three main dialects: *štokavian*, spoken in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Vojvodina and Macedonia, *kajkavian*, spoken in Croatia and Slovenia and *čakavian*, spoken in Istria and the islands of the Dalmatian coast. The founding fathers of Slavic linguistic studies, J. Dobrovský, P. J. Šafárik and J. Kopitar,¹⁶² believed that the Balkan regions where the *štokavian* dialect was spoken were inhabited by the Serbs. This prompted Vuk Karadžić to adhere to the idea that in 1825 there were around 5 million Serbs, of which 3 million were Orthodox, 1.2 million Muslims and 0.8 million Catholic.¹⁶³

After the establishment of *Matica ilirska* in 1842, the leading intellectuals of the *Illyrian movement*¹⁶⁴ realized that the only way to withstand the growing Magyarization in the Croat lands of the Habsburg Monarchy was through the unity of language. They sought to establish closer links with Vuk Karadžić and his circle. In 1835, the leading Croatian linguist Ljudevit Gaj (Fig. 2.6) began publishing *Danica Ilirska* in *štokavian* dialect, despite the fact that he himself was a native *kajkavian* speaker.¹⁶⁵ The cooperation between Croatian and Serbian intellectuals resulted in the signing of the *Literary Agreement* in Vienna in 1850. The *Agreement* set the basis for future work on the common language of the Croats and the Serbs and adopted *štokavian* as the standard dialect because it was spoken by the majority of the South Slav population. Modern revisionists explain this Serbo-Croat cooperation as an act of “mutual misunderstanding” on behalf of the signatories of the agreement by stating that “the Illyrianists indeed sought to unite the Southern Slavs, but maintained the principle of Croatia’s right to statehood.”¹⁶⁶ However, the political context at the time of the *Agreement* points to another conclusion. Both Croat and Serb intellectuals in the Habsburg Monarchy after 1848 realized that their political (national) goals could not

¹⁶² Dobrovský and Šafárik were Czechs and Kopitar Slovene.

¹⁶³ Ćirković, 2004, 208

¹⁶⁴ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 144-145.

¹⁶⁵ Wachtel, A. B. – *Ivan Meštrović, Ivo Andrić and the Synthetic Yugoslav Culture of the Interwar Period* in Djokic, 2003, 239

¹⁶⁶ Bellamy, 2003, 45 – *The Literary Agreement* and the writings of the signatories actually never spoke of the Croat statehood.

be achieved if pursued separately. The *Literary Agreement* was the only option through which national self-identification of the South Slavs could amass a number large enough to counteract the nationalism of the Hungarians or Germans. What was not taken into consideration at the time were different historical legacies and religious affiliations that would harm Serbo-Croat relations in the 20th century.

The Illyrian movement did not have much influence on cultural events and the nation-building process in the Serbian Principality. However, after 1848, the idea of the South Slav unity through closer cultural ties grew into a political movement in the Habsburg Monarchy. The term *Illyrian*, initially forbidden by Vienna, was soon replaced by the term *Yugoslav*¹⁶⁷ by Bishop Josip Strossmayer (1815-1905). Strossmayer, often called “the first Yugoslav,” believed that *Illyrian* was an artificial foreign word.¹⁶⁸ In 1866 Strossmayer founded the *Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences*¹⁶⁹ in Zagreb, hoping to lessen the growing influence of the Hungarian, Austrian and Italian national aspirations. Initially, JAZU’s main objective was to promote the ideas of the national unity of all Southern Slavs and establish close links with the *Serbian Learned Society*.

The intellectual exchange between Belgrade, Zagreb and Novi Sad, which after the transfer of *Matica srpska* from Pest became the leading cultural centre of the Habsburg Serbs, was impressive. Croatian linguists worked with their Serbian colleagues on creating a common Serbian-Croatian dictionary and, eventually, a common culture. Djura Daničić, a student of Vuk Karadžić, worked in JAZU on this project, whilst the great Croatian romantic poet Ivan Mažuranić (1814-1890) wrote in 1845 an epic *The Death of Smail-aga Čengić*, inspired by the events from Montenegro. The publishing of Mažuranić’s epic coincided with Njegoš’s *Mountain Wreath* in 1847, which symbolically meant that all Southern Slavs suffered under the same foreign rule, whether they were Roman Catholic or Serbian Orthodox.

The emerging Serbian state had little understanding of Yugoslavism in its initial stage in the late 1840s, mainly because of the political struggle to gain internationally recognized independence and organize the state internally. After the Berlin Congress, however, the political pressure of Vienna on Belgrade increased. Austro-Hungarian aggressive opposition to any Slavic national movement within the Austro-Hungarian

¹⁶⁷ Yugoslav, meaning Southern Slav

¹⁶⁸ Bellamy, 2003, 44

¹⁶⁹ Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti - JAZU, in the following text

borders only accelerated the growth of Yugoslav idea and contributed to closer cooperation between Croats and the Serbs in Croatia, Slavonia and Vojvodina and, from the mid-1880s, the Serbian Kingdom. The unpopular pro-Austrian policies of the last Obrenovićs and equally unpopular Croatian Ban Khuen-Héderváry (1883-1903), an ethnic Hungarian,¹⁷⁰ created a fertile ground for the growth of the idea of integral Yugoslavism or national oneness, which argued that Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were three names of one ethnic nation.¹⁷¹

Engrossed in their desire to be freed from any form of the Austro-Hungarian influence, neither Serbian nor Croatian intellectuals took into consideration significant differences between them. Firstly, the role of religion was seriously underplayed. The Yugoslav idea was the idea of South Slav unity, aiming to create a Christian South Slav state.¹⁷² A significant number of the Muslim Slav population was expected to return to their original Orthodox/Catholic faith of the pre-Ottoman conquest or leave, as indeed began happening after the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878. Similarly, the relations between the Catholic and Orthodox churches were not properly analyzed. The 18th-19th century's *uniate* policies of Vienna kept the two churches mutually suspicious throughout the 19th century. Secondly, the unequal economic development and different historical circumstances created a different perception of the state among the Croats and the Serbs. Thirdly, the Yugoslav idea sprang from the intellectual elite, which was small in numbers. Veritably, the Austro-Hungarian territories had a better educational infrastructure and, despite the languages of instruction being German and Hungarian, the overall literacy was more widespread, but not universal. On the other hand, despite the enormous work on promoting literacy within the Serbian Kingdom, and the introduction of the compulsory primary school education in 1882, the majority of the population was still illiterate.¹⁷³ On the eve of the Balkan wars, barely 50% of the population was literate.¹⁷⁴ Because of this, the Yugoslav idea failed to penetrate the lower classes. However, by the end of the 19th century, virtually all leading intellectuals of the Serbian Kingdom accepted Yugoslavism, whose idea was interpreted as the unity of language. A common

¹⁷⁰ An ethnic Hungarian

¹⁷¹ Djokic, D. – *(Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism* in Djokić, 2003, 140-141

¹⁷² Trgovčević, Lj. – *South Slav Intellectuals and the Creation of Yugoslavia* in Djokić, 2003, 230

¹⁷³ Ćirković, 2004, 208

¹⁷⁴ Dogo in Dogo and Franzinetti, 2002, 59

Yugoslav identity still did not exist as such, although certain differences were recognized by Croat and Serbian elites.¹⁷⁵ Rallying behind the common cause made those differences almost irrelevant, particularly after 1903, when the political situation in the Kingdom dramatically changed.

The pro-Austrian policies of Milan and Aleksandar Obrenović were not popular among the population. Even less so were their scandalous private lives, which, in the eyes of young officers, gathered around the conspiratory group *Black Hand (Crna ruka)*, undermined the respectability of the state. Thus, in May 1903, King Aleksandar and Queen Draga were murdered and defenestrated, marking the end of the Obrenović dynasty. The initial reaction of the Great Powers was horror at regicide and ensuing political sanctions which lasted until the beginning of the *Pigs War* with Austria-Hungary in 1906.¹⁷⁶ The son of Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević, elderly Peter, was brought back from exile and crowned King in 1904. The return of the Karadjordjević dynasty marked the end of pro-Austrian policies. This was also determined by the *realpolitik* in the wider European context. With the change of the dynasty, the accords of the Secret Convention lapsed. The Serbian government, wishing to reduce the unequal economic burden turned to other countries. Austro-Hungary duly punished this by closing its borders to trade with Serbia.¹⁷⁷ Serbian response was to seek protection from Russia and France.

1.5.1 Last days of Serbian nation-state

The politically turbulent decade 1903-1914 crystallized the notion of the Balkans as the “powder keg” of Europe and introduced the word “balkanization” in the European political language.¹⁷⁸ Not only did the European perception of the Balkans become fortified in stereotypes, such as the “*region cursed with too much memory per square mile, protracted hatreds and a proliferation of obstinate and incompatible ethnic and religious identities,*”¹⁷⁹ but created the image of the Balkans not as a total “*other*”, but as an “*incomplete self*”, *formed in the shadow of the*

¹⁷⁵ Trgovčević in Djokić, 2003, 224

¹⁷⁶ In the whole decade prior to the outbreak of the First World War, leading European press was depicting Serbia as the barbaric state of philistine king-slayers. When the war began, the Entente Powers immediately changed the tune and began to describe Serbia as a small state of epic heroes.

¹⁷⁷ Which consisted predominantly from trading pigs; hence the name

¹⁷⁸ See *Introduction*, p. 3

¹⁷⁹ Todorova, 2004, 2

“structurally despised alter-ego of the lowermost.”¹⁸⁰ In the centre of such perceptions were the former Ottoman territories, the new nation states of Serbia and Bulgaria.

The visual appearance of these two countries at the time contributed greatly to the perceptions of incompleteness. As both countries with their newly acquired national identity tried to accelerate the Europeanization process, the economic poverty inherited from Ottoman times and prolonged by the Great Powers hindered this process. This was best illustrated by the urban landscape depicting the European town-houses and palaces situated amid the mud-ridden streets, without the sewage system in function. The town centres were modelled on the European cities, whilst the suburbs retained a predominantly Oriental rural character.¹⁸¹ The diaries of the European travellers and missionaries depicting the new Balkan Christian states as a caricature of Europe endorsed this perception. The famous Le Corbusier in his travelogue *Le voyage d’Orient* written in 1911 described Belgrade as “a capital set in an exquisite place, but dirty and disorganized.”¹⁸² To the sophisticated eyes of civilized European intellectuals, Serbian attempts to acquire some of their sophistication seemed grotesque.¹⁸³ Since Lamartine’s praise of Serbian national heroism as he viewed the Skull Tower in 1833 and Le Corbusier’s scathing comments in 1911 the political and cultural landscape of Europe had changed dramatically.¹⁸⁴ In early 20th century Europe the *historism* and national revivals were slowly being replaced by *modernism*. Serbia, together with other new Balkan states, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, still followed national lines.

¹⁸⁰ Todorova, 1997, 18

¹⁸¹ Миљковић-Катић, 2002, 195

¹⁸² Le Corbusier – *Le Voyage d’Orient, 1911 – La Première édition du Voyage d’Orient, Fondation Le Corbusier*, Paris 1966 (re-print 1987), 39

¹⁸³ The change of dynasty and the *Pigs War* between Austro-Hungary and Serbia brought into prominence the power of propaganda. A number of Austro-Hungarian, but also German newspapers and magazines depicted Serbia as less civilized, barbaric state, which was a major threat to the Empire. A significant number of Austro-Hungarian and German intellectuals and artists were engaged in regular portraying of Serbs as wild, barbarous and blood-thirsty. This view of Serbia was echoed in Germany and other Central European press. The famous Munich magazine *Simplicissimus*, one of the most progressive artistic magazines being published in Germany at the time, was especially active in this stereotyping of the Serbian “Other.” Commenting on the press ethics of the period, modern Austrian historian Anton Holzer (b.1964) in an interview to *Deutsche Welle* on 13/10/2014 said that the negative stereotyping contributed to the numerous crimes against humanity, but also to the destruction of cultural property. See <http://www.dw.com/hr/austrougarski-zlo%C4%8Dini-u-srbiji/a-17989309> - Accessed on 13/10/2014. The propaganda lasted until the end of the First World War and the materials produced then served as primary sources in the revision of Serbian history that began in the early 1990s by the Western historians and is still in the process.

¹⁸⁴ Le Corbusier’s opinion of Serbia was in accordance with the opinions spread by the European press in 1903-1914 period.

This was best represented by the Serbian Pavilions created for the *Great Exhibitions* of 1889 and 1900 in Paris and in Rome in 1911 and the *Balkan Exhibition* in London in 1907. The pavilions were modelled on Serbian mediaeval heritage. The exhibitions' artefacts aiming to present Serbian culture, history and ethnography included artefacts from all territories deemed Serbian. The *Monument to the Kosovo Battle* in Kruševac was one of the central points in the London exhibition (Fig. 1.21). However, the 1911 exhibition in Rome was considered provocative by Austro-Hungary. The support the Serbian kingdom gave to numerous Serbian and Croatian intellectuals from Austro-Hungary irritated Vienna. At the turn of the century, the Serbian national narrative was fully developed, centred on the Kosovo Myth and revival of the mediaeval Nemanjić Kingdom. Despite four centuries of the discontinuity of the state, an uneven and slow Europeanization, an underdeveloped parliamentarianism and the disdain of the European political elite for the Serbian kingdom, academic life was thriving and as such was attractive for the Serbs and Croats from Austro-Hungary. Thus, the *Great Exhibition* in Rome in 1911 was marked by the sensational victory of the “barbarous” Serbia over the mighty Austro-Hungary. The South Slavs of the Empire, led by the famous Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović (Fig. 1.a.14) required a separate pavilion for their works, but when it was denied, they turned to Serbia and exhibited their works within its pavilion.¹⁸⁵ The choice that Meštrović, a Viennese trained artist, made when turning his back on central European culture and embracing the Serbian “barbarians” was additionally fuelled by the object of exhibition. For the exhibition he created a model for the future *Vidovdan Temple* (*Vidovdanski hram*), to be built in commemoration of the Kosovo Battle (Fig. 1.32). The proposed design combined Catholic and Orthodox elements; it was in the shape of the Catholic elongated cross, the dome was Serbian-Byzantine, whilst the outside was richly decorated with the secessionist features, such as the caryatides (modelled on heroes of Kosovo epic) and sphinxes of classical proportions.¹⁸⁶ The monument was an epitome of the fusion of the South Slav traditions and the beginning of the *Integral Yugoslavism*. Meštrović created the model of the Temple for the Rome exhibition and produced several sculptures in marble that were to be inside the temple. The sculpture of Miloš Obilić was central to the series of planned sculptures. The

¹⁸⁵ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 201-202.

¹⁸⁶ Wachtel A.B. – *Ivan Meštrović, Ivo Andrić and the Synthetic Yugoslav Culture of the Interwar Period* in Djokić, 2003, 242

Serbian government accepted the idea, but the decision for the place of its erection was not made. Originally, it was planned to be somewhere in Belgrade, or on the Avala Hill, just outside the town, but the Balkan Wars interrupted this.¹⁸⁷ After the Balkan Wars ended in 1913 and Serbia finally put under its control the territory of Old Serbia, the decision to build Meštrović's *Temple on Gazimestan*, in Kosovo, where the actual battle took place seemed logical. This also remained unfulfilled, as war broke out in 1914. Today, the model of the *Vidovdan Temple* is kept in the Kruševac City Museum, whilst some of the surviving sculptures are in London's *Victoria and Albert Museum* and the *Tate Gallery* (Fig. 1.33).



Fig. 1.32 – The *Vidovdan Temple*, model for the monument, designed by Ivan Meštrović. Planned dimensions were 250m length and 100m height. After the Second World War it disappeared, until it was accidentally discovered in the New York port in 1968. It was returned to Kruševac in 1971.



Fig. 1.33 – *Torso of Banović Strahinja*, a Kosovo Myth hero, made by Meštrović in 1907. Donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Serbian Government in the same year.

¹⁸⁷ Макуљевић, 2006, 291

1.5.2 The Golgotha of Serbia¹⁹⁰ and Resurrection of Yugoslavia – 1914-1919

When the hostilities began in 1914 the government ordered evacuation of the state archives, treasury and other institutions from Belgrade and their transfer to Niš, Kragujevac and Kruševac, away from the military lines of advance. When Austro-Hungary occupied Serbia in 1915, the attempts to remove Serbian national symbols were accompanied by plundering and destruction of valuables from libraries, archives and monastery treasuries.¹⁹⁷ For the state in retreat it became almost impossible to preserve all the documents that the Government ordered to save. The archives only managed to survive in part, owing to the efforts of individual custodians.¹⁹⁸ An unknown number of artefacts, old manuscripts and books collected during the 19th century by the National Museum and the Library of the Serbian Royal Academy was destroyed, looted or lost.¹⁹⁹ Writing in 1940 on the 50th anniversary of the academy, the then president Aleksandar Belić (1876-1960), reported the severe damage inflicted particularly on the mediaeval collections of the Academy.²⁰⁰ After the war and in accordance with the Readmission Agreement, the Serbian government required the return of documents taken during the war, but in 1940, there was no available data on the results of these actions.²⁰¹

Damage to the housing, infrastructure and pre-war industry amounted to over 50%. The public buildings erected in the 19th century were particularly targeted as they symbolized the existence of the Serbian state (Fig. 1.34). In November 1915, an American journalist Cyril Brown, reporting for *The New York Times*, wrote about “*the sorriest of three conquered capitals he had visited...Belgrade is dead...Circling around the rock-crested citadel, passed up the avenue of handsome dwellings, facing the park behind the citadel not one house survived the cloudburst of steel and fire.*”²⁰³ Four years later, in December 1919, the Associated Press reported for the same

¹⁹⁰ The phrase frequently used by Serbian historians for the 1914-1918 period.

¹⁹⁷ Cornwall in Mitrović, A. – *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918*, London, 2007, xii

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.archives.org.rs> – Accessed 03/04/2012

¹⁹⁹ Constantine Hörmann, the pre-war Director of the *Land Museum* in Bosnia and Herzegovina was appointed a chief-commissar in the occupied Serbia. He personally supervised the transfer of parts of the museum collections from Serbia to Austro-Hungary. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 389-400.

²⁰⁰ Белић, Београд, 1941, 218

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, 175. Not even after the Second World War and during the relatively stable Yugoslav period, the overall loss was never established.

²⁰³ http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?_r=1&res=9E00E1D7133FE233A25757C0A9649D946496D6CF - Accessed on 03/04/2012

newspapers that Belgrade was “still desolate and as the Germans and Austrians left it. Owing to the lack of materials, money and labour no steps have yet been taken by the authorities to restore the scores of residences, public buildings and other property that fell under the enemy bombardment. Nothing has been done yet to repair even the royal palace, which windowless, scarred and neglected looks like a great empty barrack.”²⁰⁴ The palace of Old Court, built for Milan in 1884, was not properly repaired until the 1930s. The works on the erection of the St.Sava Memorial Church were stopped and were only resumed in the 1930s. There was a similar situation throughout Serbia. In this crippled condition, the “Balkan Piedmont” ventured into the new project: Yugoslavia.

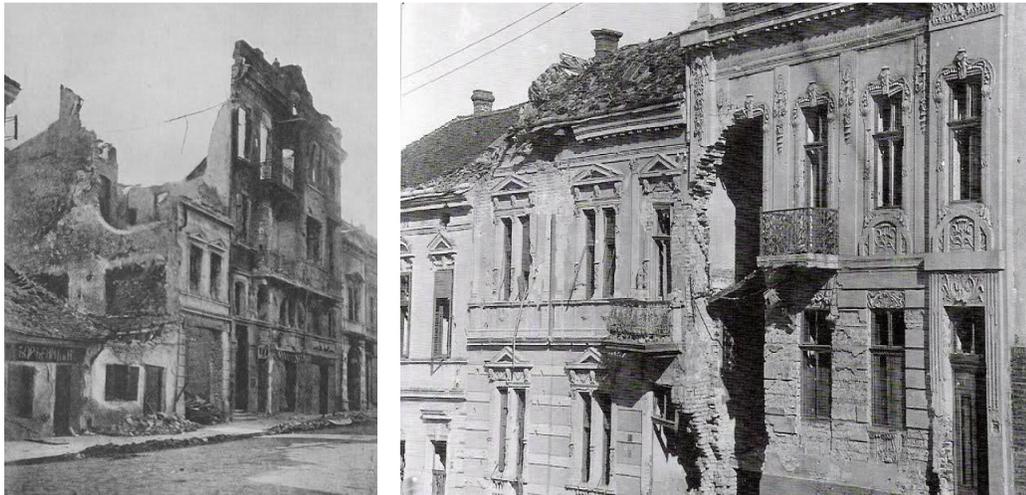


Fig. 1.34 – Damage to the housing, infrastructure and the little industry that existed before the First World War was to such an extent that many were not repaired until the late 1930s or at all. The exact date when the photograph of the to the left was taken is unknown, but it is most commonly presumed to be some time in the late 1915 or early 1916, whilst the photograph to the right, depicting the Tadeuša Koščuška Street was taken in 1922. None of these buildings exist anymore in Belgrade.

1.6 The First Yugoslavia – 1918-1941

Borders of the new South Slav state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS),²⁰⁵ were determined during the *Versailles Peace Conference* in 1919. The internationally respected Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927) actively participated in the debate over the borders of the future unified state (Fig. 1.35). Like many of his contemporaries, he received his doctorate in Vienna in the late 19th century

²⁰⁴<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archivefree/pdf?res=9806E3DE133BEE32A2575BC2A9649D946896D6CF> - Accessed on 03/04/2012

²⁰⁵ Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes - Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca – Kingdom SHS in the following text.

and on returning to Serbia became a professor at the Grand School. When the Grand School was re-named the University of Belgrade in 1905, he became one of the most prominent scientists, publishing his works in Serbian, German and French. Cvijić's research on Balkan geography and geomorphology, for which he was renowned in Europe, was accompanied by an interest in the anthropology and ethnology. The Annexation Crisis of 1908 prompted him to write about the exodus of the *Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*,²⁰⁶ which consequently led to further works on anthropogeography of the Southern Slavs and their ethnic spatiality. Some results of his work were used by the Entente Powers for partial determination of the borders of the new Yugoslav state. During the communist period, his work was re-interpreted for the needs of "brotherhood and unity" policies. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the majority of non-Serbian academics interpret him as a promoter of Greater Serbian expansionism.²⁰⁷



Fig. 1.35 – Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927)



Fig. 1.36 – Gliša Elezović (1879-1960)

²⁰⁶ <http://www.rastko.rs/antropologija/cvijiic/govori-clanci/jcvijic-iseljavanje.html> - Cvijić, J. - *O iseljavanju bosanskih muhamedanaca*, Književni glasnik, 16 Jun 1910, Beograd – Cvijić, J. – *On exodus of the Bosnian Mohammedans*, Literary Herald, 16 June 1910, Belgrade (My translation) – Accessed on 05/04/2012

²⁰⁷ Current revisionist trend deliberately omits the fact that his research coincided with the Balkan Wars and the First World War and was heavily involved in an ongoing academic war that was taking place between Serbia and Austro-Hungary. There is no indication that his work was anything but in accordance with the prevailing principles that guided European scholars at the time.

The economic situation of the Kingdom SHS, directly influenced educational and cultural development, as the former Ottoman territories had hardly any educational system in comparison with the former Austro-Hungarian territories. Slovenia, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Vojvodina and the Serbian Kingdom in their pre-1912 borders had longer and better educational traditions and illiteracy continually declined after the second half of the 19th century. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Metohija, Raška, and to a certain extent Montenegro, schools were almost non-existent.²¹⁸ Macedonia, despite the activities of Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek governments did not improve literacy rates significantly, because of the frequent political disturbances. The new state, thus, had a series of problems ranging from unevenly developed economies to the ethnically mixed territories. It also had a major problem of reconciling different religious affiliations and cultures into one integral Yugoslav culture. This, of course, was best done through a unified educational system, but that proved difficult to implement: the schools differed significantly, in terms of teaching facilities, school networks, qualified teachers and accessibility. For some parts of the country, the expected standards were too low, for others unachievable.²¹⁹

Additionally, Serbian expectations that former Austro-Hungarian territories would easily accept the Serbian school curriculums were not realised. Serbian understanding of Yugoslav unity rested on 19th century postulates of the unity of language and history and national pride for self-liberation from foreign oppressors. As a result, the Serbian government could distribute its textbooks among the Serbian population in the former Austrian territories and in Old Serbia. In Slovenia and Croatia, on the other hand, Habsburg textbooks remained in use making no mention of South Slav ethnic connections and previously downplayed references to Serbia.²²⁰

Another problem related to the unified educational system existed in areas with predominantly Muslim populations. Already in 1908, Cvijić expressed his concerns over the state of education amongst the Muslim Slav population.²²¹ He recorded that

²¹⁸ Поткоњак, 2005, 46

²¹⁹ Ibid, 46

²²⁰ Lampe, 2006, 96

²²¹ <http://www.rastko.rs/antropologija/cvijic/govori-clanci/jvijic-aneksija.html> - Cvijić, J. - *Sabrana dela*, Knjiga 3 (Tom I): *Govori i članci, Aneksija Bosne i Hercegovine i srpsko pitanje*, Beograd, 1987 - Cvijić, J. – *Collected Works*, Book 3 (Vol. I): *Speeches and Articles, Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serbian Question*, Belgrade, 1987 – The Article was originally published in Serbian, during the Annexation Crisis, and immediately after that in French, Russian, Czech and only partly in English. All publications were forbidden in Austria-Hungary. The English translation of the title is my own. – Accessed on 05/04/2012

by 1908 the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina was covered by only 253 primary schools, which was “even fewer than in Old Serbia and Macedonia, four secondary schools and no University.” Nearly 100 schools were run by either Serbian Orthodox or Roman Catholic communities, whilst the rest were organized by the Austrian authorities seeking converts to Catholicism.²²² Apart from the Muslim aristocracy which adhered to the Ottoman education, the Muslim Slav population since the Berlin Congress was completely illiterate.²²³

The inclusion of the Kosovo Albanians into the new Yugoslav state proved to be even more difficult. The Albanians attempted some form of national emancipation for the first time in 1878 with the formation of the *Prizren League*, but did not possess an educational apparatus for the demanding task of nation building.²²⁴ The Albanian clan structure continued to dominate the Albanian communities in Kosovo and Metohija. The only educational activities amongst the Albanian population occurred through the work of Catholic Albanians or Western missionaries and travellers. There were indeed some attempts by Serbian scholars to study Albanian culture and society and their impact on Serbian culture, before the First World War, but these attempts were under the umbrella of Oriental Studies established in the 1860s, when the research concentrated on the Ottoman documents relating to Serbia.²²⁵ Not until 1923, with the work of the Serbian historian and orientalist Gliša Elezović (1879-1960), born in Vučitrn,²²⁶ did Albanian folklore and ethnology become the focus of studies for the interaction between the Albanian and Serbian traditions (Fig. 1.36).²²⁷ Because of financial difficulties and war losses, the Academy was unable to resume this aspect of its work on the pre-war scale until 1925.

The physical reconstruction of devastated areas, economic stagnation and the inclusion of populations which participated in the war on opposite sides into the new state structures presented a big challenge to the process of nation-state building. As Serbia had come out of the war with huge losses and public declarations of great

²²² *ibid*

²²³ Despite current attempts of the majority of the Western scholars to interpret Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as “enlightening and civilization-bearing,” the educational activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina during four decades of occupation were minimal in comparison with the military and resources-exploiting. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 406-408.

²²⁴ See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 279-280.

²²⁵ Белић, 1941, 55

²²⁶ Situated in the central Kosovo and Metohija.

²²⁷ Elezović’s collection of several Albanian poems is used by the contemporary Western promoters of the Kosovo Battle as an exclusively Albanian myth. See, Di Lellio, 2009, 69-167

respect from its allies,²²⁸ the Belgrade government did not see the need to change its state structures in new circumstances.²²⁹ It was assumed that the Serbian national idea and cultural concepts were adequate for the future consolidation of the unified South Slav state, as the Serbs still represented the largest and politically most powerful group. Alternatively, the new state could adopt the amalgam of existing national specificities and combine them. The final option was to create a completely new culture, shared by the “three tribes” that formed the kingdom. However, the idea of assimilation to the Serbian culture was a 19th century model.²³⁰ After the devastation of the Great War, the Serbian national model was not that attractive to the unaffected former Austrian-Hungarian territories.

The 1903 Constitution was updated, declaring the Kingdom SHS as a constitutional monarchy ruled by the Karadjordjević dynasty. Peter I (1844-1921, ruled 1903-1918) was crowned the King of Serbia in 1904 on the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising. Since his accession to the throne, he did not interfere in the work of the parliament and dedicated himself to promoting a western-style democratic society. Educated in military academies in Switzerland and France and having lived for most of his life in exile in Europe, he translated John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* into Serbian in his early twenties and was the closest to a royal intellectual that Serbia ever had (Fig. 1.37). Aware that his claim to the throne was internationally questioned after the coup in 1903, Peter sought to win the support of the Serbian people through his modest lifestyle and charitable works.

Unlike his Obrenović predecessors, he was not involved in great projects of nation-building, but he supported them nevertheless. In the year of his accession he personally chose the place where the First Serbian Uprising began in 1804 for building

²²⁸ Britain and British society actively participated in the Serbian myth-making during the First World War much in the same way as they did in the 1990s, during the creation of the Bosnian and Albanian myths and national narratives. Whilst the British press in the decade prior to the war was predominantly anti-Serbian, from 1914, this trend radically changed. Immediately in August 1914, a *Serbian Relief Fund* was set up to provide medical help, supplemented by the *British Red Cross*, a *Scottish Women’s Unit* and the *Berry Mission*. A number of upper-middle-class British women, pre-war suffragettes, came to aid and nurture the “uncouth” Serbian soldiers and later published their memoirs, adding to the perception of Serbs as pseudo-Westerners. In the patronizing terms of Elsie Inglis, Lady Paget and Eveline Haverfield, the Serbs “were not as dirty folk as our East Enders, but were on the level of 17th century England.” Among the Serbs, Western civilization was “only skin-deep”, but they are to be “respected for their martyrdom” and the “tears of Serbia were as the bloody sweat that fell at Gethsemane.” (Cornwall in Mitrović, 2007, xv) – Serbia had been treated in a similar way by France and the US. The Russian perception of Serbia significantly differed. Russia entered war in order to protect Serbia, but after the October Revolution, the new Soviet authorities distanced themselves.

²²⁹ Pavlowitch, S. K. – *Serbia, Montenegro and Yugoslavia* in Djokić, 2003, 63

²³⁰ Wachtel in Djokić, 2003, 239

a Karadjordjević family mausoleum. The mausoleum church, dedicated to St. George, was designed by Kosta Jovanović and executed in the Serbian-Byzantine national style in 1910-1912 (Fig. 1.39), according to the recommendation of Mihajlo Valtrović and Andra Stefanović. During the war it was severely damaged and looted and extensive repairs were needed.



Fig. 1.37 – King Peter I Karadjordjević (1844-1921, ruled 1903-1921) was already 60 when crowned king of Serbia.



Fig. 1.38 – King Aleksandar I Karadjordjević of Yugoslavia (1888-1934, ruled 1921-1934) was a great promoter of *Integral Yugoslavism*.

The ageing king withdrew from active politics in 1914, but participated in the tragic withdrawal of the Serbian army across Albania. After the war, until his death, Peter I's only interest was to personally oversee the reconstruction works on his family mausoleum, living with his workers in a modest house near the building site and letting his son, Prince Regent Alexander become the *de facto* ruler (Fig. 1.38). This move earned him enormous popularity among the Serbian peasants, but it was also well received among the European powers because of the smooth transition of power. However, King Peter died before the mausoleum was completed and was finished by Alexander.

The mausoleum represents one of the last examples of the Serbian national style in architecture and the peak of national self-expression. The church was built entirely from local white marble, but it is the interior that underlines the national state narrative. Built as a Karadjordjević family tomb, the mosaics that cover the inner walls, cupola

and the crypt narrate Serbia's history, as starting from the southern apse, the unbroken line of Serbian Nemanjić kings and Lazarević Despots, each of them depicted holding in their hands models of their main endowments and offering them to God (Fig. 1.40). The last Serbian ruler to offer a church to God was Peter I himself, holding in his hands the model of the Mausoleum. Unsurprisingly, none of the Obrenović rulers were depicted in the church, even though the Obrenović family from the time of Miloš until Alexander I endowed over one hundred churches in the Principality. Nevertheless, even this deliberate omission of the Obrenović dynasty from the line of kings could not change the accepted and by the 20th century firmly established narrative of the resurrection of Serbia in 1804. Another link in the historical narratives was expressed by the chandelier, shaped like the mediaeval Nemanjić crown, turned upside-down, symbolizing the lost Empire in the Kosovo Battle. The chandelier was moulded from the melted rifles of Serbian soldiers who crossed Albania in 1915 (Fig. 1.41).



Fig. 1.39 – The Mausoleum of the Karadjordjević dynasty on the Oplenac.



Fig. 1.40 – The depiction of the line of mediaeval Nemanjić kings in the bottom row.



Fig. 1.41 – Chandelier shaped as mediaeval crown turned upside-down.

1.6.1 Integral Yugoslavism – 1919-1934

Prince Regent Alexander I assumed control of the state and the army at a critical time. King Peter I was very much a man of the 19th century and since he withdrew from power before the unification, his views on the idea of the Yugoslav nation remain insufficiently researched. Alexander, however, was openly in favour of Yugoslavism. Born in the Montenegrin capital, Cetinje, educated in Switzerland and St. Peterburg, he was exposed to Yugoslav ideas from childhood. But it was not only

his personal affiliations and close friendships with Ivan Meštrović and a number of Croat intellectuals that enabled the formation of the idea of integrative national models.

The ideology of *Integral Yugoslavism* promoted the vision of a common history leading towards unification. Since the time of Vuk Karadžić and the Illyrianists, such works appeared regularly, as they served as a defence against foreign, primarily Austro-Hungarian, cultural influences. In the years before and after the First World War many texts following this idea were published, but not all of them had the expected impact. The publication of the *History of Yugoslavia* in 1933 by the Belgrade historian Vladimir Ćorović (1885-1941), native of Mostar, Herzegovina, was carefully addressing the problem of unified national identity of three Yugoslav nations (Fig. 1.42). It was noted at the time for its balance, even though it firmly criticized the ideology of *Integral Yugoslavism*.²³¹



Fig. 1.42 – Vladimir Ćorović (1885-1941)

During and after the war, the generation of the intellectual elite working on building the Serbian nation-state at the turn of the century had died out. The President of the Academy Stojan Novaković died in 1915 during the withdrawal of the government and other institutions. Mihajlo Valtrović, one of the creators of the Serbian national revival in architecture, also died in 1915. Jovan Ilkić died in a Hungarian

²³¹ Ćirković, 2004, 263

concentration camp in Nezider in 1917. This decimated professional class proved too small for the task of re-building the national idea.

Alarmed by the scope of damage inflicted upon Serbia, the Ministry for Construction, on the advice of the Serbian Royal Academy, formed the Conservation Committee in 1922 to assess the level of damage on the historic architectural heritage and consider the work on restoration projects.²³² In the next ten years, all efforts concerning heritage were directed towards the preservation and restoration of the most important mediaeval and ancient monuments, with little new archaeological or architectural research dedicated to the nation-building process. In the atmosphere of the newly proclaimed Yugoslav identity, the national revivalist styles that were promoted for nearly three decades before the First World War ended abruptly, with only the works began prior to 1914 being completed. The extent of works and conservation methods applied firmly established conservation as a discipline separate from (re)construction.

However, the preservation of urban landscapes, marked by intensive re-building, failed to receive adequate attention because of the urgent nature of works. Some very important pre-war aesthetic features were lost forever.²³³ This was partly because of financial difficulties and partly because of the small number of surviving professionals. Some relief came in the early twenties when nearly 30,000 Russian émigrés poured into Serbia after the October Revolution filling significant vacant posts. Naturally, they brought their own aestheticism, which had nothing or very little in common with the Serbian national style. All public buildings in Belgrade and other towns were in need of intensive repairs; these new Russian architects, however, did not apply simple replication methods, concentrating instead on monumentality and classical forms. This was best expressed by the government complex near the Old Palace in central Belgrade. The building of the new National Assembly (Fig. 1.43), began in 1907 by Jovan Ilkić, was finished only in 1936 after extensive re-designing in neo-classical style by Ilkić's son Pavle and the Russian architect Nikolai Krasnov (1864-1939). As the original designs were lost during the war, the new classical features were considered elegant, supra-national and symbolized belonging to the family of European nations. Krasnov went on to design a new building for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finances in 1928-1938 period (Fig. 1.44), whilst

²³² Белић, 1941, 176

²³³ A good example is rebuilding of the National Theatre in Belgrade. Compare Fig. 1.11 and Fig. 1.12.

another Russian architect, Vasilij Baumgarten (1879 – died after 1945) designed the new General Headquarters (1928) and the Russian House (1933).²³⁴ Similarly, none of the public buildings in other Serbian towns, designed and erected after the First World War, were built in the Serbian national style. Ethnically neutral classical forms and shy appearance of modernism marked the re-building of Serbian territories and foundation of the unified Kingdom SHS instead. Admittedly, there were some attempts to create an original *Yugoslav Style* in architecture, but they never materialized.²³⁵

Prior to the creation of the Kingdom SHS, most of the 19th century public monuments in the Serbian Kingdom concentrated on celebrating national heroes, historic and legendary, as well as the sites where great battles of the past or important political events took place.²³⁶ The awareness of the importance of public monuments existed amongst the Serbs since the late-18th century, when Dositej Obradović recommended the erection of the statue to Zaharije Orfelin, because the message they communicated was an easily understandable allegory of a person's achievements²³⁷ or a symbol of national suffering and sacrifice.²³⁸

After 1919, however, the monuments (both erected and those which were intended to be but never built) were conceptualised around the same premise of equal sacrifice of all South Slavs for the Yugoslav idea, in the officially promoted *Integral Yugoslavism*. Ivan Meštrović, owing to his personal influence on the King, became a leading figure of *Integral Yugoslavism*. As a key-court artist, he was commissioned to execute the majority of monuments celebrating the South Slav liberation and unification. King Alexander's *Integral Yugoslavism* was epitomised in his initiative for the erection of the *Monument to the Unknown Hero (Spomenik neznanom junaku)*. Built on the Avala Hill just outside Belgrade in 1934-1938 over the remains of the mediaeval fortress, it was designed by Ivan Meštrović as a re-interpretation of the ancient tomb of Kyr II of Persia, in neo-classical form of a Greek temple (Fig. 1.45).

²³⁴ Maldini, S. – *Enciklopedija arhitekture: arhitektura, urbanizam, dizajn, enterijer, Volume 1* – Beograd, 2004, 82

²³⁵ The Dinaric wooden cottage, typical of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was taken as a model for the creation of Yugoslav national style in the late 1920s. It was one of the key-features of the Paris Exhibition in 1937. However, by then, the Yugoslav state and identity were in deep crisis. Ignjatović, A. – *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi*, Beograd, 2007, 119

²³⁶ Макуљевић, 2006, 275

²³⁷ For example, Prince Mihajlo's equestrian statue in front of the National Theatre in Belgrade, erected in 1874-1882 period.

²³⁸ A number of monuments commemorating the struggle for liberation from the Ottomans was erected after the *Berlin Congress*. Most of these are in the category of small memorial churches erected throughout the territory of Serbian Kingdom.

The Monument was a memorial to all victims of the Balkan and First World Wars. Nonetheless, the caryatides, Meštrović's signature, were in the form of women from all parts of the Kingdom, which symbolized that all South Slavs contributed equally to unification.²³⁹ Apart from the *Monument to the Unknown Hero*, another representative example of *Integral Yugoslavism* was the *Monument to Victory* unveiled in 1928 (Fig. 1.46). Positioned on the highest point of the Kalemegdan Fortress in Belgrade in the shape of a naked warrior, standing on the top of a pillar, holding a hawk in his left and a sword in his right hand, and without any national resemblances, the warrior symbolized the struggle of all South Slavs in the 1912-1918 wars. His bare masculinity, facing Vienna, whilst his back turned towards Istanbul, was a clear message to both old empires.



Fig. 1.43 – The building of National Assembly in Belgrade, began in 1907 after the design of Jovan Ilikić. As it was destroyed during the First World War and the original designs lost, it was re-designed by the Russian émigré-architect Nikolai Krasnov in neo-Classical style and erected in 1936.

The war devastation created a new form of public monuments, the so-called *memorial buildings*, dedicated to the Great War heroes and heroines. Memorial buildings, most commonly hospitals and orphanages (Fig. 1.47), served two purposes:

²³⁹ Wachtel in Djokić, 2003, 248

to commemorate those they were dedicated to (Fig. 1.48) and to solve enormous social problems caused by the war devastation.²⁴³



Fig. 1.44 – The building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finances, designed and erected in neo-Classical style by Nikolai Krasnov in 1928-1938.

²⁴³ Until then, the memorial buildings were endowments of the rich individuals to future generations or churches erected by the money of rich *ktitors* (from Greek: *κτήτωρ*, benefactor). Since the devastation of Serbia was such, it was decided that the memorial to Dr Inglis, one of the most respected members of British medical missions during the First World War, was to be the *Memorial Hospital Dr Elsie Inglis for Women and Children*. The construction began in 1922 and had its first patients in 1930. In the great hall of the hospital, to the right side were the memorial plaques with the names of beneficiaries. To the left were the plaques with the expressions of gratitude. The central place was reserved for the bronze busts of Dr Elsie Inglis (1864-1917) and an American surgeon Dr Rosalie Slaughter Morton (1876-1955). The *Memorial Hospital Dr Elsie Inglis* was under the patronage of Queen Marija until the Second World War. Little is known that modern *Hospital Dr Dragiša Mišović*, one of the most important Belgrade hospitals, was erected in a memory of a woman who almost single-handedly organized work on saving Serbian soldiers and civilians. The reason that the original name of this institution was almost forgotten is not difficult to guess: After the Second World War, the communist regime removed all memories of the Serbian state, as it was not in accordance with the new policies of “brotherhood and unity.” The hospital was renamed after Dr Dragiša Mišović, a Communist sympathiser who died under the Royalist regime in 1939. When Lady Isabel Hutton, another important member of the British Medical Aid to Serbia in 1915-1919, visited Belgrade after the Second World War, she visited the hospital and was unpleasantly surprised to discover that the memorial plaques to her friend and colleague Dr Inglis were covered by the socialist-realistic paintings representing the new proletarian rebuilding of Yugoslavia and the bronze busts removed. She pleaded to the authorities and the plaques were re-instated. The bronze busts were never found. One of the ironies of history was that this very building that survived the devastation of the Second World War was destroyed by the NATO bombs in the night 19-20th May 1999. It was re-built in 2002. Also, see footnote 228 above. http://www.dragisamisovic.bg.ac.rs/stranice/a_onama_istorijat_elsieinglis.html - The official web-site of the “Hospital Dr Dragiša Mišović” - Accessed on 25/02/2014



Fig. 1.45 – Monument to the Unknown Hero on Avala, near Belgrade, by Ivan Meštrović, erected in 1934-1938. For this purpose, the remains of the mediaeval fortress of Žrnov were demolished.



Fig. 1.46 – *Monument to Victory* by Ivan Meštrović, erected in 1928 on 10th anniversary of the winning of the Salonika Front.



Fig. 1.47 – *Memorial Hospital Dr Elsie Inglis for Women and children*, Belgrade



Fig. 1.48 - Dr Elsie Inglis (1864-1917)

The slow urban recovery of Serbian towns and their embellishment with Yugoslav symbolism was followed by the requirement of the Academy for the new Act on Museums. The members of the Academy, led by the President Jovan Cvijić, aware that the state would not be able to provide financial support, urged in 1924 for a separate Act on Museums which would regulate all museums in the territory of Serbia in its pre-1914 borders, with the inclusion of Vojvodina and Montenegro.²⁴⁴ However, this was not politically plausible and it took another ten years for the Ministry of Education to propose another Act that would regulate the relationship between the central and local museums and conservation centres.

²⁴⁴ Белић, 1941, 195

Meanwhile, the Serbian Royal Academy entered the *International Research Counsel* in London and *Union Académique internationale* in Paris following the 1918 initiative of the English Royal Society for connecting the works of various academic institutions throughout Europe.²⁴⁵ Starting from this time, the Academy began reciprocal exchange of materials with other European, mainly French and British, academies and established regular publishing of its materials in French. As the state was unable to provide the necessary support for research of the Serbian heritage anymore – as, indeed, even if it was financially possible, it would have almost certainly been directed towards *Integral Yugoslavism* – the Academy's research objectives turned to the pre-historic and pre-Slavic ancient past. This was prompted as much by practical reasons for obtaining the foreign funds, as by the general interest of the European scholars for these subjects.

By the early 20th century, the romantic interests for national self-discovery evolved into various theories of the origins of nations and prompted the research of the ancient cultures. After Valtrović's death, his student and successor in the University of Belgrade and the National Museum, Miloje Vasić (1869-1956) undertook the excavations on the pre-historic site of Vinča on the right bank of the Danube. Since the 1890s, local people were finding and bringing into the National Museum various artefacts, but the initial excavations were done only in 1908. The subsequent political crisis and wars postponed the works until 1924, when Vasić and his British colleague John Linton Meyers attempted another excavation, but this was halted again because of the lack of funds. The excavations were resumed in 1929 when Sir Charles Hyde (1876-1942) took a personal interest in the matter and provided funds.²⁴⁶

Another Valtrović's student, Nikola Vulić (1872-1945), after being appointed a professor of Ancient History at the Grand School in 1897, organized the archaeological research of the known Roman sites. Viminacium was already detected in 1866, but Vulić's research concentrated on general aspects of regional ancient history, classical philology and epigraphy and the application of the strict scientific principles for which he became internationally renowned. Vulić and his colleagues were credited with the

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 199

²⁴⁶ Novaković, P. – *Archaeology in New Countries in Southeastern Europe: A Historical Perspective* in Lozny, L.R. – *Comparative Archaeologies: A Sociological View of the Science of the Past* – New York, 2011, 390

excavation of the amphitheatre in ancient town of Scupi (modern Skopje) as well as the works on Stobi in central Macedonia (Fig. 1.49). However, neither Vasić nor Vulić had sufficient funds to undertake full-scale excavations and mapping of all pre-historic and ancient sites, but they established a firm base for future development of these disciplines.

In 1934 the Serbian Academy founded a special institute concerning exclusively archaeology – the *Institute of Balkan Studies*. Its journal *Revue internationale des Études Balkanique*, which had international character, regularly published research results.²⁴⁷ The predominant interest in pre-historic and ancient sites in the territory of Serbia in its 1914 borders, was not designed to establish the nation’s ancient origins, as the national narrative was already formed around its Slavic ethnic roots dating from the time of migration in the 6th-7th centuries, with its “Golden Age” epitomised in the Nemanjić era of the 12th-14th centuries. It was partly influenced by the available funds arriving from abroad and partly by the general trends of European archaeology at the time. It also served well as the cultural counter-argument in the increasingly unstable Yugoslav Kingdom.



Fig. 1.49 – Partly excavated the ancient city of Stobi in central Vardar Macedonia.

²⁴⁷ Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 392

1.6.2 Disintegrative Yugoslavism – 1919-1941

Whilst Serbian, Croatian and Slovene leading intellectuals sought to achieve national harmony, both the internal and external political situation severely affected the implementation of *Integral Yugoslavism*. Unfortunately, the former Austro-Hungarian territories retained old imperial administrative borders until 1922, which made it difficult to integrate the legal systems. A similar situation arose in the sphere of the economy. Croatian industrialists, bankers and politicians refused to aid the economic recovery of Serbian economy, following the dispute over the exchange rate between the former Austrian *krone* and the Serbian *dinar*, which replaced it as the unified currency. Equally, as the war reparations were slow to arrive, the wages for the labour employed in the economic recovery of Serbia plummeted. This situation enabled the growth of influence of the Communist Party, which took a significant percentage of votes in the general elections of 1920.²⁴⁹

Fearing the spread of Soviet communism, the Yugoslav authorities outlawed the Communist Party and imposed strict economic policies which were all sanctioned by the 1921 *Vidovdan Constitution (Vidovdanski Ustav)*. The agrarian reforms, which included the confiscation and division of the great feudal estates, awarding them to the poor peasants, were imposed on the territories in Old Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and Macedonia), and to a lesser degree in Slavonia and Vojvodina. Feudalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Dalmatia was also abolished. As prior to the war only Serbia had no feudal ties and all its peasants owned the land they worked, this measure was Belgrade's attempt to ease the burden of economic disparities. The peasants from the inhospitable mountainous areas of Herzegovina and Montenegro moved to the abandoned and confiscated land as colonists.²⁵⁰

Even though hardly affected by the agrarian reform, the Croats immediately opposed such measures as they saw them as a violation of their rights.²⁵¹ Stjepan Radić (1871-1928), the leader of the Croat Peasant Party was the chief opponent of these policies and openly advocated an independent Croatia, as he had opposed since 1918.²⁵² The strong political language and frequent verbal provocations led to the

²⁴⁹ Lampe, J.R. – *Yugoslavia As History: Twice There Was a Country* – Cambridge, 2000, 120

²⁵⁰ Lampe, J.R. – *Balkans into Southeastern Europe* – London, 2006, 96

²⁵¹ The colonisation of arable lands in Yugoslav lowlands was later explained as a Greater Serbian attempt to “serbianize” non-Serbian lands

²⁵² *Ibid*, 55

assassination of Radić by a Montenegrin member of the *Serbian Radical Party* during the parliamentary session in June 1928. The following political disarray was ended by King Alexander's dissolution of Parliament and the abolition of the Vidovdan Constitution. On 6 January 1929, the King declared a royal dictatorship and, guided by his own vision of *Integral Yugoslavism*, changed the name of the country into Yugoslavia. The whole territory of Yugoslavia was divided into nine districts (*banovinas*) whose borders corresponded to neither the ethnic nor historical delineation. Croat and communist nationalists later interpreted this move as a Serbian attempt to draw borders in such a way that Serbian political influence from Belgrade would prevail. The Serbs were also dissatisfied, as they believed that in order to preserve a unified country they had to sacrifice the most important legacy they brought to Yugoslavia – their liberal-democratic institutions of the old kingdom achieved in the decade preceding the First World War.²⁵³ These events caused a poisonous rift between Croats and Serbs and influenced all future interpretations of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a stage for the “Greater Serbian Hegemony.”²⁵⁴

In the aftermath of Radić's assassination, the fascist organization of the *Ustaše* was formed in Zagreb, agitating for an independent Croatia. Its leader Ante Pavelić (1889-1959), signed in 1929 an agreement in Sofia with the Bulgarian IMRO aiming for the “liberation of Croatia and Macedonia” from the Serbs.²⁵⁵ For these purposes, special units were trained in Italy and sent back to target state institutions. Similarly, the pro-Bulgarian IMRO bands were regularly raiding across the Bulgarian border. A series of high profile murders of nearly 200 Serbian officials and 600 gendarmes, including the Minister of the Interior, forced the government to introduce a virtual martial law to maintain order.²⁵⁶ This was particularly difficult in Kosovo and Metohija, where paramilitary Albanian *kaçak* units had regularly attacked the Serbian gendarmerie since the time of the First World War.²⁵⁷

However, the turbulent political events of the 1920s and 1930s in Yugoslavia, presently viewed as the primitive nationalism of the Balkan nations, cannot be

²⁵³ Djokić in Djokić, 2003, 150

²⁵⁴ There is no consensus on when the term “Greater Serbia” was first introduced. It certainly existed in the inter-war period and was used in an equally negative context by the Croat nationalists and Yugoslav communists.

²⁵⁵ Ramet, S. – *The Three Yugoslavias – State Building and Legitimation – 1918-2005*, Washington, 2006, p. 82. See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 200

²⁵⁶ Lampe, 2006, 96

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 96-97

analysed independently from the general political, cultural and even religious influence of the rest of Europe.²⁵⁸ The rise of Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany and the Great Economic Crisis of 1929, affected the world on an unprecedented scale. The whole idea of the nation-state and national identity changed.

Croatian *Ustaše* and the Bulgarian IMRO organized the assassination of King Alexander I during his official visit to France in October 1934. The eponymous last words of the king: “Preserve Yugoslavia!” were immediately seized upon by the regime as Alexander’s political testament.²⁵⁹ Whether the dying king really said those words or not is less relevant than the fact that they maintained the support for keeping the kingdom unified on the eve of the Second World War. Judging by the sorrow expressed throughout Yugoslavia, his autocratic rule was not disliked to the extent later officially promoted by the communist regime.²⁶⁰ He was buried in the Kardjordjević Mausoleum, completed only four years earlier.

1.6.3 The first death of Yugoslavia

Ćorović’s premise that *Integral Yugoslavism* had failed to achieve its goals proved correct.²⁶¹ As shown earlier, the circumstances surrounding the unification were a complex set of problems, difficult to resolve in the short period of time and without taking into account external factors affecting the formation and development of a country incorporating so many different traditions. The main obstacle for the creation of a single Yugoslav nation was a total absence of “founding myths.”²⁶² Both Serbs and Croats achieved much during the 19th century process of self-discovery. By the time of unification, the myths of “Mediaeval Golden Age” were well formulated and described on many occasions, but were used by the 19th century scholars as an intertwining narrative for both nations. The religious affiliations were explained by the influence of the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium, respectively, whilst the existence of Muslim Slavs was interpreted as the Serbian/Croat conversion after the 15th century Ottoman conquest.

²⁵⁸ The political assassinations were not limited to Yugoslavia only. Bulgarian politician Alexander Stamboliskii was assassinated in 1923, whilst the Albanian Interior Minister and future King Ahmet Zogu was shot in the Parliament in the same year. 1923 was also critical for the massacres committed during the Greek-Turkish war (1919-1922/3).

²⁵⁹ Djokić in Djokić, 2003, 136

²⁶⁰ Ćirković, 2004, 264

²⁶¹ Ђоровић, В. – Историја српског народа, Београд, 1997, 423-434

²⁶² See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, discussion on Ethno-Symbolism, p. 68-70.

However, the Croatian lack of statehood and Serbian perception of their great sacrifice during the Great War to liberate *all* Yugoslavs resulted in mutual resentment by 1939. As there was no conventional history of Yugoslavia prior to the unification, the interpretations of the mediaeval and Ottoman periods and their impact on South Slavs concentrated on the Kosovo Battle. The Serbian national myth was celebrated as a pan-Yugoslav myth, as the 1389 Serbian sacrifice for Christendom supporters of *Integral Yugoslavism* compared to those in the 1912-1918 wars.²⁶³ However, the 28 June, apart from being a state bank holiday since 1889, was also a Serbian Orthodox Church saint's day, which was quintessentially national and had enjoyed state support since the early days of independence. In 1920 the Metropolitanates of Sremski Karlovci, Belgrade and Montenegro restored the Serbian Patriarchate, which had been abolished in 1766 in the Ottoman Empire and reduced to a Metropolitanate in 1703 in the Habsburg Empire. The creation of Yugoslavia, however, meant that the Serbian Orthodox Church lost its privilege as the state church, as all religions were proclaimed equal. Since the Roman Catholic Church owed allegiance to the Vatican, this required a special agreement, *Concordat*, between the Yugoslav state and the Holy See which would regulate the appointment of the catholic priests and bishops in Yugoslavia. The Serbian Orthodox Church was suspicious of any such agreement, as it associated the Catholic Church with Austro-Hungary and its attempts to create a Uniate Church during the 18th and 19th centuries.²⁶⁴ Negotiations with the Vatican began in 1922, but the text of the *Concordat* was agreed only in 1937, when Prince Paul approved it. On the day of the vote in Parliament, clashes between the opponents of the *Concordat* and gendarmerie erupted in Belgrade followed by the death of Patriarch Varnava on the same evening. This event prevented any future co-operation between the two churches. After this unfortunate series of events, the Croats saw the Kosovo Battle not as "the founding myth of the Yugoslav nation," but as an attack on Croat national identity. Croat dissatisfaction with the Serbian dominated government and dynasty prompted Prince Paul to attempt conciliation. On the eve of the Second World War, in August 1939, the *Banovina of Croatia (Banovina Hrvatska)* was created (Map 1.a.14). The signing of the agreement enabling the establishment of Banovina of Croatia echoed the 1868 *Nagodba*.²⁶⁵ Serbian intellectuals strongly objected to the *Agreement*,

²⁶³ Djokić in Djokić, 2003, 151

²⁶⁴ Radić, R. – *Religion in a Multinational State: Case of Yugoslavia* in Djokić, 2003, 199

²⁶⁵ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 156-157.

criticizing the Croatian “habit of signing agreements within the state they lived, without any intention of keeping their promise.”²⁶⁶ This Croat attitude was seen as essentially anti-statist, negative and destructive.

The deteriorating relationship between the two political and state traditions, the former Habsburg and Serbian territories, led to the rejection of *Integral Yugoslavism*, first by Croat and then by Serbian intellectuals. The co-operation between the JAZU in Zagreb and the Serbian Royal Academy in Belgrade, despite being forbidden by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, had been the most interactive and productive prior to 1914. Strangely, when after 1918 these obstacles were removed, the two academies reduced their collaboration “because of the change of circumstances.”²⁶⁷ Croat intellectuals began perceiving *Integral Yugoslavism* as an attack on their own national identity by an “inferior and barbarous orthodox culture.”²⁶⁸ Already in the early 20th century, the leading Croat poet, Antun Gustav Matoš (1873-1914), wrote that “*as long as our culture is anational, non-Croat, Yugoslav – Serbian culture, though inferior, will continue to act and create confusion among us until our culture becomes national and free, like the Serbian culture.*”²⁶⁹ Matoš wrote about this at the turn of the century, influenced by the dominant Austrian and Central European attitude towards Serbia as “alien” and inferior. Following the economic and political discord after 1918, old Austrian ideas of the inferiority of “Ottomanised” Serbia were reinterpreted. Metternich’s remark that “Asia begins at the Landstrasse (in Vienna)” was re-worded as “the Black Balkans begin behind the Esplanada Hotel (in Zagreb).”²⁷⁰

Serbian intellectuals, on the other hand, saw this attitude as disrespectful of Serbia’s sacrifice during the First World War. For them, *Integral Yugoslavism* presented too great a compromise in favour of the Croats. In 1937, Slobodan Jovanović (1869-1958), a professor at Belgrade University, Cvijić’s co-participant at the Versailles Conference and successor as the President of the Royal Academy 1927-1931, founded in Belgrade the *Serbian Cultural Club* (*Srpski kulturni klub*), for

²⁶⁶ Ćorović in *Srpski glas*, 1939, quoted in Dimić, Lj. – *Srpski kulturni klub i preuređenje jugoslovenske države – Dijalog povjesničara – istoričara*, IV, Pečuj, Zagreb, 2001 2001, 364

²⁶⁷ Белић, 1941, 198 – Belić, being diplomatic on occasion, did not explain what this “change of circumstances” was.

²⁶⁸ The negative depiction of Serbia and Serbian Orthodoxy amongst the Croats was re-deployed Austro-Hungarian rhetoric dating back from the decade preceding the First World War. A decade of such propaganda was undoubtedly remembered by the disaffected Croat intellectuals who saw Yugoslavia as the least desirable option for Croatia. See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 196-198.

²⁶⁹ Matoš, 1938, 93 quoted in Banac, 1988, 103

²⁷⁰ Quote often contributed as a witty remark of the great Croat writer Miroslav Krleža.

Serbian intellectuals who criticised the regime's policies of *Integral Yugoslavism*. Disillusioned with the growing disparities between the "three tribes" of Yugoslavia, Jovanović (Fig. 1.50) and his colleagues advocated "*the enlightened patriotism*" that could be achieved only through "*the spiritual mobilization*" of the masses.²⁷¹

The inability of the regime to solve the political problems in Yugoslavia was seen as a direct consequence of the loss of a whole generation of an educated elite able to guide the country through the upheavals of inter-war politics. One of the greatest problems that Jovanović emphasised was the lack of understanding of the mentality and knowledge about the people who lived in Yugoslavia. Authority was given to "unprepared and inexperienced people who did not understand the new times."²⁷² Jovanović was also suspicious of Croat demands to draw borders within Yugoslavia. The creation of *Banovina Hrvatska* on 24 August 1939 was seen as a great defeat for Serbian politicians, as it allowed nearly one million Serbs to be incorporated within the borders of the Banovina. Despite calls, dialogue never took place. Within a week, the Second World War in Europe had broken out. In Yugoslavia, the war began on the 6 April 1941.²⁷³

Germany occupied parts of Serbia were subject to strict military laws, which only accelerated the growth of the mutually exclusive resistance movements: the Communist *Partisans* and some units of the former Royal Army, *Četniks*.²⁷⁴ The majority of the leading pre-war intellectuals, concerned with the Serbian national question, left the country within days after the outbreak of war. Certain that the Nazi-regime would repeat the tactics used by the occupation forces during the First World War, when the elite was the first to be deposed and imprisoned in various concentration camps, a significant number of Serbian scholars attempted and managed to escape. In the evacuating retinue of the young King Peter II was Slobodan Jovanović, who had briefly assumed a ministerial role on 27 March. Vladimir Ćorović, the respectable author of the *History of Yugoslavia*, also joined the king, but his plane crashed somewhere over Greece. Aleksandar Belić, the President of the Serbian Royal Academy remained in the occupied Belgrade, away from public life.

²⁷¹ Dimić, 2001, 362

²⁷² *Srpski glas*, 1939, quoted in Dimić, 2001, 364

²⁷³ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 47

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 57



Fig. 1.50 – Slobodan Jovanović (1869-1958), was the Professor of Law at the Belgrade University, liberal and anti-Communist. Because he was a founder of the *Serbian Cultural Club* and Minister in the Royal Government after the coup in 1941, the Communist authorities proclaimed him a Greater Serbian nationalist. He died in exile in London in 1958.

Immediately after the partition of Yugoslavia, with key-personalities removed from public and political life, a systematic pillage and destruction of Serbian national heritage began. Apart from the great number of casualties resulting from the war, state institutions and public monuments were deliberately targeted (Fig. 1.51). The whole of 19th and 20th century towns were destroyed. Belgrade, a symbol of Serbian national identity, was particularly targeted as the Nazi ideology considered it the originator of German humiliation after the First World War.²⁷⁵ The *Old Royal Palace* reconstructed only in the 1930s was severely damaged again. The building of the National Museum, inaugurated in 1936, following the reconstruction after the First World War, was also damaged with an unknown number of artefacts being lost.²⁷⁶ Individually, the greatest material loss was the total destruction of the National Library which comprised nearly 350,000 books as well as its entire historic collection (Fig. 1.52). In the above mentioned 1940 report of Aleksandar Belić, the archive of the National Library contained 1397 mediaeval manuscripts, written in Serbian redaction of the Old Slavonic or in Latin. He also described the additional 8797 “numerals” of which some

²⁷⁵ The Nazis discriminated between Serbian and former Austro-Hungarian provinces. Central Serbia was systematically destroyed, with only those buildings deemed useful to the German forces retained.

²⁷⁶ <http://www.narodnimuzej.rs/code/navigate.php?Id=4> – Accessed on 14/04/2012

contained “up to 2000 smaller documents.²⁷⁷” Of 1397 mediaeval documents, only 12 survived, as they were outside the Library during the bombing.



Fig. 1.51 – Adolf Hitler in front of the war “trophy” from Yugoslavia – a memorial plaque to Gavrilo Princip, the *Young Bosnia* assassin of Franz Ferdinand in 1914 – sent to him as a birthday present in April 1941. The photograph was taken by Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler’s official photographer. The inscription on the plaque reads: “*In this historic place Gavrilo Princip announced freedom on Vidovdan, 28th June 1914.*” The photograph, now kept at the Bavarian State Library, provides an excellent link between the First and Second World Wars. – Originally published in the Belgrade weekly *Vreme* on 31 October 2013.



Fig. 1.52 – The Neo-Classical building of National Library of Serbia, destroyed on 6 April 1941. An unknown number of books and manuscripts, kept and collected since 1832 was destroyed. The ruins of the library (right) are still visible in Belgrade.

²⁷⁷ Белић, 1941, 214

1.7 The Second Yugoslavia – 1945-1991

In 1945, the new federal organization of Yugoslavia left the Serbs most dissatisfied, even though the Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia had been the predominant element in the Partisan army. The prevailing feeling was that the federal constitution had harmed the Serbs in a number of ways; firstly, there was a notable absence of punishment for Croatian political choice of 1941 and their genocide of the Serbs.²⁸⁵ Secondly, the invention of the new nations of Montenegrins and Macedonians was seen as undermining the Serbian national core and thirdly, war refugees were allowed to return to Croatia, but there was no return for Serbian colonists expelled from Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia (15770 families), because they had been awarded land by the monarchy. After the war ended, Kosovo and Metohija remained within the framework of Serbia, soon to be awarded a status they had never held before: that of a separate autonomous region. Serbs and Montenegrins expelled from Kosovo and Metohija during the war by Albanians were banned from returning home by Yugoslav authorities, who decided to allow the Albanians from Northern Albania, settled there during war by occupational forces and their Albanian quislings to remain.²⁸⁶ This asymmetry became a great source of dissatisfaction; Serbia was the only republic divided into three units. It was observed that Dalmatia was now regarded as the “historic land” of Croatia, even though the Serbs were present there in greater numbers and more compact than any of the ethnic minorities in Vojvodina. The Serbian Party representatives were outvoted in all these matters.²⁸⁷

1.7.1 The Serbian republic within federal Yugoslavia

As the Germans retreated, the Allies bombed Serbia repeatedly, from April 1944 until the end of the war in May 1945. This brought the level of devastation to an unprecedented scale. Immediately after the liberation, the main concern of the new communist government was the immediate housing of nearly 3,500,000 homeless people.²⁸⁸ The surviving residential areas in towns were divided into smaller units, so

²⁸⁵ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 203-210.

²⁸⁶ Ordev, I. – *Erasing the Past: Destruction and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Former Yugoslavia – Religion in Eastern Europe*, XXIX, Vol.1, 2009, 3

²⁸⁷ Ćirković, 2004, 274-276

²⁸⁸ Singleton, 1985, 206

they could house more people. In Vojvodina, the new authorities confiscated the estates of local Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) accused of collaborationism during the war, and re-settled Serbs from the poorest mountainous areas of the Dinaric range.

The Soviet model of “five year plan” for industrial development was followed by the *ad hoc* construction of cheap utilitarian housing on a large scale. There were no attempts to reconstruct the pre-war and 19th century structures. The reasons for this were twofold; first, the exact reconstruction was expensive and, secondly, it was a reminder of the *Greater Serbian bourgeois* past.²⁸⁹ All reminders of the monarchy were removed, Serbian national style in architecture demolished wherever possible and all individuals associated with the old regime were forbidden to participate in public life. This particularly affected intellectuals and professionals as they were usually of upper middle class background. However, as the rebuilding programmes required educated professionals, some of the “unacceptable bourgeois” were allowed to retain their posts. University professors and academics who did not emigrate were restricted to teaching and research within various institutions, whilst the field-work was reserved for those willing to accept the ideological and visual aestheticism of *Socialist Realism*, a Soviet import officiated by the new regime.²⁹⁰

The transition to *Social Realism* was performed by a small group of pre-war modernists who appeared in the early 1930s. *Modernism*, like the *historism* and the *secession* before it, came to Serbia about twenty years after it originally appeared in Europe. This was traditionally explained by the lack of modern training at Belgrade University and its adherence to conservative academism. Therefore, this slow emergence of *modernism* in Yugoslavia (as indeed in Greece and Romania) was not a product of “genuine social needs and painstaking struggles and experiments of the *avant-garde* artists and architects” as was the case elsewhere in Europe.²⁹¹ Serbian modernists were all classically trained in Belgrade, Vienna, Paris and other European centres, but their acceptance of modernism was ideological. Modernism, for them, was part of the accelerating Europeanization, as they had different aesthetics from those of the nation-builders. However, most of the Serbian modernists were not communists and after 1945 their careers ended even though they were only in their early forties.

²⁸⁹ Compare Fig. 1.26 and Fig. 1.27 above. There are many similar replacements in other towns in other Serbian towns.

²⁹⁰ Maldini, 2004, 307

²⁹¹ *Ibid*, 307

They could not accustom themselves to the ideological and visual world of *Socialist Realism*. With some exceptions, they retained respectable social positions; some of them became university professors, members of the *Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts*,²⁹² indulged in scholarly research, wrote books. Opportunities to execute anything creative were limited. Unable to understand the new age, those pre-war classically trained Modernists who were still employed “made professionally immaculate, but cold and uninventive houses that did not reveal a single trace of their former ambition or skill.”²⁹³ The only pre-war modernist who managed to retain artistic creativity beyond *Social Realism* was Nikola Dobrović (1897-1967), who had studied at Prague. He was appointed director of the newly established Institute for Urbanism of the Republic of Serbia in 1945, and was responsible for the urban rebuilding after the war. His aestheticism, however, was guided by limited resources and imposed ideological principles which he managed to combine with the philosophy of *modernism*. Naturally, there were no “national” elements in his work.²⁹⁴ The imposed Soviet style methods of industrialization caused massive internal migrations of peasants from mountainous areas to towns. Twenty years after the war most towns doubled in size and this accelerated urbanization required the expansion of the educational network.

Parallel with the physical rebuilding, the new regime imposed different value systems. The *Integral Yugoslavism* of King Alexander was immediately re-labeled “Greater Serbian Hegemony” despite the fact that its main exponents were actually Croat intellectuals. Yugoslav unity was now organized around the harmonization principles: all nations and republics were treated as wartime victims; all had made equal sacrifices, and all those who opposed the Partisans during the war were indiscriminately labeled as servants of the occupying forces. This was particularly difficult for the Serbs to accept, as the equality sign was put between the genocide committed by the Croat regime of Ante Pavelić and the activities of the royalist army of Draža Mihajlović who fought against the Germans in the name of the King.²⁹⁵

²⁹² For obvious reasons, the Serbian Royal Academy was renamed into the *Serbian Academy of Arts* in 1947. In 1960 it changed its name into the *Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts* – SANU in the following.

²⁹³ Maldini, 2004, 306-308

²⁹⁴ Dobrović was responsible for the urbanization of Priština, which was, until 1945, a very small town of Oriental type, consisting of mud-brick single-storey houses without historically significant representative buildings dating from the Ottoman period. Albanian authors today accuse Dobrović of destruction of Priština heritage and interpret the urbanization of Priština as “Greater Serbian genocide against the Albanians.” See, Herscher, A. – *Violence Taking Place – The Architecture of the Kosovo Conflict*, Stanford, 2010

²⁹⁵ Again, see *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 201-206

Instead of an open public and critical debate about the events of the Second World War in the light of facts, actual circumstances and against the general European political background, the party version of history was imposed.²⁹⁶

Communist Yugoslavia also needed its founding myths. However, this time it was easier to find them in the Yugoslav Committee and the *Corfu Declaration* of 1917.²⁹⁷ The romantic ideas of South Slav unity were reinterpreted as the wish for the liberation of oppressed masses in order to live in harmony.²⁹⁸ Apart from the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, this list of oppressors included all three Serbian/Yugoslav kings. The communist version of *Integral Yugoslavism* was presented in the form of the “brotherhood and unity” policy, which after Tito’s famous break with Stalin in 1948, concentrated on Tito’s personality cult (Fig. 1.a.20).

After the initial reforms of 1945, a general reform of Yugoslav education led by the Croat Minister of Education Miloš Žanko, confirmed the “fundamental orientation towards the proletarian ideology and complete abandonment of the bourgeois educational models,” which also included “writing of new textbooks and re-training of the teachers.”³⁰⁰ Particularly sensitive language and history syllabuses were re-organized around the “brotherhood and unity” policies, which were based on the re-interpreted reform of Vuk Karadžić and the 1850 *Literary Agreement*. Because of the Second World War attempts by Pavelić’s regime to “purify” the Croatian language from Serbian words and create a separate language, the new Croatian leadership needed to disassociate itself from the wartime Nazi-regime, whose language reforms remained in use for some time after the war. Thus, Karadžić’s and the Illyrianists’ calls for the unity of the language were re-invented into the text of the new *Literary Agreement* between *Matica Srpska* and *Matica Hrvatska*, signed in Novi Sad in 1954. The *Novi Sad Agreement* stated that the language of the Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins is one Serbo-Croat/Croato-Serbian language, with three main dialects and regional accents, written in Karadžić’s orthography and with equal use of both Cyrillic and Latinic script. In 1971 *Matica Hrvatska* withdrew its signature from the

²⁹⁶ Ćirković, 2004, 290

²⁹⁷ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 39-40.

²⁹⁸ In that sense, Gavrilo Princip was celebrated as one of the martyrs to the Yugoslav cause and a new memorial plaque dedicated to him was unveiled in Sarajevo in the same place from which the original one was sent to the Nazi leader in 1941.

³⁰⁰ Поткоњак, 2005, 55

agreement claiming it was given under pressure. The Serbian side retained the Agreement until 1993.

1.7.2 Serbian nationalism defeated

In Tito's Yugoslavia, the sensitive issue of history, historical research and interpretation were in accordance with Marxist philosophy, economic and social issues prevailing over the traditional approaches.³⁰¹ Marxist theories encouraged the use of archaeological evidence in combination with the written sources and as many of the written documents were lost, this method moved the general Yugoslav interest of research from the late to the early Middle Ages. Therefore, a new Institute of Archaeology within the SANU was created in 1947 with its primary aim being to organize and co-ordinate fieldwork research through a new network of local museums and professionals, as well as to supervise heritage protection and develop strategic principles.

The shortage of professional expertise led to the re-instatement of some of the pre-war experts. Miloje Vasić (Fig. 1.53) was re-called from his retirement to resume his archaeology teaching at the university, but it was immediately clear that the programme needed more professionals. For this purpose, a few other classically trained lecturers were recalled from retirement to enhance academic training. After Vasić died in 1956, his students Milutin and Draga Garašanin took over his responsibilities (Fig. 1.54).³⁰² One of their first projects was a detailed archaeological map of Serbia published in two volumes between 1953 and 1956.³⁰³

As research interests after 1945 moved to the early Middle Ages and the time of the arrival of the Slavs, two new courses were introduced: Slavic archaeology and the archaeology of the Near East. The Garašanins, although limited by the imposed ideology, succeeded in increasing the importance of Serbian academic research in international circles. From the 1960s the University of Belgrade and the SANU re-established relationships with a number of European and American institutions, initiating a collaborative research. These were, however, interested in pre-historic and

³⁰¹ Curta, 2006, 29

³⁰² Draga Garašanin later clashed with the Albanian scholar Muzafer Korkuti's about his theory of the Albanian ethnogenesis and vigorously opposed his methods. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 258-263.

³⁰³ Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 391-393

ancient sites; the Neolithic Vinča³⁰⁴ and Mesolithic Lepenski Vir³⁰⁵ cultures were of interest to Berkley, Harvard and Berlin university experts, whilst the Roman sites³⁰⁶ attracted the Louvre Museum and French School at Rome, as well as the New York University.³⁰⁷



Fig. 1.53 – Miloje Vasić (1869-1956)



Fig. 1.54 – Milutin (1920-2002) and Draga (1921-1997) Garašanin. Milutin was a great-grandson of Ilija Garašanin, Serbian Prime Minister and the author of the *Draft*.

For obvious reasons, national archaeology did not play central role in this period, although the surviving mediaeval sites were subject to conservation. The conservation of heritage was from 1947 under the authority of the re-established Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, which from the 1960s and 1970s transferred its work to provincial and local branches. However, conservation principles were not strictly applied in the immediate post-war reconstruction. Again, the reasons were twofold: insufficient funds and the official party line which required the removal of all Serbian national symbols. Like in all communist countries, the public display of national pride was concentrated on the personality cult of Tito and the communist revolution. This was endorsed through the network of newly opened local museums

³⁰⁴ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 1-3.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 16-17

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 22

³⁰⁷ Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 395

from 1950s onwards, which dedicated much of their spaces to the celebration of the Second World War official history.

All royal palaces were confiscated, refurbished and given to Tito for his personal and official use or became public buildings. After its destruction in the war, the National Museum was finally moved into the reconstructed building of the former Mortgage Bank³⁰⁹ in 1952, from where it co-ordinated the development of local museums on the whole territory of Serbia until the 1970s, when new administrative division of Serbia placed much of the heritage in Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija under the authority of Provincial governments. The National Library was never rebuilt. The new library was temporarily placed in a pre-war hotel, until the decision was made to erect an entirely new building on the construction site of the Memorial Cathedral of St.Sava on Vračar. It was designed and built in the style of *Social Realism* by a Croat architect Ivo Kurtović (1910-1972) only in 1972 (Fig. 1.55).

As most religious activities were discouraged, the reconstruction of churches demolished or damaged during the Second World War was either stopped or postponed. The St.Sava Memorial Cathedral, began in the late 19th century, shared the fate of other churches. The building of the cathedral was halted during the First World War, slow in the inter-war period and in 1941 had only the base and church walls raised to a height of around ten metres.³¹⁰ Patriarch Gavriilo (1881-1950), after surviving Dachau, was not allowed to return to Belgrade until 1946 and address his concerns regarding the reconstruction of destroyed orthodox churches and confiscation of the church estates, including the area dedicated to St.Sava's Cathedral. The religion was not officially forbidden, but it was side-lined from the main public life.

The erection of public monuments was, naturally, following the Party lines and aestheticism of *Social Realism*. Generally, large public monuments celebrated the Communist struggle against the foreign oppressors and enemies of the people's revolution (Fig. 1.56). Those dedicated to individuals celebrated Partisan heroes and were most commonly in the form of bronze busts (Fig. 1.57).

³⁰⁹ See Fig. 1.24

³¹⁰ Aleksov, 2003, 63



Fig. 1.55 – The National Library of Serbia, built in 1972 after design of Croat architect Ivo Kurtović.

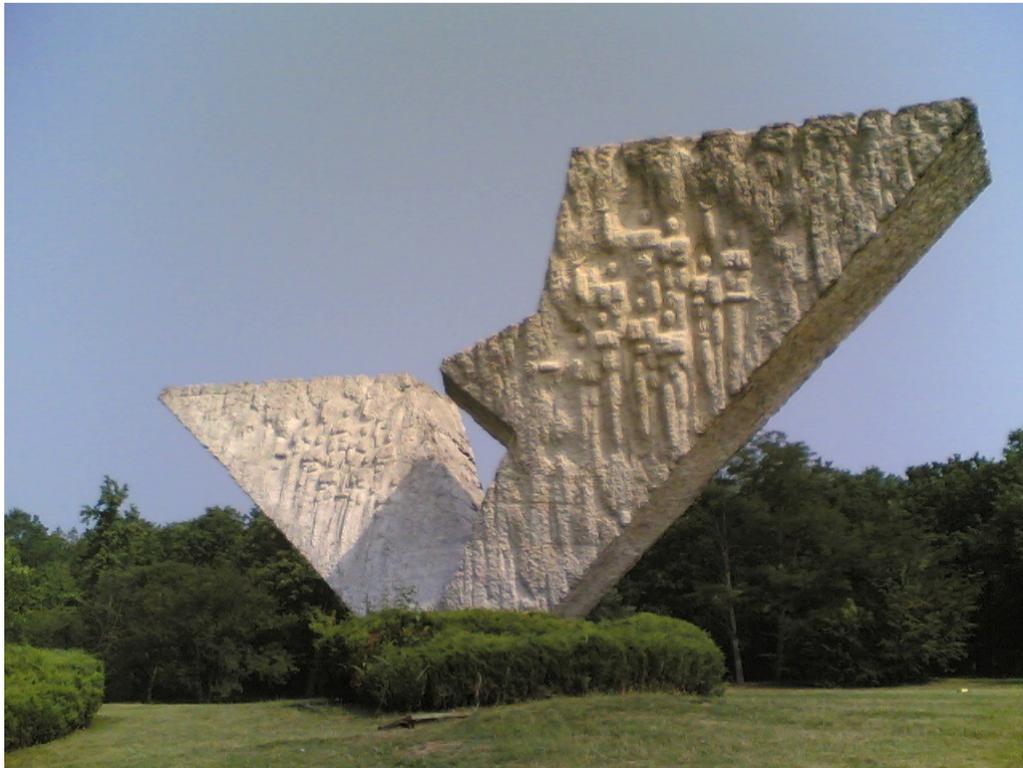


Fig. 1.56 – The Memorial Park Šumarice in Kragujevac, erected in 1963, dedicated to the memory of 3,000 citizens of Kragujevac among which were the pupils and teachers from Kragujevac schools. The Germans executed the civilians on 21 October 1941 following the orders to execute 100 Serbs in exchange for one killed German soldier. Sculptor Miodrag Živković designed the monument in the shape of Roman numeral V, representing the grade V-3 of the Kragujevac Gymnasium.



Fig. 1.57 – The Tomb to People’s Heroes on Kalemegdan, erected in 1948 set the trend of celebrating Communist leaders. Among the four most respected Communist heroes is Moša Pijade, Tito’s closest friend and confidant, who died and was buried there in 1957.

1.7.3 Serbian statehood defeated

After the announcement of the new nations in 1945, pressure began on the Serbian Orthodox Church demanding the consent for the creation of separate Macedonian and Montenegrin orthodox churches. As Patriarch Gavrilo (1881-1950) was a native of Montenegro himself (Fig. 1.58), it was politically impossible to achieve the split of the church immediately. The question of separate churches re-opened in 1958, when the authorities attempted to establish the autonomous Archibishopric of Ohrid within the Serbian Orthodox Church. However, the sudden death of Patriarch Vikentije (1890-1958) was too reminiscent of the death of Patriarch Varnava during the *Concordat* crisis of 1937³¹³ that it had to be postponed until 1967 when Tito decreed the creation of the autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church (Fig. 1.59).³¹⁴

The Albanian question posed another problem for Serbia within Yugoslavia. The revolutionary year of 1968 brought into focus for the first time the demands of the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija to form a separate republic, based on ethnic borders

³¹³ See p. 93-94 above.

³¹⁴ See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 359-360.

within the Yugoslav federation. According to the 1961 census, by then they numbered around 61% of the population of Kosovo and Metohija.³¹⁵ In 1968, the Albanian demonstrations required removing the name of Metohija³¹⁶ from the official name of the Province, as it was considered to be a symbol of “Greater Serbian hegemony.”³¹⁷



Fig. 1.58 – Patriarch Gavriilo (1881-1950), a native of Montenegro.



Fig. 1.59 – Patriarch Vikentije (1890-1958), born in Vojvodina, then part of Austro-Hungary.

This upset the remaining Serbian members of the Communist Party and prompted a few of them to openly question the sincerity of the “brotherhood and unity” policy which since the end of the war coined and widely used the phrase “weak Serbia, strong Yugoslavia.” The phrase came into prominence in the early 1960s, when the adoption of the 1963 federal constitution finally officially sanctioned it.

The Croat-Serb dichotomy grew during the 1960s. When the debate about the new federal constitution began following the failure of the *Croatian Spring* in 1971, the CPY leadership was forced to make concessions to the Croat members of the Party. Serbian philosopher and a law professor Mihajlo Đurić (1925-2011) publicly attacked these actions and interpreted proposed constitutional amendments as the foundation of

³¹⁵ Biserko, S. – *Kovanje antijugoslovenske zavere*, Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava, Beograd – Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Belgrade (Sponsored by Germany), 2006, 12

³¹⁶ The name *Metohija* derives from the Greek word μετόχια (*metókhia*), meaning “monastic estates” – a reference to the large number of villages and estates in the region owned by the Serbian Orthodox monasteries and Mount Athos during the Middle Ages – Cola, P. – *The Search for Greater Albania*, London, 47

³¹⁷ Herscher, 2010, 53

the confederation and “essentially anti-Serbian” (Fig. 1.60).³²⁴ He was sentenced to a year in prison and a number of Belgrade University lecturers who supported him publicly lost their posts. After this, any criticism of the Constitution of 1974 by Serbian intellectuals was considered “a resurrected nationalistic call for Greater Serbia.”



Fig. 1.60 – Mihajlo Djurić (1925-2011)

The Party line for curbing the “Greater Serbian hegemony” after 1945 was evidenced in foundation of new universities which would counterweight Belgrade arguments, should they cross the official Party narratives. After the University of Skopje in 1945, new universities were opened in Sarajevo (1949), Podgorica (1974) and Novi Sad (1960).³²⁵ Finally, the University of Priština was opened in 1970, with the languages of instruction in both Albanian and Serbo-Croat. This Party-organized expansion of the network of higher education in the post-war period when the number of lecturers was low due to war losses, forced retirement and emigration resulted in a decline in the quality of instruction.³²⁶

Following the same party-line, the SANU was undermined by the creation of Provincial academies in Kosovo (1978) and Vojvodina (1979). By then, the first generation of Albanian intellectuals educated in Albanian language schools that were

³²⁴ Pavković, A. – *Yugoslavia's Last Stand* in Djokić, 2003, 254

³²⁵ See corresponding chapters of this work.

³²⁶ Ćirković, 2004, 282

opened in Kosovo and Metohija after the war, had reached maturity and asserted their desire to create closer links with the University of Tirana.³²⁷

In 1971 the Albanian scholar Muzafer Korkuti (Fig. 3.7) had published the theory of the Illyrian ancestry of Albanians which was wholeheartedly accepted by Albanian students in Kosovo and Metohija. Belgrade academics, already dissatisfied with the position of Serbia within Yugoslavia and events from 1968-1971, saw this theory as threatening to the Serbian territorial integrity.³²⁹ However, the academic disagreement did not spread beyond the academic circles until Tito died in 1980. Demands for Kosovo to be declared a separate republic were renewed during the demonstrations that erupted in the province again in 1981. A series of attacks on the Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries escalated with the burning of the dormitories of the Patriarchate of Peć complex on 15 March 1981. The army and police suppressed the demonstrations, but there was no investigation of the events, as all police officials were ethnic Albanians.³³⁰ Even though the Serbian Orthodox Church, alarmed by the violations of its remaining property in Kosovo and Metohija, recorded and reported the abuse of its property on many occasions from 1968, the state authorities did nothing to investigate.³³¹

In the following years, the situation became increasingly tense. The pressure on the remaining Serbian population in the southern province increased, causing the massive emigration of more than 50,000 the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija into the territory of inner Serbia. This silent exodus, followed by a great disparity in the birth-rate between the Albanian Muslim and Serbian Christian population, resulted in reducing the Serbian population to 10% by 1991.³³² By 1985, Serbian dissatisfaction grew to an extent which prompted the SANU to draft a document aiming to address the problems of decentralisation in Yugoslavia that, in their opinion, threatened its disintegration. An unfinished document, titled *Memorandum*, was leaked to the press

³²⁷ Biserko, 2006, 12

³²⁹ Draga and Milutin Garašanin engaged with Korkuti in often heated academic debate. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 259-263.

³³⁰ Herscher, 2010, 47

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 53

³³² Ordev, I. – *Erasing the Past: Destruction and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Former Yugoslavia – Religion in Eastern Europe*, XXIX, Vol.1, 2009, 3

in September 1986 and immediately launched a ferocious polemical debate throughout Yugoslavia.³³³

1.7.4 The Memorandum

In general, the *Memorandum* emphasised the disadvantageous position of Serbia within Yugoslavia since the Second World War and the growth of anti-Serbian feelings under Tito and Kardelj's controversial 1974 Constitution. It addressed the "subjugated position of Serbia" as the "provinces even entered into coalition with other republics, as a result of which the Republic of Serbia invariably found itself outvoted at the federal level. This bizarre situation is easier to understand if we remember that Tito, a Croat, and Kardelj, a Slovene, had the final say on appointments of officials to the provincial administrations."³³⁴ The systematic destruction of the Serbian national core since the end of the war was explained by the Croat phrase that "everyone should put his own house in order," which allowed "the republican governments to treat the Serbs as best suited their separatist agendas." A growing advocacy for national states and "historical rights of each new nation created after the Second World War" were the epicentre of the critique of the *Memorandum*.³³⁵

The *Memorandum* also underlined the post-war communist practise of inserting a sense of guilt into the Serbian national identity for the "Greater Serbian hegemony" of the inter-war period: "The frustration felt by Serbian intellectuals because of the position to which they had been relegated was...that both the political and cultural leaders of Serbian nationality are suffering from a kind of preordained guilt complex, and out of compunction to allow the proscribing of those actions and those deeds, or even just intentions, which under normal circumstances are naturally manifested by every nation and minority....This unbearable atmosphere of intrigue, scheming, slander and mud-slinging from a distance, resulted in many (Serbian) human and creative values being trampled upon for no reason."³³⁶ As expected, the response of

³³³ SANU did not interfere in Yugoslav politics since 1945. Four decades of intellectual, academic and institutional dormancy proved to be too detrimental to Serbian argument on the eve of internationalisation of Yugoslav dispute.

³³⁴ *Memorandum*, 1993, 10 – The integral version of the document is available throughout Internet. For the purposes of this work the version from <http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/iii/memorandum.pdf> was used. This statement was especially relevant for Kosovo and Metohija. There were no Serbs in Kosovo institutions after 1966.

³³⁵ *Ibid*, 10-12

³³⁶ The quote actually represents the words of writer Florika Stefan, an ethnic Romanian. She wrote these words in 1971, which were then quoted in the *Memorandum*, 1993, 12

the non-Serbian parts of Yugoslavia was that the *Memorandum* represented the re-assertion of the “Greater Serbian hegemony” and from this period onwards, the internal relations within Yugoslav institutions were blocked.

1.7.5 A brief revival of Serbian national pride – 1986-1991

The publication of the *Memorandum* closely coincided with three important anniversaries for the Serbs: the 800th anniversary of the erection of the Studenica Monastery in 1986, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Vuk Karadžić in 1987 and the 600th anniversary of the Kosovo Battle in 1989. The appropriate celebrations were organized to mark these anniversaries ranging from publication of books related to Vuk Karadžić’s life, work and legacy, editions of Serbian mediaeval history, to television series and films. The anniversaries provided an opportunity for the re-assertion of national history and state-tradition that had existed prior to the creation of Yugoslavia. Karažić’s collection of Kosovo epics were re-printed and received new attention. The Kosovo Battle anniversary renewed interest for the Serbian Mediaeval history and the battle itself by modern Serbian scholars. New publications were, of course, abundant, but the occasion also prompted the re-publishing of the works of Serbian historians of the 19th and early 20th centuries, forbidden or side-lined after 1945. The original works of Vuk Karadžić and his contemporaries, as well as works of Stojan Novaković, Jovan Cvijić and Vladimir Ćorović, were also re-printed and published. Consequently, interest in Serbian mediaeval history and culture grew beyond the anniversary celebrations, resulting in a renewed interest in the whole Serbian mediaeval heritage, primarily in its mediaeval monasteries and Nemanjić castles.

Since 1945 the mediaeval archaeological and architectural sites received the best possible conservation, but this was not widely publicized. In 1979, however, the first Nemanjić capital Ras³³⁷ with its central monastic site of Sopoćani (Fig. 1.61) received UNESCO status as “*the buildings of Stari Ras represent an impressive group of medieval monuments consisting of fortresses, churches and monasteries. The monastery at Sopoćani is a reminder of the contacts between Western civilization and the Byzantine world.*”³³⁸ Seven years later, in 1986, following the extensive

³³⁷ The capital of Raška region, Old Serbia, after the Ottoman conquest renamed into Sanjak, now the centre of dispute with the predominant Muslim population in the region.

³³⁸ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/96> -Accessed on 19/04/2012

conservation works, the Studenica monastery (Fig. 1.62), built as a royal tomb by the first Nemanjić in 1186, was also given UNESCO status. These works, however, were publicized in a series of documentaries on Serbian mediaeval architecture and its specific features that included both Byzantine and Catholic influences, as expressed by the three mediaeval architectural schools that Serbian architects tried to revive in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Finally, the ill-fated erection of the St.Sava's Cathedral on Vračar that was stopped in 1914 and 1941 was allowed to be resumed in 1985.



Fig. 1.61 – The Sopoćani Monastery, built around 1260s, is the first example of the *Raška School* to be listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Site in 1979.



Fig. 1.62 – The Studenica Monastery, built in 1186, is the oldest and best example of the *Raška School* of Architecture, which combined Byzantine and Romanesque architectural elements. Listed as a World Heritage Site in 1986.

1.8 The second death of Yugoslavia

The wars of Yugoslav succession 1991-1999 put into prominence the deliberate destruction of national heritage and architecture, both modern and historical, as well as the archaeological sites that were associated with the culture of the enemy.³⁴² As the whole war was watched by the world media, the destruction of heritage structures was explained in terms of destroying the presence of the “alien other.” Since the representational power of the religious buildings associated with one nation on a given territory symbolised the presence of that nation in that area, the primary targets were churches of both denominations and mosques. The philosophy of destruction of religious heritage was, thus, connected with the “correction of historical inaccuracies” on territories that were already ethnically cleansed. Militarily and politically, the

³⁴² During Yugoslav wars, Bilig’s definition of *banal nationalism* culminated in deliberate targeting of national and religious symbols, especially churches and mosques. Foreign media reported extensively about destruction, putting emphasis on Catholic and Muslim heritage and downplaying the destruction of Serbian Orthodox heritage. See, *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 80 and *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 224-225.

destruction of heritage was explained in terms of the enemy's hiding behind the heritage in order to manipulate international sympathies and condemn the enemy.

1.8.1 The Kosovo Battle of 1999

In April 1992, after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina began, Serbia was without inquiry singled out for war guilt and put under strict sanctions. The SANU, universities and professional institutions were also excluded from any international exchange for the next ten years. The presence of war had a negative effect on these institutions, as they found themselves in restricted working conditions. Cut off from the rest of the world, with severely restricted funds, academic discourse in Serbia was limited to debates amongst Serbian academics with their views on the role of history, archaeology, architecture and heritage in general, regarding service to the nation. At the same time, outside of the academic world, a number of popular pseudo-histories, written by journalists and non-academics, appeared flattering the regime's abuse of Serbian past in order to preserve its power. This is when the legend of Kosovo Battle received its final transformation. Whilst during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the emphasis was on the "cross against the crescent" and fight for the Serbian freedom, in the 1990s the narrative was concentrated on the choice between the "Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom on Earth" – the epic verse recorded by Vuk Karadžić nearly two centuries earlier. The verse powerfully underlined the impossibility of a happy ending: whichever kingdom Prince Lazar/Serbia was to choose, the other one will be lost forever.³⁴³ Naturally, the Serbian choice of the 1990s was, just like in 1389, the "Kingdom of Heaven." It explained all the earthly losses that were taking place at the time.³⁴⁴

Except for the debate between the scholars about the Serbian position in the European and wider international context, the actual fieldwork concerning all aspects of heritage was reduced to bare survival and minimal maintenance. After the bombing of Serbian territories in Bosnia in 1993, most artefacts in Serbian museums were removed from display. In 1996, the National Museum in Belgrade closed parts of its

³⁴³ The actual verse is from the poem "*The Fall of the Serbian Empire*" – Kosovo cycle, Poems before the Battle

³⁴⁴ This reinterpretation of the Kosovo Battle in the 1990s corresponds with *primordialistic* approach which defines periods of national decline as punishment for choosing the wrong course in achieving national objectives. See, *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 61-62.

permanent exhibitions and stored the collections away. Similar actions were taken by the provincial and local museums throughout Serbia. When the hostilities in Kosovo and Metohija broke out in 1997 and 1998, the collections and archives from provincial museums were evacuated, together with the documents of the Institute for the Protection of Monuments in Priština.³⁴⁵ The churches and monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija had their treasures evacuated to the church estates less exposed to the hostilities.

However, the 1999 bombing of Serbia proved to be devastating. The Commander of the NATO forces, Wesley Clark, explained that the command and control facilities, which included general infrastructure, industrial and administrative buildings and bridges were all legitimate targets, regardless of their historical value.³⁴⁶ The architectural and archaeological heritage damaged or destroyed (Fig. 1.63) was considered “collateral damage.” This explanation directly caused a series of insurgency and counterinsurgency actions of both Albanian and Serbian forces against the cultural and religious symbols of the other nation. The three-month campaign put an end to the hostilities in former Yugoslavia and incapacitated Serbia for any national re-assertion in the near future. The Serbian army, together with over 200,000 civilians withdrew from Kosovo and Metohija, which, supported by the EU and the US, proclaimed independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008.

After the withdrawal of the Serbian state from Kosovo and Metohija, the systematic destruction of Serbian Orthodox cultural heritage began there. When the subject occasionally arose as an issue in the western media, it was explained as an “understandable by-product of the processes of revenge for the Serbian misdeeds against the Albanian population before and during the NATO intervention.”³⁴⁷ Following this premise, an American architect Andrew Herscher, who served as cultural heritage officer and co-head of the Department of Culture in the new Kosovo government in 2001-2005, wrote a book on the destruction of heritage in Kosovo and Metohija. Aware of the difficulties that his account would face due to his personal involvement in working for Kosovo’s independence, Herscher attempted to balance the West-established narrative of the Serbian aggression on Kosovo (and other non-

³⁴⁵ Herscher, 2010, 15

³⁴⁶ Ibid, 100

³⁴⁷ Ćurčić, S. – *Destruction of Serbian Cultural Patrimony in Kosovo: A World-Wide Precedent?* – *Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 14(2), 125–31, Princeton, 2000, 129

Serbian territories), with justifiable destruction of Serbian heritage as understandable revenge.³⁴⁸ According to him, Serbian forces “*vandalised, destroyed or damaged 225 out of 600 mosques during their counterinsurgency campaigns in 1998/99.*”³⁴⁹ Against this data, he gives a number of “*151 Serbian churches and other patrimonial sites*” in the weeks following the withdrawal of the Serbian army and the refugees from Kosovo and Metohija in 1999 alone.³⁵⁰



Fig. 1.63 – The Palace of Government in Belgrade, initially the first governmental building of the Kingdom SHS, built in 1926-1928, was destroyed in 1999 NATO attack. It was destroyed twice before, in 1941 and 1944 and some original features of the building were lost forever. Rebuilt in 2003.

Unsurprisingly, in the same year 1999, the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) rejected any form of collaboration with professionals from the responsible agencies in Belgrade. Bernard Kouchner (b.1939), then special representative of the UN Secretary General for Kosovo, known as the founder of the organization *Médecines Sans Frontières*, created a new group referred to as *Patrimoine Sans Frontières*, aiming to replace the banned preservation and conservation experts from Belgrade. Neither the composition nor the qualifications of this group have ever been revealed. Meanwhile,

³⁴⁸ Herscher, 2010, 15

³⁴⁹ Ibid, 87

³⁵⁰ Ibid, 136

as the list of damaged or obliterated Serbian monuments continued to grow, a “statistical syndrome,” intent on counting and recording the victimized monuments, has emerged from Belgrade institutions. These lists, duly compiled and documented by various institutions and groups concerned with national heritage, reached a limited number of professional organizations in the West, where they were either received with reserved consternation or, more commonly, remained quietly ignored.³⁵¹

Only by going through the material written by both sides is it possible to estimate how much was really damaged and destroyed. In books written by Serbian authors, the accent is on the damage caused by the Albanians and NATO, which is obviously a logical attribution of blame from their perspective. The time *when* these destructions took place is also significant. The destruction of mosques and many other Islamic shrines took place during the campaign of expulsion of Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija to Albania in spring 1999. Like in the other wars of Yugoslav succession, the mosques were used by the Albanian military and population to hide from the Serbian army and that is how some of the destruction of this heritage occurred.³⁵² On the other hand, the destruction of the many churches and monasteries took place *after* the war in 1999, when the Albanian refugees returned to their homes in Kosovo and Metohija. Having the back-up of the external factors on their side, they began a systematic destruction, both in quality and quantity. The Serbian monuments were not destroyed in the course of armed conflicts or incidents but rather after the end of the war. One third of all the registered monuments in the Serbian heritage in Kosovo and Metohija were demolished, damaged or endangered, as well as more than half of churches still in use (Fig. 1.64). The destruction of Serbian religious monuments in Kosovo and Metohija, was not accidental, but carefully planned.³⁵³

³⁵¹ Ćurčić, 2000, 129

³⁵² See discussion in Pearson, J. – *Dubrovnik’s Artistic Patrimony and its Role in War Reporting* in *European History Quarterly*, Spring 2010

³⁵³ Ordev, 2009, 5



Fig 1.64 – The Church of St. John The Baptist, 13th century, where, according to legend, Prince Lazar and his army received the last Holy Communion on the eve of the Kosovo Battle in 1389. It was destroyed during both World Wars, damaged during the Albanian insurgencies in 1981, partly destroyed during the NATO attack in 1999 and finally demolished and turned into a scrap heap and public toilet (photograph to the right) in March 2001.

1.8.2 Kosovo Myth revisited

The speed of the European Union and the United States to present their involvement in the 1990s Yugoslav wars as a success resulted in the province unilaterally declaring independence in 2008. By then, the province was virtually ethnically cleansed of Serbs. To provide the framework for the legitimacy of Kosovo's independence, a new narrative had to be created. The narrative closely corresponds with the construction of the Albanian nation-state in Kosovo, without mentioning the centuries-long Serbian presence there. Apart from the Western academics who formulated the basic postulates of the Serbian occupation of Kosovo in the late 12th century, published in their books *before* NATO's military intervention, the US and EU officials are still advising the Kosovo government on the implementation of these postulates.³⁵⁴ Western *apparatchiks* in collusion with Albanian historians from the University of Priština are still working on further refinements of these new narratives. This is best illustrated by an article by Naser Ferri, a professor of history at the University of Priština, published for the education of young Albanians in Kosovo:

³⁵⁴ Malcolm, N. – *Kosovo, A Short History*, London, 1998, 26. Malcolm's "interest" for the Balkans lasted only until the end of the wars. After the wars, he never produced anything related to the Balkan history. See further discussion.

“Their (Serbian) history and their acts have shown that Serbs were and still are one of the most destructive people in the world, who, during their migration from the Carpathians and occupation of the Balkans, destroyed everything where they stepped. One of the few things they accepted without destroying was Orthodox Christianity. After they accepted it, a long period began in which they embezzled sacred Dardanian objects and adopted them for the needs of the Serb Church. Even today, the traces of this assimilation are evident in ancient churches throughout Kosovo...There is information that even the Patriarchy of Peć, the Dečani Monastery, Gračanica,³⁵⁵ St.Marko Monastery, Church of Korish in Lipljan and many other famous ‘Serbian’ churches were constructed precisely on the foundation of earlier autochthonous churches...”³⁵⁶

Supporting this narrative, Anna Di Lellio (Fig. 3.25), a sociologist from Columbia University and a former UN consultant to Kosovo’s Albanian Prime Minister, published a book *The Battle of Kosovo 1389 – An Albanian Epic* in association with the Centre for Albanian Studies in London in 2009. As its title suggests, the book argues that the Kosovo Battle was actually fought by the Albanians and that the mythical assassin of Sultan Murad I was an ethnic Albanian. The fact that there are no existing Albanian interpretations of the myth, except two poems recorded by the Serbian historian Gliša Elezović (Fig. 1.36) in the early 20th century, DiLellio explains by the *“shifting loyalties following the mass conversion of Albanians to the faith of the murdered Sultan.”*³⁵⁷ For correcting this historic error, DiLellio argues that the Albanians are actually *“Crypto-Catholics, who only feign to be Muslim”* and that *“being one of the oldest European Christian nations”* belonging to Islam for 500 years can be perceived as *“a temporary interlude.”*³⁵⁸

Part of this programme by the new Kosovo government was the approval in 2005 of the project for constructing a new Catholic Cathedral in Priština, “the largest in the Balkans, despite the fact that over 90% of the population is Muslim.”³⁵⁹ According to the Catholic bishop of Kosovo Dode Gjeggju, the size of the cathedral is not

³⁵⁵ These monasteries were proclaimed UNESCO sites following the 2004 destruction of churches

³⁵⁶ Daily *Zëri Ditor*, published in Priština in Albanian language. The quote in question appeared on 12th March 2003, quoted in Herscher, 2010, 132. Professor Feri never offered an explanation where to find the information he refers to.

³⁵⁷ DiLellio, A. – *The of Kosovo 1389 – An Albanian Epic*, London, 2009, 32

³⁵⁸ Ibid, 8

³⁵⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html> - Accessed on 20/04/2012

controversial. Its erection aimed to show that the new Kosovo was close to Europe (Fig. 1.65).³⁶⁰



Fig. 1.65 – A new Catholic cathedral in Priština, the capital of Kosovo and Metohija, dedicated to Mother Theresa, an ethnic Albanian, was built in 2005-2010, despite the fact that there less than 4% of overall population of the province is Catholic. The tallest Catholic church in the Balkans (bell-tower is 75m tall) was severely criticized by the Albanian Muslim scholars.³⁶¹

The building of the new cathedral is accompanied by the re-interpretation of the Serbian Orthodox Monasteries as the heritage of Kosovo's Albanians, built by the Albanians *before* Serbian occupation in the 12th and 20th centuries. The catholic influences evident on the three architectural styles³⁶² of the Nemanjić period are conveniently renamed the *Paleologian Renaissance*, so the transition from the Islamic Albanian identity could be supplemented by the notion of Albanian proto-Catholic Europeanism. Thus, in 2004 the government of Kosovo and Metohija began the campaign of presenting Kosovo as a multi-ethnic society. In Priština and other towns, the campaign was advertised through the media and billboards which displayed a series of historic sites in Kosovo, ranging from the Neolithic and Roman period to the Mediaeval and Ottoman. However, the mutual distrust between the Serbs and

³⁶⁰ <http://www.b92.net> – Article from the archive, dated 03/02/2011 – Accessed on 20/04/2012

³⁶¹ Fatlum Sadiku, an Albanian politicologist from Priština accused Vatican and Western scholars writing about Kosovo of Catholic proselytism. See <http://www.bosnjaci.net/prilog.php?pid=39696> – Accessed on 19/02/2015

³⁶² See p.126 above

Albanians is so strong that, even in Herscher's opinion, the "*truths of common heritage, instituted by the Western Powers, are a fabrication supplemented by architecture.*"³⁶³

1.9 Revisionism

After international sanctions were introduced in 1992, all activities relating to nation-(re)building in Serbia were reduced to a minimum. The main reasons were financial, but also programmatic. After the initial support for Milošević in 1987-91, the majority of Serbian intellectuals became disenchanted with his manipulation of Serbian nationalism. The younger generation chose massive emigration worldwide and, before the borders with Serbia were completely closed, the estimated brain-drain for the 1992-1996 period amounted to 300,000.³⁶⁵ This trend continued to the present-day with a further 300,000 university educated emigrants leaving Serbia between 1999 and 2010, leaving the country with only 10% highly educated professionals, too few to work on any nation-building programme.³⁶⁶ Those who remained, exposed to economic hardship and unable to conduct any intellectual exchange, withdrew from public life. As the West singled out the SANU as the ideological supporter of the wars in Yugoslavia, it had little influence on the politicians who replaced Milošević in 2000.

After barely surviving the 1990s, academic research in Serbian institutions slightly increased, as the Universities of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš began re-establishing the broken relationships with their international counterparts.³⁶⁷ During the 19th and 20th century, Belgrade was established as a paramount educational centre in the south-eastern Europe and maintained that position until 1992. Even though the academic publications were reduced to a minimum in the 1990s, the publishing activity is slowly increasing. Some projects related to national reassertion were being presented to the public, but they are still relatively small in numbers in comparison with neighbouring countries.³⁶⁸ In 2010, a group of Belgrade professors and lecturers

³⁶³ Herscher, 2010, 151

³⁶⁵ Roberts, A. and Garton Ash, T. – *Civil Resistance and Power politics: The Experience of Non-Violent Action from Gandhi to the Present*, Oxford, 2009, 306

³⁶⁶ The statistical Census data given in the daily press *Politika*, on 01/02/2013 – <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Drustvo/U-Srbiji-10-odsto-visokoobrazovanih.lt.html> - Accessed on 01/07/2015

³⁶⁷ Generally, the majority of the Serbian students studying in the West are expected to conform to the narratives written in the manner of *normative historiography* during the 1990s. See *Introduction*, p. 4.

³⁶⁸ See further discussion.

presented their *Lexicon of towns and market places in the mediaeval Serbian lands – according to the written sources* with a clear aim of preventing the re-writing of history that is currently taking place in former Yugoslavia. In its preface, the editor Siniša Mišić underlined that the book was based on the existing written sources and called for a new archaeological examination of Serbian mediaeval towns, for which the *Lexicon* was intended to be the basis.³⁶⁹ The *Lexicon* included the presentation of mediaeval towns and cities in the historic Serbian lands: Serbia, Montenegro, parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Macedonia. This work marked the unobtrusive return of mediaeval history to public life for the first time in more than two decades.

In terms of historiography, the younger generation of Serbian scholars was reintroduced to international institutions and, apart from the traditional, new lines of research, such as histories of everyday life and women studies, emerged in scholarly works. In the 1970s and 1980s, Belgrade scholars managed to produce some seminal works on mediaeval architecture, sculpture and painting, whilst at the same time, the archaeology school achieved an international status in the Neolithic and Roman provincial archaeology.³⁷⁰ There are some positive trends emerging in this field, such as the major project of the revitalization of the Roman sites “*Following the roads of the Roman Emperors*” and new excavations in Vinča.³⁷¹ Being best developed and with the longest tradition, it is not surprising that these fields are of major interest to the international teams which resumed their work on the sites in Serbia after 2004.³⁷²

However, the main interest of the Serbian public remained the academic (re)evaluation of Serbian historiography, especially the one coming from the West. The Wars of Yugoslav Succession caused a tidal wave of quickly written, “convenient” histories of Serbs and Serbia, frequently without the knowledge of Serbian language and use of Serbian sources and relying on the literature produced during the 20th century.³⁷³ The immense revision that Serbian history and historiography were exposed to by the Western authors in the majority of works published since the late 1980s, should be viewed against the political context which

³⁶⁹ Мишић, С. – *Лексикон градова и тргова средњовековних српских земаља – према писаним изворима* – Београд, 2010, 9

³⁷⁰ Curta, 2006, 31-37

³⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, these projects were possible only with the financial support from the international universities. The situation is similar to that of the post-First World War period, when the foreign capital enabled the majority of the fieldwork in newly created state of Yugoslavia.

³⁷² Novaković in Lozny, 2011, 400

³⁷³ Ković, M. – *Saznanje ili namera: Savremena svetska istoriografija o Srbima u XIX veku*, Sociologija, Vol. LIII, Beograd, 2011, 402

treated the Serbs as the new *Untermenschen* of Europe. The reason for the unprecedented enmities expressed by the Western authors was that the traditional narrative of the former Serbian allies required disassociation with the Serbs because of their new role as main villains of Europe. In that sense, the notions of “Greater Serbian nationalism” and “Greater Serbian Hegemony” introduced to the world by Austro-Hungary in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which had been dismissed then, were redeployed through the works of journalists-turned-academics.³⁷⁴ These two notions, resurrected by Tito’s regime, reached international academic and political circles in the decades after 1945 as part of the official Yugoslav ideology and remained one of the key-arguments during the 1990s wars.³⁷⁵ Since Serbia was denounced as the principal generator of the war, the Western narrative equalized the Serbs with the German Nazis of the Second World War, further implying that they deserved punishment, the reduction of their state-territory and the ongoing de-Nazification and de-nationalisation processes.³⁷⁶

But, it was not only the Serbian historiography that was revised for modern political purposes. The entire Serbian culture, from ethnology and literature to the national myths, were reinterpreted in a negative light. The roles of Vuk Karadžić, Kosovo Myth, the *Draft* and Njegoš became the favourite subject of current revisionism. Taken out of context and analysed through the modern understanding of “nationalism,” Serbian culture was not compared to the contemporary processes that were taking place elsewhere in Europe.³⁷⁷ This trend of revising Serbian history and historiography by Western authors has less in common with the academic quest for *knowledge* than with *political intent* by their governments. In its essence, such *political intent* aims at *adapting the past* for the present use, thus confirming the old maxim that history is written by victors. It should be noted, however, that such a history has a limited expiry date.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁴ Noel Malcolm, to be discussed later in this study, was one of the first to employ the malicious journalism as academic research. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 436-439

³⁷⁵ Ković, 2011, 403

³⁷⁶ The majority of these accounts were written by the Croat émigré historians and their Western colleagues since 1990 and rely exclusively on the revised historiography devised in the early 20th century and promoted during the NDH. The Bosnian Institute in London, for example, employed as special consultants some of the most prominent Croat historians, who actively participate in the revisionism of the 19th and 20th century Yugoslav history. The Institute is led by the British historian Quintin Hoare, a husband of the Croat publicist Branka Magaš and father of historian Marko Attila Hoare.

³⁷⁷ Ković, 2011, 408. Also, see further discussion.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 413; Mazower, 2000, 17

The Croats

The appearance and development of Croatian nationalism in the 19th century was largely influenced by the internal policies of the Habsburg Empire, in which the majority of the Croats lived until the creation of Yugoslavia. At the time of the birth of nationalism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a smaller percentage of Croats lived on the Adriatic coast which was then ruled by the Venetian Republic. An even smaller number of Croats lived in the Bosnian Pashalik, the westernmost part of the declining Ottoman Empire. The Habsburg Croats were further divided between those who lived in Civil Croatia and those who lived in the Military Frontier.¹ By the early 19th century, the Croat nobility fully recognized Habsburg supremacy and in most cases did not accept the ideas of nationalism that spread throughout the Empire after the Napoleonic wars.

The Croat intelligentsia that initiated national awakening amongst Croats in the first half of the 19th century was fully aware of its weak position and sought to generate wider public support by including as many of the South Slavs as possible. This resulted in postponing the formulation of a Croat national narrative until a later date, as well as the definition of a common language which would not only include three different dialects, but also share a common morphology and grammar with the Serbs. This further meant that development of Croat nationalism had three phases. Firstly, its initial *Illyrian* form was a Romantic response of a few literate intellectuals to the growth of nationalisms emanating from Vienna and Budapest.

Its evolution into *Yugoslavism* from the 1860s onwards received a political connotation after the *Ausgleich* of 1867 which transformed the Habsburg Empire into Austria-Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian response to the growing Slavic dissatisfaction within the Empire were internal policies which promoted various degrees of favouritism of smaller ethnic groups by keeping them subdued through maintenance of their mutual competition. In Croat case, this was manifested primarily through the insistence on religious and folkloristic differences from other South Slavs, eventually leading to the formulation of Croat nationalism in the 1880s. However, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was far too strong to enable the creation of an independent Croat state and Croat intellectuals working on national liberation readily participated in the creation of Yugoslavia. Consisting of different traditions

¹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 31-32.

and religious groups, the Yugoslav solution frustrated Croat desire for national self-definition. Consequently, Croat nationalism underwent three additional changes during the Yugoslav period and finally led to the declaration of independence from SFRY on 25 June 1991. All transformations of Croat nationalism followed the political changes in Europe at the time and have to be examined against the political background when those changes occurred. Its modern manifestation stems from the wars of Yugoslav succession, which enabled Croatia to present itself to the international public as the victim of aggression and acquire a new national history. This was overwhelmingly supported by the Western media and academic circles that adopted not only close co-operation with Croat academic institutions, but which had in their ranks a significant number of Croat émigré scholars who, being associated to the NDH regime, had left Yugoslavia after 1945.

Croat nationalism is thus a convenient case-study of the politically influenced re-evaluation of the national past and re-writing of the entire national history in order to justify the current political situation in the region.

2.1 Territoriality of Croatian nationalism

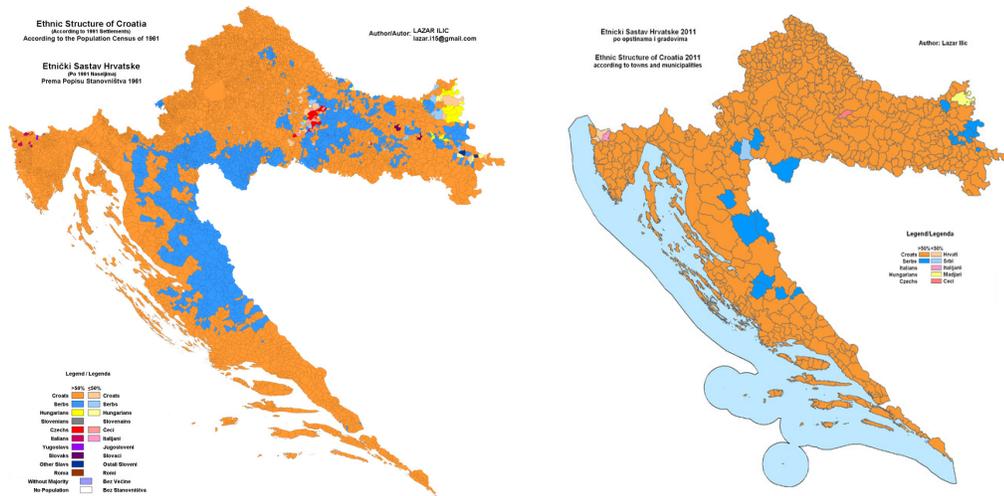
The territory of the current Croatian state, according to the official census of 2011, counted just fewer than 4.3 million inhabitants, of which nearly 90% declared themselves Croats (around 3.9 million), with Serbs at 4.4% (just over 180,000).² These results are in sharp contrast to those of 1991, when the population of the Republic of Croatia was at its highest and counted just fewer than 4.8 million, of which 3.7 million (78%) declared themselves Croats and 580,000 (12.15%) declared themselves Serbs.³ This huge fall in the numbers of the Serbs in Croatia was the direct result of the 1995 ethnic cleansing and there are no signs yet of the Republic of Croatia allowing the return of the displaced population, despite the declarative calls for return (Map. 2.1 and Map 2.2).

Because the EU and the US sanctioned the expulsion of the majority of the Serbs from the territory of modern-day Croatia, the question of borders and the territory of the Republic of Croatia are considered to have been finally brought to a

² <http://www.dzs.hr> - Final Results of Census 2011 – Accessed on 24/02/2015. The official data from 2011 Census point to the decline of nearly 150,000 people of the overall population of Croatia in comparison with 2001 Census, which counted to 4.43 million.

³ CD Rome – *Naselja i stanovništvo republike Hrvatske od 1857-2001 godine* – Izdanje Državnog zavoda za statistiku Republike Hrvatske, Zagreb, 2005

close. The only unresolved questions are those of the ownership of personal property, as well as the surviving religious and cultural heritage that witnessed the nature of the creation of the modern Croatia, now consisting of three historical regions: Croatia Proper, Slavonija and Dalmatia. The disappearance of the Serbs from these territories in the course of the 20th century found its justification in the academic discourse, first developed in the final decades of the Austro-Hungarian period and then in Croatia itself. The final argument about the disappearance of the Serbian population in Croatia has been asserted in the past twenty years and, against the background of the full support Croatia received from the EU and US, it appears that will remain a dominant rationale in the future of the Croat historiography and national narrative.



Map. 2.1 – Ethnic and territorial map of Croatia in 1991 Map. 2.2 – Ethnic and territorial map in 2001 (Territories marked blue represent the Serbian population on both maps in respective years. Author: L. Ilić)

2.1.1 Historical spatial distribution

Prior to 1991, Croatia was last independent in 1102, when it succumbed to Hungarian conquest. Exactly what was the territory of the last independent Croatian state is difficult to assert, as there are no surviving documents which could determine this.⁴ The earliest maps of European cartography represent Croatia either as part of the Hungarian Kingdom or as part of the Military Frontier.⁵ Mercator's *Atlas* placed Croatia in the vicinity of Zagreb, whilst the surrounding territories were marked as

⁴ Fine, John V.A. – *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans*, Ann Arbor, 2006, 59-60

⁵ Danti's maps in Florence do not include a reference to Croatia, but *Bosina*, *Servia* and *Macedonia* are all depicted.

Slavonia and *Hungaria*.⁶ Written documents also place Croatia in the vicinity of Zagreb, whilst Dalmatia, known to the Italians as *Schiavonia* or *Slavonia* are almost exclusively depicted as separate territories, always under Italian rule.⁷ Thus, between the loss of independence in 1102 and the inclusion of the Austro-Hungarian Military Frontier (Map. 1.a.11) into the territory of Croatian-Slavonian crown land under Hungarian jurisdiction in 1882, Croatia was confined to the vicinity of Zagreb, where the population spoke the *kajkavian* dialect of the South Slav language group, a language close to Slovenian. When Slavonia was added to Croatia in 1882, the *štokavian* dialect spoken by both the Catholic and Serbian Orthodox population living there, became a prevalent factor in the development of the common Yugoslav idea. Croatia-Slavonia remained within the Hungarian part of Austro-Hungary until 1918, when it joined the Kingdom of SHS. Dalmatia, a separate region also with *štokavian* speakers, was ruled by the Venetian Republic for most of the period between the 13th and 19th centuries. Following the end of Napoleon's "Illyrian Provinces" in 1815, it was controlled by Vienna, under which jurisdiction it remained until 1918.

The abolition of the Military Frontier was a consequence of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, making the inclusion of Slavonia to the joint crown-land Croatia-Slavonia a pragmatic administrative decision. Initially formed as a buffer zone against the ever-threatening Ottoman Empire, the Military Frontier changed its borders and ethnic composition of the population over the centuries (Map. 2.3). Stretching over the territories of the present-day Vojvodina, Slavonija, and most of Transylvania, the Military Frontier included a myriad of people, of which Orthodox Serbs represented a significant percentage.⁸

2.1.2 The Migrations controversy – Whose is Slavonija?

The Ottoman rule between 1526 and 1699 led to the expansion of Islam and the Ottoman way of life in these areas. This was accompanied by the re-designing of

⁶ <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/mercator/accessible/images/page40full.jpg> - Accessed on 25/02/2015

⁷ Fine, 2006, 20

⁸ See, for example, the extensive Austrian records, such as the *Übersichts-Tafeln zur Statistik der österreichischen Monarchie*, Vienna, 1850. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 31, See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 21-24.

the mediaeval cities of the Hungarian Kingdom into the Oriental-style *kasaba* (small town), which destroyed the majority of the early and late mediaeval heritage in these territories.



Fig. 2.3 – Military Frontier in 1868, the year of *Nagodba*; Croatian territory marked dark red.

After the *Treaty of Karlowitz* in 1699, the Muslim population was promptly expelled from the areas re-conquered by the Christian Holy Roman Empire and almost all traces of the Ottoman presence there were equally promptly annihilated.⁹ When the Habsburgs finally militarily secured the territory north of the Danube and Sava rivers, they could initiate its economic recovery. This involved not only complete rebuilding of urban centres according to Central European models, but also draining marshlands that covered significant parts of the Pannonian plain, as well as the construction of several main roads and re-establishment of the baronial estate

⁹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 32.

system.¹⁰ As the Ottoman conquest north of the Danube almost entirely eradicated the remains of the previous mediaeval urban and religious life, evidence of its existence is based on scarce written documents which indicate overall Hungarian control of the area. However, prior to 1526, the Hungarians imposed their rule over the north Balkan territories through the lesser Slav, Serbian or Croat, nobility who recognized Hungarian suzerainty.

The colonization of the Military Frontier that lasted from its establishment until the mid-18th century was not only caused by the Habsburgs' need to prevent new Ottoman incursions into its territories, but also by the desire of the Christian populations of both denominations to escape Turkish rule. As one by one mediaeval Balkan Christian states were falling under the tide of the Ottoman conquest, their surviving elites and some sections of the lower classes withdrew northwards.¹¹

Since prior to the Battle of Mohács Slavonija was dominated by the Hungarian crown, church and nobility, it is difficult to assess the ethnic and religious structure of the territory in the period before the Ottoman advance. Admittedly, early mediaeval documents mention the name Slavonia and the Slavs, but without any exact geographical description. Porphyrogenitus noted that a part of "*the Croats who came to Dalmatia split off and possessed themselves of Illyricum and Pannonia.*"¹² However, it is unclear what the borders of these two former Roman provinces were at the time of Porphyrogenitus or the time of Heraclius to which he refers.¹³ Furthermore, no other pre-1102 source, Slavic or foreign, connects Croatia with Pannonia.¹⁴ All the research points to this obvious imprecision of the sources and place early Slavonia much further south: to the territory south of the River Sava and south-west of the Croatia Proper, most of which is today in Bosnia and

¹⁰ On the nature of the urban landscape of the Military Frontier, see *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 27-28

¹¹ Constantine the Philosopher, the biographer of Despot Stefan Lazarević (1374-1427, ruled from 1389), was a Bulgarian intellectual and a poet who escaped to the Serbian court in 1393, after the fall of Bulgaria. The withdrawal to the Hungarian territories north of the Danube of the remaining members of the Serbian ruling family and nobility after the fall of the Despotate in 1459 is well recorded in the Hungarian historic documents. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 31 and *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 21. This pattern of withdrawal further north and west from the Ottomans continued until the Siege of Vienna in 1683.

¹² *DAI, Volume I, 30*

¹³ During the Roman period, the Pannonian borders stretched as far west as Austria and Slovenia, which is outside the current territory of Slavonija. Similarly, Illyrian borders overlapped with the Pannonian over history. As there are no other documents to clear up the matter, this sentence is heavily disputed among Croat, Serbian and Hungarian historians.

¹⁴ Fine, 2006, 72

Herzegovina.¹⁵ The Croat historian Milan pl.Šufflay (1879-1931) asserted in the 1920s that “*there existed from the 12th to the 16th century from Drava to Zeta a broad belt in which was it not customary to use Croat or Serb names, but only general ethnic term the Slav. Therefore, Slavonia was a fluid territory and term which covered an area between the Drava and the Gvozd Mountain to the north and Neretva, Drin and Bojana in Albania to the south; this was what remained from the Slavonia of the 7th-10th centuries that included all the territory between Zadar, Thessaloniki and the Rhodope Mountains in Bulgaria.*”¹⁶

What is called Slavonija today were the marshlands between the Sava and Drava and were first dominated by the Avars (6th-9th centuries) and then by the Hungarians (from the late 9th century). It seems highly unlikely that many Slavs, either Croats or Serbs, inhabited this area in significant numbers before the Ottomans started pushing them northwards from the 14th century. This argument is supported by the total absence of both written sources and archaeological evidence, as no Slavic settlements from the period 7th-12th centuries have yet been identified. The archaeological remains, unearthed in parts of northern Slavonija are no earlier than the mid-10th century and are associated with the creation of the first Hungarian state.¹⁷

Current Croatian historiography insists that the first Croatian king Tomislav I Trpimirović (910-928) included Slavonia in his realm after defeating the Hungarians, which is proof enough that the Croats inhabited the area from the period of their migrations to the Balkans.¹⁸ This debate is of immense importance, as a number of leading Croat historians insist that the Military Frontier, that is Slavonia, Lika, part of Croatia Proper and Srem,¹⁹ were predominantly Croat since the early Middle Ages and that the Serbian presence there was a consequence of the immigration influx of the “*Orthodox Slavs and Vlachs after the end of the 17th century, which forever shattered the integrity of the Croat people’s ethnic territory.*”²⁰

¹⁵ The episode of the prince Ljudevit Posavski (810-823) escaping to the Serbs in Dalmatia was widely discussed in both Croat and Serbian historiography. However, the easternmost and northernmost parts of his principality, with the capital Sisak are outside of the territory of the modern day Slavonija. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p.16.

¹⁶ Fine, 2006, 167

¹⁷ Curta, F. – *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages – 500 – 1250*, Cambridge, 2006, 191-193

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 193

¹⁹ Today part of Vojvodina, area of ancient Sirmium, from which its name derived

²⁰ Banac, I. – *The Rediviva Croatia of Pavao Ritter Vitezović*, Harvard Ukrainian Studies 10, 1986, 493, quoted in Fine, J.V.A. – *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans*, Ann Arbor, 2006, 175.

The Ottoman conquest in the 16th century complicated the ethnic situation in the conquered Pannonian plain even further, because the conversions in the former Hungarian Kingdom took place in a manner similar to that south of the Sava and Danube rivers a century before. The Ottomans also practiced the re-settlement of population as a means of easier control of the newly conquered territories. From the early 15th century the Muslims of Anatolia and Balkan cities were transferred into Serbia and Hungary, whilst the Christians from those areas were re-settled mainly to Asia Minor and towns dominated by the Muslims.²¹ The Ottomans carefully recorded the population surveys of the new territories through the system of the *defter* record books. However, after the 16th century it became uncommon to record the population of the previously conquered land, although some *defters* were produced for the re-conquered land in the 17th century.²²

Whilst Croat historians claim that Slavonia in pre-Ottoman times was predominantly Croatian and that the Serbian Orthodox population appeared in these areas not before the late 17th century, their Hungarian counterparts claim the opposite: Slavonia, as well as Transylvania, were in the same period predominantly Hungarian. “*While Magyars or ethnic Hungarians constituted some 75 to 80 percent of the kingdom’s population before Ottoman rule, they had become a minority by the early 18th century. This had fateful consequences for the country in later centuries.*”²³ There are no Hungarian documents that would corroborate this argument. Generally, the Hungarians based their estimations on some discovered early *defeters* in the European archives, but wider use of these documents was not fully available until the Second World War. It was only after 1945 that the analysis of *defeters* was taken more seriously.²⁴ Immediately the question of misuse of *defeters*’ interpretation arose. Firstly, the documents dated to the time of the conquest do not indicate the difference between the Catholic and the Orthodox Christians. Secondly,

This theory, asserted by the Croat émigré historians of the post-1945 period, became dominant in the 1990s when it was accepted by some Western historians who further advanced it in order to support interventionism. See works of N. Malcolm, M.A. Hoare, S. Ramet or M. Vickers, for example.

²¹ Usunçarşih, I.H. – *Osman Tarihi*, Vol. 1, 181, quoted in Hooper, P.L. – *Forced Population Transfers in Early Ottoman Imperial Strategy: A Comparative Approach*, Princeton, 2003, 23. One example of forced population transfer is the Belgrade Forest, 20km outside of Istanbul. It was named after the Serbs from Belgrade and its vicinity re-settled there by Suleyman the Magnificent (1494-1566) in order to safeguard the springs that supplied the city with water.

²² Cosgel, M. - *Ottoman Tax Registers (Tahrir Defterleri)*, *Historical Methods*, Spring 2004, Vol. 37, No. 2, ft. 2, 37

²³ Ágoston, G. and Masters, B. – *Encyclopaedia of the Ottoman Empire*, New York, 2009, 258

²⁴ Cosgel, 2004, 5

since the information of the ethnic background of the Christian population is also absent, it appears that the Hungarian claim is at least partly accurate. The records of transferred population often indicate the place of their origin, but this practise was not uniformly used throughout the Ottoman Empire and there is no definite analysis on the situation in Slavonia.²⁵ What is known, however, is that both the Ottomans and the Habsburgs used the non-Turks or non-Austrians/Hungarians respectively as the buffer zone against their principal enemy. Thus, the bordering territories mostly exposed to the raids were first populated by the Croat or Serb population, with the Ottoman or Habsburg authorities in command. Unless the complete available *defters* related to the territory of Slavonia are analysed simultaneously by all relevant national schools a the common consensus is reached, separate Croat, Serbian and Hungarian national narratives will remain in stark contrast to each other and prone to manipulations.

Whilst generally ignoring the Hungarian, Croat historiography and those who support it insist on the detrimental consequences for the Croat national territory of the two particular Serbian migrations that happened between 1690 and 1740.²⁶ The Serbian migrations led to the displacement of a large number of the Serbs from the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, which after this period saw the spread of the Albanian population in the province. Diametrically opposing the Croats, Albanian scholars downplay the number of Serbian migrations arguing that the Serbs “willingly withdrew” from the territory which they had first occupied only in the 12th century.²⁷ Similarly, modern Western historians favouring the Albanian narrative argue that no Serbian migrations of significant numbers that would have any impact on the ethnic composition of Kosovo and Metohija ever occurred.²⁸ This obvious discrepancy in the modern narrative poses the following question: If, as claimed by

²⁵ Hooper, 2003, 81

²⁶ Western historiography in the past twenty years accepted this argument, aiming to show that the 1990s expulsion of the Serbs from the modern Croat state was justified in every aspect: historical, political and moral. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 23-24, which illustrates the arguments of Noel Malcolm and Frederick Ascombe. Neither of them took into account the Hungarian view on historical territorial claims. As such, their arguments represent the typical example of the contemporary Western revision of Serbian history.

²⁷ In the English language literature the argument of “willing migration” during the Habsburg-Ottoman wars was first promoted by Malcolm in his book “*Kosovo: A Short History*.”

²⁸ Again, this assertion aimed at justifying the expulsion of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija in 1999. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 297-300 and works of Noel Malcolm, Miranda Wickers or James Pettifer arguing the Albanian viewpoint. It is interesting to see how the two opposing views: one insisting on the Serbian migrations and one completely denying them, are academically used to approve the policies of ethnic cleansing by the Croats and Albanians.

the Albanian historians, there were no significant movements from the south towards the Croat national territory in the 17th and 18th centuries, would this mean that the Serbs from the Military Frontier were native to Slavonija since at least the time when both the Croats and the Serbs settled in the area?²⁹ This question remains without an answer. Speculation aside, the migrations contributed to the preservation of the Serbian ethnic affiliation north of the Danube enabling intertwining with the Catholic Croats.

Although recent attempts to depict the Habsburg Monarchy as tolerant of the existence of Orthodoxy in its territories are gaining momentum, the reality was somewhat different. Immediately after the *Treaty of Karlowitz* in 1699, Emperor Leopold I issued an imperial charter which sanctioned the union between the Roman Catholic Church and those Orthodox Churches that wanted to accept the supremacy of Rome.³⁰ The exiled Serbian Patriarchate of Peć, then settled in Sremski Karlovci, was strongly against the union. Anticipating problems, the Court in Vienna downgraded it to a Metropolitanate in 1703. This enabled the promotion of Catholicism in the Military Frontier which became dominant by the late-19th and early 20th century. In just sixty years, between 1850 and 1910, the Orthodox population fell sharply. In the above mentioned 1850 census³¹ the population of the entire Military Frontier (Croatia, Slavonija, Vojvodina and parts of Transylvania) numbered the Serbs as 50%. In the 1910 census, the Serbian population numbered around 25% in the territory of the new administrative unit of Croatia-Slavonia alone. Because the Habsburg Empire was re-structured in 1867, it is impossible to compare the territorial spatiality of the Serbian Orthodox population in Slavonija because the geographical census units were different.³² The new administrative units of the Empire corresponded with the period of growth of national movements within the Empire resulting in the *Ausgleich* and ruthless unification policies that increased after 1867. Subsequently, the decrease in number of Orthodox Serbs in Slavonija resulting from such policies coincided with the establishment of a separate Croat nationalism, based on Catholic exclusivity. This differed from the Pan-Slavic ideas that

²⁹ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 21-22.

³⁰ White, G. – *Nationalism and Territory*, Boston, 2000, 123

³¹ See footnote 8, p. 129, above.

³² *Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények*, Budapest, 1912, p. 30–33

dominated the first half of the 19th century. In such a complicated political and religious atmosphere Croat nationalism began its development.

2.1.3 Dalmatia

Napoleon acquired former Venetian territories in the eastern Adriatic coast in 1809, incorporating them into the French Empire as the *Illyrian Provinces*. When they were returned to Austria as the Kingdom of Dalmatia in 1816 after Napoleon's defeat, most Dalmatian towns, except Dubrovnik, continued to be governed by Italian or Italianised Slavic merchant aristocrats. With few exceptions, urban administration, economy and cultural life were in hands of Italians and, after 1815, increasingly Germans and Hungarians, with very few native Slavs entering the imperial public service. The major coastal towns had a significant percentage of non-Slavic population, even though the Slavs were not forbidden to live within the cities.

The towns' hinterland was, however, overwhelmingly Slav: in the north, they were predominantly Catholic, in the vicinity of Dubrovnik and further south, they were mainly Serbian Orthodox.³³ The Slavic presence enabled the penetration of the South Slavic language of the *štokavian* dialect in the coastal towns, whilst the language of the Slavs living on the islands and parts of Istria, evolved into the *čakavian* dialect. Both dialects were exposed to the influence of Italian and developed independently from the *kajkavian* dialect, spoken in Croatia Proper.

In Dubrovnik itself, four languages were spoken in the Middle Ages: Latin, Old Ragusan (a Romance language developed from the corrupt Latin, which disappeared by the 16th century), Italian and, finally, Slavic of *štokavian* dialect, which was used more and more from the 15th century. Even though the only independent South Slav state in history, Dubrovnik had two chancelleries for inscribing the documents: one in Latin and another one in Slavic used for affairs concerning the Slavic nobles of the near interior. This Slavic chancellery wrote Slavic in Cyrillic.³⁴

³³ This distribution roughly corresponded to the first mention of the Serbian-Croat geographical position in *De Administrando Imperio*, and the borders of the 10th-11th century Croatian and 12th-14th century Serbian kingdoms. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 13-16

³⁴ This Dubrovnik Cyrillic script became the most contentious issue between the Croatian and Serbian scholars in the past two decades, as both use it to claim Dubrovnik as of their own ethnic identity. Fine, 2006, 155

French rule in Dalmatia lasted less than a decade and was highly unpopular, but it presented the inhabitants of Dalmatia with the ideas of the French Revolution. Despite the fact that they could never fully develop there, it provided the inspiration for a number of national movements that were growing in the Habsburg Monarchy later in the 19th century.

2.2 Historical and academic settings for the formation of Croatian nationalism

– Pre-Romantic national period and diverging paths of Croat nationalism

When nationalism as an idea appeared in the Habsburg Empire, Croatia Proper was under the jurisdiction of Budapest. Dalmatia was governed by Vienna from 1816 until the end of the First World War. Both parts of the Military Frontier were under direct imperial rule until 1881, when they were jointly included into the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, governed by Budapest. Even though the present-day Croatia was technically part of one empire, it was divided between three administrations which developed from three differing historical circumstances:

1. Croatia Proper, nominally part of the Hungarian crown land, was never affected by Ottoman expansion and retained the features of the Habsburg Empire and its religious and social structure, i.e. Roman Catholic and feudal.
2. Slavonia, devastated by Ottoman rule which lasted just under two hundred years, was developing as a special imperial territory, where both Germans and Hungarians represented the governing elite. Whilst the general cultural features of the Habsburg and later Austro-Hungarian Empire were at its core Central European, the cultural and linguistic differences between Hungarians and Germans imposed in varying degrees distinct cultural influences on the Croats and Serbs living in Slavonia. Because of the imperial policies of settling the mixed Slav population close to the Ottoman border, with the additional German settlers and those from elsewhere in the Empire, Slavonia never acquired the distinct characteristics of any single ethnic group until after 1945.
3. Dalmatia changed rulers frequently, but its longest lasting influence was Italian, both culturally and linguistically. Until the Ottoman conquest became

a serious threat in the 15th century, very few Slavs, either Catholic or Orthodox lived inside the city walls of rich coastal towns. Only with the Ottoman advance, did the towns allow Slavs to become part of their urban life. However, those Slavs were soon Italianised and only a few intellectuals who adopted the ideas of the Renaissance and Baroque wrote their literature in Slavic and Italian/Latin. For this purpose, they often Italianised their names.³⁵

These foreign influences were much stronger than the impact of Croat or Serbian culture in the period prior to the national awakening. Neither of the two largest South Slav nations had its own state which could support their national development at the time when the romantic national movements were developing in Europe in the first half of the 19th century. Because of this, Croat nationalism, as indeed the nationalisms of other Slavic peoples in Europe, had to be based on the rediscovery of national history through language and folklore. However, the development of Croat nationalism was opposed by much stronger German, Hungarian and Italian nationalisms that were also growing at the time. Serbian nationalism in this period, although conceived in the Habsburg territory, soon moved to the nascent Serbian Principality south of the Danube, where it could develop unhindered from the 1830s onwards. Since the Ottoman threat had weakened, Serbian nationalism developing within the Principality did not need to make alliances with other neighbouring South Slav nationalisms in order to survive. Croat nationalism, on the other hand, had to do precisely that. This need to form alliances for mere survival led to the developmental path similar to that of the Serbian nationalism. Instead of having a national narrative formulated by the intellectuals from the Croat core territories, the initiators of the Croat national awakening drew heavily on the works of the pre-nationalist South Slav intellectuals originating in the periphery of the Croat ethnic zone.³⁶ These early intellectuals were mainly writers and historians from Dalmatia, where the influence of Italian Humanism and the Renaissance was stronger than in other parts of the Habsburg Empire.

³⁵ Italians regard these Italianised Slavs as part of their own culture. See further discussion.

³⁶ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 40-43.

2.2.1 The “Illyrian language” of the Renaissance and Baroque Periods

Apart from a few surviving mediaeval documents mainly of a religious and legal nature, the secular literature and the first historiography in the territory of what is the present-day Croatia, appeared in the 16th century among the humanist intellectuals of Dubrovnik, Hvar and Zadar.³⁷ The first independent South Slav dictionary was published by a Šibenik-born Faust Veranzio (Vrančić) in Venice in 1595 under the name *Dictionarium quinque nobilissimarum Europae linguarum Latinae, Italicae, Germanicae, Dalmaticae et Ungaricae* (*Dictionary of five most noble European languages Latin, Italian, German, Dalmatian³⁸ and Hungarian*). Bartol Kašić (1575-1650) published in 1604 in Rome the first South Slav grammar *Insitutionum linguae illyricae*,³⁹ in mixed *štokavian* and *čakavian* dialects. This was of utmost importance, as the majority of the Renaissance writers in Venetian Dalmatia and Dubrovnik wrote in Latin and Italian, rarely making distinctions between the South Slavs that were later to become known as the Serbs and the Croats.

From the same period were two most important historians of the 16th and early 17th century, writing about the Western Balkans: Mauro Orbini, the author of the influential *Il regno degli Slavi*, published in Pesaro in 1601, and Johannes Lucius, known for his *De regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*, published in Amsterdam in 1666.⁴⁰ However, the first history written in South Slav dialect was by Lucius' follower Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652-1713), of German descent, who published in 1696 his *Kronika aliti spomen vsega svieta vikov* (*The Chronicle or the Memory of the World*). This work was considered to be the precursor of the pan-Slavic idea, developed in the early 19th century.⁴¹ Like his Serbian counterpart Djordje Branković (1645-1711), Vitezović made no sharp distinction between the Croats and Serbs and used their common name Slavs or Illyrians interchangeably. Vitezović is considered to be an important historian for both Croat and Serbian narratives, because he wrote two Latin histories of both peoples: *Croatia Rediviva* (1700) and *Serbia illustrata*

³⁷ Moguš, M. – *Povijest hrvatskoga književnoga jezika*, Zagreb, 1993, 52

³⁸ Note that the language of the dictionary is not Croat, but “Dalmatian.”

³⁹ Again, the language of the dictionary is “Illyrian.”

⁴⁰ Mauro Orbini, an Italian from Dubrovnik, mid-16th century-1614, published his work in 1601 in Pesaro. Johannes Lucius, a Dalmatian, is equally claimed by the Croats and Italians (Ivan Lučić in Croat transcription and Giovanni Lucio in Italian, 1604-1679). Both wrote exclusively in Latin and Italian.

⁴¹ Moguš, 1993, 88

libri octo (after 1710).⁴² These early, pre-national writers, are important not only for their historical records, but because they introduced the idea of the Illyrian ancestry of the Slavs of their time.

The very idea of the “Illyrian origins” of the Balkan Slavs had its roots in the two mediaeval manuscripts that linked the Slavic conquest of Dalmatia with the Gothic raids of the Illyrian provinces of the Roman Empire by Totila’s Goths in the 6th century: the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, written by an anonymous Slavic monk sometime between the 12th and 13th centuries and the *Historia Salonitana*, written by Archbishop Thomas of Split in the 1250s. According to the renowned Croatian linguist Radoslav Katičić (b.1930), the linking of the two distinct ethnic tribes was based on one line in the *Chronicle* which stated that “*the Slavs were called Goths, because they came with Totila, as part of his army.*”⁴³ This connection of the Slavs and Goths, according to Katičić, was asserted sometime in the second half of the 12th century, after the Mongol raids of the 1240s.⁴⁴ In the period of Humanism and the Renaissance the Dalmatian towns, influenced by the similar events in Italy saw the rise of secular intellectuals interested in the ancient past. The Illyrian features of the eastern Adriatic during the Roman period presented an excellent opportunity for the flourishing of the Renaissance literature and historiography in Dalmatia.

These early Dalmatian intellectuals provide the core sources for the contemporary Croat and Serbian national narratives, but are also subject to mutually disputed national claims; the Croats simply label them Croats, because the majority of them were Roman Catholic and spoke Latin. The Serbs assert that they were of Serbian origin, because they wrote in the local *štokavian* dialect, used Cyrillic based on the Serbian redaction of Old Slavonic and frequently referred to the Nemanjić mediaeval past.⁴⁵ The most striking feature in *all* written works from this period is the absence of national declaration by the authors. This is not surprising considering that, with the exception of Dubrovnik, all South Slav territories were ruled by foreign empires. Dubrovnik, a small independent city-state, became the place of refuge of

⁴² *Serbia illustrata libri octo* was not published in the modern period. Croat historian Zrinka Blažević is currently working on the translation of the manuscript.

⁴³ Katičić, 1993, 101-102

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 101-102

⁴⁵ Petar Hektorović (1487-1572) from the island of Hvar, in his only surviving work *Fisherman and Fisherman’s Talk* from 1568, referred in verse as being “the Serbian way.”

various Slavic aristocrats and intellectuals, who all brought their memories and customs. Merging these traditions within the city walls prevented a clear national distinction among them, so a preferred national self-identification of Dalmatian writers and historians was “Illyrian.”⁴⁶

The intricate nature of self-identification by Slavic writers from the Adriatic coast continued well into the 17th and 18th centuries. Beginning with the Dubrovnik poet Ivan Gundulić (1589-1638), whose epic *Osman* later served as a basis for the Illyrian movement of the 19th century, and ending with the extraordinary Rudjer Bošković (1711-1787),⁴⁷ the artists and humanists of the declining Republic of Dubrovnik preserved memories of various South Slav mediaeval states.⁴⁸

Whilst the argument of the importance of the intellectuals from the pre-Nationalism era for the cultural development on the Dalmatian coast is unquestionable, recent arguments about their ethnic origins brought into prominence all the absurdity of the nation-creation processes in the South Slav Balkans. As noted earlier,⁴⁹ Catholics and Orthodox intermarried for several centuries prior to the appearance of nationalism in its modern form and the national designation of the name Croat or Serb became of importance only in the later 19th century.⁵⁰

2.2.2 A Heritage to build upon

In terms of quality of life, Croats living in Croatia Proper, which was unaffected by the Ottoman invasion lived in a feudal society dominated by the high nobles of which only a few could trace Slav/Croat origins.⁵¹ The old mediaeval

⁴⁶ Dubrovnik authors used to refer to their language as: *dubrovački* (Dubrovnik), *slovenski* (Slavic), *srpski* (Serbian), *hrvatski* (Croatian) and *naški* (“our language”).

⁴⁷ Rudjer Bošković was a scientist and a diplomat whose *Theoria philosophiae naturalis redacta ad unicam legem virium in natura existentium* (*Theory of Natural philosophy derived from the single Law of forces which exist in Nature*) brought him membership of the London Royal Academy in the 1760s.

⁴⁸ Bošković’s grandfather was a Serbian Orthodox who escaped from Herzegovina to Dalmatia and converted to Catholicism in the mid-16th century. With this conversion, his legacy began to be considered as exclusively Croat in the 19th century. Antun Sorokočević (1775-1841), the last ambassador of Dubrovnik in Paris, wrote *Postanak i propast Republike Dubrovačke* (*The Rise and Fall of the Republic of Dubrovnik*) which openly called for the unification of Dubrovnik, Boka Kotorska, Montenegro and Serbia into one state.

⁴⁹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 31-32

⁵⁰ With the adoption of the “divide and rule” policies of the Austro-Hungarian government following the periods of Bach’s absolutism and the *Ausgleich* the designation of the name Croat was linked to being a Roman Catholic. Correspondingly, the Orthodox religion determined belonging to the Serbian ethnic background.

⁵¹ Екмечић, М. – *Србија између Средње Европе и Европе*, Београд, 1992, 60

towns, consisting of small wooden houses surrounded by city walls, were gradually replaced by the Baroque masonry by the 18th century. Before the establishment of the Military Frontier, from the 16th century onwards, facing the Ottomans were mainly the military fortifications and Central European Renaissance-type towns such as Karlovac (Fig. 2.1).⁵²



Fig. 2.1 – Dubovac Castle overlooking the City of Karlovac (*Karlstadt*, named after Karl II Franz Habsburg, reigned 1564-1590), built in the 16th century.

The large scale devastation that accompanied the expulsion of the Turks from Slavonia and Lika practically erased the Islamic architectural urban features which comprised numerous fortified towns, bazaars, secular buildings and a number of mosques.⁵³ In the newly formed Military Frontier, these were swiftly replaced by the Habsburg military structures with the elements of Baroque-type fortifications.⁵⁴ By the end of the 18th century, the fortifications were losing their significance due to the waning Ottoman threat and to the strengthened central power of enlightened absolutism which had established a permanent army and prevented powerful nobles from conspiring against the crown and each other.⁵⁵ Just like elsewhere in the Habsburg borderlands, the Baroque town architecture was provincial and copied Viennese models. Generally, these included public buildings like townhalls, barracks

⁵² Mohorovičić, A. – *Architecture in Croatia*, Zagreb, 1994, 117

⁵³ *Ibid*, 114

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 117

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 133

and administrative mansions and private residences of various dignitaries and nobility, as well as the houses of an emerging middle-class (Fig. 2.2).



Fig. 2.2 – Eltz Manor, Vukovar, built in 1749-1751 for the Counts von Eltz of German descent.

In Dalmatia, ancient and mediaeval urban structures survived intact for centuries (Fig. 2.3). After the devastating earthquake of 1667 which heavily damaged the coastal towns, Italian Baroque was accepted as a dominant style and a number of public and private buildings were erected replacing previous mediaeval buildings (Fig. 2.4).⁵⁶



Fig. 2.3 – Dioclecian's Palace in Split, peristyle, now the central town square

⁵⁶ Ibid, 137



Fig. 2.4 – St. Blaise Cathedral, Dubrovnik, built by Venetian architect Marino Gropelli in 1715.

2.2.3 Illyrianism

After 1815 the Habsburg Monarchy witnessed the growth of romantic nationalisms in its constituent nations. Among them, the Croats of Croatia Proper traditionally under the Hungarian Crown began arguing for a higher level of autonomy. In 1832, Count Janko Drašković (1770-1856), one of the few native aristocrats who embraced the national revival (Fig. 2.5), published a manifesto titled *Disertatia iliti razgovor gospodi poklisarom (Disertation or Treatise given to the honourable lawful deputies and future legislators of our Kingdoms)* which argued for the unification of all Croat lands under the common name Illyria.⁵⁷ One of the most important aspects of defining the nation was a language standardization that was taking place in the Habsburg Monarchy. However, the dialect of Croatia Proper, *kajkavian*, was limited to a small population living in the vicinity of Zagreb and as such was not numerous enough to grow into a strong national movement. Mirroring the activities of the Serbian philologist Vuk Karadžić, a Croatian philologist of German origins Ljudevit Gaj or Ludwig Gay (1809-1872) published in Buda in 1830 *Kurzer entwurf einer kroatisch-slavischen ortographie (Short Introduction to Croat-Slavonic Orthography)*. In 1835 Gaj (Fig. 2.6) initiated publishing the first Croatian

⁵⁷ Stančić, N. – *Između političkog nacionalizma i etnonacionalizma: od hrvatske “staleške nacije” (natio croatica) do hrvatskog “političkog naroda”* in Cipek, T., Vrandečić, J. – *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji*, Zagreb, 2007, 44-45

newspapers *Novine horvatske* (*Croatian Newspapers*) in Zagreb in the *kajkavian* dialect. In the same year, also in Zagreb, he began publishing a cultural supplement *Danica Ilirska*, printed in both *kajkavian* and *štokavian* dialect, despite the fact that he himself was a native *kajkavian* speaker. Gaj and his circle soon became known as the Illyrianists.



Fig. 2.5 – Count Janko Drašković (1770-1856) Fig. 2.6 – Ljudevit Gaj (1809-1872)

Gaj's choice to use the *štokavian* dialect became heavily contested between Croat and Serbian scholars in the 20th century, who accused each other of fraud: the Croats accused the Serbs for trying to “Serbianize” the Croat lands by expanding their dialect to all lands west of the Drina, whilst the Serbs accused the Croats for “stealing Serbian culture and language.” Modern Croat historian Ivo Banac asserted that “*kajkavian* was superior to comparable *štokavian* works....but could not provide the basis for standardization, due to its limited extent of territorial use.”⁵⁸ Even though the Illyrian movement played the most important role in the Croatian national revival, modern Croat scholars cannot forgive the all-inclusive South Slav orientation of its leaders, particularly as they did not use the term Croat, but Illyrian: “The Illyrianists, just as in the matter of the most suitable national name, practised self-denial.”⁵⁹ In reality, considering the political situation in the Habsburg Empire, the Illyrianists were aware that limiting themselves only to Croatia Proper would be detrimental to their national ideas and needed the support of as many surrounding Slavs as possible. Gaj was painfully aware that low literacy rates among the South Slav peasant population enabled the promotion of the Hungarian national programmes that were taking place at the time: “...in an illiterate land such as

⁵⁸ Banac, 1994, 77 – By expressing his views in these words, Banac admitted that the adoption of the *štokavian* was for the purpose of territorial expansion of the Croat national idea.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 77

*ours...it is most necessary to bring all powers to bear upon awakening an effective and noble cultural patriotism...The story of our fatherland has already taught me how much it deserves to be lifted out of the miserable Magyar darkness.”*⁶⁰

Since most of the nobility spoke German, Italian or Hungarian and showed loyalty to their respective rulers, it was the bourgeois intellectuals who worked for the national awakening. After the publication of the Croatian newspapers, some members of the Croat *Sabor* called for the use of the “Illyrian language” in schools and other institutions. The term “Illyrian” was a substitute for South Slavic language area that consisted of three main dialects: *štokavian*, spoken in the Serbian Principality, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Vojvodina, Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia, *kajkavian*, spoken in Croatia Proper and Slovenia and *čakavian*, spoken in Istria and the islands of the Dalmatian coast. The leading intellectuals of the Illyrian movement within Croatia Proper concluded that the only way to withstand the growing Magyarization was generating a mass-movement of the Slav population through the unity of the language. However, different administrative divisions in which the South Slavs lived, dialectological differences, as well as the small number of “Illyrian” intellectuals prevented a widespread acceptance of the Illyrian national movement and an all-Slav national unification. Consequently, they sought to establish closer links with Vuk Karadžić and his circle and initiated the establishment of *Matica ilirska* in 1842.⁶¹

The government in Vienna understood well that the all-inclusive Illyrian movement could potentially generate a massive national movement of all South Slavs, which could eventually undermine the stability of the Empire. The ban to use the term *Illyrian* was a swift response of the authorities in 1843.⁶² Thereafter, Vienna focused its political activities on separating the potential national unification of the Catholic and Orthodox Southern Slavs by creating an atmosphere of mutual distrust. A similar approach was adopted by the Hungarian Diet, which was already immersed in fighting the growing German nationalism. Mutual distrust was manipulated through the most sensitive question of all: church unification. Serbian Orthodox Metropolitans saw this as the main threat and viewed the cooperation between the

⁶⁰ Bellamy, 2003, 44

⁶¹ <http://www.matica.hr/www/mh2www.nsf/oMatici2?ReadForm&krono> – The official web-site of *Matica hrvatska* – Accessed on 07/01/2013

⁶² Abraham, R. – *Walking in Croatia*, London, 2010, 30

Serbian cultural movement centred on Vuk Karadžić and leading Habsburg Slavic Catholic philologists as a step closer to the full unification.

However, Karadžić's literary victory of 1847⁶³ enabled the idea of the unity of the language to prevail in the secular circles of South Slav intellectuals, encouraging the Illyrianists to embrace cooperation with their Serbian counterparts. This resulted in the signing of the *Literary Agreement* in Vienna in 1850. The Agreement set the basis for future work on the common language of the Croats and Serbs and adopted *štokavian* as the standard dialect because it was spoken by the majority of the South Slav population. Some modern accounts interpret this Serbo-Croat cooperation as an act of mutual misunderstanding on behalf of the signatories of the agreement: the Illyrianists indeed sought to unite the Southern Slavs, but maintained the principle of Croatia's right to statehood.⁶⁴ However, as no question of right to statehood was ever mentioned in the Agreement provisions, the socio-political circumstances at the time of the signing of the agreement point to another conclusion. Both the Illyrianist Croat intellectuals and their Serbian counterparts after 1848 realized that their political and national goals within the Habsburg Monarchy could not be achieved if pursued separately. The *Literary Agreement* was a pragmatic solution that could make progress in achieving some form of national self-identification.

In the 20th century, Croat scholars argued that the *Literary Agreement* was the agreement of "a small group of Croat intellectuals and Serbs who had no mandate to sign any agreement related to the Croat language."⁶⁵ The fact that the signing of the *Literary Agreement* in 1850 coincided with the closure of the "Illyrian reading rooms" in Zagreb and the oppressive policies of Bach's regime (1849-1859) on the "Illyrian culture" in the aftermath of the revolutionary 1848 was not taken into consideration. It is also notable that the *Agreement* was signed by only two Serbs (Vuk Karadžić and Djuro Daničić), one Slovene (Fran Miklošič) and five Croats (Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, Dimitrije Demetar (an Orthodox of Greek origins), Ivan Mažuranić, Vinko Pacel and Stefan Pejaković), which points to the conclusion that more than a "small group" of Croat intellectuals was genuinely concerned by the problems of national awakening. In a sense, the signing of the *Agreement* was a desperate measure to preserve a minimum of the national culture and language for

⁶³ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p.34-36.

⁶⁴ Bellamy, 2003, 45

⁶⁵ Moguš, 1993, 158

both the Croats and Serbs, threatened to be marginalized in the Monarchy. Sadly, what none of the signatories of the Agreement took into consideration were different historical legacies and religious affiliations that would mar Serbo-Croat relations in the 20th century.

The Illyrian movement did not have a significant influence on the cultural events in the Serbian Principality. Nor did it have any influence in Dalmatia, which at the time witnessed the development of several parallel national identities: South Slav-Illyrian, Slav-Dalmatian, Croatian, Serbian and Italian.⁶⁶ Dubrovnik, even though officially under the rule of Vienna, had a literary tradition much longer and separate from that of Croatia Proper. When written in “Slavic,” Dubrovnik literature was exclusively Cyrillic and based on the *štokavian* dialect spoken in its immediate hinterland and in Herzegovina. As the Viennese policies suppressed the development of the South Slav national movements and the Italian and Italianised Slav aristocracy of the major coastal towns looked across the Adriatic, the Slav population of Dalmatia turned towards those centres that corresponded to their religious affiliations. The Serbs of Dalmatia looked towards the Serbian Principality. The Croats of Dalmatia looked towards Croatia. However, the physical separation by the Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina prevented direct contact between Serbs from the Serbian Principality and Serbs in Dalmatia. Communication and cooperation had to take place via the main academic centres of the Habsburg Empire. As Karadžić’s work became so influential by the 1850s, it acquired followers in Dalmatia. Thus, a young Serbian writer from Šibenik, Božidar Petranović (1809-1874), following the establishments of *Matica Srpska* in 1826 and *Matica Ilirska* in 1842, established *Matica Dalmatinska* in Zadar in 1862.⁶⁷ It lasted until 1912, when it finally merged with *Matica Hrvatska* resulting from the political circumstances that preceded 1914.

Generally, the Illyranists’ ideas of the unity of the Southern Slavs within the Monarchy grew into a political movement after 1848 and its proponents started to use the historical statehood narrative insisting on closer cultural ties behind the common Illyrian ancestry. As soon as the Habsburg government prohibited the term *Illyrian*, it was replaced by a newly-coined term *Yugoslav* by Bishop Josip

⁶⁶ Clewing, K. – *Političacija kulturalnih razlika i racionalnost jezično-nacionalnih zahtjeva: primjer Dalmacije u revolucionarnoj 1848/49 godini* in in Cipek, T. i Vrandečić, J., 2007, 69

⁶⁷ In 1865 *Matica Dalmatinska* published a collection of Serbian epic poetry from Dalmatia in Latinic script. Some of the poems were variations of those previously recorded by Vuk Karadžić.

Strossmayer (1815-1905). “The first Yugoslav,” Strossmayer, even though of German origins himself, believed that the Illyrian was an artificial and foreign word and that the term *Yugoslav* was more appropriate for the Southern Slavs.⁶⁸ However, as a Catholic cleric loyal to the Crown, he did not advocate a separate South Slav state, but understood that some form of autonomy should be achieved within the framework of Austro-Slavism.⁶⁹

2.2.4 The Nation-Building programme in the southern Habsburg lands

In the southern Habsburg lands, Classicism, like the Baroque before it, arrived about a generation later.⁷⁰ As a general pattern, initially conservative bourgeois societies in Central Europe, influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution, responded to the 18th century aestheticism of the classical forms of antiquity by looking into the mediaeval “national” past. Similarly, as the native middle classes lacked the strength to fully define new aesthetic expression amidst the national revival movements across Central Europe, it took again a whole generation to replace the rigid Classicism by the Neo-Romanesque and, from the mid-19th century, the Neo-Gothic. Both artistic movements were influenced by the re-discovery of national histories and the creation of national narratives.

In Croatia Proper, the national revival occurred about two decades later than in Central Europe. One reason for this should be sought in the fact that neither Austrian nor Hungarian authorities expressed much interest for the industrial development of the southern regions. Admittedly, the road and rail networks were being built from the mid-19th century, but were neither widespread nor well-connected like in the core lands of the Monarchy. The ruling noble classes of Croatia were little interested in the national revival and spreading education amongst the population. Even though the Croats were the only Southern Slavs to have national nobility and gentry, they showed little interest in advancing national institutions. This is not accidental, as the majority of the top nobles were actually foreigners, with the exception of only a few Croat families. Of just under 10,000 noble families in 1805, barely five could claim

⁶⁸ Bellamy, 2003, 44. Yugoslav literally translates as South Slav.

⁶⁹ Austro-Slavism was a short-lived concept developed amongst the Slavs loyal to the Habsburg Empire. It sought to oppose Pan-Slavism which was under the influence of Russia.

⁷⁰ Mohorovičić, 1994, 171

mediaeval origins and even they were not exclusively Croat.⁷¹ Naturally, they were loyal to the Crown, spoke German or Hungarian and had vested interests only in maintaining their privileges. That is why the towns in Croatia Proper and Slavonia in the pre-national revival period had no national characteristics, but were reminiscent of the other parts of the Habsburg Empire.⁷²

At the beginning of the 19th century, Zagreb had only a few cultural institutions. It had one *Royal Academy of Sciences*, established by Maria Theresa in 1776, which consisted of three faculties: Philosophy, Theology and Law, with the language of instruction in Latin and German.⁷³ However, this institution was abolished in 1850, following reforms of the educational system in the Habsburg Monarchy. The Faculty of Philosophy was downgraded to Principal Grammar School (*Archigymnasium*) and the Faculty of Law was turned into the *Royal Academy of Legal Science* (*Regia academia iuris*), which thus became the only institution of higher education in Croatia until 1874, when the University of Zagreb was finally inaugurated (Fig. 2.7).⁷⁴

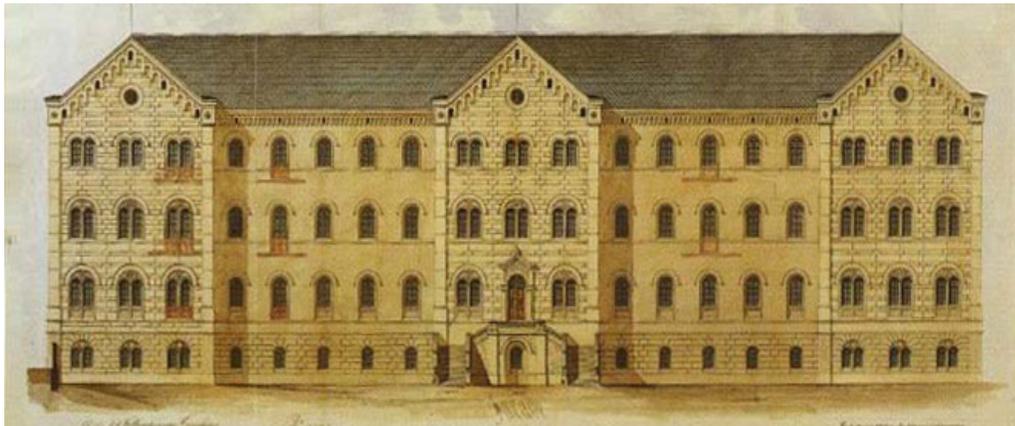


Fig. 2.7 – The Faculty of Law, original design from 1864. Today, this building is the Rectory of the Zagreb University. The architecture of the building has strong Neo-Romanesque features, reflecting similar attempts to re-create earlier styles elsewhere in the Monarchy.

⁷¹ As the *Sabor* had the right to grant noble titles, until 1835, it had only 658 charters issued, which shows that there was little independence on deciding even on this issue. – Екмечић, М. – *Србија између Средње Европе и Европе*, Београд, 1992, 60

⁷² In the Habsburg Monarchy, later Austro-Hungary, existed 11 university centres: Vienna (Wien), Budapest, Cluj (Klausenburg, Kolosvar), Černivci (Czernowitz), Graz, Innsbruck, Krakov, Łwow (Lemberg), Prague (two universities: Czech and German) and Zagreb, which was the last to be formed.

⁷³ http://www.pravo.unizg.hr/en/law_school/history - The official web-site of the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb – Accessed 21/01/2013

⁷⁴ <http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/about-university/history> - The official web-site of the University of Zagreb – Accessed 21/01/2013

Apart from the Royal Academy, there was a seminary, a few primary schools, two printers, one bookshop and a theatre in its nascent phase, which all used German as the language of communication.⁷⁵

It was not until the local bourgeoisie grew in the first part of the 19th century that the national awakening was possible. The idea for the formation of a *Learned Society* was advanced by an early Pan-Slavist Tomaš Mikloušić (1767-1855), who wrote in *Izbor dugovanj vsakoversneh* in 1821 about the need to educate people in their mother tongue. Ljudevit Gaj accepted the idea, developed it further and published it in *Danica* in 1836.⁷⁶ In the same year, the Illyrianists proposed to establish the National Museum in Zagreb. However, both the idea for the Learned Society and the National Museum had to wait for another decade to materialize.⁷⁷ The *National Museum* was finally opened in February 1846 in the prestigious Zagreb palace of Count Karlo Drašković of Trakošćan (Fig. 2.8).⁷⁸ The donated artefacts acquired before the opening were previously sent to the Royal Academy of Law and initially stored in the palace of Baron Daniel Rauch in Zagreb. For the next twenty years, the Museum functioned with varying degrees of success. The Archaeological department of the Museum existed from the very beginning, but not until Don Šime Ljubić (1822-1896) became its director in 1868, were significant advances in its work possible.

The *Learned Society for Yugoslav History and Antiquities (Društvo za jugoslavensku poviest i starine)* was founded in 1850 by an important member of the Illyrian movement and one of the signatories of the *Literary Agreement* in Vienna in the same year, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (1816-1889). However, the Learned Society had a very restricted manoeuvring space, as all national movements were suppressed in the 1851-1860 period, during the premiership of Alexander von Bach. Only with the removal of Bach in 1860, were the controls relaxed and Bishop

⁷⁵ Hawkesworth, C. – *Zagreb, A Cultural and Literary History*, Oxford, 2007, 35

⁷⁶ According to the great Croat historian of the late 19th century, Tade Smičiklas, Gaj maintained the idea of the *Learned Society* since 1829, when he dreamt of building a magnificent palace to house the Society in Harmica, modern day Jelačić Square. – Smičiklas, T. and Marković, F. – *Matica Hrvatska od godine 1842 do godine 1892, Spomen knjiga*, Zagreb, 1892, 21

⁷⁷ *150 godina HAZU – 150 Godina Hrvatske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1861-2011*, Zagreb, 2011, 14 – This building was the place where Jelačić was nominated Ban in March 25, 1849.

⁷⁸ The palace, built in 1838, had the great dance hall which was still not finished when the building was bought for museum purposes. On November 16 (according to some sources this happened somewhat earlier) of the same year a permanent museum exhibition was opened. – Mirnik, I. – *Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 27; Ljubić, S. – *Narodni zemaljski muzej u Zagrebu*, Zagreb, 1870, 15

Strossmayer could begin his work on founding the academy. Already in 1861 the Sabor passed a bill for founding the academy, but Emperor Franz Joseph I (1830-1916, ruled from 1848) did not sign the decree of approval until 1866. Immediately after the establishment of the *Yugoslav Academy* in 1866, the Sabor passed a bill renaming the National Museum to *Landesanstalt Croatia-Slavonia* and put it under the management of the *Sabor* and the *Yugoslav Academy*.



Fig. 2.8 – The Drašković town palace where the National Museum was first housed. Designed and erected in the Neo-Classical style in 1838 by the Czech architect Bartol Falbinger (1785-1871). Today it serves as a municipal building *Narodni dom (National Home)* and houses the Institute for Croat Language, Theatre and Music.

After obtaining imperial approval, Bishop Strossmayer (Fig. 2.9) founded the *Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences (Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti – JAZU)* in Zagreb. The academy soon established close links with the *Serbian Learned Society* in Belgrade and promoted the ideas of the national unity of all Southern Slavs. Bishop Strossmayer, as its patron, and a historian and theologian Franjo Rački (1828-1894) as its first president (Fig. 2.10), dominated the life and work of the JAZU for the first two decades of its existence.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ *150 godina HAZU – 150 Godina Hrvatske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1861-2011*, Zagreb, 2011, 15



Fig. 2.9 – Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815-1905) Fig. 2.10 – Franjo Rački (1828-1894)

2.2.5 The Revolution of 1848, “Austro-Slavic patriotism” and Ban Josip Jelačić (1801-1859)

When Hungarian national sentiment erupted in 1848, Vienna sent troops under the command of the Croatian general Josip Jelačić (Fig. 2.11) to suppress the rebellion. Jelačić was appointed Ban of Croatia in March 1848, just as the political crisis was culminating. As an Austrian officer, he was educated at the Viennese *Theresianum* and served in Galicia and the Military Frontier, where he gained respect for his administrative abilities.⁸⁰ The Hungarian political leaders had demanded freedom from Vienna, but were not prepared to give the same to the Croats, Serbs, Slovaks and Romanians living under the Hungarian administration. Thus, when Jelačić was proclaimed Ban, it was the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitan Rajačić, who gave his blessings as a gesture of support for the common South Slav cause.⁸¹ At the same time, the Zagreb Catholic Bishop Haulik, a Slovak loyal to the Hungarians, was noted for his absence.⁸² Jelačić severed the relationship between the *Sabor* and Hungarian Diet in April 1848, abolished serfdom and established a court-martial that

⁸⁰ Rihtman-Auguštin, D. – *The Monument in the Main City Square – Constructing and Erasing Memory in Contemporary Croatia* in Todorova, M. – *Balkan Identities*, London, 2004, 181

⁸¹ Metropolitan Rajačić (1785-1861) had his title of Patriarch briefly restored during the 1848 Revolution

⁸² <http://www.nacional.hr/clanak/89793/tko-je-tko-i-odakle-strani-velikani-hrvatske-kulture> - The official web-page of the Croatian daily *Nacional* – An interview with Prof. Predrag Matvejević, a retired professor of the University of Sapienza, Rome – Accessed on 22/01/2013

was aimed primarily at the *Madjaroni*, the political party founded by the leading nobles in 1842 in order to promote union between Croatia and Hungary. He then marched his troops across the Drava, but stopped when approached Budapest, which signalled that the conflict of the Croats against the Hungarian government was under Austria's control.⁸³

Hungarian and Croat national historians view the role of Jelačić in the 1848 revolution from diametrically opposing perspectives. For the former, he and his soldiers are remembered as bringers of considerable evil.⁸⁴ For the Croats, Jelačić was the first Croatian statesman since the Middle Ages who managed to bring under his authority most of the regions where the Croats lived.⁸⁵ The institutions he founded whilst in the office are considered to confirm the Croatian right to statehood: the Zagreb diocese, until 1848 under the Hungarian episcopate was raised to the level of archbishopric, the national theatre was founded, along with increased support for the use of the Croatian language and the printing of books in Croatian. However, even though a moderate supporter of Illyrianism, Jelačić was first and foremost loyal to the crown and did not see Croatia as an independent state. His concept of Croatian national identity was firmly based within the framework of Austro-Slavism, as envisaged by Czech historian František Palacký.⁸⁶ Following the defeat of the national movements in 1848/49 in the Habsburg Empire, a short-lived Austro-Slavism was also compromised. Jelačić found himself under great pressure by Bach's regime, which attempted to induce Germanization on Monarchy's Slavic nations. He remained Ban of Croatia until his death in 1859, but his role was reduced to the mere implementation of Viennese policies.

In his last years, although very ill, Jelačić retained the aura of a national hero, despite the fact that the Croats were in the same disadvantageous position as other non-Germans in the Empire. The decision to erect an equestrian statue to Ban Jelačić in Zagreb's new City Square came not from the Croats, but the Austrian authorities in 1854, which were re-developing provincial towns according to the Viennese model. The original 17th century buildings were already replaced by

⁸³ Ibid, 182

⁸⁴ Rihtman-Auguštin, D. – *The Monument in the Main City Square – Constructing and Erasing Memory in Contemporary Croatia* in Todorova, 2004, 186

⁸⁵ Ibid, 195 – Palacký (1798-1876), a protégé of Count Sternberg, was very careful of alienating Vienna. He accepted and further developed Borovský's initial idea of Austro-Slavism into a full programme.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 182

classicist buildings, based on the Viennese *Ringstrasse*.⁸⁷ This was a programmatic move of the Habsburg authorities after the 1848 revolution to urbanize the southern Habsburg lands aiming to strengthen loyalty to the state.⁸⁸ Originally laid in the 17th century, this new City Square, previously known as Harmica,⁸⁹ was renamed Jelačić Square to honour the loyal servant to the Crown.⁹⁰ The Viennese sculptor Anton Fernkorn created an equestrian statue, finally unveiled in 1866 – the year of the establishment of the JAZU (Fig. 2.12). The sculpture of the Ban, holding his sabre high above head pointing towards north (Hungary) dominated the Jelačić Square until 1947, when the authorities of Communist Yugoslavia removed it. It was reinstated in 1990, but this time facing south (Bosnia and Herzegovina). The monument to Ban Jelačić was one of the first monuments to be erected to an ethnic Croat in Croatia, albeit on the initiative of the Habsburg authorities.



Fig. 2.11 – Ban Josip Jelačić (1801-1859)



Fig. 2.12 – Monument to Ban Jelačić, Zagreb, 1866

⁸⁷ As the city authorities were loyal to Vienna, mirroring the Viennese architecture was one way of expressing this loyalty.

⁸⁸ Екмечић, 1992, 67

⁸⁹ Word *harmica* derived from the Hungarian *harmincz*, the title collection point

⁹⁰ Hawkesworth, 2007, 56

2.2.6 *Nagodba*

The policies of Germanization imposed after the revolution 1848/49 were seriously challenged after the Austrian defeat by Prussia in 1866. The Hungarians used this political situation to force the *Ausgleich* in the following year, whilst the Croat national revivalists in the *Sabor* sought an opportunity to acquire more freedom for their goals. In January 1867, the *Sabor* passed a bill which sanctioned the use of *Croatian or Serbian language* as the official language in Croatia and Slavonia.⁹¹ This decision also included the implementation of Karadžić's language reform. As the expected *Ausgleich* between Austria and Croatia did not materialize, closer ties with the Serbs were needed in order to prevent the total collapse of the Croatian national movement. On their part, the Serbs in the Principality, used the moment of Austrian weakness to connect with their co-nationals in the Monarchy as that would ease the Austro-Hungarian encroachment that was expected after the final Ottoman withdrawal.⁹²

The foundation of the academy coincided with the political turmoil in the Habsburg Monarchy during the *Ausgleich*. Aiming to curb Hungarian influence, Vienna advocated the state-right for Croatia which was the basis for the Hungarian-Croat agreement of 1868.⁹³ The *Nagodba* between the Hungarian and Croatian diets sanctioned joining Croatia Proper and Slavonia for the first time in history under the name of the Kingdom Croatia-Slavonia. Istria and Dalmatia remained separate provinces under Vienna. In theory, the *Nagodba* allowed the Croats to maintain their own local administration, educational and religious systems. However, the administrative ruler of Croatia, the Ban, had been appointed by Vienna since 1526. With the *Nagodba*, this right was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Hungarian Diet, which quickly acquired full-control over the *Sabor* and its autonomy.⁹⁴ With only few exceptions, the Croatian Bans appointed after 1868 were almost exclusively conservative nobles, either foreign or of mixed ethnic origins, who unconditionally supported the union of Croatia and Hungary and favoured Hungarian supremacy.

⁹¹ <http://www.nspm.rs/kulturna-politika/o-etnickom-identitetu-srpskohrvatskog-jezika.html?alphabet=1> – Sotirović V. – *O etničkom identitetu "srpskohrvatskog" jezika in Nova srpska politička misao (New Serbian Political Thought)*, published on 25/09/2012

⁹² See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 47

⁹³ Modern argument of the Croat state-right during the secession from Yugoslavia was actually this old Viennese policy. As such, it was adopted by the majority of modern scholars. See, Bellamy's comment on the Literary Agreement in Footnote 63, p. 217.

⁹⁴ Hawkesworth, 2007, 61

Immediately after his term began, the newly appointed Ban of Croatia, Baron Rauch de Nyék (1867/68-1871), one of the leading advocates of unification with Hungary, was given a free hand to start the policies of Magyarisation. Strict Hungarian control and German undermining of this control by open national favouritism led to the appearance of Croat nationalism which opposed both the Illyrianists' and Strossmayer's concepts of Yugoslavism.

2.3 Establishing the Croatian national programme

The failure of the Illyrian movement to generate overall South Slav support and failure of the *Nagodba* to secure minimum autonomy resulted in a generation of frustrated Croat intellectuals, disenchanted with the romantic ideas of their Illyrian predecessors. Even though the Illyrianists formed the People's Party in 1841 that was supposed to counter-act the *Madjaroni*, they were never more than a cultural movement with only superficial interest in daily politics. From the mid-19th century, however, the political landscape began to change, with the appearance of the first modern political parties formed around exclusively political, rather than cultural ideology. During Bach's absolutism any form of national revivalism within the Habsburg Empire was suppressed. In Croatia-Slavonia, the People's Party's political platform was greatly reduced to manoeuvring between Vienna and Budapest.⁹⁵ This enabled Strossmayer to assume the role of *de facto* People's Party leader between 1860 and 1873. Being a powerful personality, after the abolition of the term *Illyrian*, he concentrated on *Yugoslavism*, as the main party programme. An open call for the unification of all South Slavs alienated him from both Vienna and Budapest and contributed to the party's defeat in the overwhelmingly pro-Hungarian *Sabor*. After the failure to achieve political goals, Strossmayer withdrew from politics and continued his work on cultural development in Croatia-Slavonia, still advocating the union between Serbs and Croats.

2.3.1 Strossmayer's Yugoslavism

Strossmayer, of German descent, was born in Osijek in 1815. Catholic educated from the early age, he achieved two doctorates in the universities of Budapest and Vienna in Philosophy and Canon Law. In 1847 he became the

⁹⁵ Tanner, 2010, 97-100

Habsburg Court Chaplain, only to be appointed bishop of the rich diocese of Djakovo in Eastern Slavonia in 1849. Strossmayer immediately sought to establish the cultural policies that would guide the Habsburg Slavs albeit under the influence of the Catholic Church. He directed the revenues from the diocesan estates towards rebuilding churches and cathedrals in the style of *Historism*, the aesthetic movement promoted by Vienna in its desire to return to traditional values. In 1866, Strossmayer commissioned two Viennese architects, Karl Rösner and Friedrich von Schmidt,⁹⁶ to rebuild the Djakovo Cathedral in the combined Neo-Romanesque and Neo-Gothic style which were then dominating Habsburg *Historism* in architecture. The building of the cathedral lasted for more than two decades, 1866-1882, and was at the time a landmark of Eastern Slavonia, as it could be seen from afar (Fig. 2.13).

Strossmayer personally supervised the works. He desired the re-building of the Djakovo cathedral to send his political and ideological message to all the South Slavs of Austro-Hungary. Yugoslavism, which he envisaged within the Austro-Hungarian political constitution and devoted to Roman Catholicism, was best presented in the two key-frescoes painted inside the cathedral; one of them, *Adoration of the Kings* (Fig. 2.14), shows five South Slav peoples bowing before the baby Christ. Each of the five peoples were presented in their national costume and doing their national work: A Croat man carrying grapes in his hands, a Slavonian woman with wheat, a Dalmatian woman with olives, a Bulgarian with fruit and a Serbian man as a shepherd. In the later 20th century, the differing costumes were interpreted as belonging to the Croat nationals from different parts of the Balkans.⁹⁷ The second fresco, *The Coronation of St. Mary* (Fig. 2.15), is even more significant, as it depicts an Orthodox woman and a Muslim man in Bosnian costume bowing before the Papal throne.⁹⁸ The latter represented Strossmayer's strong belief that the union of the Southern Slavs was not possible without a single faith, which could only be the Roman Catholic. Needless to say, this attitude raised suspicions in the Serbian Orthodox Church, which then put all its efforts in protecting its believers from Catholic proselytism.

⁹⁶ Von Schmidt was the leading Austrian Gothic-revivalist and was credited, amongst other works, for the design of the *Akademisches Gymnasium* in Vienna and gild works on the *Cologne Cathedral*.

⁹⁷ Damjanović, D. – *Nacionalne ideologije i umjetnost u 19. stoljeću na primjeru fresaka Đakovačke katedrale*, Zagreb, 2008, 468

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 465



Fig. 2.13 – Djakovo Cathedral, re-built in 1866-1882 by Karl Rösner and Friedrich von Schmidt from Vienna on the initiative of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer.



Fig. 2.14 – *The Adoration of the Kings*, painted by a German artist Ludwig Seitz in 1878. Different traditional regional costumes were explained in the late 19th century as those of the various South Slav peoples.



Fig. 2.15 – *The Coronation of St. Mary*, painted by Alexander Seitz, father of Ludwig in 1879-1880. Bottom right corner represents a Muslim man and an Orthodox woman coming to bow before the Papal throne. To the left is Bishop Strossmayer himself, holding in his hands a small model of the Djakovo Cathedral.

Strossmayer was solely responsible for founding the JAZU, but also had a final word in deciding how the future palace of the academy should look. His choice was a palace in the Neo-Florentine Renaissance, built by Friedrich von Schmidt in only three years, 1877-1880 in the Zrinski Square in Zagreb (Fig. 2.24). He personally oversaw the Academy's first periodical, *Rad*, published in 1867 by Franjo Rački. In the year of *Nagodba*, 1868, the JAZU began publishing mediaeval manuscripts entitled *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium*, collected and translated into contemporary language and printed in Vuk Karadžić's orthography. A year later, the JAZU published the first volume of its annual periodical *Starine (Antiquities)*.⁹⁹

Strossmayer endorsed the foundation of the *Croatian Archaeological Society* in 1878, which followed the financial collapse of the *Learned Society for the Yugoslav*

⁹⁹ http://info.hazu.hr/osnutak_akademije - The official web-site of the Croat Academy of Sciences and Arts (HAZU) – Accessed on 24/01/2013; *Rad* was replaced by a number of specialised periodicals by 1882.

History and Antiquities.¹⁰⁰ The newly founded Society limited its activities to archaeology, as it was created as a separate department within the Museum. The appointed Committee took care of the organizational work.¹⁰¹ Both the Museum and the Archaeological Society were under the JAZU umbrella, closely observed by the watchful eye of Bishop Strossmayer. In 1884, Strossmayer donated to the Academy 235 paintings of old masters that he collected all his life. This event marked the foundation of the Academy's Gallery.¹⁰²

When the JAZU opened, its first secretary was Karadžić's closest follower, a Serbian linguist Djuro Daničić. He was invited personally by Strossmayer and Rački to work on a common language and, subsequently, a *Dictionary of Croatian or Serbian Language* was published in 1882. The publishing of the Dictionary expressed the ideology of the leading scholars of the JAZU that the language of the Serbs and the Croats was one and the same, written in both Latin and Cyrillic script.

2.3.2 Ante Starčević (1823-1896) and distinct Croat nationalism – 1868-1883

The failure of the People's Party to win full autonomy from the Hungarians aggravated some former members of the Illyrian movement and prompted them to re-think the cultural policies in political terms. This was a significant divergence from the romantic views of the national history promoted by the Illyrians of the first half of the 19th century. The new ideas of national identity among the Croats were now linked to the exclusively Croat, Catholic and Central European concept of nation-state.

Strossmayer and Rački wanted unification of all South Slavs based on the policies of Austro-Slavism and under the influence of the Catholic Church.¹⁰³ However, a very few Habsburg Serbs were willing to accept the union of two churches. Naturally, the Serbian intellectuals who had good connections with the

¹⁰⁰ The *Learned Society for the Yugoslav History and Antiquities* existed between 1850 and 1878 and was initiated by a prominent Illyrianist Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski. It stopped its activities primarily for financial reasons.

¹⁰¹ Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski became its first chairman and Fra Šime Ljubić its first vice-chairman. Mirnik, I. – *Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 2

¹⁰² Sewell, B. – *Museums of Zagreb* in Group of Authors – *Croatia – Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, Zagreb, 2009, 197

¹⁰³ Banac, 1994, 90

*Serbian Learned Society*¹⁰⁴ sought to improve cooperation with their counterparts in the Serbian Principality. As the Serbian Principality was showing signs of economic growth, accompanied by an unhindered cultural development, it was natural for the Serbs of Austro-Hungary to turn their attention towards the newly awoken Serbian state, rather than towards the more developed, but alien, Vienna or Budapest. Many of them actually moved to Serbia and became professors at the Grand School and held other important posts in the new Serbian national institutions.¹⁰⁵ Strossmayer's failure to attract the majority of the Orthodox Slavs convinced some Croat intellectuals that Illyrian and Yugoslav ideas were inadequate for the salvation of the Croats.

Witnessing political struggle for the Italian unification in 1861, the chief notary of Fiume,¹⁰⁶ Ante Starčević (1823-1896), desired the same for Croatia. Of mixed Croat-Serbian origins, Starčević (Fig. 2.16) graduated at the Roman Catholic theological seminary at Pest, but rather than becoming a priest, he pursued a legal career and held several posts in the Austro-Hungarian state bureaucracy. From 1848 to 1853 he wrote literary essays and advocated the etymological alphabet. His literary endeavours, however, did not mirror his political activism. Between 1857 and 1868, Starčević worked on the theory that the Serbs and the Croats were not only two different people, but two different races. In his 1868 book *Ime Srb* (*The Name of the Serb*), he developed the idea that the Croats belong to the Nordic race of warriors, whilst the Serbs were their slaves.¹⁰⁷ Even though it is impossible to establish to what extent Starčević was acquainted with the emerging racial theories of Joseph Gobineau, the similarity of the ideas was startling.¹⁰⁸

However, his voice was not heard until well into the 1870s, when the political situation in Croatia Proper and the Military Frontier changed, and when the transformation of intellectual thinking throughout Europe affected the Monarchy itself. In general, the nationalism of the second part of the 19th century began its transformation and national ideas based on the "golden age" and ethnic folklore of the previous generation were replaced by calls for an exclusive and self-sufficient

¹⁰⁴ Later *Serbian Royal Academy*. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 44-48

¹⁰⁵ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 32-38

¹⁰⁶ Modern day Rijeka

¹⁰⁷ Екмечић, 1992, 95; Starčević, A. – *Ime Srb*, Zagreb, 1868, 3-4

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 95

nation-state. The appearance of anti-Semitism in Europe and Russia, influenced Starčević to form his idea of Croat supremacy among Balkan Slavs.¹⁰⁹



Fig. 2.16 – Ante Starčević (1823-1896), the founder of Croat nationalism.



Fig. 2.17 – Josip Frank (1844-1911), a close associate of Ante Starčević.

Starčević was a bitter opponent of Strossmayer's calculated tolerance of Orthodoxy. He failed to recognize that growing exploitation of the religious differences between the Serbs and Croats was a key policy for preserving Hungarian supremacy in their part of the Dual Monarchy, had a profound influence on his own political thinking. The Hungarians saw that tolerance towards Serbs could weaken Croat separatist tendencies. On their part, the Austrians fully endorsed the union of two churches, which led some Croats to favour Vienna. This frequent change of support to each ethnic group created political divisions that forever affected relations between the two South Slav nations.¹¹⁰

Apart from internal political reasons, geo-strategic interests were also involved in creating this irreconcilable division between the Croats and Serbs. Banac has argued that the "route of *Drang nach Osten* ran eastward across Slavonia at the time when Berlin was instructing the adherents to this policy among the Austrian ruling class" to insist on its implementation. At the same time, Hungarian interests were

¹⁰⁹ Gross, M. – *Izvorno pravaštvo – ideologija, agitacija, pokret*, Golden marketing, Zagreb, 2000, 690–750

¹¹⁰ Singleton, F. – *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, Cambridge, 1985, 107

heading westwards, towards the Adriatic across the same territory.¹¹¹ The clash was inevitable and securing the loyalty of the local Slavs was necessary. Maintaining a bitter religious rivalry between the Croats and Serbs enabled both Vienna and Budapest to pursue their own political and national agendas.

These deliberately divisive internal policies in Austro-Hungary affected the formation of Croatian nationalism precisely when nationalism as an ideology was developing characteristics significantly different from the emancipating role of the pre-1848 romantic nationalism. Starčević's inability to recognize that both the Croat and Serbian position in Austro-Hungary were parts of a complex political situation, led him to focus his political programme exclusively on the denial of the existence of Serbs or Orthodoxy in the territories he considered historically Croat. However, unlike the Illyrianists or Strossmayer and Rački, Starčević was the first to assert an idea for an independent Croatia that would include all territories held by the Croat state under King Tomislav in the early 10th century.¹¹² His definition of Croat nationalism was deeply rooted in the idea of devotion to the Roman Catholicism of the early mediaeval Croatian kingdom.

Starčević became additionally embittered after the uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875.¹¹³ The rebels, predominantly Orthodox Serbs, demanded liberation from the Ottoman Empire. The support they received from Serbia and Montenegro led to the 1876-1878 war between the Ottoman Empire and two Serbian principalities. After Serbia and Montenegro entered the war, the Bosnian rebels demanded not only the liberation from the Ottomans, but also unification with Serbia. This was not well received by Starčević and his followers with their newly formulated concept of Croatian statehood which perceived Bosnia and Herzegovina as the core lands of the Croat mediaeval kingdom.

Together with his friend Eugen Kvaternik (1825-1871) Starčević founded in 1881 the *Croatian Party of Rights (Hrvatska stranka prava)*, better known under its later name the *Pure Party of Rights (Čista stranka prava)*.¹¹⁴ The party's programme

¹¹¹ Banac, 1994, 95

¹¹² Croat nationalists argued that King Tomislav (925-928) ruled not only present-day Croatia, but also Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. They created a map of Tomislav's kingdom which included not only modern-day Croatia, but also most of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegrin coastline and Srem in Vojvodina. With some modifications this map was used as a basis for so-called "Greater Croatia" and the NDH state during the Second World War.

¹¹³ Ibid, 92. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 37

¹¹⁴ Singleton, 1985, 107

was centred on the idea of state right, introducing the claim that the migration to and the conquest of the 6th-7th centuries “*established the eternal and natural Croat right to the ownership of the land.*”¹¹⁵ Starčević and Kvaternik interpreted *De Administrando Imperio* as Porphyrogenitus’ confusion and simply stated that the Serbs were actually “Orthodox Croats” and the Slovenes “Highland Croats.” For them, the mere name of Serbs meant the “*unclean race of various origins, dating to ancient times, which was bound together only by its servile nature; their very name derived from the Latin servus (servant, slave).*” Starčević’s denial of the Serbs went as far to claim that “*the mediaeval kings of Doclea were the most ancient and illustrious family of Croats – the Nemanjić family.*”¹¹⁶

Starčević was staunchly against the language reform of Vuk Karadžić, even though he used the *ekavian* dialect himself and strongly opposed the *Literary Agreement* of 1850. He believed that the Orthodox population in what he considered Croatian territory was “the oldest and purest Croat peasantry that converted to Orthodoxy and mixed with the Orthodox Vlachs who became Croats.”¹¹⁷

Although Starčević did not advocate the Gothic origin of the Croats, his followers later developed the idea of the non-Slavic origins of the Croats.¹¹⁸ These views coincided with the period when ideas of racial superiority were penetrating the mainstream social thinking of intellectuals in the major European Powers. They generated many supporters in the last decades of the 19th century, especially amongst students and young intellectuals.¹¹⁹ From a modern perspective, understanding his anti-Serbian and anti-Orthodox feelings, especially as his mother was Serbian Orthodox who converted to Catholicism on marrying his father, falls into the domain of psychology.¹²⁰ To use the bold assessment of the modern Western scholar Sabrina Ramet, Starčević presented a classic case of a disturbed personality with low self-esteem.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ Ванас, 1994, 86

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 86

¹¹⁷ Mandić, D. – *Hrvati i Srbi, dva stara različita naroda*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 1990, 235

¹¹⁸ Екмечић, 1992, 95

¹¹⁹ Ванас, 1994, 88

¹²⁰ His hatred for the Serbs could be explained by some deeper intrapsychic egodystonic problems.

¹²¹ Ramet, S. – *Thinking about Yugoslavia*, Cambridge, 2005, 306 – Ramet actually paraphrased German scholar Schoenfeld who concluded in 1996 that **the entire Serbian nation** suffers from an inferiority complex. Such arguments among Western scholars dealing with the Serbs in Former Yugoslavia are not unusual and show signs of disturbing chauvinism. In this respect, the phrase used here in order to illustrate Starčević’s personality is not directed against the entire Croat nation.

2.3.3 Croat nationalism as a political construct of the later 19th century¹²²

Starčević's *Croatian Party of Rights* won popular support when the political influence of the *People's Party* failed to successfully oppose the policies of Magyarization, ruthlessly implemented by the much hated Ban Khuen-Héderváry (1883-1903). During his time in office, Hungarian was introduced as the official language in Croatia and Slavonia, while Hungarian national symbols took precedence over Croatian. Simultaneously, the Serbs in Croatia-Slavonia received from Khuen-Héderváry some small concessions regarding their religious rights, which additionally aggravated Croat politicians who, unable to achieve political equality, turned against the Serbs.¹²³

The enforcement of Khuen-Héderváry's policies resulted in the growth of Croat dissatisfaction with Strossmayer's ideas of Yugoslavism and the radicalization of Croat national feelings. Starčević's re-modelled political programme now openly argued for an independent Croatia consisting only of ethnic Croats, which included both "Orthodox Croats" (Serbs) and "Mountain Croats" (Slovenes). This resonated well amongst fervent Catholics. However, after Starčević's death in 1896, the *Croatian Party of Rights* split into several factions of which the most prominent became the *Croatian Pure Party of Rights*, led by Josip Frank (1844-1911), a Jewish convert to Catholicism (Fig. 2.17).¹²⁴ The so-called *Frankists* of the *Croatian Pure Party of Rights* were solely interested in preventing the Serbs from participating in the political and cultural life of Croatia and Slavonia. Blinded by their hatred, they quickly became a tool in the hands of Vienna, which by then expressed interest in expanding its influence across the borders of the Drina into the Serbian Kingdom.¹²⁵

Modern Croatian historiography insists that the national programme created by Ante Starčević and his followers was a response to the nationalistic and "Greater Serbian" ideas of Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin. In the early 1980s, Ivo Banac, the internationally most prominent Croat historian for the past three decades, relying on the writings of nationalist-scholars belonging to the period of the Croatian Spring of 1971¹²⁶ and some extreme-right Croat émigré authors, asserted that Vuk Karadžić

¹²² See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 65-66 – *Political aspect of modernism*

¹²³ Tanner, 2010, 108

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 106

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 106

¹²⁶ See further discussion.

was “a vociferous Serbian nationalist, who brought forth a modern Serbian national ideology, the purpose of which was to assimilate the vast majority of Catholic Croats and all Bosnian Muslims, whose dialects were akin to the štokavian spoken by the Serbs.”¹²⁷ According to Banac, “Karadžić’s linguistic Serbianism followed the erroneous teachings of the earliest Slavic scholars, beginning with the German historian August von Schläzer (1735-1809) who distinguished between Croatian (kajkavian), Bosnian, Dalmatian and Illyrian (štokavian) which Schläzer called “*Illyrisch oder Serbisch*.”¹²⁸ All subsequent pioneers of Slavic philology in the early part of the 19th century, according to Banac, followed this “false” premise. Karadžić’s linguistic “vociferous nationalism,” Banac found to be mirrored politically in Garašanin’s *Draft* of 1844, which “laid foundations of the Great Serbian policy of Yugoslav unification, which remained axiomatic among the conservative circles and individuals in Serbia until 1941.”¹²⁹ To underpin his argument, Banac juxtaposed Starčević’s disquieting anti-Serbianism and anti-Semitism against Karadžić’s short linguistic essay *Serbs, All and Everywhere*, by arguing that the “*cudgels of controversy* (the attempt of Serbianization) were picked up by Ante Starčević, a peasant like Vuk” and successfully compared two incomparable cultural and political ideas.¹³⁰

Karadžić’s public activities (1814-1867) and Starčević’s rise to prominence in Croat political life (1851-1894) were politically and culturally one generation apart, coinciding with significant transformation of the Habsburg Monarchy.¹³¹ Primarily a scholar, rather than a politician, Karadžić lived and worked during the romantic nationalism of the late 18th and early 19th century, when nationalism as a novel idea had a largely positive, *emancipatory*, role.¹³² Being a student of the German/Austrian school of linguistics and philology, he shared great enthusiasm for national revival of his European contemporaries.¹³³ Karadžić’s *Srbi, svi i svuda*, written in 1836, was only published as a linguistic polemic on the territoriality of Serbian national revival

¹²⁷ Banac, 1994, 80

¹²⁸ Ibid, 80

¹²⁹ Ibid, 82

¹³⁰ Ibid, 85 – In reality, Starčević did not respond to Karadžić’s article at all.

¹³¹ By arguing that Karadžić’s writings from the early Romantic era have the nationalistic tone of the later part of the 19th century, Banac exonerated Starčević’s chauvinism and put the equality sign between two different generations.

¹³² See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 85.

¹³³ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 33-36

during the revolutionary 1848/49.¹³⁴ The interpretation that Starčević's anti-Serbian rhetoric was in response to Karadžić's assertion of the territoriality of Serbian nation is essentially incorrect as it omits to notice that the Croat response to the contents of Karadžić's article did not appear in 1849 when it was first published. Nor did it appear in the year 1850, when the *Literary Agreement* in Vienna was signed. It came only in 1861 when a young Croat politician Josip Miškatović (1836-1890), a loyal employee of the Habsburg administration, protested to the notion of the "Serbs of all three creeds" that Karadžić, used in his writings based on linguistic analysis some twelve years earlier, as inaccurate.¹³⁵

On his part, Garašanin was the first modern Serbian politician to accept the idea of the nation-state according to the French and German models. His *Draft* of 1844 was copied almost a word-for-word from the article of the influential Pan-Slavs Adam Czartoryski and František Zach.¹³⁶ At the time of writing the document, Karadžić's language reform was still not accepted by the Serbian government; indeed, his reformed alphabet was still forbidden and Karadžić had many enemies among the senior Constitutionalists, including Garašanin himself. Therefore, even though they both shared Pan-Slavic ideas, there are no indications that Karadžić politically influenced Garašanin. As a pragmatic politician who understood well the insecure and weak position of the still dependent Serbian Principality, Garašanin was in no hurry to alienate Vienna. It seems illogical that laying down a "Greater Serbian programme in 1844" when full independence of the Serbian Principality was still more than thirty years away, could be anything more than the wishful thinking of a politician educated in the same climate of romantic nationalism. The mere fact that the *Draft* remained unknown to the Serbian public until 1906 indicates that the document itself could not have had any influence on creating any national

¹³⁴ <http://www.rastko.rs/filologija/vuk/vkaradzic-srbi.html> - Online version of the document *Srbi, svi i svuda*, originally printed in *Kovčević za istoriju, jezik i običaje Srba sva tri zakona*, Vienna, 1849 – Accessed on 14/02/2013 – The main premise of the article is that, linguistically, Croats live predominantly in *kajkavian* and *čakavian* speaking territories, whilst the *štokavian* population is ethnically Serbian.

¹³⁵ Already the elderly Karadžić responded within days after the publication of Miškatović's article on 4 March 1861, that he never disregarded other Southern Slavs and that the title of the article meant "Von den Serben überhaupt," that is "To the Serbs, wherever they live." Karadžić's explanation is carefully omitted from the Croat interpretation of the real reasons behind the establishment of the Croat national programme. <http://www.rastko.rs/filologija/vuk/vkaradzic-srbi.html> - Online version of the document *Srbi, svi i svuda*, originally printed in *Kovčević za istoriju, jezik i običaje Srba sva tri zakona*, Vienna, 1849 – Accessed on 14/02/2013

¹³⁶ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 42-43.

programme amongst the Serbs in the 19th century. In other words, the premise that the *Draft* was the basis of Greater Serbia should be seen as a simple misrepresentation of the facts.

On the other hand, Karadžić's work on language reform and his collection of Serbian folk poetry brought him great respect among the Croat revivalists such as Ljudevit Gaj and other Illyrianists. Arguing that both the Illyrianists and Croat signatories of the *Literary Agreement* in 1850 were all misled by a single individual, even one as influential as Karadžić, seems very unreasonable. Since the first Croat intellectuals to disagree with Karadžić belonged to a three or even four decades younger generation, the attempts to link them without taking into account the changed political circumstances within the Habsburg Monarchy between 1815-1848 and 1868-1894 represents a typical example of normative historiography.¹³⁷ Within the Monarchy, the latter period differed drastically politically from that of 1815-1848, when Karadžić was at his most active. The nature of the nascent party politics in the *Sabor* required political programmes to focus on the political struggle. Initially, Strossmayer's cultural Yugoslavism presented the only challenge to the Hungarian and Austrian national policies and it naturally prevailed amongst the Croat intellectuals. As the political pressures from Budapest and Vienna increased, cultural Yugoslavism was not a satisfactory solution, especially as it argued that Croatia-Slavonia and other South Slav lands should remain within the Habsburg Monarchy. Inevitably, Starčević's political programme remained the only alternative to the pro-Hungarian *Magyaroni* and politically impotent Strossmayer's *People's Party*. Simultaneously, Serbian influence, either political or cultural, was marginal, as the Serbs of the Dual Monarchy were constantly looking towards the Obrenović government in Belgrade, despite its inability to avoid influence of Vienna. This Serbian attitude was understandable considering Austro-Hungarian neglect of the economic development of Croatia-Slavonia paired with the extremely difficult cultural position of the South Slavs in the Monarchy whose national movements were either minimised or completely forbidden. Starčević thought this Serbian political malaise was equal to treason, which only increased his deep hatred for the Serbs and Orthodoxy. His failure to render any significant opposition to much stronger German and Hungarian political influences, focused his political activism

¹³⁷ See *Introduction*, p. 5

against the “less developed and uncivilised Slavo-Serbs.”¹³⁸ His personal frustrations, therefore, became the basis for a Croat national programme that collided with a Serbian national narrative in the 20th century. Thus, by comparing two different cultural and political concepts from two different timelines, the origins of Croat nationalism were defined on a fallacy of composition.¹³⁹

2.4 The road to the South

Starčević’s ideas, based exclusively on the denial of the existence of the Serbian identity, became the leading rationale of the Croat national narrative at the end of the 19th century. They gained prominence after the 1878 occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international recognition of the independent Serbian Principality. As the number of Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not exceed 20%, whilst nearly 43% of Orthodox Serbs of the overall population constantly looked towards Belgrade for support, the Croat national ideologues sought to neutralize this disparity by expanding Starčević’s claim that the “Bosnian Muslims were Croat by nationality” and “the oldest and purest nobility of Europe.”¹⁴⁰

The underpinning for this assertion was sought in the division of the Roman Empire by Theodosius the Great in 395: Since *all* territories west of the Drina automatically belonged to the Western Empire which was under the Pope’s jurisdiction, the Slavic population that lived there was originally Catholic, that is, Croat.¹⁴¹ To support this claim, first Starčević and then Frank after him, evoked the term *Red Croatia* that appeared in chapter 9 of the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*. *Red Croatia* assigned the territory of “Upper Dalmatia” to the narrow coastal strip of land that included cities south of Dalma¹⁴² and Drač in Albania (Map. 2.4).¹⁴³

¹³⁸ This was Starčević’s favourite derogatory term for the Serbs. Modern Croat historian Mirjana Gross is one of the few Croat scholars who openly argued that Starčević was a racist and an anti-Semite. Ivo Banac completely omits or tones down Starčević’s arguments.

¹³⁹ This interpretation that the origins of the Croat national programme was a response to the Greater Serbian expansionism of Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin, became common place in Croat and Western historiography in the past three decades.

¹⁴⁰ Banac, 1994, 108

¹⁴¹ This was when, for the first time in the late 19th century, an exclusive equality sign was put between Catholicism and Croatness.

¹⁴² Usually identified as Duvno in Herzegovina in Croatian historiography, although there are some differences in opinion. Undoubtedly, the city of Dalma gave the name to the whole province of Dalmatia. During the 1990s wars in Former Yugoslavia, the town’s name was changed into Tomislavgrad in honour of the first mediaeval Croat king Tomislav (925-928).

¹⁴³ Мијушковић, С. – *Летопис попа Дукљанина – пријевод и објашњење* – Београд, 1988, 114 – Мијушковић, С. – *Chronicle of Priest of Doclea – translation and explanation* – Belgrade, 1988, 114

Extrapolating the division of the Roman Empire in 395 to the selective reading of the *Chronicle* through the term of *Red Croatia*, a late 19th century definition of Croat ethnic territory, stretching from Slovenia eastwards to Belgrade and along the Drina to Skadar, established a narrative based on the total denial of anything Orthodox, that is, Serbian. Starčević and his followers took the notion of *Red Croatia* as an accurate fact and ignored that the Priest of Doclea stated in the same place in his chronicle: that the said territory “in which the rivers flow northwards into the Danube is called Serbia.”¹⁴⁴



Map. 2.4 – *Red Croatia*, as envisaged by Starčević and Frank.

Vienna saw these Croat efforts as a useful tool to control the rebellious Serbs within Austro-Hungary and impose additional pressure on Belgrade, which was dissuaded from influencing the Serbs in the Dual Monarchy. As Croat nationalism in Croatia-Slavonia was under the firm control of the leading *Magyaroni*, the frustrated national aspirations of the Croats turned their full attention towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the majority of the Serbs kept their Orthodox tradition even

(the text of the *Chronicle* within this work was quoted as the *Chronicle*, whilst the explanations were quoted as Mijušković's work

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 113 – The notion of the rivers that flow north and into the Danube determines the Danube watershed, which includes modern day Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Slavonia and Serbia.

more ardently than the Serbs in the Serbian Kingdom. This new Croat national narrative gained momentum during von Kállay's administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, resulting in the alienation of the Serbs, who hoped to attract the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the common cause against Austro-Hungary.¹⁴⁵ Whilst Khuen-Héderváry led the policy of appeasement of the Serbs in Croatia-Slavonia in order to subdue the Croats, von Kállay in Bosnia and Herzegovina favoured the Croats there in order to win their support against the Serbs. In this way, the Austro-Hungarian authorities managed to induce a Serbo-Croat clash over Bosnia and Herzegovina and shift the main Croat aim of winning equal status with Hungary after the *Nagodba* towards the non-existent threat from the Serbs and their Orthodox faith. The "Divide and Rule" policy as a common practice in Austro-Hungarian internal politics finally succeeded. From the early 1880s relations between the Croats and Serbs in Croatia-Slavonia seriously deteriorated.¹⁴⁶

2.4.1 Austro-Slavic *Historism* in Croatia Proper and Slavonia

Except for the appearance of nationalism, the Napoleonic wars also accelerated the spread of industrialization in Europe, which in turn resulted in the growth of the existing towns and founding of new ones. The Neo-Classical features of the grand aristocratic town houses and stately homes in the countryside were soon surpassed by the appearance of modern urbanization guided by the needs of the new bourgeois classes that strove to emulate the aristocrats by building their own houses modelled on the grand palaces of previous centuries, albeit on a more modest scale.

In Austria itself, industrialization began after 1840 in the form of *Gründerzeit*, the economic concept followed by the appearance of the *nouveau riche* which generated the economic growth that enabled re-building and re-shaping the townscapes across the Habsburg Empire. However, Austrian *Gründerzeit* did not attempt to impose the new aesthetic, but to imitate the grandeur of the previous epoch. Richly decorated facades, reminiscent of the palatial architecture of the previous centuries, referring to the perceived national characteristics first occurred in

¹⁴⁵ The establishment of the Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1881 was followed by the appointment of the Croat Archbishop Josip Štadler (1843-1918) in Sarajevo, to further the unionist policies of Austro-Hungary. Štadler introduced Jesuits in Bosnia and Herzegovina and worked ardently to convert Muslims and Serbs to Catholicism, thus, making them Croats. Simultaneously, the rights of the Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were severely restricted. See *Chapter V- The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 400-401.

¹⁴⁶ Banac, 1994, 92

Austria, Moravia and Bohemia. In other parts of the Empire this concept was developing at a much slower rate as the growth of the nationally aware bourgeoisie was directly proportionate with the economic growth of a particular province. The economic development of the southern Habsburg territories was affected by the often restrictive policies within the Military Frontier, where industrialization did not properly begin until its abolition in the 1880s.

The aesthetic adopted by various national movements in the Habsburg Monarchy was firmly based in the re-discovery of the national “Golden Age” which served as an inspiration to painters, composers, poets or novelists and coincided with the beginning of industrialization. In the southern Habsburg lands, centuries of rule by non-Slavic kings and a predominantly Germanized or Magyarized aristocracy who followed metropolitan tastes and the supra-national influence of the Roman Catholic Church, left few traces of anything “national” in the visual landscape of the South Slav territories, which had suffered cataclysmic population losses and religious transformations in the previous centuries. With a few exceptions, the great aristocratic landowners rarely spoke Croatian or were of foreign origin and readily expressed loyalty to the crown.

The inspiration for the national “Golden Age” was nevertheless sought in the only part of the Balkans that remained unaffected by the Ottoman conquest: Civil Croatia or Croatia Proper, *reliquiae reliquiarum regni Croatia, Slavoniae et Dalmatiae*, where the remaining South Slav aristocratic families took refuge and built their fortresses and castles as the defense system against the Ottomans in the fortified towns of Varaždin, Zagreb, Križevci and Samobor.¹⁴⁷ After the Habsburg-Ottoman wars ended in the 18th century the towns, together with those in the Military Frontier, were re-modelled on Baroque principles. Consisting of a converging street grid directed towards the most prominent and socially significant buildings (churches, town halls, schools, markets), these towns reproduced the visual nucleus of the Austrian town.¹⁴⁸ In residential areas, the rich palatial facades frequently hid smaller buildings, often divided into several floors.

The early tastes of the new middle classes was to imitate those of the nobility which lacked national characteristics. Neo-Classical forms of the later 18th century with their strict Palladian proportions were slowly replaced by Neo-Romanesque and

¹⁴⁷ Mohorovičić, 1994, 23

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 23

Neo-Gothic features in the period of Romanticism, only to be surpassed by the Neo-Renaissance of the second part of the 19th century.¹⁴⁹ Together these styles formed the continuum of the Austrian *Historism* and were applied eclectically throughout the Empire. Croatia Proper and Slavonia were not exempt, especially as their visual features were the work of predominantly Austrian architects, commissioned to emulate metropolitan tastes.

Chronologically, the best examples of Classicism were represented by the Januševac Castle (Fig. 2. 18), the City Hall in Samobor (Fig. 2.19), both designed by the German architect Bartholomeus Felbinger, and the Mausoleum at Trsat near Rijeka, built in the Doric style for the Irish general Laval Nugent in the service of the Habsburg crown (Fig. 2.20).¹⁵⁰

The Neo-Gothic style was the inspiration for the complete re-modeling of Zagreb cathedral in 1881-1902 by the Viennese architects Friedrich Schmidt and Hermann Bollé (Fig. 2.21). The Trakošćan Castle of the Drašković family remodelled in the mid-19th century is another good example of the Neo-Gothic (Fig. 2.22). So are the New Palace built for Ban Jelačić and the Jurjaves Chapel in Zagreb (Fig. 2.23).

The Neo-Renaissance was an inspiration for the JAZU (Fig. 2.24), as well as for the theatre buildings in Zagreb and Varaždin (Fig. 2.25). The Mirogoj Cemetery (began in 1876 by Hermann Bollé on the land owned by Ljudevit Gaj, but finished in 1929), the central Railway Station (built by a Hungarian architect Ferenc Pfaff in 1890-1892) and the Grand Gymnasium – today the Mimara Museum (Fig. 2.26), all modern Zagreb landmarks, are also good representations of the Neo-Renaissance. The Zagreb buildings of the National Theatre (Fig. 2.27) and the Palace of Gavella are the best representations of Neo-Baroque.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 25

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 27



Fig. 2.18 – Januševac Castle near Zagreb, built around 1830 by Bartholomeus Felbinger. A typical example of Neo-Classical architecture, it houses today the Croat National Archives. For the most of its history, the castle was used by those aristocrats who followed the metropolitan tastes of the Habsburg Empire and had little interest in national emancipation outside of Austro-Slavism.



Fig. 2.19 – City Hall in Samobor, built in 1826 by Bartholomeus Felbinger.



Fig. 2.20 – Mausoleum at Trsat, near Rijeka, built for General Nugent in the 1850s. The inscription on the pediment reads *Mir junaka* (*The Pece of Heroes*).



Fig. 2.21 – Zagreb Cathedral, re-built in 1906 in the Neo-Gothic style.



Fig. 2.22 – The Trakošćan Castle of the Counts Drašković. The original mediaeval castle was remodelled in the mid-19th century in the Neo-Gothic style.



Fig. 2.23 – The Neo-Gothic Jurajaves Chapel, built by Josef Vönstadel for Archbishop Juraj Haulik in 1864.



Fig. 2.24 – The building of Yugoslav Academy, built in the Neo-Renaissance style by Friedrich von Schmidt in only three years, 1877-1880 in the Zrinski Square in Zagreb.



Fig. 2.25 – National Theatre in Varaždin, designed and built by the famous Viennese architects Herman Helmer and Ferdinand Fellner in 1873.



Fig. 2.26 – The Grand Gymnasium (today the Mimara Museum) built in Neo-Renaissance style by German architects from Leipzig and Berlin, A. Ludwig and L. Th. Hülssner in 1895 for the occasion of the official visit of Emperor Franz Joseph II.



Fig. 2.27 – The National Theatre in Zagreb built in Neo-Baroque style by the Viennese architects Ferdinand Fellner and Herman Helmer in 1895. It replaced the small theatre that existed since 1836 in the Old City Hall. It was opened by Emperor Franz Josef I during his official visit to Zagreb in 1895.

This Austrian *Historism*, dictated by the political and social order in the Habsburg Empire, was usually reserved for monumental public buildings. The transformation of Zagreb and other towns of Croatia Proper and Slavonia in the revivalist historical styles, did not begin until the mid- to late-19th century. In none of these provinces, including Dalmatia as well, were key-public buildings executed by ethnic Croat architects. One rare example was the original building of the *Zagreb Županija*, built in 1849 by Aleksandar Brdarić (1813/14-1872), a student of the Lviv University and a follower of Classicism. As the building was shared between the *Sabor* and *Zagreb Županija*, only a few decades later it became inadequate and was re-modeled in 1911 by the Czech architects Lav Kalda and Karlo Susan in the styles of Classicism, Neo-Renaissance and the Viennese Secession (Fig. 2.28).¹⁵¹

Creating a national style that would symbolically present “Croat” in architecture was additionally impeded by the absence of educated Croatian architects. Brdarić was unique in his lifetime, as he was one of the few university educated middle class Croats. Not until 1882, when for the first time the City of

¹⁵¹ <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?sec=484> – The official web-site of the Croat Sabor – Accessed on 18/02/2013

Zagreb Chief Architect became a graduate of the University of Graz, Milan Lenuci (1849-1924), were ethnic Croats directing the urban development. Even then, they were following the tastes initiated in the imperial capital. When an earthquake seriously damaged Zagreb in 1880, Lenuci demolished the old street-grid in order to form the so-called “green horseshoe,” a series of city parks and avenues, based on Viennese and Paris models.¹⁵²



Fig. 2.28 – The Croatian *Sabor*, re-built in 1911 by the Czech architects Lav Kalda and Karlo Susan in the styles of Classicism, Neo-Renaissance and Viennese Secession.

The new *Landestheater* opened in 1895 during the state visit of Emperor Franz Joseph I, who personally contributed by the symbolic last stroke of the silver hammer, specially made for that event (Fig. 2.27).¹⁵³ The construction of the theatre was initiated in 1871, but approval was not given until 1893, as part of the preparation for the Emperor’s visit. Ban Khuen-Héderváry personally recommended

¹⁵² “The Green Horseshoe,” built between 1891 and 1912, was envisaged to link six town squares, which marked the expansion of Zagreb into what is now known as *Donji Grad*. Its western side consists of three squares now named: Maršal Tito, Marulić and Mažuranić, whilst its eastern side is bordered by the Strossmayer, Zrinski and Tomislav squares.

¹⁵³ http://www.hnk.hr/o_kazalistu/o_zgradi/povijest_zgrade - The official web-site of the Croatian National Theatre – Accessed on 20/02/2012

the location outside the old city and engaged two Viennese architects Ferdinand Felner and Hermann Helner to design the building in the manner of Viennese *Historism*. Even though carefully planned, the Emperor's visit was marred by disturbances. A group of students openly opposed the Magyarizing policies of Khuen-Héderváry by burning the Hungarian flag in front of the monument to Ban Jelačić.¹⁵⁴ The event showed deep disappointment at the position of Croatia-Slavonia within the Empire.

2.4.2 Nation-sculpting

Until the second half of the 19th century, the impact of the Croat national revival was limited to literary activities and occasional cultural events. There were no attempts to create a separate "Croat national style" in architecture as there were no surviving uniquely national models from the Middle Ages which could serve as the basis for such an enterprise. The erection of the large public buildings, aristocratic estates and town houses was dominated by Austrian and German architects. However, from the mid-19th century, a series of young Croat sculptors came into prominence, mainly through the patronage of Strossmayer who ensured that large sums generated by the Djakovo Diocese were partly used for their education.

The first Croat sculptor to embrace and celebrate the national past was Ivan Rendić (1849-1932), from the island of Brač, where world renowned marble was quarried and where he began his career (Fig. 2.29). Educated in Venice and Florence in the traditional school of *realism*, Rendić was soon noticed by Strossmayer, who became his patron. From 1871, when his portraits received acclaim, Rendić lived in Zagreb. During the next twenty years, he worked on a series of monuments dedicated to famous Croats from the past. His monument to Ivan Gundulić (Fig. 2.30) was unveiled in Dubrovnik in 1893.¹⁵⁵ It was soon followed by one to Petar Preradović, an early Illyrianist, which was unveiled in Zagreb in 1894. The monuments of famous individuals of Croat history and public life, such as those of Ban Krsto I

¹⁵⁴ Banac, 1994, 96

¹⁵⁵ The costs of the construction were paid for by the young Serbian King Aleksandar Obrenović (1889-1903).

Frankopan (1482-1527)¹⁵⁶ and Ante Starčević were erected in Zagreb in the same period.



Fig. 2.29 – Ivan Rendić (1849-1932)



Fig. 2.30 – Monument to Dubrovnik's poet Ivan Gundulić (1589-1638) was unveiled in 1893 on initiative of the Serb Catholic Youth, local movement of Dubrovnik Serbs.

In 1894, on the initiative of the *Party of Rights* in Zagreb, city authorities approved building a house in for Ante Starčević (Fig. 2.31). Although initially forbidden by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, the house was built in a magnificent Italian Neo-Renaissance style by German architects Leo Hönigsberg and Julio Deutsch. The chosen location was a newly designed prominent Zagreb square,¹⁵⁷ worthy of the “*Father of the Nation*” as Starčević came to be called by his followers. When he died in 1896, Rendić was commissioned to design Starčević's tomb. The monument was a composition of Starčević's bust and a personification of *Croatae* in the form of a woman with fists stiffened in pain and tired of the attempts to release herself from the shackles at the bottom of the pedestal (Fig. 2.32). *Croatae* stands above a replica of the *Pro Duce Trepimero* inscription of the endowment of Croatian duke Trpimir from 852, the oldest charter relating to the Croat history. The symbolic meaning of the monument was to confirm Starčević's assertion of Croats being the oldest and noblest of all Southern Slavs. Accordingly, Rendić's monument to Ante Starčević, revealed the respect that Starčević's national programme had gained by the end of his life.

¹⁵⁶ The highest Croat noble who presided over the *Sabor* of Cetina that elected Ferdinand I Habsburg as Croatian king in 1527

¹⁵⁷ Now called Starčević Square.

After Rendić, several younger Croat sculptors continued producing monuments of famous historical persons and events, making sculpture a key-element for expressing Croat nationalism.



Fig. 2.31 – Starčević’s town house, erected on the newly built Starčević’s Square in Zagreb. Funded by donations of his followers, the house was designed by German architects Leo Hönigsberg and Julio Deutsch in Italian Neo-Renaissance style. The archival photograph was taken by the first Zagreb photographer immediately after the completion.



Fig. 2.32 – The tomb-monument to Ante Starčević in Šestine, which incorporated a copy of a fragment of historical monument *Pro Duce Trepimero* from the 9th century, the allegoric figure of Croatia above which towers the “Father of the Nation” – Ante Starčević.

2.4.3 The Slavo-Dalmatians

After acquiring Dalmatia in 1815, Vienna retained Italian as an official language of administration, culture and education. In Istria, the port of Fiume¹⁵⁸ with the status of *separatum sacrae regni coronae adnexum corpus* remained the only Hungarian port in the Adriatic¹⁵⁹ until the end of the Habsburg Monarchy.¹⁶⁰ In Dalmatia, the national revival activities before 1848 had little contact with Croatia Proper and Slavonia. In 1848 an Illyrianist enthusiast Ante Kuzmanić (1807-1879) asserted in the short-lived magazine *Zora Dalmatinska (The Dalmatian Dawn)* that in one territory can live only one nation.¹⁶¹ Kuzmanić championed the *ikavian* pronunciation of the *štokavian* dialect of his native Split, but never proclaimed himself a Croat. This was in accordance with the view that many *štokavian* speaking intellectuals of the period held. They were primarily concentrated on developing Slavo-Dalmatian national consciousness which would, in case of some future independence, create a connection between the Catholic West and the Orthodox East Slavs. In the same year, 1848, an old Dubrovnik aristocrat Ivan Dživo Natali (1775-1853) wrote, but never published, a document titled *Ristretto* which argued for the establishment of an independent state of Dalmatia which would consist of Dalmatia, Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska.¹⁶²

The development of Slavo-Dalmatian identity, let alone Croatian or Serbian was frustrated by the much stronger Italian nationalism which intensified in the period following the Italian unification in 1861. One of the most prominent representatives of Italian nationalism, Niccolo Tommaseo (1802-1874), a native of Šibenik argued against the Illyrianist assertion that Dalmatia belonged to the historical Slavic Kingdom of Croatia since the conquest of the 7th century. Tommaseo (Fig. 2. 33) argued that no Byzantine document ever confirmed that the Greeks willingly surrendered Dalmatia to the Croats. In an article *Parnica dalmatinska razvidjena s njezinih novih pogledah*, published in Zadar in 1861, Tommaseo suggested that “if the Croats won their right to Dalmatia in the 7th century

¹⁵⁸ Modern-day Rijeka

¹⁵⁹ Fiume was under Hungarian authorities since the 1779 decree issued by Maria Theresa (1740-1780)

¹⁶⁰ Šakčević, D. – *Svjesno mijenjanje slike Mađara u dijelu hrvatskoga tiska kao dio dobro smišljene taktike u politici “novoga kursa” prije i nakon Riječke rezolucije* in Cipek, T. i Vrandečić, J., 2007, 98

¹⁶¹ Clewing, K. – *Politizacija kulturalnih razlika i racionalnost jezičko-nacionalnih zahtjeva: primjer Dalmacije u revolucionarnoj 1848/49. godini* in Cipek, T. i Vrandečić, J., 2007, 70-71

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 100

by force, the same right was won by the Venetians in the 11th century.”¹⁶³ Tommaseo drew heavily on the difference between the Croats and Dalmatians, not only because the “Dalmatians struggled to understand the language created in Zagreb,” but also because throughout their history, the Dalmatians were politically separated from the Croats; they did not participate in the 1527 Sabor of Cetin,¹⁶⁴ when a Habsburg was chosen to be a Croat king, neither were they asked if they agreed to the 1712 *Pragmatic Sanction* which re-confirmed the Habsburgs as the ruling dynasty of Croatia.¹⁶⁵



Fig. 2.33 – Niccolò Tommaseo (1802-1874)



Fig. 2.34 – Antonio Baiamonti (1822-1891)

Unsurprisingly, Dalmatian Italians wished for unification with Italy. Both Italian and Croat modern historiography disagree about the Italian presence in Dalmatia in the 19th century. Whilst Italian scholars argue that the Italian population comprised as much as 30% of Dalmatia, their Croat counterparts estimate that this number could not be higher than 7%.¹⁶⁶ The Croat argument is based on the notion that the Italians included into their ethnic core all the people who spoke Italian,

¹⁶³ Ibid, 102

¹⁶⁴ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 32.

¹⁶⁵ Clewing in Cipek i Vrandečić, 2007, 103

¹⁶⁶ Bartoli, M. – *Le parlate italiane della Venezia Giulia e della Dalmazia*. Tipografia italo-orientale. Grottaferrata, 1919, 46. Also, Peričić, Š. – *O broju Talijana/Talijanaša u Dalmaciji XIX. Stoljeća*, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru, 2002, 344. Note the dates of publications of the two accounts. One is from the perspective of the political situation immediately after the First World War and another in the aftermath of Croat independence, over 80 years later.

without taking into account that many Slavs spoke Italian. The Italians, on the other hand, argue that the Italians of Dalmatia were exposed to aggressive *Slavification* after 1882.¹⁶⁷

The Orthodox population lived predominantly in southern Dalmatia and Dubrovnik and expressed interest in having closer connections with the nascent modern Serbia.¹⁶⁸ The Dalmatian Slavs, who identified themselves as the Serbs, irrespective of religion, founded in 1862 *Matica dalmatinska*, an organization mirroring the work of *Matica srpska*. Dalmatian Serbs adopted Karadžić's language reform and argued for the unification of all Dalmatian Slavs.

Responding to the growing Slavic nationalism, the Italian mayor of Split, Antonio Bajamonti (1822-1891) asserted that the Roman influence was a key-element in creating the early Mediaeval Dalmatian communes: "the barbarians, that is, Slavs, did not participate in the transformation of the Roman antique heritage into a new mediaeval system that the Dalmatian coast was based on."¹⁶⁹ Much as his Istrian contemporary Carlo Combi (1827-1884), Bajamonti (Fig. 2.34) advocated *Italianization* of "the diffused and unconnected Slavic mass", which was "without history and culture."¹⁷⁰ After the unification of Italy in 1861, Italian nationalism in Dalmatia received much stronger support from the new Kingdom of Italy.

The Catholic Dalmatian Slavs resented *Italianization*, despite sharing the same faith as the Italians. When Strossmayer criticized the doctrine of Papal infallibility in 1871, they supported his conflict with Rome and embraced his political Yugoslavism.¹⁷¹ The influence and respect the Bishop of Djakovo enjoyed among the South Slavs of Austro-Hungary enabled his concept of a unified South Slav front opposing the Germans and Hungarians in Croatia-Slavonia to become a role-model to the isolated Dalmatian Slavs in their struggle against Italian nationalism. This further influenced the Catholic Dalmatians to begin to accept the notion of Croat

¹⁶⁷ Peričić, 2002, 354; 1882 witnessed a rebellion in South Dalmatia. It was suppressed by the Austro-Hungarian army.

¹⁶⁸ Since the 1830s, a Serb-Catholic movement from Dubrovnik argued for closer links with the nascent Serbian state.

¹⁶⁹ Bajamonti, A. – *Nello inaugurale la publicita delle sessioni minicipali in Spalato*, Trieste, 1862, 1-25 in Šakčević, D. – *Svjesno mijenjanje slike Mađara u dijelu hrvatskoga tiska kao dio dobro smišljene taktike u politici "novoga kursa" prije i nakon Riječke rezolucije*, 2007, 109

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 109

¹⁷¹ Tanner, 2010, 101

national identity developed around the idea of Catholicism in Croatia-Slavonia in the last quarter of the 19th century.¹⁷²

On the other hand, integrative processes amongst the Dalmatian Orthodox Serbs had already been centered on the Serbian Orthodox Church as had their newspapers and cultural societies. The printed materials in the *Srpski list* (*Serbian Newspapers*, published in Zadar) or *Srpski glas* (*Serbian Voice*) or *Srpski magazin* (*Serbian Magazine*, published in Dubrovnik) were orientated on Serbian cultural history: Karadžić's legacy of folk epic, Serbian Mediaeval History or works of contemporary Serbian writers. There was little cooperation with their Croat counterparts.¹⁷³

2.4.4 The Italian features of Dalmatia and Istria

When the early 19th century and the Greek revolution prompted West European intellectuals and travellers to redirect the route of their Grand Tours further east, the Adriatic coastal towns became important stopping points. This increased interest in the Roman heritage of Split, Trogir, Zadar and Dubrovnik and initiated some early assessments of the Roman remains in these places. Since the Renaissance, foreign travellers and local scholars were attracted by the rich archaeological remains on the Adriatic coast; the Palace of Diocletian (Fig. 2.35) or the arena of Pula (Fig. 1.a.5) had been known to the European "Grand Tourists" since the eighteenth century.¹⁷⁴ The upsurge in interest in antiquity was such that many objects of importance and exceptional beauty were sent not only to the royal collections in Vienna or Budapest, but were acquired by these travellers, who then dispersed them throughout Europe.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Trogrlić, M. – *Četiri faze političkog djelovanja Jurija Bjankinija* in Cipek, T. i Vrandečić, J., 2007, 136

¹⁷³ Ibid, 135

¹⁷⁴ Guzin-Lukić, N. – *National museums in Croatia* in *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*. Conference proceedings from EuNaMus, European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, Bologna 28-30, April 2011, 156

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 157 – An Italian chronicler of Dalmatia, Alberto Fortis (1741-1803) recorded in his *Viaggio in Dalmazia dell' Abate Alberto Fortis*, published in 1774, that "many artefacts were sent to Italy during his lifetime." The trend continued until the beginning of the 20th century. In 1878, British archaeologist and curator Sir Arthur Evans had acquired the head of Livia for the Ashmolean Museum. In 2004, the head of this antique sculpture was returned on loan in the Archaeological Museum of Split. But, this is an exception, rather than the rule.

The growing interest in the ancient past prompted the Dalmatian Provincial government to establish the Archaeological Museum in Split in 1820.¹⁷⁶ The first of its kind in Dalmatia, the role of the Split Museum was to collect artefacts of the ancient Romans in Dalmatia, epigraphic remains (mainly Latin inscriptions) and coins and place them under the supervision of the Imperial Museum in Vienna. Diocletian's Palace was, of course, a place of exceptional interest. By the early 19th century, significant parts of the palace were not only incorporated in the core of the city that grew within the palace walls after the Slavic invasions of the 7th century, but were also reused as building materials for the houses of the local population. The authorities in Vienna decided not only to inaugurate the Archaeological Museum, but also to preserve the palace's remains. In a very unusual decision for Vienna, the appointed architect-conservator of Diocletian's Palace was a native of Split, Vicko Andrić (1793-1866), the first educated architect of Slav origin in Dalmatia. Andrić (Fig. 2.36) designed the original museum building, which was built next to the eastern wall of the palace in 1821.¹⁷⁷



Fig. 2.35 – Palace of Diocletian, as reconstructed in 1912 by French architect and archaeologist Ernest Hébrard (1875-1933)

¹⁷⁶ The initiative to found the Museum in Split was put forward by the Habsburg authorities after a visit by Emperor Franz I in 1818. <http://www.mdc.hr/split-arheoloski/hr/FS-povijest.html> - The official web-page of the Split Museum – Accessed 16/05/2015

¹⁷⁷ Andrić was a true pioneer of conservation of cultural heritage in Dalmatia. He went on to supervise the conservation of the Šibenik cathedral and construct a number of new roads along the coast.



Fig. 2.36 – Vicko Andrić (1793-1866), an architect, surveyor and a pioneer conservatoinist in Dalmatia.

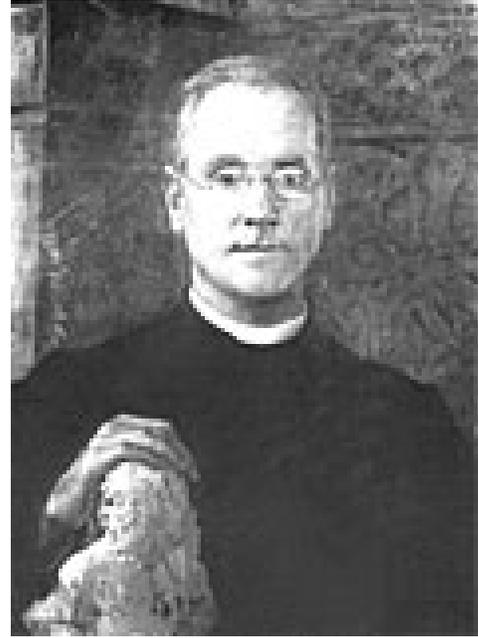


Fig. 2.37 – Frano Bulić (1846-1934), the first Croat director of any archaeological museum in Dalmatia.

In 1878 the Museum began publishing *Bullettino di archeologia e storia dalmata* and established the Museum's Library.¹⁷⁸ However, there were no Dalmatian Slavs, either Croats or Serbs, in charge of the Split museum until 1886, when Frano Bulić (1846-1934), a Catholic priest, archaeologist and conservator became its director (Fig. 2.37).¹⁷⁹ Bulić studied classical philology and Slavic studies at the Vienna University, when Alexander Conze¹⁸⁰ persuaded him to abandon the latter and engage in archaeology. On his return to Split, he worked at the Italian High School in Split and as a professor at the Dubrovnik High School, until he was appointed the Museum director.¹⁸¹ In Dubrovnik he met Arthur Evans, who was then a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*.¹⁸²

Bulić excavated large areas of Split and its surroundings and conserved the discovered monuments so they could be presented to the public. The most important

¹⁷⁸ Duplančić, A. – *Arheološki Muzej u Splitu i njegov "Bullettino"/"Vijesnik"* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 24

¹⁷⁹ Guzin-Lukić, 2011, 157

¹⁸⁰ Alexander Conze (1831-1914) was a grand figure of German archaeology in the 19th century. Among the achievements of his rich career was the famous excavation of Pergamom Altar in 1900.

¹⁸¹ Cambi, N. – *Frane Bulić* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 16

¹⁸² Evans lived primarily in Dubrovnik until his expulsion from the Dual Monarchy in 1882. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 250-251.

sites he worked on were in Solin – the ancient Salona.¹⁸³ At the beginning of his career, Bulić was interested in both Classical and Early-Christian periods, but as the overall interest in the national history grew, he turned his interests towards the early Croat state.¹⁸⁴ He was among the founders of the *Bihać Society* in 1894 which had a mission to excavate monuments and sites dating from the time of the Slavic rulers of Dalmatia.¹⁸⁵ The earliest inscription that contains the name of the Duke Trpimir, the single most important document of Croat history, was his discovery (Fig. 2.38).

Bulić was appointed the conservator of the Split Classical monuments, with the official title of the *Conservatore dei monumenti antichi di Spalato* in the same year when he became the director of the Split Museum, 1886. His attention was centred, understandably, on the most endangered but also the most valuable monument – the palace of Diocletian.¹⁸⁶ Bulić considered Andrić's original museum building to be inadequate and initiated its rebuilding in 1914.¹⁸⁷ However, despite his energy in protecting the unexcavated heritage, he was unable to establish full cooperation with the national movements beyond the immediate borders of Split.



Fig. 2.38 – Trpimir's inscription *Pro Duce Trepimero* from the 9th century. A fragment from the church in Rižnice near Solin was discovered by Frano Bulić in 1891. The inscription instantly became the most venerated material evidence of the longevity of the Croat state. It was replicated by Ivan Rendić on the tomb of Ante Starčević a few years after its discovery. See Fig. 2.32 above.

¹⁸³ Within Salona, he excavated Manastirine, Marusinac and Crkvina (an Episcopal complex he called the *Basilica Urbana*, to differentiate it from the cemetery churches), *Porta Caesarea* – the city gates, the Western necropolis and others. Outside of Salona he worked on the basilica and monastery on Klapavica above Klis, necropolis and buildings in Slano and Early-Christian basilica in Grohote on the Šolta.

¹⁸⁴ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 13-14

¹⁸⁵ Duplančić, 2009, 16 – The name Bihać is not to be confused with the town of the same name in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 17

¹⁸⁷ Guzin-Lukić, 2011, 157

The second Provincial Museum in Dalmatia was founded in Zadar in 1832 on the initiative of an Austrian Lieutenant in Dalmatia, Vetter von Lilienberg, who encouraged collecting flora, fauna and objects related to life in the region, in addition to classical antiquities. Despite the campaign, throughout the 19th century, Zadar museum fell behind the Archaeological Museum of Split which was granted title *Museo Nazionale* by Vienna.¹⁸⁸

The circumstances which led to the foundation of these first museums in Dalmatia raise the question of the definition of national museums in the multinational states of the 19th century and in the period of nation building in Europe. Modern Croat scholar Nada Guzin-Lukić concluded that due to their local perspective, nature of collections and their diversity, these museums were regional or provincial museums of the Habsburg Empire, rather than national museums in Dalmatia.¹⁸⁹

2.4.5 The discovery of the Croat national heritage in Dalmatia

In the village of Gornji Muć, between Split and Sinj, the Latin inscription dated to 888 during rule of Prince Branimir (879-892), the founder of the local church dedicated to St. Jerome, was discovered in 1871 (Fig. 2.39).



Fig. 2.39 – The inscription bearing the name of Duke Branimir, dated 888.

The discovery prompted the local adherents of the Croat national revival to collect as many monuments as possible, primarily those of princely inscriptions, as

¹⁸⁸ <http://nmz.hr/museum/history> - The official web-site of the National Museum Zadar – Accessed on 23/02/2013

¹⁸⁹ Guzin-Lukić, 2011, 158

irrefutable proofs of a millennium-long presence of Croats in Dalmatia.¹⁹⁰ This increased interest in early Mediaeval Croat archaeology coincided with the struggle against the official policies of Vienna in Dalmatia and with the growing respect for the writings of Ante Starčević.

The champion of the Croatian national revival in Dalmatia was a catholic priest Don Lujó Marun (1857-1939), an amateur archaeologist and enthusiast, who undertook a number of excavations in Knin and its surroundings, aiming to collect as many artefacts and inscriptions related to the Croats as possible. Marun's interest in the national heritage was influenced by the writings of Starčević, as well as by the strong opposition to the Austrian proposal to build a railway line to Knin over a number of local mediaeval churches and graveyards.¹⁹¹ Immediately after work on railway tracks began in 1885, Marun wrote to the local *Narodni List (People's Press)* and the Dalmatian Diet about the need to preserve these monuments. The initiative received great support from the Croat members of the Dalmatian Diet. Encouraged, Marun organized a *Committee for the promotion of excavation of Croatian monuments* in Knin in 1886.¹⁹² The Committee was renamed the *Knin Antiquities Society* in 1887.¹⁹³ Marun worked diligently on excavating and collecting early mediaeval inscriptions and stone reliefs.

In 1893, he founded in Knin the first *Museum of Croatian Monuments (Muzej hrvatskih spomenika)* which housed most of his finds. Marun, in his enthusiasm to prove Croatia's identity through researching the archaeological heritage, visited numerous villages and archaeological sites in Dalmatia, parts of Lika and south-west Bosnia. At a number of these sites he, alone or through his assistants, conducted the preliminary excavations, gathered the finds and brought them to Knin Museum.¹⁹⁴ The museum, housed in a building designed by Josip Slade, opened despite the opposition of the local authorities which saw this as a political threat and demanded all the activities and speeches of the members of the *Antiquities Society* to be sent for

¹⁹⁰ Zekan, M. – Četiri zaslužna velikana hrvatske nacionalne arheologije Srednjeg vijeka u 20. stoljeću (Lujó Marun, Lovre Katić, ljuó Karaman, Stjepan Gunjača) in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 22

¹⁹¹ Zekan, M. – *Fra Lujó Marun (1857 -1939), Founder, Missionary and Visionary of Croatian Archaeology, Science and Patriotism in Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III/34, Muzej Hrvatskih Arheoloških Spomenika, Split, 2007, 40

¹⁹² *Ibid*, 41

¹⁹³ The Committee initially received some support from Frano Bulić, who, conscientious of his public role, avoided public exposure.

¹⁹⁴ Zekan, 2007, 41

their approval.¹⁹⁵ On opening, it changed its name into the *Croatian Antiquities Society*, the first time that a Croatian national institution was named in the territory of Dalmatia.

However, Marun's initiative did not receive the approval of the existing museums and institutions in Dalmatia. One of the greatest opponents of the *Museum of Croatian Monuments* and its publications was Frano Bulić who disagreed with the activity of the Society in the wider area of Dalmatia and was against the change of name to the *Croatian Antiquities Society*. He saw the foundation of the Society's collection and the Museum dedicated to housing the Croatian national monuments, the foundation of the library and its own publishing activities in Croatian, as weakening the role of the central museums and thus of his own role.¹⁹⁶ Bulić refused the publication and the acknowledgement of Marun's work.

On his side, Marun did not even entertain the idea of publishing anything in *Bullettino di Archeologia e Storia Dalmata*. This was mainly because of the clash of identity between the *Croatian Antiquities Society* and the Italian language. Similarly hostile reception of Marun's activities occurred in Zagreb, where leading historians, such as Rački, Tkalčić and Smičiklas, opposed the idea of Knin taking precedence over Zagreb. Seeking help, Marun turned to Sarajevo where he received some support from the historians of the newly established *Landesmuseum* there: director Constantine Hörmann and archaeologists Karl Patsch and Ćiro Truhelka, all charged with the task of building provincial Bosnian consciousness among local Muslim, Serbian and Croats.¹⁹⁷ In 1895, Marun published the first issue of *Starohrvatska Prosvjeta (Old Croatian Education)*, the first bulletin of any museum in the Austro-Hungarian lands that bore in its title the name "Croatian."¹⁹⁸ Its contributors were predominantly local enthusiasts and amateur archaeologists, with the notable absence of the contributions of the professional experts of the time.

2.4.6 Nation-building programme in Dalmatia and Istria

As most important civil posts in Dalmatia and Istria were in the hands of Italians or pro-Italian aristocracy, the concept of building Croat or Serb national

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 43

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 44

¹⁹⁷ See *Chapter V – Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 448

¹⁹⁸ Gjurašin, H. – *Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika i njegovo glasilo "Starohrvatska Prosvjeta"* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 30

identities by erecting public monuments and buildings was hindered as it was in Croatia-Slavonia. The better preserved coastal towns already bore Italianate features of the pre-national era. The 19th century national revival in Dalmatia and Istria characterised by *historism* drew heavily on the Italian concept of nation-building. By the 1890s, Dalmatian Italians were receiving regular financial and political support from the Kingdom of Italy, prompting the first national parties of the Croats and Serbs to appear on the Dalmatian political scene and begin a period of cooperation. Based on Strossmayer's Yugoslavism, this cooperation was, similar to that in Croatia-Slavonia in the 1848-1883 period, also driven by the need to form an alliance against a much stronger non-Slavic nationalism. Little attention was given to the religious differences and the appearance of the different interpretations of historical sources.

In Dalmatia and Istria, Italian nationalists began erecting monuments to different personalities of Italian history and culture and, especially towards the end of the 19th century, to the prominent individuals of the Risorgimento. A monument to Niccolo Tommaseo, for example, was erected in Šibenik in 1894.¹⁹⁹ Šibenik's Italian mayor Antonio Bajamonti personally initiated twenty eight public projects: the new theatre and business buildings, new docks and water-supply system.²⁰⁰ Bajamonti insisted on the Italian version of *historism*, but unusually for the time, employed an Italian educated native of Trogir Josip Slade (1828-1911) to design the theatre building.²⁰¹

On the other hand, no public buildings bearing either Serbian or Croat national characteristics were erected in Dalmatia and Istria. Similar to the trend in Croatia-Slavonia, the nation-building process of these local Slavs was seen in the occasional erection of monuments to poets or artists such as the monument to Ivan Gundulić by Ivan Rendić, erected in Dubrovnik in 1893.

Simultaneously, a number of monuments dedicated to members of the imperial family and other imperial dignitaries, designed by the Viennese sculptors, were publicly displayed in the towns on the initiative of the authorities loyal to the crown.

¹⁹⁹ Tommaseo's statue was demolished after the Italian withdrawal from Dalmatia in 1943.

²⁰⁰ Šakčević, D. – *Svjesno mijenjanje slike Mađara u dijelu hrvatskoga tiska kao dio dobro smišljene taktike u politici "novoga kursa" prije i nakon Riječke rezolucije* in Cipek, T. i Vrandečić, J., 2007, 109

²⁰¹ After 1878, Slade was invited by the Montenegrin Prince Nikola to start building roads and dynastic residences in Cetinje and other Montenegrin towns. Most of the 19th century palatial buildings in Montenegro are his work. See *Chapter VI – The Montenegrins*, p. 487

2.5 The Dawn of Yugoslavia

Two decades after Strossmayer founded the JAZU, the majority of Croat intellectuals were in favour of Karadžić's language reform. Their concept of Yugoslavism was based on the thesis asserted by Rački: the Serbs and Croats were originally one nation with two names, separated by different histories, state traditions and cultures.²⁰² When a leading Slavic philologist of the second part of the 19th century, Vatroslav Jagić (1828-1923), accepted Karadžić's reformed orthography, it became a dominant cultural movement in Croatia-Slavonia. They introduced the phonetic principles and invited Karadžić's follower Đuro Daničić to JAZU to work on the new *Dictionary of Croatian or Serbian language*.²⁰³ Further affirmation of the Karadžić's reform was followed by the 1901 publication of the *Dictionary of Croatian language* by Croat linguists Ivan Broz and Franjo Iveković, which was based on Karadžić's dictionary of 1852.²⁰⁴ The term *Serbo-Croat* was still not in use, although it was first recorded as early as 1867, when a Dubrovnik Catholic Serb, Pero Budmani (1835-1914) published in Vienna *Grammatica della lingua serbo-croata*, a manual for the Dalmatian gymnasiums.²⁰⁵

The oppressive political situation and the economic mismanagement by Vienna in Dalmatia and by Budapest in Croatia-Slavonia won growing support for the Yugoslav programme amongst the leading Croat and Serb politicians in Austro-Hungary. In 1906 in Croatia-Slavonia they formed the Croat-Serb Coalition and entered the *Sabor*. The Croat-Serb Coalition remained the main political force of the united Croats and Serbs until the creation of the Kingdom of SHS in 1918.²⁰⁶ The Yugoslav idea was particularly strong amongst the intellectuals and artists who sought freedom of national expression by leaving Austro-Hungary.²⁰⁷ A significant number of them chose either Belgrade or other European towns where they could continue their work. The Great Exhibitions in 1889 and 1900 in Paris had already created great interest in the Serbian Kingdom, but the sensation of the 1911

²⁰² Cipek, T. – *The Croats and Yugoslavism* in Djokic, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 73

²⁰³ Moguš, 1993, 168 – Published in 1882, the *Dictionary* was followed by the *Grammar and stylistics of Croatian or Serbian language* by Toma Maretić in 1899. The term *Serbo-Croat* became official after the creation of communist Yugoslavia and insisted upon from 1954 until 1967, when Croat linguists and philologists rejected it.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 173-176

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 171

²⁰⁶ Cipek, T. – *The Croats and Yugoslavism* in Djokic, 2003, 73

²⁰⁷ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 70-74

Exhibition in Rome left Austro-Hungary humiliated again by a small Serbia, which had already won the *Pig War* in 1910.²⁰⁸

As open political struggle with Austro-Hungarian authorities was severely restricted, a group of younger Dalmatian Croat sculptors gathered around the newly founded *Medulić Circle* in Split in 1908. Headed by Ivan Meštrović, a graduate of Vienna University (Fig. 1.a.14), they began working on themes inspired by the mythical past of the South Slavs. Meštrović was so completely immersed in the Serbian *Kosovo Cycle* of epic poetry that he produced a series of sculptures of mythical Serbian heroes and produced a design for the never executed Vidovdan Temple (Fig. 1.32).²⁰⁹ For the 1911 Great Exhibition in Rome he and his compatriots demanded a separate pavilion for the South Slavs of Austro-Hungary and when they were denied it, they decided to exhibit in the Serbian pavilion.²¹⁰ The controversy that arose from the change of sides by the Austro-Hungarian South Slav artists earned Meštrović the winning award for sculpture in Rome and made him famous in wider European circles. He remained in Rome for the next four years, but when Italy entered the First World War he moved to London, where he actively participated in the work of the Yugoslav Committee.²¹¹ Whilst in London, Meštrović was the first living artist to have an individual exhibition in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Some of the sculptures he produced for this exhibition remained part of a permanent display to the present day.²¹²

With the exception of some artists who maintained good relations with Belgrade and Serbian intellectuals, building a national culture in Croatia-Slavonia was hindered by Khuen-Héderváry and subsequent pro-Hungarian *Bans*. The struggle for national liberation and building national identity was limited to the political activities inside and outside the *Sabor*. In the public domain there were no

²⁰⁸ The *Tax War*, usually known as *Pig War* in English language literature, was a set of economic sanctions that Austro-Hungary imposed on Serbia in 1906. Prior to that, Serbian economy was completely in Austrian hands, which used to import Serbian goods (mainly food and, of course, pork) up to the 88% of total production, under the unequal terms. Serbia was obliged to import exclusively from Austro-Hungary. Whilst Serbian goods were taxed up to 20%, Serbia was allowed to impose tax of only 3% on Austro-Hungarian imports. After Austria stopped all the imports from Serbia, Serbia re-orientated its economy towards France under better conditions, avoiding total economic collapse, which had as a consequence frustrations of Austro-Hungarian aims.

²⁰⁹ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 74

²¹⁰ Wachtel, A. – *Ivan Meštrović, Ivo Andrić and the Synthetic Yugoslav Culture of the Interwar Period* in Djokic, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 242

²¹¹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 39-42

²¹² See Fig. 1.33, p. 74

visible symbols of Croat or Serb national identity. This could only be expressed through the printing activities of the JAZU and Matica Hrvatska, but these were limited to the literate South Slav elite.

The Croat-Serbian Coalition spent most its existence in opposition, whilst its leaders were tried for treason. However, the coalition was the main initiator for the unification and strongly argued for signing of the *Corfu Declaration* in 1917. The Croat politicians in favour of unification were in a hurry to create a common state, because of the fear of Italian and Hungarian pretensions.²¹³ However, not all Croat politicians were in favour of Yugoslavia. Stjepan Radić (1871-1928), the leader of a small People's Peasant Party founded in 1905, believed that the union should be decided after a separately formed Croatian state would hold a popular referendum (Fig. 1.a.15).²¹⁴ Yet, he was in minority.

2.6 The First Yugoslavia – 1918-1941

Unlike in the Serbian Kingdom, the former Austro-Hungarian South Slav provinces did not suffer war destruction to any great extent. Whilst at least half of Serbian pre-war industrial facilities were destroyed, no significant damage occurred in Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.²¹⁵ The recovery was difficult and followed by the immediate dispute over the agrarian reform in former imperial lands and the debate over the exchange rate between the Austrian *kronen* and Serbian *dinar*. The disappointment with the new government, which expected former Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs to show solidarity with a devastated and unevenly developed Serbian Kingdom was quickly employed by Radić, who immediately asserted his republican ideas. A staunch anti-monarchist, Radić used a populist approach among the people who, for the first time in history, were given the right to vote.

Whilst the central government in Belgrade was focused on re-building parts of the country destroyed in the war and re-distribution of land to war veterans and impoverished peasants of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and Croatia-Slavonia continued their development unhindered, albeit at a slower rate than expected.

²¹³ Cipek, T. – *The Croats and Yugoslavism* in Djokić, 2003, 74. Also, Lampe, 2006, 55

²¹⁴ Cipek in Djokić, 2003, 74

²¹⁵ The war reparations to Serbia were mysteriously “lost” after the Versailles Peace Conference. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 75-78. Also, Lampe, 2006, 73

Buoyed by greater industrial growth, this time without Austrian or Hungarian involvement, the local authorities of Zagreb and Ljubljana planned to transform the former Austro-Hungarian provincial towns into modern centres.²¹⁶ However, by then, the problem of nation-building faced two obstacles. Firstly, focusing on the national narrative in a new common state was difficult due to the different religious and state traditions and, secondly, the *Historism* and national revivalist architecture of the 19th century on which many new European nation-states were built, were considered outdated by the end of the First World War. The Viennese secession that had influenced the first generation of university educated Croat architects was replaced by *Modernism*, which stylistically had nothing in common with building national identities. Unsurprisingly, the monuments celebrating Austro-Hungarian emperors and national heroes that existed in the former imperial provinces were removed by the new authorities, amidst the promotion of the new nation-building programme: *Integral Yugoslavism*. The pre-war pro-Yugoslav intellectuals from Croatia were its main executors.

2.6.1 Fully developed Croatian nationalism

Josip Frank had led a faction of Starčević's *Party of Right* under the name *Pure Party of Rights* (*Čista stranka prava*) until his death in 1911. Frank's close associate, Aleksandar Horvat, re-launched the party under its old name in 1913, who chose a young lawyer from Herzegovina, Ante Pavelić (1889-1959), to be party secretary. During the First World War the *Party of Rights* was condemned both by the Croat-Serb Coalition, who hoped for the unification with Serbia and by Radić's *Croat Peasant Party* who opposed the *Party of Rights* devotion to the Habsburgs. Eventually, the pro-unionists won when the majority of the leading Croat intellectuals supported Strossmayer's and Rački's concept of *Yugoslavism*.

The situation dramatically changed after the creation of the Kingdom of SHS and the event that put Croat nationalism firmly behind the anti-Serbian argument was the assassination of Stjepan Radić in the Belgrade *Skupština* in 1928, after a heated parliamentary debate in which the opposition, gathered around the *Croat Peasant Party*, accused the government of corruption, whilst the *Serbian*

²¹⁶ Lampe, 2006, 100

Radical Party accused the Croat opposition of treason.²¹⁷ This crime played into the hands of the *Party of Right* which immediately resurrected the nationalist doctrine of Croat supremacy of Ante Starčević. Prominent party members, historians Ivo Pilar (1874-1933) and Milan pl. Šufflay (1879-1931) furthered the idea of Croat state-right, based on Starčević's premise that all lands east of the Drina were ethnic Croat lands. In the years prior to the First World War they had argued that the Croat nation and state could survive only within the Austro-Hungary. The anti-Serbian rhetoric, originally initiated by the Austro-Hungarian politicians and historians in the 1880s, fitted well with Vienna's official policies towards Serbia. The Croat adherents to these former Austro-Hungarian state-narratives were still alive and well at the time of Radić's assassination and witnessed Croat dissatisfaction with the new state. The immediate redeployment of these anti-Serbian narratives as a threat to the Croat nation was not incidental; both Pilar (Fig. 2.40) and Šufflay (Fig. 2.41) were Austro-Hungarian public servants loyal to the former state who favoured the official conduct of the old imperial bureaucracy.



Fig. 2.40 – Ivo Pilar (1874-1933)

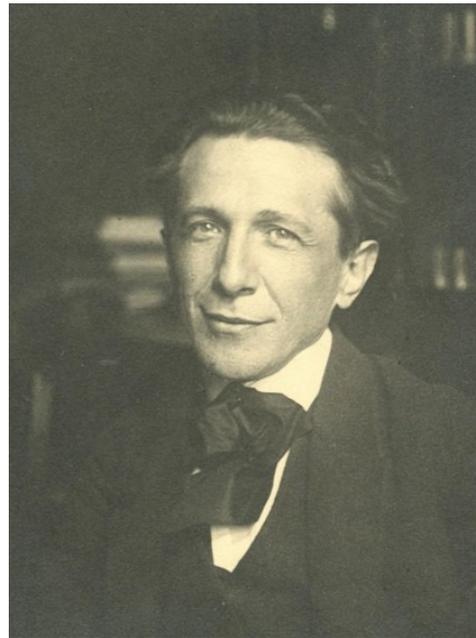


Fig. 2.41 – Milan pl. Šufflay (1879-1931)

Šufflay, together with the Hungarian historian Lajos Thallóczy (1857-1916), a close friend of Benjamin von Kállay and his principal advisor, between 1913 and 1918, worked on the *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis illustrantia*

²¹⁷ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 43

(*Documents and Diplomatic Affairs illustrating the Middle Ages in Albania*), a key work for the establishment of the Albanian national narrative in the years of creation of the Albanian state.²¹⁸ Pilar, on the other hand, under the German pseudonym L. v. Südländ, published in 1918 in Vienna *Die südslawische Frage und der Weltkrieg. Übersichtliche Darstellung des Gesamt-Problems (The South Slav Question and the World War. The General Presentation of the Entire Problem)*. He argued that one of the main reasons for the beginning of the war was Serbian desire to take Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Croats.²¹⁹ The book was poorly received by the leading Croat intellectuals who advocated unification, as well as by Vienna because it also pointed to the Austrian failure to earn Croat loyalty. Both Pilar and Šufflay were marginalized after 1918 and they saw the *Party of Rights* as a platform to continue their anti-Serbian rhetoric. The Yugoslav authorities tried them for treason, but their sentences were short and they were allowed to resume their writing.

The *Party of Rights* used the difficult political crisis that arose after Radić's assassination to pursue its goals militarily. They were unintentionally aided by the introduction of the Dictatorship by King Alexander I on 6 January 1929 which also brought the change of the country's name. As a soldier and a king at the beginning of his reign, Alexander was greatly respected by his subjects regardless of their ethnicity. However, Radić's assassination and dictatorship that followed greatly affected his personal popularity and set Croat-Serbian relations on collision course. Alexander banned all anti-Yugoslav parties that openly advocated the break-up of the country and proclaimed *Integral Yugoslavism* as the official cultural policy of the country. In response, the *Party of Rights* led by Ante Pavelić founded the *Ustaše (Resurgents)* units for terrorist attacks on Yugoslav officials. Soon Pavelić emigrated to Italy where Mussolini provided financial support for *Ustaše* activities. Five years later, in collaboration with the pro-Bulgarian VMRO, they assassinated King Alexander in Marseilles.²²⁰

By the end of the 1930s, the European geopolitical map had changed significantly. The growth of Nazism in Germany prompted the British government to

²¹⁸ See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 249-250 and *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 387-390.

²¹⁹ Some contemporary Western historians are currently reviving this view in light of the German dominant position within the EU aiming at minimising the lingering antagonisms among the leading European states – Germany on one and Britain and France on the other side.

²²⁰ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 45

interfere in the affairs of all Balkan states and soon the entire Balkans became a stage for confrontation between Britain and Germany.²²¹ Regent Paul (Fig. 1.a.17) attempted to ease the tense relations between the Serbs and the Croats by negotiating a political compromise which led first to the *Concordat* with the Catholic Church in 1937, and then to the *Sporazum (Agreement)* which enabled the creation of the Banovina Hrvatska in 1939.²²² This is when, for the first time in history, Croatia-Slavonia and Dalmatia were placed under the authority of Zagreb and were given the common name of Croatia. Dubrovnik became part of Banovina Hrvatska under the provisions of the same agreement.

The *Sporazum* can be viewed as an attempt to resolve an increasingly dangerous position of Yugoslavia, with its many ethnic groups, on the eve of the war in Europe. In Yugoslavia, having fought alongside the victorious allies 1918, the Serbs leant towards Britain. The Croats, dissatisfied by the pre-war economic policies despite their insignificant impact on the former Habsburg lands, turned towards their former allies, the Germans and Austrians. When the Second World War began, this political division turned into an ethnic division, after the Axis invasion of 1941. Initially, the Serbs supported the remains of the Royal army that fought guerilla campaigns in the mountains of south-western Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Croats supported the *Ustaše* movement that assumed leadership in creating the *Independent State of Croatia* in April 1941.²²³ At the beginning of the war, a small number of both the Serbs and Croats joined the *Partisan* movement of the Communist Party that also opposed the Axis. The Partisans grew into a formidable force, especially after 1943, when the Allies withdrew support for the remains of Royalist army.

2.6.2 Ivan Meštrović (1883-1962)

The turbulent interwar years in Yugoslav culture were marked by one remarkable man: Ivan Meštrović. After 1918, Meštrović became a close friend of King Alexander I and was commissioned to build the majority of the monuments to

²²¹ Lampe, 2006, 107

²²² See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 93-96

²²³ Lampe reproduced a map published in 1996 by Richard and Ben Crampton in their *Atlas of Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* in his *Balkans into Southeastern Europe*, London, 2006, 144. The map indicates the distribution of partisan units at the beginning of the Second World War and clearly shows that the largest concentration of the partisan units in Yugoslavia as a whole corresponded to the Serbian ethnic territories.

the fallen in the First World War, thus becoming the main promoter of *Integral Yugoslavism*.²²⁴ Apart from the allegorical monuments dedicated to all the South Slavs (*Monument to the Unknown Hero*, Fig. 1.45), he also worked on monuments celebrating the “founding fathers of Yugoslav idea.” In 1926, he produced an imposing sculpture of Bishop Strossmayer to be placed on the Strossmayer Square in Zagreb (Fig. 2.42). In the same period, Meštrović began working on themes that were later proclaimed exclusively Croatian. In 1929 he produced a monumental statue of Bishop Gregory of Nin, a 9th century bishop who opposed the Papal statute that only Latin should be used as the language of service in the Catholic churches (Fig. 2.43).²²⁵

As *Integral Yugoslavism* heavily drew on the most glorious episodes of the national histories, in 1932 Meštrović produced a bronze monument *History of Croats* to be placed in front of the University of Zagreb Law Faculty (Fig. 2.44). Clearly inspired by the ancient Egyptian statue of the Scribe from the Louvre, the *History of Croats*, modelled on the artist’s mother, sits with its crossed hands over the writing board which holds an inscription “history of the Croats” in Glagolitic letters. However, the original of the monument, executed in marble, was done specially for King Alexander and it is now placed in the National Museum in Belgrade.

By this time, Meštrović was a world renowned sculptor. However, he also experimented with architectural design. In 1922 he bought and redesigned a 17th century house in Zagreb, where he lived until 1942 when he fled Croatia.²²⁶ Between 1934-1939 he also designed a building for the Association of Croatian Artists in Zagreb (Fig. 2.45). Originally intended to be dedicated to King Peter I Karadjordjević, the building was turned into a mosque during the Second World War, only to be used by the artists again after 1945.

²²⁴ For the details of *Integral Yugoslavism*, see *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 82 and p. 84-85

²²⁵ The statue was originally placed within the Peristyle of Diocletian’s Palace in Split, but was later moved to the Golden Gate of the Palace, where it still stands.

²²⁶ Sewell, B. – *Museums of Zagreb* in Group of authors – *Croatia – Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, London, 2009, 202 – Inspired by the antique architectural forms, Meštrović built a palace for himself in Split between 1931 and 1939, decorated by his signature caryatids in the shape of local peasant women. Next to his palace was a ruined Renaissance villa which he rebuilt and turned into a gallery.



Fig. 2.42 – Monument to Strossmayer, erected in 1926 in front of the JAZU.



2.43 – Monument to Gregory of Nin, erected in 1927 in Split.



Fig. 2.44 – The History of the Croats, 1932



Fig. 2.45 – Association of Croatian Artists, 1939

After the assassination of King Alexander in 1934, Meštrović lost the position of a “court-artist.” He continued working on *The Monument of an Unknown Hero* on Avala and the *Croatian Association of Artists*, but his public prominence was overshadowed by the political crisis in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.²²⁷

²²⁷ See Appendix I – Historical background, p. 43-45

2.7 The Independent State of Croatia (1941-1945)

Croatia gained “independence” for the first time since 1102 on 10 April 1941. On that day, the leader of the *Ustaše*, Ante Pavelić assumed the role of the *Poglavnik* (*Leader*). His close associate, Slavko Kvaternik (1878-1947) son-in-law of Josip Frank, proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH*), incorporating some of the territories of Banovina Hrvatska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the county of Srem in Vojvodina.²²⁸ This territory incorporated around 6 million people of which around 2 million were Serbian Orthodox.²²⁹ The new regime adopted the 16th century Coat-of-Arms, a white and red checkerboard representing the Kingdom of Croatia, as its main state-symbol (Fig. 2.63).²³⁰ Even though the Croat Coat-of-Arms had changed through the centuries, it remained quintessentially Croatian and as such was imposed over all the territories included into the NDH.²³¹

Barely four days after the bombing of Belgrade on 6 April 1941, the German troops entered Ljubljana and Zagreb where they were greeted as liberators.²³² Immediately after the proclamation of the NDH, a programme of extermination of the Serbs, Jews and Roma began. Already in May 1941 the newly formed police and military units began expelling as many Serbs as possible to German occupied Serbia, but when the German occupational authorities in Serbia closed the borders, the Croatian Culture and Education Minister, Mile Budak (1889-1945), stressed that those who remained should convert from Orthodox to Catholic and become true Croats or be killed.²³³ Budak is often cited to have coined the statement that of “all Serbs who live in Croatia, one third should be deported, one third converted to Catholicism and one third killed.”²³⁴

²²⁸ Italian zone of occupation included large parts of the Dalmatian coast south of the Zrmanja River and Istria, which was already part of Italy according to the Treaty of Versailles.

²²⁹ Gumz, J. – *German Counterinsurgency Policy in Independent Croatia, 1941-1945*, originally published in *The Historian*, 1998, Vol.61, No.1, 38. See also, Matković, H. – *Povijest Nezavisne države Hrvatske*, Zagreb, 2002, 48

²³⁰ The earliest representations of the Croat Coat-of-Arms date back to the late 15th century and are usually associated with the reign of Maximilian I Habsburg (1486-1519).

²³¹ At different periods in history, the Croatian coat-of-arms had been incorporated into Hungarian, Habsburg and Yugoslav state-symbols.

²³² The pathé from the period witnessing the events is easily available online.

²³³ Lampe, 2006, 158

²³⁴ Bellamy, 2003, 52

Following the proclamation of the new state in May 1941, the Ministry for Education decreed the closure of the JAZU and its transformation into the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (HAZU).²³⁵ On 14 August, the NDH government decreed an “act for the cleanliness of the Croat language” which forbade the use of Karadžić’s phonetic orthography and grammar.²³⁶ A few days later, on 26 August, the use of Cyrillic was officially forbidden.²³⁷ This was followed by the publications of the *Etymological Syntax* in 1942 and the *Croatian Punctuation* in 1944.²³⁸

By the end of 1941, a series of anti-Semitic and anti-Serbian laws were passed, accompanied by the systematic murder of Serbs, Jews and Roma. The Jews were branded by wearing a yellow band around their arm, whilst Serbs were forced to wear a blue one. A series of concentration camps were established throughout the NDH territory from the beginning of the war, where genocide against the Serbs, Jews and Roma took place over the next four years.²³⁹ The most notorious concentration camps were Jasenovac, Jadovno (near Gospić), Jastrebarsko, Kerestinac, Lepoglava (an old Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav prison) and Stara Gradiška (unique in its role as the only European concentration camp made exclusively for women and children).

2.7.1 The NDH narrative

Pavelić (Fig. 2.46) and Kvaternik (Fig. 2.47) adopted Starčević’s ideas about Croat supremacy among the South Slavs. To prove their loyalty to the Aryan theories of the Third Reich, the NDH leadership promoted the idea of the Gothic origins of the Croats, based on the spurious interpretations of the *Historia Salonitana* and *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, which had appeared in the later Austro-Hungarian period. The eastern and southern borders of the NDH were drawn according to Starčević’s idea of the Croat lands west of the Drina River and included the notion that the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were “the best of the Croats.”

²³⁵ *150 godina HAZU – 150 Godina Hrvatske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1861-2011*, Zagreb, 2011, 19

²³⁶ Moguš, 1993, 185

²³⁷ Bellamy, 2003, 52

²³⁸ Moguš, 1993, 185

²³⁹ Of nearly forty concentration camps on the territory of NDH, the most atrocious was certainly Jasenovac.

In order to gain Muslim support, in 1941 Pavelić's regime awarded the post of Vice-President of the NDH to a Bosnian Muslim, Džafer Kulenović (1891-1956), which he held until 1945, when he escaped from Zagreb (Fig. 2.48). The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina who joined NDH army were organized into separate units under the command of Muslim officers who had declared themselves Croats. As a goodwill gesture, in July 1941, Pavelić decided to convert Meštrović's round pavilion (Fig. 2.46), an Association of Croatian Artists, into a mosque. The name of the square where it stood was renamed from King Peter's Square to Kulin-Ban Square, because Kulin-Ban was considered to be the Catholic founder of the mediaeval Bosnian state. Architect Stjepan Planić designed the internal decorations and 45m tall minarets. The mosque first used on 14 January 1943 (Orthodox New Year), whilst its official inauguration took place in August 1944. After the war, the minarets were dismantled, the internal Islamic decorations removed and the building returned to the Association of Croatian Artists.



Fig. 2.46 – Ante Pavelić
(1889-1959)



Fig. 2.47 – Slavko Kvaternik
(1878-1947)



Fig. 2.48 – Džafer Kulenović
(1891-1956)

Since the Croatian historical narrative included a significant number of Orthodox Serbs, especially among the Dalmatian Slavs and the members of the Illyrian movement, the NDH regime decided to create a state Croatian Orthodox Church. Already on the 18 June 1941, a government decree forbade the term “Serbian Orthodox Church” and returned to the old Austro-Hungarian term “Greek-Eastern Church.” By the end of the year, the Julian calendar used by the Orthodox population was banned and in February 1942 Pavelić decreed the establishment of

the Croatian Orthodox Church. A Russian émigré and a former Metropolitan of New Moscow, Germogen (1861-1945), was installed as its Metropolitan.²⁴⁰

The foundation of the Croatian Orthodox Church, however, did not prevent the systematic destruction of Orthodox churches and monasteries on the territory of NDH. According to a report produced by the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church in March 1947, 23 churches destroyed in the Gornjokarlovci Eparchy had been badly damaged out of total of 220 churches and chapels from various periods of history. In Srem, the seat of the Metropolitanate under the Habsburgs, 28 destroyed and 62 damaged churches were recorded. On the whole territory of NDH all but 3 monasteries had been destroyed. In Dalmatia, only the monasteries of Krka (built c.1350 by Jelena Šubić-Nemanjić), Krupa (built in 1317 by King Milutin of Serbia) and Dragović (built in 1395) survived, owing to the fact that this part of Dalmatia was under Italian occupation. In the Eparchy of Banja Luka in north-west Bosnia and Herzegovina, 20 churches were completely destroyed, and 11 damaged, whilst in Banja Luka itself, both Orthodox churches were razed to the ground.²⁴¹

During the existence of NDH, historical narrative justifying the existence of the large Croat state was supported by the government. The most significant Croatian cultural institution, *Matica Hrvatska*, became the primary publisher of approved works of Croat historians who advocated the idea of an independent Croatia free of Serbs. Additionally, Austro-Hungarian and German works written on the eve of the First World War that supported anti-Serbian statements, such as Pilar's *The South Slav Question*, were finally translated from German into Croatian and published by *Matica Hrvatska*.²⁴² The old Austro-Hungarian arguments of the non-existence of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were reiterated by Ćiro Truhelka in his final work *Studije o podrijetlu. Etnološka razmatranja iz Bosne i Hercegovine*, published by *Matica Hrvatska* in 1942.²⁴³ Truhelka, the first curator of the Land Museum in Sarajevo during the mandate of Benjamin von Kállay was not only responsible for coining the phrase *bosančica* for the mediaeval Cyrillic script used in Bosnia,

²⁴⁰ Matković, 2002, 115

²⁴¹ *Син.бр. 1060-зан. 237, 27-14. марта 1947* – The original report, published in *Сербиа и коментари*, Београд, 1990-91, 87-162

²⁴² <http://www.matica.hr/www/mh2www.nsf/oMatici2?ReadForm&1842> – The official web-site of *Matica Hrvatska*. The presentation does not state its publication of Pilar's work, but insists that during the war "the principles of humanity, justice, freedom and artistic values" were never compromised.

²⁴³ See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 424-426.

Herzegovina and Dalmatia, but also for the assertion of the purity of the Croats and Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁴⁴

2.7.2 The Genocide

After the Second World War, the new Communist authorities, based on the 1948 census, asserted that the total population loss in the whole of Yugoslavia was around 1,7 million of people or nearly 11% of the pre-war population.²⁴⁵ 700,000 people had been exterminated in Jasenovac alone, of whom nearly 500,000 were Serbs, with the rest Jews, Roma and Croats who disagreed with the Pavelić's regime.²⁴⁶ The barbarity of the crimes committed in Jasenovac and other concentration camps throughout the NDH were such that even the German military representatives present at the time were disapproving.²⁴⁷ Yet, little was to stop the genocide, because of the anti-Slavic racism of the *Wehrmacht*.²⁴⁸

Tito ordered the bulldozing of the Jasenovac concentration camp immediately in 1945 hoping that, by erasing the physical remains of the camp, Serbs and Croats would forget their deep mutual resentment. Tito himself never visited the site, not even when a Memorial Centre with distinctive sculptures of *Social Realism* opened in 1966 (Fig. 2.49).²⁴⁹ The monument erected on the Jasenovac site bore no national characteristics; instead, abstract concrete flower was chosen as a symbol of hope in the new Yugoslavia, rather than the reminder of the notorious crimes committed by the Nazi-regime of the NDH.

One of the most controversial roles in the genocide against the Serbs and other non-Croats during the existence of the NDH was that of the Roman Catholic Church. The majority of the clergy, led by the Cardinal Alojz Stepinac (1898-1960) supported

²⁴⁴ Wolf, E. – *Eradicating "Undesired Elements": National Regeneration and Ustasha Regime's Program to Purify the Nation, 1941-1945* in Yeomans, R. and Weiss-Vendt, A. – *Racial Science in Hitler's New Europe, 1938-1945*, University of Nebraska, 2013, 209

²⁴⁵ Singleton, F. – *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, Cambridge, 1985, 206

²⁴⁶ The contemporary Croat official narrative reduced the number of the Jasenovac victims down to 83,000 people of which around 56,000 were unnamed Orthodox people. For more, see the official online presentation of the Jasenovac memorial centre.

²⁴⁷ German Plenipotentiary general in NDH, Edmund Glaise-Horstenau reported with disgust to the Wehrmacht in the early 1944 that the Jasenovac victims counted between 300,000 and 400,000. Broucek, P. – *Glaise von Horstenau, Edmund, Ein General im Zwielficht : die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaises von Horstenau*, Graz and Köln, 1980-1988 – collected and edited memoirs of Horstenau, no page reference

²⁴⁸ Gumz, J. – *German Counterinsurgency Policy in Independent Croatia, 1941-1945*, originally published in *The Historian*, 1998, Vol.61, No.1, 33-50

²⁴⁹ Ignatieff, 1993, 23

the formation of the NDH.²⁵⁰ Some Catholic priests even actively participated in the *Ustaše* military corps or were in charge of the concentration camps.²⁵¹ After the war, the Catholic Church denied its role in the genocide. It was questioned whether Stepinac and the top echelons of the Roman Catholic clergy were really not aware of the committed crimes. After the war, Stepinac (Fig. 2.50) was tried for treason and spent most of his remaining life under house arrest. His imprisonment was viewed by the majority of the Croat-émigré and some Western scholars as a consequence of political naivety and communist persecution.²⁵²



Fig. 2.49 – Jasenovac Memorial, unveiled in 1966. The idea of the Belgrade architect Bogdan Bogdanović was executed by the Croat architect Ljovoslav Horvat.



2.50 – Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac (1898-1960), head of the Roman Catholic Church in NDH. In recent years, Stepinac became a figure of veneration in Croatia and was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1997.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Bellamy, 2003, 53

²⁵¹ Between June and October of 1942, one of the commanders of Jasenovac was a Franciscan, Miroslav Filipović (1915-1946).

In March 1943 the command was taken over by another Roman Catholic priest Ivica Brkljačić (1913-1946):

http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2012&mm=08&dd=24&nav_category=206&nav_id=637268 – Accessed on 08/03/2013

²⁵² Bellamy, 2003, 53. See also, Tanner, 2010, 144-146

²⁵³ In February 2014, the Vatican announced its intention to proclaim Stepinac a saint, despite his participation in many NDH public activities, among which was the Committee of Three, an organization responsible for the forced conversions of the Serbs and Jews into Catholicism

2.7.3 The Bleiburg massacre

Ante Pavelić had ordered withdrawal of the remnants of the *Ustaše* armies to Germany through Austria in early May 1945. The advancing British troops captured and turned them over to Tito's Partisans near Bleiburg in Austria. After complicated and unsuccessful negotiations, the Partisans executed a heavily disputed number of the *Ustaše*. This event became a convenient excuse for the anti-Serb, anti-Yugoslav and anti-Communist rhetoric generated by the Croat émigré community which emerged after the Second World War, first in Argentina and then in the United States and Western Europe. A number of these émigrés were open supporters of the NDH who had managed to escape the new Communist regime in Yugoslavia.²⁵⁴ In 1951 Croat emigres began publishing the *Croatian Review* in Buenos Aires, a quarterly magazine supposedly concerned with Croat history, culture and language. The review quickly became the main Croatian magazine abroad. Vinko Nikolić (1912-1997), a former adjutant to the *Supreme Ustaše Headquarters* during the war (Fig. 2.51), after escaping to Argentina in 1947, briefly lived in the house of Ante Pavelić. He became a lifelong editor-in-chief of the *Croatian Review* in 1951.



Fig. 2.51 – Vinko Nikolić, first editor of the *Croatian Review*, a magazine for Croat history, culture and language, first published in Argentina, photographed during the Second World War in front of the monument to Ante Starčević.

²⁵⁴ Pavelić and a number of his ministers and high military leaders escaped first to Western Europe and then to Latin America. The majority of them, including Pavelić himself, were never tried for their crimes. He died in Madrid in 1959.

2.8 The Second Yugoslavia – 1945-1991

Communist Yugoslavia was reorganized as a federation of six republics. The internal borders of the federal republics were determined in 1945 along lines that would become internationally recognized in 1991. The new borders in the west of the country corresponded with the Austro-Hungarian administrative borders drawn at the end of the 19th century. In the south, Macedonia was proclaimed a separate republic of the state, while Serbia was partitioned into three territories: Serbia Proper (roughly corresponding to its pre-1912 borders), the Province of Vojvodina (roughly corresponding to its short-lived 1848 borders) and the Province of Kosovo and Metohija (the remaining territory of Serbia in its post-1912 borders). The borders of Croatia followed approximately the boundaries of the Banovina Hrvatska determined by the 1939 *Sporazum*, whilst Bosnia and Herzegovina had its borders established according to the Austro-Hungarian delineation of 1878.²⁵⁵

Those parts of the Istrian Peninsula that had been under Italian rule after the Treaty of Versailles were finally included into the Yugoslav state and added to the newly proclaimed People's Republic of Croatia. Immediately after the inclusion of Istria and parts of Dalmatia that belonged to Italy before the war, a process of the expulsion of the remaining Italian population began. In Istria alone, the exodus of the Italians between 1945 and 1954 numbered between 200,000 and 210,000, forever changing the demographic structure of the eastern Adriatic coast.²⁵⁶

Concurrently, the exodus of the Germans from Vojvodina and Slavonia was compensated by the forced re-settlement of the Serbs from the poorest parts of Lika and Bosnia and Herzegovina on land formerly belonging to Germans. Under the pretext of a better life, the Communist authorities further reduced the number of Serbs in the newly proclaimed socialist Croatia. Together with the atrocities committed by the *Ustaše* regime during 1941-1945, these forced resettlements reduced the number of Serbs in Croatia-Slavonia by 5%.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ The Commission for delineation was headed by Milovan Djilas, Tito's closest associate before he turned against him.

²⁵⁶ Dukovski, D. – *Istra 20. stoljeća: promjene identiteta, nacionalni sukobi i tolerancija* in Čipek, T., Vrandečić, J. – *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji*, Zagreb, 2007, 179

²⁵⁷ Group of Authors – *Istorijski atlas* (1st ed.). Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva & Geokarta, Beograd, 1997, 90-93

2.8.1 The Croatian republic within federal Yugoslavia

In order to maintain a unified state, the Yugoslav Communist Party, did not allow open public debate about internal Yugoslav divisions during the Second World War. No distinction was made between the *Ustaše* regime of the NDH and the Serbian Royalist army that had fought against the Germans, Partisans and *Ustaše*.²⁵⁸

As the destruction in the former NDH territories had mostly affected the towns along the lines of withdrawal of the German and Croat armies, the most important towns of Zagreb, Sisak, Varaždin and Djakovo in Slavonia-Croatia had not suffered the same devastation seen in Serbian towns. Just as after the First World War, the physical recovery of Croatia-Slavonia and Slovenia was much quicker than the recovery of Serbia. All visible reminders of the NDH were removed from public display and all individuals associated with the quisling regime, as the NDH was now renamed, were forbidden to participate in public life. Symbolically, the most sensitive was the removal of the equestrian statue of Ban Jelačić from the central Zagreb square, where it had stood since 1866.

The new Croatian authorities established a network of public institutions, similar to those in other Yugoslav republics. Official historical narratives, historical research and education followed the Yugoslav version of Marxist ideology, centred on the new policy of “brotherhood and unity.”²⁵⁹ For obvious reasons, archaeological and historical research were subject to the new institutions controlled by the Communist Party. All books published by the NDH authorities that propagated Croat superiority in the Balkans and Gothic origins of the Croats were duly banned. All acts of the NDH government were overthrown and Karadžić’s language was restored to either Serbo-Croat or Croato-Serb. The Academy’s name was returned to its original the Yugoslav Academy, JAZU, in 1945 and an act of 1947 enabled JAZU to found and organize cultural institutions on the territory of Croatia, to enable it to become the central scientific and artistic institution of Croatia.²⁶⁰ *Matica hrvatska* was reorganized in the same manner as *Matica srpska* and was required to follow the cultural policies of “brotherhood and unity.”

²⁵⁸ Ćirković, S. – *The Serbs*, London, 2004, 290

²⁵⁹ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 99-101

²⁶⁰ *150 godina HAZU – 150 Godina Hrvatske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1861-2011*, Zagreb, 2011, 23

The University of Zagreb was expanded by creating several new faculties between 1946 and 1981. This was followed by the opening of new universities at Zadar (1955), Rijeka (1973), Split (1974) and Osijek (1975).²⁶¹ The network of Austro-Hungarian and Royal Yugoslav museums that had existed prior to the war was reorganized and put under the authority of the National Museum of Croatia. The experts that worked in the University, museums and other cultural institutions before and during the Second World War were initially retired by the new Communist authorities, but as there were no easily available experts and intellectuals amongst the new authorities, these were quickly recalled from their enforced retirement. After Šime Ljubić, the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb was led by a succession of Viennese graduates until 1953.²⁶² All subsequent directors of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb were educated at the University of Zagreb.²⁶³

The Restoration Institute was initiated in 1948 as a special branch of the JAZU.²⁶⁴ Similar regional institutes were founded in Split in 1954 and Zadar in 1958. In 1966 the Restoration Institute of Croatia was established as an independent cultural institution for care of cultural heritage on the territory of the republic.²⁶⁵

Since the former Habsburg lands, excluding Bosnia and Herzegovina, had a significant number of privately owned manor houses and castles, the new regime confiscated most of those and converted them into public institutions: schools, hospitals, orphanages, homes for the elderly or administrative buildings. Very few were turned into museums and opened to the public.²⁶⁶ Furthermore, the new Communist elite frequently used some former aristocratic houses as official residences of the Party leaders. Naturally, ordinary people had no access to those places.

²⁶¹ Except for the University of Osijek, all these universities now claim a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages stemming from the Catholic seminaries during the time of Italian rule in Dalmatia. In Osijek, the tradition was linked to the existence of a theological school established in 1707. <http://www.unios.hr/?g=4&i=1> – The official web-page of the University of Osijek – Accessed on 12/03/2013

²⁶² Josip Brunšmid (1893-1924), Viktor Hoffiller (1924-1943 and 1945-1951), Mirko Šeper (1943-1945) and Zdenko Vinski (1951-1953), as the last Viennese graduate to run a state institution in Croatia.

²⁶³ Mirnik, I. – *Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu* in Group of authors – *Hrvatska arheologija u XX stoljeću*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, 27

²⁶⁴ <http://www.h-r-z.hr/index.php/zavod/o-zavodu> - The official web-site of the Croatian Restoration Institute – Accessed on 12/03/2013

²⁶⁵ Ibid

²⁶⁶ Binney, M. – *Castles and Manor Houses of Croatia: Winning or Losing* in Group of authors – *Croatia – Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, London, 2009, 175

2.8.2 Croat intellectuals – reluctant Communists

As the new state narrative required compliance with the policies of “brotherhood and unity,” the founding myth of the Second Yugoslavia was based on the Strossmayer’s idea of Yugoslavism and the Corfu Declaration of 1917. Because of the role of the *Matica hrvatska* and the HAZU during the Second World War, the Yugoslav authorities decided to redefine the relationship between the Serbs and Croats by establishing a new common culture based on Marxist principles. The ideas of *Integral Yugoslavism* were dismissed as they were interpreted to promoting Greater Serbian hegemony. However, the idea of the unity of the language remained. So, basing the argument on the Vienna Agreement of 1850, a new literary agreement between Serbs and Croats was signed in Novi Sad in 1954. This act was meant to heal the resentment between Croats and Serbs and neither Croatian nor Serbian signatories dared to challenge that.

A number of prominent Croat artists and intellectuals of the pre-war era managed to survive the war either by carefully working with the NDH regime (such as Miroslav Krleža, 1893-1981) or by leaving Yugoslavia at the beginning of the Second World War (Ivan Meštrović). During the war, Krleža (Fig. 2.52) refused to join the Partisan movement, but had chosen to remain in Zagreb where he lived unmolested by the regime. After the war, those academics and intellectuals who had stayed in Yugoslavia, nominally accepted Communist rule and many gained prominent public positions. Immediately after the war, Krleža became the vice-president of the JAZU. Unlike Ivo Andrić, the only Nobel Prize Laureate from Yugoslavia (Fig. 2.53), who led a quiet life in Belgrade with little involvement in the politics, Krleža, the most prominent Croatian writer of the 20th century and a strict opponent of the Royal Yugoslavia and the policies of *Integral Yugoslavism*, soon became Tito’s most important state artist.²⁶⁷

Ivan Meštrović emigrated to the United States in 1946, where he continued his career as a professor at Syracuse University. The former close associate of King Alexander and a venerated figure of *Integral Yugoslavism*, Meštrović became closely connected with the Croat emigration associated with the *Ustaše* movement.²⁶⁸ He

²⁶⁷ Tanner, 2010, 191

²⁶⁸ Meštrović’s grandson Stjepan (1955), an American scholar and sociologist, became very prominent during the wars of Yugoslav succession and significantly contributed to the revision of Croat history in the West.

regularly contributed to the *Croatian Review*, which sought to maintain the narrative of Croatian history as put formerly by Starčević, expanded by Pilar and maintained by the NDH regime. Meštrović initially refused to return to Yugoslavia, but eventually did so in 1952 to give support to Cardinal Stepinac and endow his work to the people of Croatia. On Stepinac's death in 1960, Meštrović produced a relief that was placed on his tomb in the Zagreb Cathedral.²⁶⁹ When Meštrović died in 1962, his remains were buried in the family mausoleum that he had had built in the inter-war period.

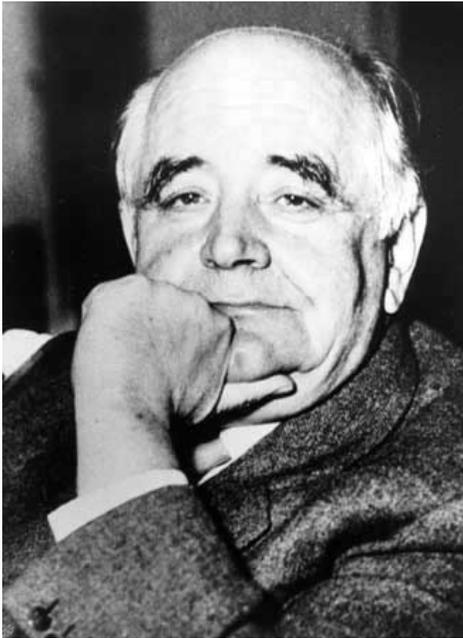


Fig. 2.52 – Miroslav Krleža (1893-1981). the most prominent Croat writer. Tito's favourite, he held a cynical attitude towards Yugoslav unification in 1918.

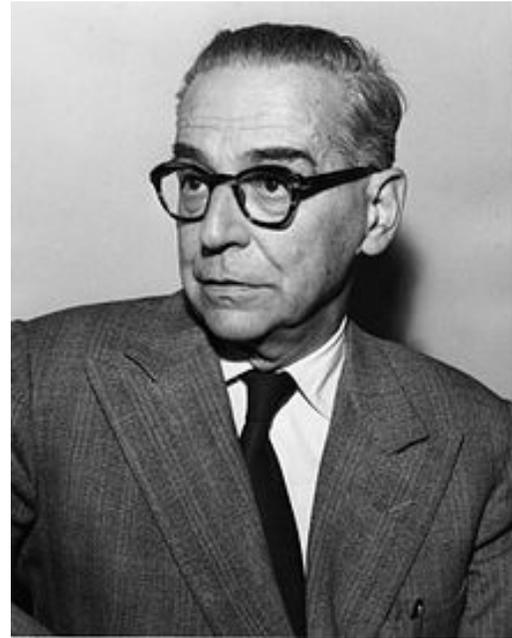


Fig. 2.53 – Ivo Andrić (1892-1975), the Nobel Prize for Literature winner in 1961. A member of the Young Bosnia organization which assassinated the Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 in Sarajevo.

When the first cracks in the fragile Croat-Serbian relations occurred in the 1960s, most Croat intellectuals supported the new upsurge of Croat nationalism and abandoned the “brotherhood and unity.” Even though Tito suppressed this early outbreak of Croat nationalism, he did so only by conceding to the Croats by weakening the federation and further reducing Serbian influence.²⁷⁰ This opened the way for the *Croatian Spring* of 1971.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 187

²⁷⁰ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 53

2.8.3 The Croatian Spring

In April 1967, a group of Croat intellectuals published a *Declaration Concerning the Name and Position of the Croatian language*, a document which denounced the notion of a unified Serbo-Croat language. The declaration, signed by members of *Matica hrvatska* and a number of prominent Croatian intellectuals, asserted that the Croatian language had been reduced to the status of a dialect and thus demanded the introduction of four official languages in Yugoslavia: Slovene, Croatian, Serbian and Macedonian.²⁷¹ Krleža, even though Tito's favourite, also joined the signatories, revealing his old anti-Yugoslav attitude from the pre-war period when he described the Croats' struggle against Belgrade as "the search of a new master" and a replay of an old theme of the 1526 union with the Habsburgs.²⁷²

The situation was further complicated in 1971 with the beginning of the *Croatian Spring*. Complaining that significant financial profits created in Slovenia and Croatia were being directed towards the less developed republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and the province of Kosovo, the Croat political rebels demanded the purge of Serbs from the police, army and the Party.²⁷³ By then, the percentage of the Serbian population on the territory of Croatia had fallen to just below 15%.²⁷⁴ These demands for a separate language and the purge of Serbs from state institutions revived memories of the NDH. Instead of celebrating the "brotherly" struggle against the "foreign occupiers and domestic traitors," which was the official narrative after 1945, the Croat *Massive Movement (MasPok)* as the *Croatian Spring* became known sought the revival of the Croat national narratives.²⁷⁵ For example, in Šibenik in 1971 instead of the planned erection of the monument to the victims of the *Ustaše* regime, the city council decided to erect the monument to the 11th century Croat king Petar Krešimir IV.²⁷⁶ There were even calls for the re-installment of the monument to Ban Jelačić in his square in Zagreb, but Tito soon energetically crushed the rebellion.

²⁷¹ Tanner, 2010, 190-191

²⁷² Banac, I. – *The National Question in Yugoslavia – Origins, History, Politics*, London, 1984, 4th Ed. 1994, 268

²⁷³ Tanner, 2010, 191

²⁷⁴ Census of 1971

²⁷⁵ Massive Movement – Masivni Pokret (MasPok) was so called because of the widespread support of intellectuals, students and prominent public figures, the local authorities in various Croat and Dalmatian towns.

²⁷⁶ Tanner, 2010, 194

In 1971, *Matica hrvatska* withdrew from the *Novi Sad Agreement* arguing that it had been signed under the coercion of the authorities. A new *Croatian Orthography* by Milan Moguš was published in Zagreb, which re-asserted some of the linguistic solutions used during the NDH and claimed that Serbian and Croatian were two distinct languages that had been forcefully united. In the same year, as a result of the *MasPok*, the publication of the *Croatian Weekly (Hrvatski tjednik)* began and, for the first time since 1945, the position of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina was debated.²⁷⁷ As Tito found these public assertions subversive to the official policy of “brotherhood and unity,” the work of *Matica hrvatska* was suspended in 1972 and its members, amongst whom was a dissident Franjo Tudjman (Fig. 2.54), were dispersed.²⁷⁸



Fig. 2.54 – Franjo Tudjman (1922-1999) rose through the Party ranks until 1971 when he joined the *Croatian Spring*. In 1991 he became the first President of the new independent Croatia.

Further concerns were raised when the younger generation of historians, such as Bruno Bušić (1939-1978) asserted in 1971 that the real number of victims in all NDH concentration camps had not been higher than 60,000. Bušić’s mentor at the time was none other than Franjo Tudjman, former Yugoslav army-general-turned-historian. Tudjman led for several years the Institute of the Worker’s Movement of Croatia. After clashes with the authorities during the *Croatian Spring*, his work on modern Croatian history was possible to continue only with help from the Croatian

²⁷⁷ Ibid, 192

²⁷⁸ <http://www.matica.hr/www/mh2www.nsf/oMatici2?ReadForm&1842> – Accessed on 16/03/2013

Disapora that maintained the cults of Starčević and Pavelić after 1945. His efforts culminated in the publication of the controversial *Wastelands of Historical Reality* (*Bespuća povijesne zbiljnosti*) in 1989, in which Tudjman reasserted Bušić's denial of genocide in the NDH.

After the suppression of the *Croatian Spring* in 1971, the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution dissolved Yugoslavia into a set of confederate states with administrative borders that did not correspond to the ethnic groupings. The disillusioned participants of the *Croatian Spring*, among whom was Franjo Tudjman, sought to establish connections with the Croat diaspora. Links with the former members of the *Ustaša* regime of NDH secured significant financial aid that enabled the formation of the *Croat Democratic Union* (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica – HDZ*) in June 1989 – the party that would lead Croatia to independence. Consequently, when the newly independent Croatian Republic was proclaimed in 1991, several prominent Croat emigres became ministers in Tudjman's new government.

With the growing economic problems that had engulfed Yugoslavia from the late 1970s, the confederate nature of the state combined with Serbian dissatisfaction with the inability to make decisions over its entire territory, let alone to influence federal decisions due to the absence of high political representatives in key-state positions, the road to the disintegration was fully open.²⁷⁹

2.8.4 Croatian national narrative in diaspora

Supported by the Catholic Church and the *Pontifical Croatian College of St. Jerome* in Rome,²⁸⁰ a significant number of former NDH officials and members of the *Ustaše* movement and their adherents managed to emigrate and form a strong Croatian diaspora that continued to actively propagate the idea of an independent Croatia. One of the key figures in maintaining the Croatian national narrative of the NDH period abroad was a Catholic priest from Herzegovina, Dominik Mandić (1889-1973), who had opposed the Yugoslav idea from the beginning of the First World War (Fig. 2.55). With a doctorate in *Church History* awarded at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, Mandić was a strong supporter of the late 19th

²⁷⁹ As David Gibbs noted, “external intervention was one of the principal causes of the conflict” and “helped to trigger both the break-up of Yugoslavia and further intensify the war.” Gibbs, D. N. – *First Do No Harm – Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Nashville, 2009, 2

²⁸⁰ The *Pontifical Croatian College of St. Jerome* was founded in 1901 by Pope Leo XIII and was a special college for education of the Croat speaking priests.

and early 20th century concept of South Slav history promoted originally by German and Austrian historians and supporters of Austro-Slavism: Starčević, Pilar, Thallósz, Šufflay and Truhelka. In 1939 he was made an administrator for Slavic countries for the Franciscan Order at Rome, a post he abandoned in 1951 when he emigrated to the US. On his arrival in America, Mandić became fully engaged in organizing the Croatian diaspora, becoming the President of the Croatian priests of America and a chief contributor to the *Croatian Review* until his death in 1973.²⁸¹

From his base in the United States, Mandić began the rehabilitation of the idea of the NDH, arguing that an independent Croatia was a political necessity for which many Croats had sacrificed their lives. From the mid-1950s, he wrote several books related to the Croatian early Middle Ages in which he asserted the idea that the early Croatian kingdom roughly corresponding to the territory of the NDH.



Fig. 2.55 – Dominik Mandić (1889-1973) Fig. 2.56 – Ivo Banac (b.1947)

Mandić's works were based on the selective reading of the *De Administrando Imperio* and the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*. Gaps and discrepancies in these original historical sources were supplemented by the invented mediaeval Croatian chronicle, *Methodos*, a product of his own imagination. Mandić claimed that the *Methodos*, written in the 8th century but long since lost, had still existed at the time of the Priest of Doclea and contained the notion of *Red Croatia* stretching from Duvno

²⁸¹ Budak, N. – Introduction to the re-print of Mandić, D. – *Hrvati i Srbi – dva stara različita naroda*, Zagreb, 1990, 7 - He held this post until 1951 when he emigrated to the United States.

in north-west Herzegovina to Durrës in Albania.²⁸² According to Mandić, the *Methodos* was written after 753, in the time of the alleged Duvno Council, and represented a manual of the state administration written in the Slavic language.²⁸³ Except for the invention of the “mediaeval sources”, Mandić produced genealogies of lost Croat noble families, the years of their rule and the events impossible to corroborate in any of the existing mediaeval sources.²⁸⁴

Mandić’s narrative included the drawing of the mediaeval state borders with the Croats west of the Drina River and the Serbs to the east.²⁸⁵ The existence of Orthodoxy in Bosnia and Herzegovina was explained by the great number of autochthonous Vlachs, “Roman veterans originating from Mauritania, of dark hair and complexion.”²⁸⁶ He asserted that there were no Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but Vlachs who were later “Serbianized,” as well as that the Croats and Serbs, based on their physical, political and social characteristics, were two different races. Quoting Austro-Hungarian historians from the late 19th and early 20th century, Mandić asserted the idea of the Iranian origins of the Croats, based on the similarity of the names *Choroáthos*, first recorded in the 3rd century BC.²⁸⁷ Similarly, Mandić argued that the Serbs were not of Indo-European origins and that the tribe of *Serboi* recorded by Pliny the Elder in the 1st century AD were servants of Rome of Kurdish origins.²⁸⁸ Mandić also reasserted the idea of the Catholic origins of the Bosnian Church.

Mandić’s writing was banned in Yugoslavia until the late 1980s and his research methods and arguments were questioned not only by Serbian, but also by some Croat historians. Nada Klaić (1920-1988), one of the most prominent figures of the Croatian historiography of the mid-20th century, criticized his methods, yet Mandić, being based in the United States, presented his writing as anti-Communist,

²⁸² Mandić, D. - *Hrvati i Srbi – dva stara različita naroda*, Zagreb, 1990, 66

²⁸³ Budak, N. - Introduction to the re-print of Mandić, D. – *Hrvati i Srbi – dva stara različita naroda*, Zagreb, 1990, 11 – If the *Methodos* written in the Slavic language really existed, the Slavic literacy would have preceded Cyril and Methodius for nearly a century.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 11

²⁸⁵ This was just the re-iteration of the Austro-Hungarian narrative from the end of the 19th century.

See above, p. 167-168.

²⁸⁶ Budak, 1990, 12

²⁸⁷ Mandić, 1990, 19. Term *Choroatos* was recorded on the inscriptions near the Greek town Tanais on the River Don in southern Russia. Malcolm, 1994, 7.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 23

thus influencing both the American scholars of Croat origins and some later Western academics who wrote about the Balkans.²⁸⁹

All these writings were disputed by official Yugoslav historiography, as well as most historians in the West during the Cold War, when Yugoslavia was considered to be a balance between the East and the West. With the changes that took place in Europe in the late 1980s, however, the Croatian narrative based on the racial theories of Starčević and Frank and the Austro-Hungarian view of Serbia from the late 19th century, were carefully revised and redeployed. This revisionist Croat national narrative, now presented as based on the Central European tradition and Western democratic values, was the product of the second generation of the Croat émigré scholars and their Western supporters.

One of the key figures in the reinterpretation of the “Croat question” in Yugoslavia was Ivo Banac (1947), an American historian of Croat origin, whose interest in the national question in Yugoslavia placed him in a prominent position during the 1990s wars in Yugoslavia (Fig. 2.56). In *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, published in 1984 in the United States, Banac compared the period of Romantic national awakening of Vuk Karadžić from the 1840s to the fully developed racial nationalism of Ante Starčević of the 1880s. By equating the two distinctly separated political and cultural concepts of nationalism, Banac established a platform for future interpretations of the genocide committed during the period of the NDH. Incorporating the communist ideology which adopted the Austro-Hungarian concept of Greater Serbian expansionism towards the non-Serbian ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, the argument of the Croat émigré scholars gained additional support as it enabled the racism on which the early Croat national ideology was based to be branded as essentially non-communist and democratic.²⁹⁰

The introduction of the émigrés linked to the remnants of the *Ustaše* movement in the public life of Croatia in the early 1990s, firmly determined the contemporary path of the Croat national narrative. In 1991, Vinko Nikolić, a lifelong editor-in-chief

²⁸⁹ His arguments had become the reliable source for the creator of a new Bosnian narrative of the British author Noel Malcolm in 1994. Malcolm’s bibliography consists predominantly of the same Austro-Hungarian sources written in the late 19th and early 20th century. At the same time, a contemporary of Mandić and another Croat émigré author from Germany, Stjepan Buć (1888-1975), the founder of the National-Socialist Party of Croatia in 1940, reasserted the idea of the Gothic origins of Croats in 1970. Mužić, I. – *Podrijetlo Hrvata*, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 1989, 10

²⁹⁰ Even though Banac admits Starčević’s anti-Serbianism, he downplayed the influence Starčević’s writings had on the ideologues of the *Ustaše* movement. See, pages 93-95 of the *National Question*.

of the *Croatian Review* (Fig. 2.51) returned to Zagreb after a long exile. His return signalled the *Croatian Review* as one of the official publications of the renewed *Matica hrvatska*.²⁹¹

2.9 The Second Independent State of Croatia – 1991 until the present

The prevailing interpretations of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s tend to downplay the role of external intervention. According to this view, the breakup of Yugoslavia resulted entirely from internal factors, while the dominant international powers, the US, Western Europe and the United Nations, stood aside.²⁹² Supported by the major Western governments, sizeable and influential Croatian expatriate communities in the US, Canada and Germany easily presented the Yugoslav Communist government dominated by Serbs, even though until the end of 1991, nearly six months after Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, federal appointments still maintained ethnic parity among its ranks.²⁹³ Just as in 1941, the ethnic Croat and Slovene officers of the *Yugoslav People's Army* (*Jugoslovenska narodna armija - JNA*) defected and formed their respective ethnic armies, which enabled the presentation of the remaining units of the JNA as the tool of Serbian "aggression." The image of "red Serbia" was soon established in the leading western media and was continuously reinforced and embellished by hack-journalism.²⁹⁴

Prior to proclaiming independence, the political situation in Croatia had changed in 1990, when the right-wing HDZ won a majority in the first multi-party elections since 1945. Its leader, Franjo Tuđman, became the first elected president of Croatia. In the years following Tito's death, Tuđman and his associates had openly argued that the Republic of Croatia was a state of ethnic Croats.²⁹⁵ He had adopted this narrative during the *Croatian Spring* when he established close contacts with the *Ustaše* emigration. Upon assuming power in 1990, the HDZ introduced constitutional changes that downgraded the status of the Serbs from the constituent nation to that of the minority.²⁹⁶ Immediately, a campaign to purge Serbs from key state institutions began, justifying its actions on the assertions dating back to the

²⁹¹ http://www.matica.hr/HRRevija/revija2010_4.nsf/AllWebDocs/Deset_godina_Hrvatske_revije -

The official publication of *Matica Hrvatska – Deset godina Hrvatske revije* – Accessed on 16/03/2013

²⁹² Gibbs, 2009, 2

²⁹³ Ibid, 51

²⁹⁴ Ibid, 65

²⁹⁵ Ibid, 67

²⁹⁶ Tanner, M. – *Croatia – A Nation Forged in War*, Yale University Press, 3rd Ed, 2010, 230

Croatian Spring, which argued that the proportion of Serbs in the civil service and the army was disproportionate to their 12% overall population in Croatia.²⁹⁷

On 24 May 1991, the JAZU changed its name once again. Assuming the name *Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts*, HAZU, which had been used once before during the NDH period, the members of the JAZU claimed this change was to be “in response to Serbian aggression.”²⁹⁸ Sabor sanctioned the new name and promoted Milan Moguš, the controversial author of the *Croatian Orthography*, banned in 1971, to HAZU’s Secretary General.²⁹⁹ A number of Croat émigré scholars, including those associated with the problematic *Ustaše* movement, joined the HAZU in the same period.

The fighting began within days of the declaration of independence in June 1991. The war had two phases, which were marked by the hostilities between summer 1991 and early spring 1992 and the period up to summer of 1995. A fragile ceasefire in-between was used to re-arm the new Croat army and to increase pressure on Belgrade as the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was unraveling. The territories of Lika and Eastern Slavonia with a majority of the Serbian population proclaimed themselves autonomous provinces (Map 2.5) and expressed the wish to remain in Yugoslavia. The war resulted in the deaths of an estimated 23,000 people.³⁰⁰ German recognition of independence for Croatia was soon aided by the international media, which in the beginning focused on the destruction of two historic towns that became the reason for blaming Serbia as the master-mind behind Yugoslavia’s disintegration. These towns were: Vukovar in eastern Slavonia, with no majority for either Serbs or Croats prior to 1991 and Dubrovnik, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, 195

²⁹⁸ *150 godina HAZU – 150 Godina Hrvatske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1861-2011*, Zagreb, 2011, 26

²⁹⁹ Moguš became the president of the HAZU in 2004.

³⁰⁰ According to the Croat sources, the loses on Croat side were just under 16,000 of both soldiers and civilians (Živić, D. - *Demografija Hrvatske – Aktuelni demografski procesi*, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, no page reference). According to the Serbian Krajina Information centre *Veritas*, Serbian casualties numbered around 8,000 – personal correspondence to Savo Štrbac, the director of *Veritas*.



Map 2.5 – The self-proclaimed Serbian autonomous provinces (*Republika Srpska Krajina*), with the majority of the Serbian population in 1991.

2.9.1 The abuse of Heritage in the 1990s

In 1991 the city of Vukovar had no surviving mediaeval heritage. After the Ottoman withdrawal in the late 17th century the town was rebuilt by the Habsburgs into a provincial baroque town, populated by Croats, Serbs and Germans. Because of its strategic position on the confluence of the River Vuka with the Danube, it became part of the Military Frontier network. There was no significant damage to the city in the First World War, while in the Second World War, it suffered some damage during Allied bombing raids in 1944/45. The greatest destruction that the town suffered since the Ottoman-Habsburg wars in the 17th century was the shelling by autumn 1991 (Fig. 2.57 and Fig. 2.58). The destruction of 90% of all Vukovar buildings, including its Baroque core, became a blueprint for media war coverage.³⁰¹

Generally, during the wars of Yugoslav succession, cities under siege were divided into ethnic districts that hosted opposing armies. The typical tactics involved positioning of military equipment on the most prominent buildings, especially those on heritage lists, aiming to provoke a response from the enemy. The inevitable

³⁰¹ Pearson, J. – *Dubrovnik's Artistic Patrimony and its Role in War Reporting* in *European History Quarterly*, Spring 2010, 201.

consequent damage was calculated and aimed at provoking the international media outrage and a sense of victimization. “Exposing the damage to the historical cities exclusively as responsibility of one party in the conflict” by the majority of western journalists stemmed from a *journalism of attachment* political doctrine, devised for the purpose.³⁰² Supporting the narrative which depicted the war as “European Croatia” versus “Asiatic Serbia,” the destruction of historical heritage served to generate public’s approval for western interventionism.³⁰³



Fig. 2.57 – Damage to the Eltz Manor in Vukovar in 1991. Built in 1749-1751 for the German noble, Karl von Eltz-Kempenic.



Fig. 2.58 – Damage to the *Serbian Home* in Vukovar, erected in 1905 in place of the 1733 *Serbian-Russian-Church-Slavonic School*.

³⁰² The argument for “journalism of attachment” was put forward by Martin Bell, a journalist and a politician, who openly argued that journalists should embrace a *journalism of attachment* (as opposed to neutrality) to expose the treachery of the guilty parties,” quoted in Pearson, 2010, 204

³⁰³ See Gibbs’s argument in – *First Do No Harm – Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Nashville, 2009 or Pearson, above. Good theoretical argument was given by Maria Todorova.

The siege of Dubrovnik (Fig. 2.59) by the Montenegrin forces of the JNA set another example of the misuse of heritage in all wars in the Former Yugoslavia, regardless of the level of destruction. According to the *Institute Report* produced by *Dubrovnik's Institute for the Protection and Conservation of Historical Monuments*, which was publicly used without full verification by the UNESCO observers, the shelling brought a “widespread destruction” of 3% to both old and new buildings.³⁰⁴ The UN acknowledged that the *Institute Report* “may suffer from a tendency to exaggerate the gravity of some impacts on facades and the stability of the greater buildings, as much of the work was carried out under extremely difficult conditions,” but insisted that the level of the inflicted damage should be expressed by a number of shells used on the historic core, rather than by the actual damage sustained.³⁰⁵ Eventually the number of buildings that the *Institute Report* suggested were damaged or destroyed was reduced from 116 to 52, but despite this correction, the initial *Institute Report*, has proved an enduring basis for all subsequent data claims.³⁰⁶ The problem was further exacerbated by western media which presented the siege of Dubrovnik in deliberately exaggerating terms, aiming to win public support for intervention.³⁰⁷



Fig. 2.59 – Dubrovnik Walls, UNESCO Heritage Site since 1979

³⁰⁴ *United Nations – Security Council, Annex XI.A*, quoted in Pearson, 2010, 202

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 199

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 201

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 201-206

Nearly twenty years after the war, some British journalists who reported from Dubrovnik admitted that: “*in terms of the buildings themselves, the city was looking pretty much unchanged. It was only when one went outside the old city that you saw that the damage had been done on new Dubrovnik rather than old Dubrovnik; partly because there was a gross shelling of Dubrovnik, partly because it is easy to destroy modern pre-fabricated buildings.*”³⁰⁸ However, during the war, leading western and especially British media regularly reported that the old city had been significantly damaged or destroyed.³⁰⁹ Even though some of the journalists later admitted that deliberately exaggerated reports were influenced by the UK Foreign Office and the Military, Dubrovnik presented a precedent which revealed the close interconnectedness between modern propaganda and modern state-politics.³¹⁰

2.9.2 Media as a tool for creating a new national narrative

The language used by media to describe the entire Serbian nation in the conflict in Croatia as an *alien other* was what Milica Bakić-Hayden defined as *nesting Orientalism*.³¹¹ Based on Edward Said’s concept of *Orientalism*, Bakić-Hayden described it as “*a tendency of each region to view the cultures and religions to its South and East as more conservative and primitive.*”³¹² Her argument was supported by this typical representation of the Serbs during the siege of Dubrovnik in the western media: “*the barbarian hordes advancing on Rome...forfeiting any right to be termed more than a lawless mob, and seem determined to take Dubrovnik, even*

³⁰⁸ *The Telegraph* correspondent Alex Russell interviewed by Pearson in Person, 2010, 204

³⁰⁹ Public debates organized by the media which questioned whether the damaged historical buildings provided a sufficient reason for military intervention frequently coincided with the governments’ positions, which decided to support Croatian independence. Pearson, 2010, 206

³¹⁰ In his interview with Pearson, Max Hastings, the former Editor-in-Chief of *The Daily Telegraph* admitted: “It is undoubtedly true that the *Daily Telegraph*’s editorial position not only on Yugoslavia but on other foreign policy issues, tended more than not to run closely with that of the *Foreign Office* because of my relationship with Douglas Hurd. That is undoubtedly true. But that does not, I may say, always mean that one supported Douglas about everything. In fact, we had some extremely sharp conflicts of views, in particular about Europe. We gave him a hard time on some aspects of his European policy. But, certainly on Yugoslavia I would say that was where the roots of the policy were coming from.” – quoted in Pearson, as above, 209

³¹¹ Milica Bakić-Hayden and her husband Robert Hayden introduced this concept in 1992 in their article *Orientalist Variations on the Theme "Balkans: Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics*, published in 1992, when Serbian argument in the conflict was dismissed as nationalistic and anti-civilizational. See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 71.

³¹² Bakić-Hayden M. and Hayden, R. – *Orientalist Variations on the Theme "Balkans: Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics*, *Slavic review*, vol. 51, no. 1, Spring 1992, 4

if they destroy the city and the population in the process.³¹³ Other comparisons between Dubrovnik and British cities during the Blitz, or the transposition of conflict to the days of the Second World War, had the rhetorical effect of dividing combatants into convincing ethical/moral categories: the Serbs as Nazis, the Croats as British.³¹⁴ With combatants divided into these clear categories and supported by pictures of damaged heritage, sympathy for the Croats grew, as well as the public support for military intervention.³¹⁵

The war reports re-asserted the concept of “barbaric Serbia” propagated in the years preceding the First World War. Evoking the narrative of the *Carnegie Endowment Report*, paid for and procured by Austro-Hungary in 1914, western media and academia set in motion a complete revision of Serbian history and historiography.³¹⁶ They reports which qualified the Serbs as “demons” enabled the modern Croat government to re-assert Starčević’s premise that east of the Drina and Danube is the *Oriental, Byzantine and Ottoman Other*.³¹⁷ The overwhelming Western support for Croat independence accepted the Croat argument for “Serbian aggression,” firmly establishing in the process the concept of *nesting Orientalism* in the European public opinion. Similarly, the case of Dubrovnik established a pattern of reporting in the subsequent wars in Former Yugoslavia, reaching its culmination in the reporting of the siege of Sarajevo and the Kosovo war.

Simultaneously, the Western media completely neglected the destruction of the Serbian heritage during the Yugoslav wars. Already in 1991, the systematic destruction of Serbian property and especially Orthodox heritage began. In the Croatian republic, most of these churches and monasteries had been destroyed once before in 1941-1945 and only partly rebuilt after the Second World War (Fig. 2.60 and Fig. 2.61). In the territory of the Eparchy of Pakrac in central Slavonia, for

³¹³ Alex Russell in *Telegraph*, quoted in Pearson, J. – *Dubrovnik’s Artistic Patrimony and its Role in War Reporting* in *European History Quarterly*, Spring 2010, 204

³¹⁴ *Ibid*, 205

³¹⁵ *Ibid*, 206

³¹⁶ Negative depiction of the Serbs between 1903 and 1918 was aimed at preparing the public opinion of Austria-Hungary and Germany for the subsequent political and military actions against the Kingdom of Serbia at that time. In the 1990s, similar techniques were deployed by the US and UK media, often quoting the press from the early 20th century as accurate depiction of the Balkan problems. A good insight into the similarities between the two propagandas can be found in Ković, M. – *Saznanje ili namera: Savremena svetska istoriografija o Srbima u XIX veku*, Sociologija, Vol. LIII, Beograd, 2011, 402.

³¹⁷ Paul Davidson in his diary instalments in the *Independent* with the title of one entry referring to the Serbs as: “They Must be Demons,” quoted in Pearson above, 204

example, during the Second World War 54 churches, dating from the 15th to the early 19th century were raised to the ground. The reconstruction of some of them was finished only in 1990, only to be destroyed again in 1991-1995. In the same eparchy, 39 churches were destroyed and the Monasteries of Orahovica and Pakra were demolished in 1991. The Episcopal residency, one of the early Baroque buildings in Slavonia, dating from 1732, was destroyed.³¹⁸

Whilst the destruction of Vukovar and its Baroque Catholic heritage received due attention from the international media, public and academia, the decimation of Serbian Orthodox property was rarely mentioned in either official Croat or international reports.³¹⁹ This allowed the Croatian authorities to incorporate the narrative created by Starčević and his followers into the official national history curriculums, thus legitimizing chauvinism as struggle for national liberation.



Fig. 2.60 – The Church of St. Trinity in Nova Gradiška, erected in 1738 in Baroque style, destroyed in 1941.



Fig. 2.61 – The second Church of St. Trinity in Nova Gradiška, erected in 1982 in neo-Moravian style, destroyed in 1992; the ground turned into a green field.

2.10 Revisionism

Immediately after the hostilities in Croatia began in the summer of 1991, the Croat state not only gained political and military support from the West, it also

³¹⁸ <http://eparhija-slavonska.com/html/latinica/eparhija.html> - The official web-site of the Eparchy of Slavonija of the SPC – Accessed on 20/03/2013

³¹⁹ A whole PhD thesis, awarded by Cambridge University in 2009 was dedicated to the destruction of Vukovar. The author wrote the thesis without knowledge of the language and relying exclusively on dubious interpreting skills of local residents and modern revised historiography.

welcomed Croat academics and scholars. The HAZU and other cultural institutions, supported by the influential Croatian diaspora and its Western allies, began the process of historical revisionism. The old racial theories of the late 19th and early 20th century, forming the basic argument for the territoriality of the Croat nation-state in Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Srem, revised and re-phrased, presented Croatia as a thoroughly European and democratic state with an anti-fascist past. Starčević's chauvinism was significantly downplayed and explained in terms of defense against the "Greater Serbian nationalism of Vuk Karadžić", as was originally asserted in the 1980s by Croat scholars in diaspora.³²⁰ Both Croat and foreign scholars uncritically adopted this view as one of the main premises of the modern Croat national narrative.

Since Croatia did not have full national independence until 1991, the early mediaeval period became central part of the Croat national history. The exceptional importance was given to the short-lived connections to the early 9th century Frankish Empire and Roman Catholicism, which were both used to emphasize Croatia's ties to Central Europe, as well as identify the country with western democratic values. To support this claim, the few fragments of old Croat Latin inscriptions dating from the 9th to 11th centuries were proclaimed as the authentic achievements and originality of the early Croat nation-state.³²¹ The remains of only a few interlace ornamentation engraved in stone became proof of the unique Croat nature of the pre-Romanesque architecture.³²²

Much more problematic was the re-naming of the heritage built in the pre-national period by the Romanized population in Dalmatia and Istria as exclusively Croat.³²³ Since these towns did not have a significant Slavic populations until the late 14th and early 15th century and even after were exposed to a strong Italian cultural influence, the simple solution to this problem involved re-naming of the Italian artists and architects as Croat by Slavicizing their names; for example, the sculptor Giorgio da Sebenico (1410-1475) became Juraj Dalmatinac; the painter Nicolo Raguseo (?1463-1517) was renamed Nikola Božidarević, whilst Lorenzo di Marino (1420-

³²⁰ Initial re-naming began during the Austro-Hungarian period when the struggle against Italian domination was at its peak. Once the Italians were expelled, it was easy to Croatize the heritage through the connections with the Roman Catholicism.

³²¹ Special attention was given to the two oldest inscriptions bearing Croat names. See p. 260-261 above.

³²² Mohorovičić, A. – *Architecture in Croatia*, Zagreb, 1994, 54

³²³ *Ibid*, 50-55

1478), considered to be one of the finest Dubrovnik fresco painters in the early Renaissance, is now known as Lovro Marinov Dobričević. Although it cannot be denied that there was considerable mixing of the Romanized populations with the surrounding Slavs in Dalmatia and Istria, distinguishing their ethnic affiliations is impossible because Italian claims that Dalmatia and Istria belong to their national heritage, for Italian education and use of the Italian language through history is equally valid.

The greatest problem of the modern Croat national narrative, however, remained the question of language and religion. Since Cyrillic was denied official status in 1991, the question of the Dubrovnik archives, which store a significant Cyrillic heritage, had to be adapted for the new arguments. Conveniently, the assertion of Dominik Mandić in the mid-20th century that the Orthodox population of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was of Vlach origin that was forcefully Serbianized after the 16th century, revived the claim that the Serbs do not any claim to any heritage in the territory formerly known as the NDH. The surviving Bosnian and Dubrovnik Orthodox mediaeval chronicles, with the obvious Catholic miniaturist influence, but written in the *Nemanjić Serbian Minuscule* were simply renamed as the *Croatian Cyrillic* or *Bosančica*.³²⁴ Since the newly founded *Bosniak* nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina laid its claims to *Bosančica* as well, apart from the ongoing dispute between the Croats and Serbs regarding the script, there is a growing dispute between the Croats and Bosnian Muslims about the claim to the script and the surviving manuscripts. Similarly, Croatian academics played a major role in the creation of the new Montenegrin alphabet, relying on the notion of *Red Croatia* from the mid-20th century.³²⁵ However, since it is impossible now to re-assert the claim of the Croat origins of the Montenegrins, the full separation of the Montenegrins from the Serbs, attempted once before in 1944 by the NDH authorities, would be equally satisfactory for Croat national policies.³²⁶

Finally, after the attempt of the NDH to form a *Croatian Orthodox Church* in 1942, the idea was revived in 2010, when the Croat government announced the

³²⁴ The term first introduced by an Austro-Hungarian archaeologist of Croat origins, Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942) in 1889. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 425

³²⁵ See discussion above, p. 170-171

³²⁶ See *Chapter VI – The Montenegrins*, p. 508

establishment of the *Croat Orthodox Church (Hrvatska Pravoslavna Crkva – HPC)*, separate from the *Serbian Orthodox Church*.³²⁷

In 1990, the Croat Sabor removed communist symbols from its state insignia. An old Mediaeval Croat Coat-of-Arms, the white and red checkerboard, used by the NDH authorities during the Second World War, was once again proclaimed the official state symbol. Because of the international pressure to disassociate itself from the *Ustaše* movement, the colours on the checkerboard changed places. Thus, the first field of the Coat-of-Arms, traditionally painted white, was marked red and vice versa (Fig. 2.62 and Fig. 2.63).³²⁸



Fig. 2.62 – Croatian Coat-of-Arms since 1990



Fig. 2.63 – Croat Coat-of-Arms during the NDH

Since then, the majority of accounts by Croat émigré historians and their Western colleagues written against the background of Yugoslav disintegration were based primarily on old Austro-Hungarian accounts and Starčević's ideas, revised in the 20th century and promoted during the NDH. The Nazi nature of the NDH regime was not officially denied, but significantly downplayed and selectively presented. This enabled the *Ustaše* movement to be presented as an anti-Communist struggle, while the Croat role in the genocide against the Serbs and other non-Croats during

³²⁷ <http://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/rh-ce-postujuci-zakon-priznati-hrvatsku-pravoslavnu-crkvu-clanak-110667> - Croatian daily *Večernji list* in its article *RH će, poštujući zakon, priznati Hrvatsku pravoslavnu crkvu*, dated 14 March 2010 – Accessed on 20/03/2013 For now, the only activities related to the formation of the HPC are limited to the existence of anonymous web-sites that promote the revisionists accounts of the Croatian history. <http://www.hrvatskipravoslavci.com> – Accessed on 20/03/2013

³²⁸ The pressure insisted not only on the change of the field-order, but on different shades of colours.

the Second World War was re-interpreted as Greater Serbian propaganda and Yugoslav Communist oppression.³²⁹

This revised narrative was followed by newly erected monuments to famous events and individuals in Croatia's recent past. Apart from the monuments to historical personalities, artists and scientists considered significant for Croat culture, such as the Monument to King Krešimir IV (1058-1074) erected in 2000 in Šibenik (Fig. 2.64) or that to Franjo Tuđman, "the Father of the Nation" (Fig. 2.65) erected in 2013 in Split, there were others dedicated to the ideologues and leaders from the NDH era (Fig. 2.66).³³⁰

Simultaneously, the majority of the monuments dedicated to Communists from the Second World War were either removed or re-branded as monuments to the Croat anti-fascist struggle, together with the revised numbers of the participants in the *Ustaša* movement during the NDH. The Bleiburg incident was re-interpreted as the killing of innocent Croat patriots, rather than the casualties inflicted upon the *Ustaša* soldiers. In 1994, a monument celebrating the "Communist victims at Bleiburg" was unveiled at the Mirogoj Cemetery (Fig. 2.67).



Fig. 2.64 – Monument to King Krešimir IV (1058-1074), erected in Šibenik in 2000, after design of Marija Ujević.

³²⁹ A number of books and publications justifying the existence of the NDH and the *Ustaše* were printed and distributed to the European libraries in all the major European languages.

³³⁰ For now, these attempts were prevented by the Croat authorities under the pressure from the EU officials. For example, a plaque to Mile Budak, unveiled on the local church in Budak's hometown Sveti Rok in August 2009, was removed by the authorities a few days later.



Fig. 2.65 – Monument to Franjo Tuđman, after Zoran Jurić and Branko Sidjan, erected in 2013, in Split is one in a series of monuments to the “Father of the Nation” erected in several Croat towns.



Fig. 2.66 – The memorial plaque to Jure Francetić (1912-1942), a prominent *Ustaša* from the Pavelić government; erected in Slunj in 2000 by the Society of the War veterans (Croat *Domobrani*), removed in 2004. The plaque was re-erected in the Split suburbs in 2005.



Fig. 2.67 – The monument to the killed *Ustaše* fighters at the Mirogoj Cemetery. The inscription reads: To the Croat victims at Bleiburg and surrounding roads.

The Jasenovac Memorial to the victims of the NDH genocide was razed to the ground once again by the Croat army at the beginning of war in 1991.³³¹ A newly built Memorial Centre opened in 2006, with a significantly revised number of victims. Official Croat historiography, based exclusively on the few surviving incomplete documents, insists that there were only 82,129 victims of Jasenovac, excluding those disposed of in the crematoria, because there is no evidence of their remains, while the records were burnt shortly before the *Ustaše* abandoned the camp in 1945.³³² Similarly, the most gruesome artifacts of torture, such as the notorious *Srbosjek* (literary, Serb-cutter, a special knife designed for quicker throat-cutting) were removed from the display (Fig. 2.68). In many of the exhibitions related to Jasenovac concentration camp, ethnic Serbs are usually referred to as “Orthodox Croats and Bosniacs” in accordance with the accepted narrative which denies the existence of the Serbs west of the Drina River.³³³ Furthermore, on the memorials

³³¹ Ignatieff, M. – *Blood and Belonging – Journeys into the New Nationalism*, BBC Books, 1993, 22

³³² <http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6284> – the official web-site of the Jasenovac Memorial Site – Accessed on 20/03/2013

³³³ <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Drustvo/Srbi-u-Norveskoj-sprecili-pokusaj-revizije-istorije.sr.html> - When the programme of the revision of the number of victims in Jasenovac started, the director of the Jasenovac Memorial Site, Nataša Mataušić, was its main promoter, both in Croatia and abroad – The

dedicated to the victims of the 1991-1995 wars, especially those in Vukovar, the names of local Serbian victims are described as Croats, despite the considerable amount of written evidence for their ethnic origins.³³⁴

When the Croat army, with overwhelming US support, regained control over the Serbian held territories in August 1995, it immediately initiated systematic ethnic cleansing. Over 200,000 Serbs were driven out of Croatia without any sign that they would be allowed to return, reducing the Serbian population in Croatia to just over 3%. The local Serbian governments that existed in the self-proclaimed Republic of Srpska Krajina withdrew to the Republic of Serbia.³³⁵ The documents and archives of the Srpska Krajina authorities from 1991-1995 detailing the events in the war from their perspective, including losses in human lives and material wealth, are still unavailable to the public. This, of course, makes any discussion of the nature of the war much more difficult and controversial.



Fig. 2.68 – The *Srbosjek* (*Serb-cutter*) tool, used for killing the victims in Jasenovac and other concentration camps. The artefact does not appear in the Jasenovac Museum, neither as an object nor on the photographs.

article in *Politika* was related to one such exhibition in Norway in February 2013 – Accessed on 20/03/2013

³³⁴ According to the Information Centre *Veritas*, the case of inscribing the names of the Serbs from Osijek killed by the Croat army in 1991, as the defenders of Osijek was one such case. The information was obtained in the interview with Savo Štrbac; the official announcement of the *Veritas* was given in the Belgrade daily *Politika* on 26 July 2012. This is usually explained by the notion that Croatia belongs to the Western state-concept, based on citizenship. See *Introduction*, p. 1.

³³⁵ Later, the majority of them were sent to The Hague on charges of genocide as part of the punishment of Serbia. None of the Croat officials were brought to The Hague.

The mass expulsion of Serbs from Croatia was followed by the systematic clearance of the Serbian heritage. Those Orthodox churches and monasteries that were not destroyed in 1991, were demolished after 1995. Only in Dalmatia and Lika, where pockets of the Serbian population remained, were some of the monasteries allowed to remain. Although the 14th century Monastery of Krka in Dalmatia was partly demolished (Fig. 2.69), after being ruined for several years, a few monks returned to begin the repair works.³³⁶ However, the surviving Orthodox churches and monasteries lack the attendants as legal restrictions and usurpation of the property remain the main obstacle for the return of the expelled Serbs.



Fig. 2.69 – The Monastery of Krka, erected in 1345 on the old Roman ruins as endowment of Princess Jelena Nemanjić-Šubić. Built partly in the Romanesque style, with later additions. Survived the Second World War and partly demolished in the 1990s. Renewed in 2001.

³³⁶ <http://www.eparhija-dalmatinska.hr/manastiri-krka-1.htm> - The official web-site of the Eparchy of Dalmatia of the SPC – Accessed on 20/03/2013

The Albanians

The small state in the southwest of the Balkan Peninsula, Albania, formerly an Ottoman province, proclaimed its independence from the Ottoman Empire on 28 November 1912. Even though Edward Gibbon described Albania as a “land within sight of Italy but less known than the interior of America,” a very few European diplomats, travellers, Catholic missionaries and intellectuals, expressed an interest for Albania and the Albanians until the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although scarce, writing about Albania and the Albanians coincided with the accumulating political tensions preceding the First World War. The collision of the Great Powers’ interests prompted Austro-Hungary to engage a number of its scholars and civil servants to research and formulate a credible argument for the creation of a new Balkan state.¹ The ensuing historiographical narratives by the non-Albanian authors laid foundations for the future Albanian national narrative. However, the years of the First World War followed by the internal disturbances, political assassinations and frequent changes of governments after the war, prevented the Albanian state from developing its own national narrative and national culture in the interwar period.

Only after the Second World War, when the new Communist regime introduced a programme of compulsory education to eradicate endemic illiteracy, the building of the Albanian national identity could properly begin. By the 1970s, when the Albanian national narrative was fully established, Albanians lived divided among the states of Albania, Yugoslavia and Greece; a significant number of the Albanian Diaspora also lived abroad. With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the Albanians there now found themselves divided amongst the former Yugoslav republics of Montenegro, Serbia (predominantly in its southern province of Kosovo and Metohija) and Macedonia. The political problems between the Yugoslav successor republics enabled the ethnic Albanians to assert their idea of national unification that had first emerged during the 1925-1943 Italian domination over Albania. With Western support the concept of national unification has remained a main objective of Albanian foreign policy for the past twenty years. This stimulated the development of Albanian studies in various European and American universities, most of which were employing the methods of

¹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 37-39.

normative historiography to justify the involvement of their own governments in the region.

The main concern of the current Albanian studies is the revision of available historical facts and surviving material heritage to produce a justifiable national narrative which would correlate with the projected state-borders. Discussing cultural aspects of Albanian nationalism in the context of surviving material heritage must, therefore, include current perceptions of both external political factors and the Albanians themselves, as there are no surviving accounts of the perception of the material heritage within their environment by either the elite or wider population, prior to the mid-20th century.

3.1 Territoriality of Albanian nationalism

The ethnic Albanians in the Balkans number just over 5 million spread over the territory of the Republic of Albania, Greece and the territories of former Yugoslavia, which include Kosovo and Metohija, Macedonia and Montenegro. The Republic of Albania itself is inhabited by 2.8 million people.² The second largest Albanian ethnic territories are the Serbian break-away province of Kosovo and Metohija with its estimated 1.74 million of overall population and the Republic of Macedonia with approximately half a million ethnic Albanians living predominantly in the region west of the Vardar valley.³ Smaller numbers of ethnic Albanians live in the far south of Montenegro and north-west part of Greek Epirus.⁴

With a young population and a newly established democracy, the re-evaluation of the Albanian national question resulting from the geo-political changes in the wider

² *Republika Shqipërisë, Instituti Statistikës, Population and Housing Census 2011*, Tirana, 2011, 40 – Of the 2.8 million people who inhabit Albania, 2.3 million declared themselves ethnic Albanians, while approximately 390,000 people refused to declare their nationality, following the controversial protest of the Orthodox Church of Albania that claimed that the Greeks and other Orthodox population in the country were forced to declare themselves ethnic Albanians. The Government in Tirana, naturally, dismisses these accusations.

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html> - Accessed on 20 April 2013 – This number is still subject to controversy. The authorities in Priština still do not control the north of the province where the concentration of the Serbs is the greatest. The Serbs refused to participate in the 2011 census, similar to Greek objections to the census in Republic of Albania. Similarly, over 210,000 Serbian refugees (This number is taken from the Ministry for Refugees and Internally Displaced People of Republic of Serbia) from Kosovo and Metohija are now in collective centres in central Serbia and are still not allowed to return, despite formal invitations coming from the Albanian authorities and the EULEX Forces.

⁴ Being the nation with the highest birth rate in the region, the average age of the Albanians is less than 30 years, which significantly differs from all other countries in the Balkans.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook> - Accessed on 10 October 2010

European context, the reshaping of the Albanian national legends for territorial gains is now taking place at an unprecedented speed. Here, as well as in the other Balkan countries, the full endorsement of the Albanian national discourse is more a matter of the political aims of the major world powers than the evolution of the Albanian national movement itself. The creation of the first Albanian state in its current borders in November 1913 was more a consequence of the sensitive balance of political power on the eve of First World War, rather than the result of the strength of the national struggle of the population. In order to prevent Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria acquiring too much of the remaining Ottoman Balkan provinces, the Great Powers led by Austria-Hungary, Germany and supported by Italy, allowed the creation of the new national state, albeit leaving a significant number of Albanian nationals outside the Albanian borders.⁵

Even though its creation coincided with the period when the debate on the importance of nation-states and national self-determination was at its peak, there were no unanimity in the Albanian-speaking lands over the political course which the new state should take. This was particularly difficult in conditions when the literacy rate of the overall population was less than 5% and tribal loyalties still dominated society.⁶ Very few Albanian intellectuals of the time, literate and able to publish their work for the outside world, eagerly embraced the idea of national self-determination. However, arguing for the Albanian cause was a difficult task, as it was promoted almost exclusively by exiles, mainly in the USA. Thus, the Albanian intellectuals abroad were not only the first creators of the Albanian national discourse, but also their first lobbyists.

By the end of the 20th century, ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia developed a strong sense of national “oneness” with the Albanians in Albania. When Yugoslav disintegration began, the Albanians who lived predominantly in Serbia’s southern province Kosovo and Metohija, used the opportunity to assert their wish to form an independent republic. Following the war in 1998-1999, the province was placed under the protectorate of the United Nations, which sanctioned the unilateral proclamation of the independence of Kosovo on 17 February 2008. So far, 96 out of 195 states in

⁵ Bosworth, R. – *Italy and the Approach of the First World War*, London, 1983, 115

⁶ Jacques, E. E. – *The Albanians – An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, Jefferson 1995, 391

the world recognized the independence of Kosovo.⁷ This led to the situation that the Albanians are the only people in Europe who currently live in two nation-states. As the political situation in the region is very sensitive, due to the great pressure of the West on Serbia to recognize the independence of Kosovo in exchange for membership in the EU, the question of the unification of Albania and Kosovo is still several years away. However, as the border between Albania and Kosovo and Metohija is practically non-existent and the primary school textbooks introduced in May 2012 are the same for both countries, there should be no doubts that this will inevitably happen.⁸

The relations between ethnic Albanians and Macedonian Slavs in the Republic of Macedonia are also far from idyllic. Following the Albanian uprising in the part of Macedonia bordering Kosovo in 2001 which sought the federalization of the state on its Albanian and its Slavic parts, the EU pressed the political leaders of both ethnic groups to negotiate some form of co-habitation. With the promise of Macedonian membership in the EU, open warfare has been avoided so far by the creation of a bi-national state, with two equal official languages, Slav Macedonian and Albanian, and an educational system divided along the same ethnic lines. That the aim of the Albanian political parties to federalize Macedonia is still very strong is corroborated by the recurring ethnic violence between the Albanians and Macedonians in the last ten years. This suggests that the Albanian question in Macedonia will reopen again in the near future.⁹

In Montenegro, 30,500 Albanians in the south of the country, after giving full support for Montenegrin separation from Serbia in 2006, now ask for full autonomy, creating in the process a certain level of disquiet among the Orthodox population.¹⁰

All these events currently taking place are accompanied by strident rhetoric by Albanian politicians in all these territories calling for “*a natural Albania*.” This is a

⁷ <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=3,33> – The official web-site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo – Accessed on 21/04/2013

⁸ <http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/?id=20,1735,82,05,2012&lng=Ser#id=20,1735,82,05,2012> – Accessed on 30/05/2012 – The official site of Ministry of Education of Kosovo. The identical primary school text book for Albania and Kosovo and Metohija, *Abetare (Alphabet)*, was inaugurated on 17 May 2012.

⁹ During 2012 there have been several violent clashes between the Albanians and Macedonian Slavs in Macedonia. In November 2012, the *Iliria News Agency* (INA) in the Albanian language from Skopje issued an open call for the uprising. A new violent attack took place on the 21 April 2015 in the village of Gošnice near the border between Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo and Metohija.

¹⁰ <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1102233> – The Belgrade monthly *Vreme*, article *Već viđeno (Déjà vu)*, published on 07/03/2013 – Accessed on 23/04/2013

euphemism for the politically sensitive term “Greater Albania” originally created by the Axis Powers during the Second World War in the same territories. Clearly, the problem of the territoriality of the Albanian nation is very much connected to the contemporary political interests of the only international powers currently dominating the Balkans: the US and the EU. On their part, Albanian politicians and scholars accept the current political climate as beneficial for their national goals and seek to promote a concept of national narrative that corresponds to the designed territory of “*natural Albania*.” In this perspective, the disintegration of Yugoslavia significantly contributed to the strengthening of the Albanian national goals and led to the creation of a new narrative that denies the existence of a Slavic or Greek population on this territory.

3.2 Imagined aspects of the Albanian national narrative – The origins of the Albanian Question

Writing in 1918, at the beginning of Albanian statehood, an Albanian author from the US, Christo Dako (1876-1941), asserted that “the Albanians were the oldest and most beautiful race of the Balkan Peninsula and had, until the Middle Ages, occupied all Balkan countries.”¹¹ Dako (Fig. 3.1) argued that Albanian “national consciousness was stronger than any of their neighbours” and added that “they were not only an Aryan people, but European in their national instincts” and whose sense of family in particular was “European, not Turkish.”¹² The rationale behind Dako’s arguments was to assert Albanian rightful place amongst the other sovereign Balkan nations on the eve of Albanian statehood for the first time in history. Dako’s statement that the Albanians were “the most ancient people of the Balkans in the circle of the family of nations” was accompanied by the political assertion that the Albanians were “the element of order and peace in the Balkan Peninsula.”¹³ Dako’s Christian background was certainly in tune with the Austrian and Italian political goals in the region in 1913 that, wishing to prevent Serbian access to the sea in the aftermath of the Second Balkan War, enabled the creation of the Albanian state.

¹¹ Todorova, 1997, 45

¹² Ibid, 45

¹³ Ibid, 45



Fig. 3.1 – Christo Dako (1876-1941), laid foundation of the Albanian national narrative in 1918.

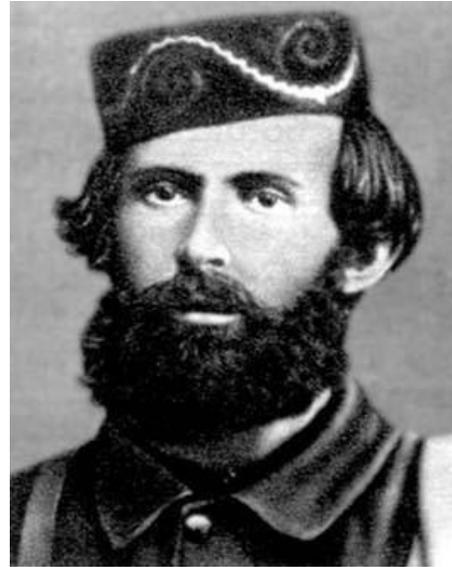


Fig. 3.2 – Mihal Grameno (1871-1931), co-authored the “*Albanian Memorandum*” in 1918.

However, by the end of First World War, when Austria-Hungary ceased to exist, Christo Dako and Mihal Grameno (1871-1931), another American Albanian of Christian background, co-authored the memorandum entitled *Albania's Rights and Claims to Independence and Territorial Integrity* in 1918 that was sent to the American President Wilson and other key foreign leaders.¹⁴ In ten pages of the memorandum, Dako and Grameno (Fig. 3.2) established two leading lines of the future Albanian national myth: that of the unbroken continuity of the Albanian nation from the time of the “Albanian king Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC” to the present day and the request for the territory of the Albanian nation that corresponded to that one where the Albanians lived in their lifetime. The problem, however, was a total absence of both written and material remains that would corroborate this assertion. Not until the second half of the 20th century would a work on creating the material evidence to support territorial claims begin. By then, the nature of nationalism and a whole process of nation-state building came under the academic scrutiny which perceived the concept of nation-state as an artificial construct.¹⁵

Dako's and Grameno's evocation of the famous names of the ancient past as ancestral kin achieved the main goal for the newly established country without coherent social structures and written traditions: the *raison de être* of the state itself.

¹⁴ Dako, C. and Grameno, M. – *Albania's Rights and Claims to Independence and Territorial Integrity*, 1918, 3, no place of publication printed on the edition, The Library of Congress, digital version of the Memorandum, edited by Sloan Foundation – www.archive.org – accessed 16 October 2010

¹⁵ See discussion on theories of nationalism in *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 57-87

This acquisition of belief in an unbroken continuity of the Albanian nation served several purposes: it legitimized the existence of Albania, provided a sense of national pride and self-respect for the newly emerging national identity and, finally, it laid the foundations for the future refutation of contesting claims by the neighbouring nations. Dako's and Grameno's national exuberance stemmed from pride of their ancestral homeland in the time when nationalism as political ideology still had largely positive connotation. The display of emotions in the memorandum was strongly influenced by their personal sense of injustice towards the Albanians. Following the idea of a nation-state that would include all Albanians in the region, they wrote:

“The Albanians justly demand all lands in the west of the Balkan Peninsula, which are inhabited by Albanians. The boundary can easily be followed on any map. From the Boiana River, it keeps to the former Montenegrin frontier on the north till it reaches the Novibazar, south of Berane, whence it follows the river Ibar to Mitrovitza. It includes the railway line as far south as Kupruli taking in Ferozovik and Uskup.¹⁶ From Kupruli the boundary runs south to the angle of Monastir¹⁷ railway near Florina between lakes Prespa and Ostrovo and then strikes east to a point nearly south of Lake Prespa, leaving out Kastoria, whence it runs due south to the old Greek frontier.”¹⁸

The Memorandum thus clearly defined the Albanian territorial claims, which remained unchanged during the 20th century. Postponed by historical and political circumstances, a new opportunity for their advance came along during the wars of Yugoslav succession and overthrow of the communist regime. The pattern of Albanian territorial demands resembles those of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia during the 19th and early 20th centuries: The oppressed population deserved the right to self-determination. However, claims of these three countries with predominantly Christian populations resulted from the regional geo-political interests of the then Great Powers during their attempt to oust the Ottomans from the Balkans. Today, the overwhelming support for Albanian national claims derives from the interests of modern powers involved in the Balkan ethnic patchwork, albeit with a different rhetoric: there is no need to save the Christians from the oppressive rule of the “backward” Ottoman

¹⁶ Uskup – Modern Skopje, capital of Macedonia, Ferozovik, an Albanian toponym for Serbian Uroševac, Kosovo and Metohija.

¹⁷ Modern Bitola in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – All these borderlines correspond to the contemporary assertion of the notion of “natural Albania.”

¹⁸ Dako, 1918, 8

Islamic state. On the contrary, modern Western support for the predominantly Muslim Albanians represents “convenient externalization of the political, ideological, cultural and religious frustrations stemming from the regions and societies outside the Balkans.”¹⁹ As Western concept of multicultural Europe gained momentum, supporting Balkan Muslims generally, in the words of the Bulgarian scholar Maria Todorova, “exempts the West from charges of racism, colonialism, eurocentrism and Christian intolerance against Islam.”²⁰

The distance of one century does not make much difference, except that addressing national problems now employs a different tone and includes terms such as human rights, democracy, cultural and gender issues. Hence, discussing Albanian territorial claims, and those of other Balkan nations, involves modern debate about the specificity of the national identity and national cultural heritage. Since the Albanian national consciousness developed in the shadow of the oppressive regime of Enver Hoxha (1944-1985), religion played a secondary role. Hoxha aimed at strengthening national identity through the ideology unveiled on the eve of the official prohibition of all religions in February 1967: “*Albanianism is the only true religion of the Albanians!*”²¹

Still, even the fiercest attempts of the regime to detach the population from the traditional role of religion and tribal loyalties did not fully succeed in changing its mentality. The educational programmes imposed in 1945 aimed at embedding the concept of the unique character of the Albanian nation, which is exactly what Dako, Grameno and a few other Albanian-American writers argued in the early 20th century. Most of the founding fathers of the Albanian national narrative were of Christian background: works of Fan Noli (1882-1965), the founder of the Albanian Orthodox Church in 1922 (Fig. 3.3), Faik Konica (1875-1942), a Muslim convert to Catholicism and a founding-founder of the Albanian literature in 1896/7 in Brussels, as well as Kostandin Çekrezi (1892-1959), author of the first Albanian history book (Fig. 3.4), published in English in New York in 1919, served as a basis for Hoxha’s educational reforms introduced in 1945 to the Albanian population which had not seen any improvement in literacy rates since the proclamation of independence in 1913. One of the first decisions of Hoxha’s government in 1945, apart from compulsory reading

¹⁹ Todorova, 1997, 188

²⁰ Ibid, 188

²¹ Jacques, 1995, 484

and writing classes for adults and children, was the establishment of new Albanian state institutions promoting the national narrative and a sense of identity.

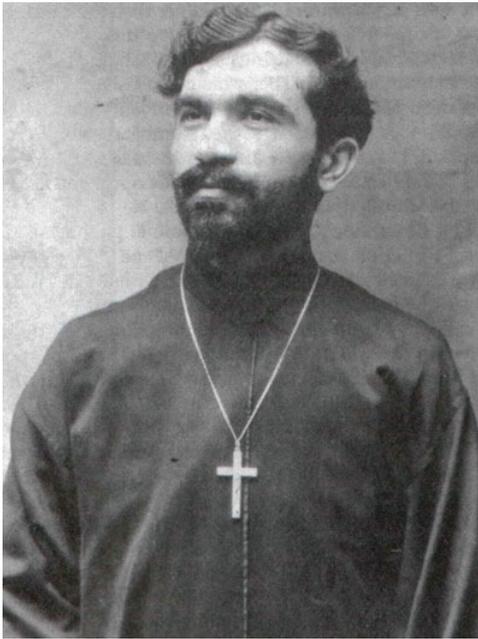


Fig. 3.3 – Fan Noli (1882-1965), the founder of the Albanian Orthodox Church in 1922.



Fig. 3.4 - Kostandin Çekrezi (1892-1959), author of *Albania, Past and Present*, the first Albanian history textbook, published in New York in 1919.

In 1947, the Institute of Sciences was created in Tirana to promote education. A year later, a joint Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum was established to work on the development and care of the Albanian national heritage. However, as qualified staff in crucial disciplines was lacking, any serious work was postponed until the late 1950s, when the first generation of Albanian scholars, educated mainly in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, returned to work on this programme. This first generation of Albanian scholars and intellectuals helped to establish the first University in Albania, in Tirana in 1957. From the 1960s, when Albania entered the period of self-imposed isolation, a special theory of the uniqueness of the Albanian nation was promoted by Hoxha's regime aiming to distinguish Albania from the rest of the Balkans. This politically motivated decision was in contrast with Dako's initial arguments and had great influence on the Albanians both in Albania and in the neighbouring countries.²²

²² Dako did not aim to disentangle the Albanians from the rest of the Balkans, but to assert their rightful place amongst the other sovereign Balkan nations.

Following this course, the first volume of the *History of Albania* was published in Tirana in 1959. As the development of historical and archaeological theory was strongly influenced by directives of the Hoxha regime, the research was based on Marxist principles, which insisted on “material culture history.” Albania was no exception to other communist countries at this time.²³ The main concern of both disciplines was to interpret how the ordinary people lived and produce the narratives that depicted their role in society in relation to Marxist social theory.²⁴ This approach required the existence of the material heritage corroborating the theories initiated by the early 20th century American-Albanian writers which served as a basis for building Albanian national consciousness.

3.3 Cultural aspects and material heritage in the context of Albanian nationalism

Every ethnic group that aspires to become a nation within its own state borders requires an unbroken continuity of the clearly defined ethnic territories.²⁵ The evolution of ethnic nationalism usually coincides with the simultaneous construction of the state, nation and corresponding national myths. Because of the unique position of the Albanian language, surrounded by Greek and South Slav linguistic traditions, and absence of written tradition, the construction and spread of the national narrative was possible only when a nationally conscious intelligentsia was formed after 1945. For the definition of the Albanian ethnic territory, the grand narrative of the continuous Albanian presence in the Balkans was asserted by linking the modern Albanian language to that of the ancient inhabitants of the peninsula: the Illyrians.²⁶

Since no written documents in the Illyrian language exist and the first record of the Albanian language was dated in the mid-17th century,²⁷ it was impossible to support this assertion without documentary or other material evidence.²⁸ Even though the formation of the first Albanian alphabet took place in November 1908 in the then Ottoman Monastir,²⁹ the real pioneering work on Albanian linguistic heritage was not

²³ Curta, F. – *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages – 500-1250*, Cambridge, 2006, 22

²⁴ *Ibid*, 22

²⁵ See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 65-66 – Development of Albanian nationalism qualitatively belongs to the *Political Modernism*.

²⁶ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 3-6.

²⁷ Muzafer Korkuti, the most prominent Albanian archaeologist with the specific interest in the ethno-genesis of the Albanians, claims that the first written sentence in what we can safely identify as the Albanian language comes from the one line in the Latin manuscript of 1642.

²⁸ Jacques, 1995, 309

²⁹ Modern Bitola in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

undertaken by Albanian scholars, but by foreigners, mainly from Central European intellectual centres from the mid-19th century onwards. The Romantic period that coincided with the re-discovered Christian population of the Ottoman Balkans, brought into focus for the first time some interest in the languages and ethnography of the region as a whole. Since by that time the majority of the Albanian population were Muslims, the main interest of these early scholars remained with the Greek or Slavic languages. Some first remarks on the Albanian language and its connections to Latin were noted as early as 1829 by the great Slovenian linguist Jernej Kopitar, the Censor for the Slavic languages in Vienna (Fig. 1.6). However, Kopitar's pan-Slavic aspirations directed him towards a very close collaboration with the Slavic scholars of the Habsburg Empire and today he is primarily known for his work with the Serbian linguist Vuk Karadžić (Fig. 1.5).

In 1854 German diplomat Georg von Hahn (1811-1869) published in Jena three volumes of Albanian Studies (*Albanesische Studien*) on Albanian history, language and culture, focusing on the Indo-European origins of the Albanian language.³⁰ Contemporary Albanian scholarship considers Hahn to be a founding father of Albanology – the studies of the Albanian language, culture and history – even though most of his works had been critically contested and surpassed long ago.

After Hahn in the mid-19th century, there were no significant attempts to write about Albania or the Albanians prior to decade leading to the establishment of the independent Albanian state in 1913. Arguing for the creation of the Albanian state, the Austro-Hungarian government employed two of its most prominent historians who studied the Balkans at the turn of the 20th century to present to the outside world a collection of documents and related sources on mediaeval Albania, in order to support its argument for the necessity of creating a new state in the Balkans. A Czech historian Konstantin Jireček (1854-1918), his Hungarian colleague Lajos Thallóczy (Fig. 5.2) teamed up with the Croat historian Milan pl. Šufflay (Fig. 2.41) and in 1913 in Vienna published the first book of *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis illustrantia* (*Diplomatic and Other Documents on Medieval Albania*).³¹ The second book was published in 1918, whilst the third and final one, *Codex albanicus* was written by Šufflay alone in 1931, on the demand of the then Albanian government.

³⁰ Jacques, 1995, 30

³¹ Thallóczy and, especially, Šufflay were supported by the government in Vienna, as Vienna's political programme at a time was to create an independent Albanian state that would actually belong to the Austro-Hungarian sphere of influence.

Because of Šufflay's strong anti-Serbian and anti-Yugoslav attitudes, this book was never published. Thus, Hahn, Thallósz, Šufflay and, to a lesser extent, Jireček could be considered to be the real founders of Albanology.

Their efforts were accompanied by the works of British traveler-turned-anthropologist, Edith Durham (1863-1944), who wrote about the north-Albanian tribes in the early 20th century. Durham's (Fig. 3.5) documentary work on customs and life in the Albanian highlands remained valuable source for research of the Albanian folklore from that period.

The 19th century early comparative linguistics established the uniqueness of Albanian in the Indo-European language group, with no close etymological relations to other neighbouring languages, except for loan words. Interestingly, one of the first writers to claim the certainty of Albanian descent from the Romanized Illyrians was not a linguist, but a famous British archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans (1851-1941). Before he "discovered" the Minoans and still in his early twenties, Evans (Fig. 3.6) lived and worked in the Balkans during the Eastern Crisis of the 1870s. Writing in 1885/86 for the *Society of Antiquaries* in London, Evans stated:

*"The relics of the Roman provincials who survived the Slavonic conquest of Illyricum were divided in Dalmatia at all events, into two distinct classes, the citizens of the coast-towns, who retained their municipal and ecclesiastical institutions and something of Roman civilization under the aegis of Byzantium, and the Alpine population of the interior, the descendants for the most part of Romanized Illyrian clansmen recruited by the expropriated **coloni** of the **municipia**, or at least that part of them who had been forced to give up fixed agricultural pursuits for a semi-nomad pastoral life. Both classes spoke the Latin language, approaching in various stages of degradation..."*³²

As for the Albanian scholars themselves, very few of them were able to write in Albanian, as the alphabet and grammar were not standardized. These intellectuals usually belonged to both Christian denominations, lived abroad and mostly wrote in French, Italian or English, thus addressing the readers of these languages. Even if books in Albanian had existed, no one could read them because of the endemic illiteracy of the population.

³² Evans, A. J. – *Ancient Illyria – An Archaeological Explanation*, 1886, reprint I.B Tauris & Co, London and Centre for Albanian Studies, 2006, 31. My bold.



Fig. 3.5 – Edith Durham (1863-1944), the champion of Albanian cause in the early 20th century.



Fig. 3.6 – Sir Arthur Evans (1851-1941), creator of the idea of Albanian Illyrian descent.

However, modern advanced studies in comparative linguistics immediately identified a serious discrepancy in the hypothesis of the Illyrian ancestry of the modern Albanian language. In a general division of the Indo-European language tree, the Illyrian belongs to the western group comprising Germanic, Venetic, Illyrian, Celtic, Italic and Greek, whilst modern Albanian has all the characteristics of the eastern group. This includes Slavic, Baltic, Albanian, Thracian-Phrygian, Armenian, Iranian and Indian, as based on the most recent common denominator of each related language group.³³ Because there is no evidence that Illyrian belongs to the eastern group as is the case with modern Albanian, the discrepancy between the two is crucial for the argument that Albanian is directly descended from the Illyrian. Furthermore, since Illyrian words survive only in personal and geographical names and there are no discovered writings in the Illyrian language and letters, the most frequently cited argument about the connections between the languages is that of the few direct correspondences of the vocabulary.³⁴

³³ This problem was widely argued as a *satem-centum* debate. For more, see Wilkes, J. – *The Illyrians*, Oxford, 1995, 73

³⁴ Wilkes, 1995, 73. The majority of the contemporary scholars advocating this premise rely on the few surviving words in Albanian that have an Indo-European root. However, the counter-argument is based on the comparative analysis of some neighbouring Slavic words. For example, the word *strava* (fear), of Hunic/Avar origin is still in use in Serbian/Croatian with the same meaning. This certainly does not

Dako accepted and introduced the idea of the Illyrian origin of the Albanians in 1918. Since then, the unaltered version of this theory was centred on the unbroken descent of modern Albanians from an Illyrian ethnic group formed in the Bronze Age, but on a territory that roughly corresponds to the territory occupied today by Albanian speakers: the states of Albania, Kosovo and Northern Epirus.³⁵

The search to prove this theory was conducted in archaeological and onomastic efforts to provide material evidence. The archaeological research, based on the results of excavations of the prehistoric burials, supplemented evidence for the distinct Illyrian culture, separate from its Greek and Thracian neighbours. Evidence of the earliest Illyrian presence in the Balkans and relations with the Greek and Roman worlds formed the main focus of the analysis of the ancient authors who distinguished the Illyrians from the latter. Since both Greek and Roman historians in typical fashion represented the Illyrians as the barbarian “other,” an accurate assessment of the Illyrian world is difficult. The archaeological evidence related to the Illyrians covers a much larger area than Albanian scholars are prepared to examine (Map 1.a.4) because defining the territoriality of ancient Balkan peoples proved to be equally difficult as doing so in the case of modern nation-states formed after the demise of the Ottoman Empire. The population of the Balkans was since the ancient times, due to the geographical and climatic characteristics, accustomed to the seasonal movements. The frontiers had often been flexible or even meaningless. That is one of the reasons why Greek writers were so vague in description of the boundaries of the Illyrian peoples. *Herodotus* implied the greater Illyria to be beginning from Epirus, going inland to the great Morava Valley and expanding all the way to the Veneti.³⁶ Later accounts show significant variations in description of the Illyrian tribes and territory. Thus, Appian’s description of the Illyrian territories places a southern boundary with Chaonia and Thesprotia where ancient Epirus began, south of the River Aous (Vijosë) and north across the Danube.³⁷ This vast area produced the archaeological evidence for twenty or so groups defined by the material remains inhabiting the Illyrian territories during the Early Iron Age (8th-4th century BC). None of them give conclusive definitions of Illyrians, either through a compact unity of the

make the Serbs or Croats the Huns or Avars. For more, see Curta, F. – *The Making of the Slavs*, Cambridge, 2001

³⁵ Wilkes, 1995, 11

³⁶ Wilkes, 1995, 92-93. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 3-6.

³⁷ Wilkes, 1995, 92

archaeological finds or through any apparent consistency in rituals and daily life.³⁸ Modern Albanian scholars energetically challenge this argument, and focus their research on tracing similarities between the archaeology and the surviving ethnography.

As with the scientific systematization of linguistics, a similar pattern was adopted for the analysis of the archaeological and architectural remains. The intricacy of the material evidence with little or no reference to the written documents and customs was demarcated by using the comparisons with the much better documented ancient and mediaeval heritage of the area. In Albania proper, the first systematic record of ancient sites was conducted in 1904 by Carl Patsch (1865-1945), Jireček's successor as a professor at the University of Vienna, and subsequently by Camilo Praschniker (1884-1949) and Arnold Schober (1886-1959) in 1919 who concentrated their work on the Illyrian heritage.³⁹ The topographical studies of Patsch and Praschniker-Schober remain to this day the basis of modern studies of Illyrian sites.

However, after the demise of Austro-Hungary, a young Albanian state did not have the capacity to undertake any research of its heritage. The National Library of Albania (*Biblioteka Kombëtare e Shqipërisë*), initiated in 1920, opened two years later. Until the end of the Second World War there were no other educational and cultural institutions working on the development of national narrative. This was a direct consequence of a dire financial situation which put the entire Albanian economy in the hands of Mussolini's Italy.⁴⁰ There were no investments in education of the Albanian youth and no finances for undertaking the archaeological research which would corroborate the initial thesis of the Illyrian ancestry of the Albanians.

On their part, the representatives of the Italian authorities in Albania were particularly eager to identify classical Roman sites as it was part of the Italian political agenda of the Mussolini era whose fascists saw themselves as the legitimate successors of imperial Rome and laid claims to Albanian territory; the leading argument being that where the Romans once ruled, they could rule again. The Greek and Roman sites in the coastal areas were first examined by Italian and French archaeologists starting from the mid-1920s, but their focus was exclusively on the Classical period. A young Italian archaeologist Luigi Maria Ugolini (1895-1936) was

³⁸ Ibid, 65

³⁹ Wilkes, 1995, 10

⁴⁰ Lampe, 2006, 80-82

sent in 1924 to excavate sites of Appolonia, Saranda and Butrint, and until the contemporary international teams resumed the works on some of these sites in the 1990s, much that was uncovered is owing to his efforts.⁴¹

Only after the establishment of the Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum in Tirana, first as a joint institution in 1948 and then as two separate institutions in 1976, could the process of creation of national narrative begin. When the Albanian Academy of Sciences (*Akademia e Shkencave e Shqiperise*) in Tirana, established in 1972, created the Centre for Archaeological Research, the main objective of Albanian scholarly efforts was to achieve accordance with the political aims of the Hohxa regime. The separation of the two institutions coincided with the increased efforts of the regime from 1975 onwards to vigorously promote the idea of Albania's peculiar national individuality. Even though research by Albanian scholars, educated at the newly founded University of Tirana in 1957 and further trained at Soviet (mainly Moscow) and Chinese universities, started in the 1950s and 1960s, the 1970s was the decade when the state fully supported the development of national archaeology.⁴²

The beginning of the field-work research of the Albanian national past was marked by the 1969 symposium *Illyrians and the Albanian genesis* which pointed to the future direction of the Albanian national discourse. One of the long lasting outcomes of the symposium was the beginning of periodicals *Illyria* and *Monument*, mostly concerned with the Albanian Illyrian past, which began being published in 1971. The same year witnessed the publication of the first archaeological map by the eminent Albanian academic Muzafer Korkuti (1936), who devoted his life's work to the problems of Albanian ethno-genesis. Thus, the year 1971 can be considered as the beginning of state's focus on the academic interpretation of the material heritage of Albania and the turning point in constructing of the Albanian national narrative.

3.4 Historical and academic sources on Albanian heritage

After Ana Komnena, written accounts referring to the Albanians are rare and reveal little. The Serbian Emperor Stefan Dušan in the 14th century styled himself "Emperor of the Serbs, Greeks and Albanians," but nothing more about the Albanians survived in either Serbian or Byzantine documents. In the 17th century, a valuable

⁴¹ Gilkes, O. – *Albania – Summary guidance of field and museum works during his archaeological work in Albania for the University of East Anglia*, 2006, 36

⁴² Jacques, 1995, 467; Wilkes, 1995, 10

Ottoman historian Evliya Çeleby (1611-1682), shed some light on the life of Albanians but his travelogue did not comment on Albanian history. Documents concerning Albanian history and Albanians only appeared in the 19th century, when the *Grand Tour* included parts of the Balkans.⁴³

There are still ongoing debates in dating the earliest document written in the Albanian language. The majority of contemporary authors maintain that it was the *Meshari* (*Missal*) dating from 1555, and written by Gjon Buzuku in Latin for the needs of the Arbëreshë community of exiled Christians of Albania in Italy. It contains a single line in Albanian, incorporated within the Latin text and written in the Latin alphabet. From the same period dates the Chronicle of the Musachi family, in the Gheg dialect of Albanian and written in Latin orthography. It refers to the exiled 15th century noble Teodor Musachi⁴⁴ and his ancestral possessions lost to the Ottomans.⁴⁵ The book does not contain information on land, towns, castles or buildings. There are, however, some documents on Episcopal Sees in the region written during the decline of Byzantine rule, but they do not refer to Albanian nationals and for the most part, some of the names and locations are difficult to identify, particularly those with Slav-sounding names of origin.⁴⁶

Except for these scarce documents from the pre-nationalist period, no other sources related to Albania and the Albanians, were found prior to the mid- to late-19th century, when educated European travellers began recording Albanian customs and contemporary political events. By then, ideas of nationalism penetrated intellectual thinking and not even the (arguably) most objective scholars and writers were exempt from its influence.

3.4.1 The problem of the validity of the sources

The 19th and early 20th century accounts of Albania and Albanians come from foreign authors, primarily concerned with describing the terrain and ethnography. Few reflected on the history of the Albanian ethnic place and the Albanian people. Only occasionally they referred to the historical background and archaeological remains of the land they were visiting. However, by the time of the

⁴³ Winnifrith, J. J. – *Badlands – Borderlands – A History of Northern Epirus/Southern Albania*, London, 2002, 102

⁴⁴ Alternative spelling is Muzaka

⁴⁵ Winnifrith, 2002, 98; Kola, P. – *The Search for Greater Albania*, London, 2003, 4

⁴⁶ Winnifrith, 2002, 86

Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878), the majority of the European writers were affected not only by the phenomenon of nationalism within their own countries, but by the impact that the ideas of nationalism had on the development of historiography and a number of humanist disciplines. These undoubtedly affected their writings, resulting in the produced works reflecting more their own times, intellectual thinking and political circumstances, rather than objective views on the past. Nevertheless, imperfect as they are, these 19th century accounts represent a valuable source for the examination of the nation building processes not only in Albania itself, but for the whole of the Balkans.

In that sense, Sir Arthur Evans' account *Ancient Illyria – An Archaeological Explanation* (1886), despite its frequently erroneous conclusions and referring mainly to the modern Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia, records the surviving heritage dating from ancient times and depicts only the Albanians living in those territories which Evans visited. Another valuable source for the ethnographic features of Albania came from Mary Edith Durham, who wrote extensively in the early 20th century. Following the usual western pattern of the time, she had found her Albanian "pet nation" and became an important source for modern Albanian historiography.⁴⁷ Undoubtedly, she has earned her place for the quality of her ethnographic and tribal depictions of the Northern Albanian and Montenegrin highlanders, but the fierce criticism that almost transcended into open chauvinism towards the Serbs, the Greeks and Orthodox Christianity in general, excluded her work from the list of sources valuable for the comparative analysis of early 20th century Balkan history.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Rebecca West was first to use the term in the early 20th century, when commenting on Durham's biased approach towards various Balkan ethnicities. Durham herself had a staunch anti-Slav and anti-Serbian attitude and her attempts to write about Balkan history were received with a certain level of derision by the respected British academic community at a time. For example, Durham – Seton-Watson correspondence, today kept at the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies, reveals high degrees of disquietude and even contempt that serious scholarship held for Durham during the First World War. Over the years, Durham – Seton-Watson disagreements evolved from matters of policy to more personal disputes over who was more qualified to comment on Balkan affairs. Durham viewed Seton-Watson as a pointy-headed parvenu: "*You I take it made the acquaintance first of the pick of the Austrian Slavs who owed their culture to generations of Austrian civilisation*", she wrote to him in December 1924, "*and you did not grasp the danger of subjecting them to the Serb savage, whom you did not know.*" He, on the other hand saw "*her methods of controversy, her reckless and infamously untrue charges against all and sundry, make it difficult for any friend of Yugoslavia to find any common ground on which to meet,*" as expressed in his letter to her in February 1929. Charles King summarised years of their academic war in his article published in the *Times Literary Supplement*. King, C. - *Queen of the Highlanders: Edith Durham in "the land of the living past"* – TLS, 04/08/2010

⁴⁸ Todorova, 1997, 121

3.4.2 The establishment of the national narrative

Recording the history of Albania by Albanian authors began only with the publication of the first volume of the *History of Albania* in 1959. Clearly, the development of historiography in this period was strongly influenced by directives of the Hoxha regime which, like most communist countries, based historical and archaeological research on the principles of Marxist doctrine that insisted on “material culture history.”⁴⁹ The main concern of both disciplines was to excavate, read and interpret how the ordinary people lived and produce the narratives that depict this people’s role in society and their situation in relation to Marxist social theory.⁵⁰

As elsewhere in the Balkans, the absence of written documents placed an emphasis on archaeology and its interpretations, but as Hoxha’s paranoia engulfed the country and its borders, there was no possibility for professional academic exchange either with scholars with an international background (including neighbouring countries) or with Albanian nationals living and working in Yugoslavia and Greece. Even though the prevailing communist ideology officially suppressed nationalism, particularly in Yugoslavia, the old enmities between the Balkan ethnic groups had survived and transformed themselves into the battle between the different variants of communism, as expressed through the personality cults of Hoxha (Fig. 1.a.23) and Tito (Fig. 1.a.20). The differences between their characters and upbringing inevitably led to different national aspirations under the aegis of communism. Whilst Hoxha persevered in shaping and constructing Albanian national identity based on the uniqueness of the Albanian language in the Balkans, Tito did everything to curb various Yugoslav nationalisms and particularly the Serbian one, as he saw it as a main threat to the existence of the unified state. In order to achieve this, Tito took two incredibly important decisions: to proclaim several new nations within the Federal State of Yugoslavia and to forbid the return of 15,770 Serbian families expelled from Kosovo and Metohija during Second World War.⁵¹ Both decisions had a long lasting effect on Serbian nationalism. As two new nations were introduced by the 1946 Yugoslav Constitution⁵², the Macedonian and the Montenegrin, the percentage of the

⁴⁹ Curta, 2006, 22

⁵⁰ Ibid, 22

⁵¹ Ćirković, 2004, 276

⁵² The third one, that of the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina was introduced in the 1974 Constitution.

population described as Serbs within the Federation fell considerably. Simultaneously, the ethnic map of Kosovo and Metohija was irreversibly changed.

Parallel with the establishment of the new regime in both Albania and Yugoslavia in 1945, the efforts to build the educational networks were taking place on an unprecedented scale. In Albania, in 1952 the southern *Tosk* dialect was standardized as official Albanian and the first dictionary of the Albanian language was printed in 1954. This was followed by the foundation of the University of Tirana in 1957. In Yugoslavia, the main centres of Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana had inherited universities and educated classes, but the southern republics that did not have institutions of higher learning, were the first to receive them. As Kosovo and Metohija was economically the least developed part of Yugoslavia, with a nascent infrastructure, the University of Priština was established as late as 1970, with the language of instruction being both Serbo-Croat⁵³ and Albanian. However, this rapid expansion of the academic network, influenced by the communist ideology, had a negative effect on the quality of studies, especially in the new institutions. This was significant because the period after 1945 became crucial for Serbian-Albanian relations.⁵⁴

Books published in the post-war period, openly admitted influence of the Marxist ideology of both countries. Some of them do show a genuine attempt to address the problems of perceptions of nationalism and the national question objectively. However, the absence of developed academic traditions, combined with political agendas of both the Albanian and Yugoslav regimes, often marred the objectivity of arguments. Despite that, the communist period between 1945 and 1990 provided necessary support for the establishment of national goals and narratives suitable for the developmental needs of the new states. These goals and narratives continued in the post-communist transition era, but this time heavily influenced by international policies of modern Great Powers involved in the Balkans. Subsequently, academic objectivity once again underwent a general revision which gave books written and published in the past three decades significant academic bias.

⁵³ The official name of the official language of Yugoslavia at a time

⁵⁴ Ćirković, 2004, 282

3.4.3 The Illyrian Theory

The first *Assembly of Illyrian Studies* was held in Tirana in 1972 and presented the results of work of the first generation of the native Albanian academics, educated at the University of Tirana and Soviet universities. The central argument was asserted by the first and most important Albanian archaeologist in the field of pre-historic research, Dr Muzafer Korkuti (Fig. 3.7). On this occasion, he presented the first detailed map of Albanian pre-historic sites and set the basis for all future Albanian arguments by his work *On the Formation of the Illyrian Ethnos*.

The thrust of Korkuti's argument emphasized the unbroken continuity of the *pre-Illyrian*→*Illyrian*→*Arber*→*Albanian* line of descent. His interpretation of the pre-historic finds was based on the claim that the Illyrians were settled in the Balkans before the Indo-Europeanization took place during the Bronze Age.⁵⁵ Basing his conclusions on the excavations from the tombs of Mat (Middle Albania), Pazhok (Central Albania), Vajza (South-Western Albania), Dropulli (Southern Albania) Korkuti's conclusions asserted that the Illyrians were not only the carriers of the Iron Age culture in the territory of Albania but also they had lived in the same territory even in the Bronze Age.⁵⁶ Even though Korkuti was aware that generalisation of the material finds had to be corroborated by the coordinated conclusions from various disciplines concerned with the problems of ethno-genesis, he still maintained that archaeology provides the most important conclusions as opposed to the studies of linguistics and anthropology. Insufficient factual evidence for the proper anthropological research, such was the absence of pre-historic skeletons, Korkuti challenged by a counter-question:

“When one takes up the issue of the origins of the Illyrians, the first problem which needs solving, is the cultural continuity from the early bronze period to the middle, and later to the late bronze and iron epoch. Let us consider as solved (and to a certain extent it is) the problem of the cultural continuity during the Bronze and Iron Age in the western territory of the Balkan Peninsula in the lands where the proper Illyrians had spread. But is this fact sufficient, or this preliminary conclusion on this problem? (sic) Is it necessary to prove the cultural continuity since the beginnings of the Bronze Age and say that the process of the creation of the Illyrian

⁵⁵ <http://mkorkuti.tripod.com/index.html> - Accessed on 06/10/2010 - Personal web-site of dr Muzafer Korkuti containing his extended essay *Preiliret-Iliret-Arber*, published in 2006

⁵⁶ Ibid

ethnos starts there? The continuity of living in a definite territory constitutes one of the basic premises for the formation and consolidation of a culture, an ethnos or a language. As a consequence, the study of the cultural continuity constitutes the first condition and the key support in treating the problem of the ethno-genesis of the Illyrians."⁵⁷

The concept of cultural continuity provided a convenient argument for linking the historic Illyrians with modern Albanians. As Korkuti's research coincided with the state version of the Albanian uniqueness championed by Hoxha's regime, the support for the claim was additionally expressed through the premise that:

*"In the Albanian archaeological literature, enough data has been offered to prove the uninterrupted cultural continuity in the land of our country since the early Bronze Age. This has served to back up the view that the Illyrian ethno-genesis starts here. According to this view, the beginnings of the autochthony coincide with the beginning of the ethnos. Closely related to this conclusion, the link between autochthony and the formation of the ethnos is the first issue that comes up for discussion. The formation of the Illyrian ethnos could not be understood without autochthony and the fact that they develop parallel to each other but their starting points do not coincide in time. Autochthony has been in existence for a longer stretch of time whereas the true Illyrian ethnos was formed on the basis of autochthony only after it has been existing for a long time."*⁵⁸

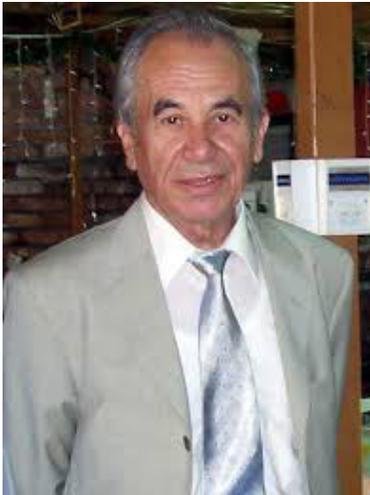


Fig. 3.7 – Muzafer Korkuti (b.1936) formulated the hypothesis of the cultural continuation between the ancient Illyrians and modern Albanians in 1971.

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

This view echoes the 1910 writings of Edith Durham “to whom we owe essentially the first in-depth interest and study on Albania’s customary law”, who wrote that the Albanian mountaineer “boasts and believes that he is the oldest thing in the Balkan Peninsula.”⁵⁹

Considering the fact that Korkuti’s pioneering work during the 1960s and 1970s created the basis for the Albanian school of archaeology, it remained unclear to which literature he referred, other than his own or that of Dako, Grameno and a few foreign travellers from the early 20th century. His guiding principles of archaeological research were based primarily on the excavation of the prehistoric burial tumuli in order to supplement evidence for the prehistoric Illyrians from the Korçë basin. The main objective of these projects was to define more clearly their relations with the prehistoric cultures of Greece, Italy and the countries that were parts of former Yugoslavia.⁶⁰ However, about twenty groups that were defined by their material remains on the whole of the Illyrian territory during the Early Iron Age, show various levels of similarity among them, primarily through the burial or pottery patterns, thus exceeding the territory claimed to be authentic Albanian.⁶¹

Amidst the modern controversy over the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, special attention was paid to the ethnic background of the *Dardanians*, the ancient inhabitants of Kosovo and Metohija and what is now northern Macedonia. Whether the Dardanians were of an Illyrian or Thracian origins has been the main focus of the Albanian-Serbian academic debate since the 1970s. The eastern border of the Illyrian lands ran through the Morava valley and encompassed a wide contact zone between the Illyrian and Thracian tribes (Map 3.1).⁶² For Albanian scholars that the Dardanians were a tribe homogenous with the rest of the Illyrians is a non-negotiable fact. Supported by the onomastic derivative of the modern Albanian word for *pear* (*dardhë*), Albanian science is adamantly conclusive about the Illyrian origin of the Dardanians. On the other hand, most Yugoslav scholars held them to be a hybrid of the Illyrians and Thracians, as the traces of their culture were found in the territory considered to be Thracian.

⁵⁹ Tarifa, F. - *Of Time, Honor, and Memory: Oral Law in Albania* in *Journal Oral Tradition*, 23/1 (2008): 3-14, 2008, 5

⁶⁰ Wilkes, 1995, 11

⁶¹ *ibid*, 65

⁶² The Morava basin is the main river valley of central Serbia.

Korkuti's thesis on the Illyrian origins of the Albanian nation, appeared just as a major exhibition about the prehistoric tribes living in what was then Yugoslav territory took place at the National Museum of Belgrade. In the catalogue for the 1972 exhibition, the archaeologist Draga Garašanin (Fig. 1.54) of the National Museum, published results of her research on prehistoric tribes in the Balkans.⁶³ In it she juxtaposed the findings of the several different burial sites examined in the area of the Morava valley and around the natural communication pass between Niš and Lezha (Naissus-Lissus). Her interpretation of the findings was that:



Map 3.1 – The remains of Dardanian culture proved to be a great controversy for both the Albanian and Serbian archaeologists.

“The cultural development of the area in the Morava valley in the Bronze Age is also closely related to the region of Kosovo. It is evident that the region of Kosovo in this period already had close cultural contact, and also ethnic contacts with the west Balkan Illyrian area...Unfortunately, on the basis of the archaeological information at our disposal, it is not possible with certainty to offer a complete

⁶³ It is no coincidence that Garašanin published her finds almost immediately after Korkuti published his theory. The ensuing polemics is an excellent example that Communist regimes generally could never completely suppress nationalism. Furthermore, they embraced them as a way of preserving the state territories.

picture of the Kosovo region during the Bronze Age⁶⁴. However, on the basis of the known sites from this region (Ljušta near Kosovska Mitrovica and Gladnica near Priština) we seem to have a culture that is very similar to the Mediana group⁶⁵...On the other hand the urn from Ljušta, unfortunately a solitary find, seems to indicate influences from Pannonia⁶⁶ on the basis of its shape and decoration. It is quite clear that no widespread conclusions can be based on one solitary find....In any case it is only future systematic archaeological excavations that will allow us to take a definite stand of this question.”⁶⁷

Although not numerous, the systematic archaeological excavations in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija were carried out until the early 1990s, only to be abruptly interrupted by the Yugoslav wars which prevented any major archaeological activities in the region. At present, the National Museum in Belgrade has been completely closed to the public for nearly a decade, but the National Museum in Tirana held on a display since 1992 one section dedicated to Kosovo’s Illyrian-Dardanian origins aiming to secure wide support for the Albanian cause north of the official border of the state of Albania.

3.5 The Illyrians Ancestry narrative

Similar arguments of the ethno-genesis of the Albanian nation were used for the border territories of southern Albania and northern Greece. Disputes between Greek and Albanian academics about the ethnic affinities of the ancient Epirotes, have persisted for approximately the same length of time as disputes between Albanian and Serbian scholars. However, this dispute had a different outcome, as Greek scholars successfully emphasised the documented period of the 4th-3rd centuries BC which enabled them to argue that the ancient Epirotes had been, by that time, completely Hellenized. Furthermore, this debate involved academics from the academic institutions from all major European countries, as the research of Ancient Greece represented, ultimately, the research of European civilization. The objectivity of the foreign authors was frequently questionable because they showed a tendency to side

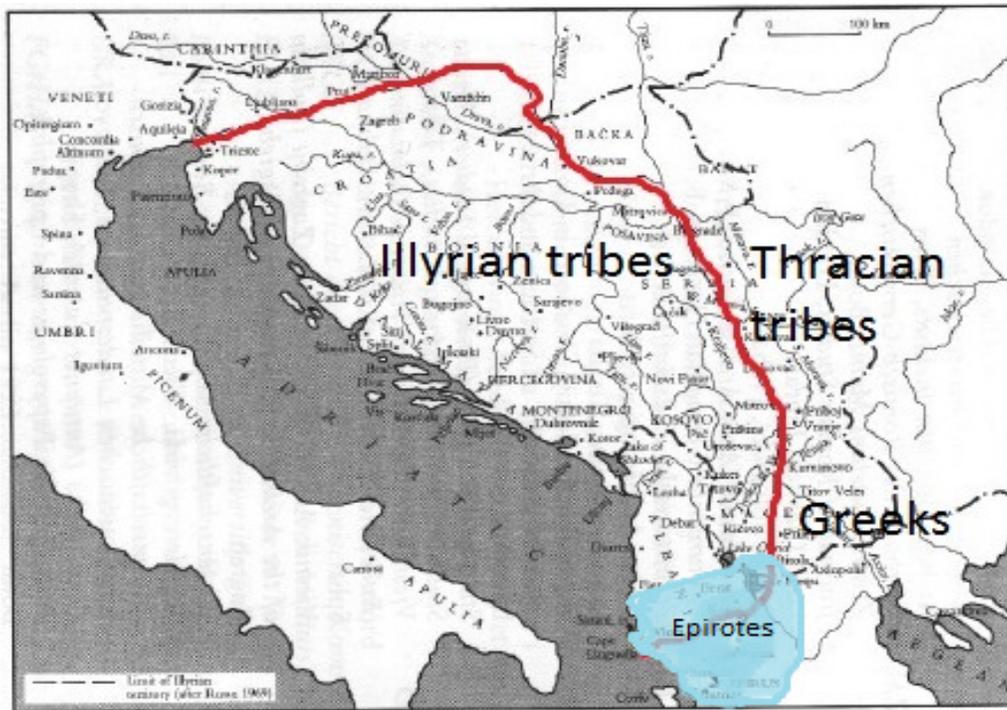
⁶⁴ My Italics

⁶⁵ Garašanin refers to the site of Mediana, near Niš, where a Bronze Age archaeological site was identified as Thracian; Mediana, however, is a Roman name of the nearby Late Antique archaeological site, often linked to the Emperor Constantine I (272-337, ruled from 306).

⁶⁶ Already identified as the Illyrian sphere of influence

⁶⁷ Garašanian, D. – *Katalog Narodnog Muzeja za potrebe izložbe 'Praistorijska plemena na tlu današnje Jugoslavije*, Narodni Muzej, Beograd, 1972, no page numbers

with either Albanian or Greek arguments, which was a direct consequence of the influence of contemporary politics towards individual states in the Balkan region. In the Greco-Albanian debate, Albanian scholars insist that the southern border of Illyrian influence was not the right bank of the Shkumbini River, but much further south, penetrating the province of Epirus to the line which roughly corresponded to the Greek border prior to the 1913 London Agreement (Map 3.2).



Map 3.2 – The dispute about the ethnicity of the ancient Epirotes between the Albanian and Greek scholars implies dissatisfaction with current state-borders.

Eager to disassociate the Ancient Epirotes from Greeks, Albanian scholars insisted that most ancient authors regarded Epirotes as barbarians, thus non-Greek speakers. On the other hand, Greeks insisted on the resemblance of the burial patterns of Mycenae and those of Albanian sites, which Albanian science dismissed as coincidental or non-existent.⁶⁸ Owing to the presence of the Greek colonies on the coast, there was undoubtedly a mixed Greco-Illyrian culture.⁶⁹ The imprecise primary sources and their diametrically opposed interpretations complicate debate on the nature of early Epirus. The increased archaeological activities on both sides of the contemporary Albanian-Greek border have revealed a great deal about the identified

⁶⁸ Winniffrith, 2002, 40

⁶⁹ Wilkes, 1995, 104

groups in the area, but the satisfactory answer to the question of the nature of their ethnic affinities is far from being resolved.⁷⁰

The Illyrian urban settlements played a central role in the efforts of Albanian archaeologists trying to prove the Illyrian character of northern Epirus. As in the case of the Dardanians, the focal point of research was directed to the study of origins, growth, political and social organization, and interactions with the surrounding territories.⁷¹ The earliest identified urban settlement, dated to the 5th century BC in the area of Shkodër, was placed far to the north of the disputed southern districts of the region. The walls of an enclosed area were built from the unworked stone blocks without defensive towers and with two entrances at the most.⁷² This unsophisticated settlement could hardly be called a town, since the southern regions developed distinctly urban characteristics by the mid-3rd century BC. The intricate nature of the Greco-Albanian discourse arose over the general question of the extent of mutual influence between the Illyrian and Greek worlds. Korkuti, adamant that the Illyrian culture was autochthonous, asserted that as such it had spread to the southernmost parts of the Illyrian world, the area of Epirus by the 3rd-1st centuries BC.⁷³ Korkuti pointed out that:

“The urban settlements of Byllis, Nikaia (Klossi) or Albanopolis⁷⁴...did not differ much from its southern and eastern neighbour’s economic and cultural development as well as political organisation. The ancient manufacturing crafts had spread to almost all the southern Illyrian regions. The ancient Greek and Roman authors tell us about the dynamic urban life in the numerous Illyrian cities they describe when writing about the political events of the time. The picture they described becomes ever more complete from the material and testimonies the archaeologist’s pickaxe has brought to light.”⁷⁵

This was challenged by the British author John Wilkes who cautiously noticed that it is not possible to determine precisely *“to what extent the urban development was a direct consequence of external stimulus,”* notably in the period of King Pyrrhus (319/318-272BC), and whether there is *“any genuine evolution from the ‘pre’ or*

⁷⁰ Winniffrith, 2002, 51

⁷¹ Wilkes, 1995, 129

⁷² Ibid, 129

⁷³ Korkuti, 2006

⁷⁴ The name of Albanopolis is another proof for the Albanian scholars that modern Albanians are descendants of the ancient Illyrians

⁷⁵ Korkuti, 2006

'proto' urban phases."⁷⁶ For Wilkes, "the matter will be resolved only by systematic excavations in the interior of discovered settlements, which so far has not been attempted" and that evidence so far points towards the negative conclusion."⁷⁷

Wilkes's work was published in the early 1990s and since then a series of international teams came to Albania to undertake excavations of ancient sites that were until then exclusively under the management of Albanian archaeologists. Establishing a number of offices in the region, with particular interest in ancient coastal towns and pre-historic sites in the hinterland, an abundance of the documented research programmes appeared in all major European languages.

One such project was undertaken in 2007 on the pre-historic site of Kamenica in the Korçë region. The discovered tumulus, dated between 13th and 6th century BC, was organized as a museum with the help of the *Packard Humanities Institute* from California (Fig. 3.8). In the year of opening, a special seminar celebrating the 95th anniversary of Albanian independence was organized in order to further the Illyrian theory. The director of the Kamenica site, Skënder Aliu, wrote an essay titled *Characteristics of the Illyrian culture in the proto-urban and urban periods in southeast Albania* which confirmed the generally accepted argument by Albanian scholars of their Illyrian ancestry. His colleague Sonila Bitincka joined the debate with her work *Elements of the iliro-arbërore culture in the archaeological and ethnographic material* in the same manner.⁷⁸ As the tumulus itself does not contain definite confirmation of the presence of the Albanian ethnicity, the interpretation of the site by modern scholars cannot be based on the material evidence.



Fig. 3.8 – The main excavations of the Tumulus of Kamenica – a link to the Illyrian past?

⁷⁶ Wilkes, 1995, 136

⁷⁷ Wilkes, 1995, 136. Wilkes and his interpretation of the Illyrian past were not received well in the Albanian academic circles.

⁷⁸ http://www.kamenicatumulus.org/Seminars/seminars_281107.html - Accessed on 20/03/2011 - The official web-site of the Tumulus of Kamenica – Archaeological site and museum

The numerous works by foreign academics in the past thirty years have failed to achieve the desired effect of changing established perceptions. Works related to the debate on Illyrian ethnicity and its Albanian descendants have only contributed to the more divisive and, in some cases, completely polarised professional opinions, as they had been based exclusively on scholarship dating from the 1970s onwards.⁷⁹

3.5.1 Promoting the Illyrian narrative the West

An increased academic interest in the region during the period of the Yugoslav wars triggered by the political need for European and US governments to provide for their voters the satisfactory reasons for their involvement. Thus, much of the foreign research from the early 1990s onwards was written frequently by non-academics with some experience in the area or by those scholars who chose to follow the political agendas of their governments and support Albanian national re-assertion. The links between the Albanian and foreign authors who argue the same cause are clearly visible through the background activities of publishing houses and their financiers.

The most obvious example for modern political engagement in historical revision of the Albanian national narrative derives from the *Centre for Albanian Studies* in London and its associate publishers. Apart from several books that relate to the problems of the modern Albanian national question, one of its associates, historian Bejtullah Destani (b.1960), initiated publishing of re-prints of the earliest writers on Albania from the 19th century.⁸⁰ As the number of foreign authors who devoted their academic life to the question of the ethno-genesis of the Albanians was limited, Destani used the introduction to those reprinted works to assert an argument about the damaging historical influence of the Serbs and Greeks for the Albanian national territory. For example, instead of pointing out to the positive views that Evans held for the Albanians in his travelogue through the lands of Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia, written when Kosovo and Metohija were still an Ottoman province, Destani insisted that “*the*

⁷⁹ Some of the most prestigious academic institutions in the West researching Albania and the Balkans often lack new books from national academic institutions. Shpuza, E. – *Spatial typology of traditional Albanian town houses / Ermal Shpuza*. London, 1995 [Unpublished]. It examines the spread of various types of traditional Albanian urban architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

⁸⁰ Among the others, a reprint of the 1885/1886 work of Sir Arthur Evans’s *Ancient Illyria – An Archaeological Explanation* was re-printed and published in 2006 by I.B Tauris & Co, London and Centre for Albanian Studies.

Serbian army tried, by burning the mosques and villages, to destroy any evidence of the fact that the Albanians lived in Kosovo since ancient times.”⁸¹ Such terminology is a clear political effort to academically justify current political affairs in the region. Evans himself did not spend much time either in Northern Albania or in Kosovo and Metohija and his writings are often confused, erroneous⁸² and full of guesswork. A typical passage that illustrates Evans’ youthful self-confidence when describing remote towns and churches that he visited, reads:

*“The mere insertion of Turkish inscription into the outside wall of a building does not necessarily prove that it was the work of a Turkish dignitary, thus honoured, and some of the buildings, especially in the North-East quarter of the town, may well date⁸³ from pre-Turkish and even pre-Slavonic times...”*⁸⁴

Evans’s frequent change of emotions and objects of observation, so apparent in his travelogue, do not display methodological research. However, its value is mainly in careful recording of the historical towns, old buildings and walls he visited. His book is mainly about the territories of former Yugoslavia and there is little reference to the territories inhabited by the Albanians. As such, it is more valuable for research in the territories of these countries, rather than as a eulogy to the missing link of the Illyrian-Albanian ethno-genesis. Finally, as Arthur Evans is much better known for his often criticised interpretation of the famous site in Crete, most modern academics give him credit for enthusiasm, rather than his academic techniques.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Evans, 1885/1886, rep. 2006, Flyleaf

⁸² Evans sometimes declares the Albanians as the Illyrians, but sometimes he claims the same for the Vlachs, although they are two distinct ethnic Balkan groups with different languages. Similarly, for Evans, the town of Skupi (Uskup, Skopje) is a definite place of *Iustiniana Prima*, the birth place of Justinian I (482-565, ruled from 527). However, an archaeological site in the Serbian village called *Caričin Grad (Empress’ City)*, discovered in the 1920s is now generally accepted as the location of *Iustiniana Prima*.

⁸³ The italicised bold words point out to the guessing nature of Evans’s observations.

⁸⁴ Evans, 1885-86, 249

⁸⁵ There was a considerable amount of criticism for Evans’s methods since the 1970s. Modern criticism focuses on his projection of the views and values of his time on the society from distant past: “*Evans embodied all the contradictions of modernism. He used industrial methods and materials to reinvent the myths of antiquity; he was a racist who argued for the African origins of Western civilization, an ageing Boy Scout who championed the theory of matriarchy. At the actual site at Knossos, the reconstructions proceeded in an absurdist counterpoint to the romantic rhythms of his prose....Arthur Evans played a key-role in this crisis of knowledge. He and his celebrated predecessor Heinrich Schliemann blithely projected the spiritual and philosophical concerns of their own times onto the deep past.*” Gere, C. – *Knossos and the Prophets of Modernism*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009, 5-6

3.6 The establishment of the Albanian national narrative

During the 1970s and 1980s, when academic clashes between Albanian and Serbian scholars were becoming more prominent, the states of Albania and Yugoslavia had different political and economic circumstances. Because Yugoslavia was regarded as a “special case of communism” and enjoyed relative freedom and economic prosperity since the mid-1960s, Yugoslav scholars of all ethnic backgrounds enjoyed frequent contacts and academic exchange with their international counterparts in both blocs of the bipolar world. Albania, however, was in constant economic decline until the mid-1970s, when it entered into a self-imposed isolation. This state of affairs was reflected in the process of the academic exchange. Albanian scholars had severe restrictions in promoting their academic achievements and most published works from that period were by a small number of foreign authors who rarely had an access to Albania.

3.6.1 The Continuation Theory – Komani-Kruja culture

To justify the isolationist policies of the Hoxha regime, a theory arguing that the cultural and ethnic identity of the Illyrians continued through the Arbërs (in Byzantine sources after the 11th century referred to as Arbanitai or Arvanitoi), later renamed Albanians, was devised in the 1970s. This became part of every educational syllabus in a programme designed to eradicate illiteracy after the Second World War. It was loosely based on the continuity thesis first formulated by Christo Dako in 1919. However, Hoxha’s persistence was responsible for its full implementation. The consequence of this is the deeply rooted idea of national continuity in the Albanian collective psyche.⁸⁶

Since the evidence of “material culture of purely Albanian origin” is difficult to verify, linguistic theories developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries formed the basis for the argument of continuity. The academic debate, however, has identified two main hurdles. Firstly, there is a total absence of the written Illyrian language: only a few names survive in Greek and Latin sources, an insufficient data about the vocabulary, grammatical structure and phonetics of the Illyrian language. Secondly, by the time the Albanian language was written down, Illyrian had ceased to exist as a spoken language for over a millennium. For Albanian archaeologists, even

⁸⁶ Gilkes, 2006, 6

as remarkable as Dr Korkuti, this deficiency was overcome by “*highlighting the historical fact of primary importance: Albanian is spoken nowadays in the territory that was inhabited by the proper Illyrians in the ancient times and where Illyrian and one of its dialects were spoken. This is a fact of primary importance that scholars who have proved the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language have been starting from in laying out their arguments and proof.*”⁸⁷

The absence of material evidence of undisputed Albanian origins is usually explained by the narrative of the “undisturbed life of the Romanized Illyrian population.”⁸⁸ Conveniently, little is known about the Balkan interior beyond the hinterland of the coastal cities after the Roman conquest. From the excavated and analysed sites so far, it appears that the Balkan provinces enjoyed a period of stability and prosperity up to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, during which time the native inhabitants were Romanized. As elsewhere in the Empire, the Illyrian lands were included in the imperial administrative system only to gain some prominence in the period of decline of the Roman Empire. Even though the name *Illyricum* survived several administrative reorganizations including the division and reshaping of the Empire, there were no clear references to the inhabitants of the region after the major influx of the Slavs in the 6th-7th centuries who penetrated the peninsula as far south as the Peloponnese. Subsequent struggles between the Byzantine and Bulgarian Empires over control of the territory of Albania up to the 11th century were recorded in various Byzantine chronicles, but no mention of Albanians appeared until the 1080s, when Anna Comnena first used the term Albania. Albanian research explained this absence of reference by asserting that since there was no great disturbance in the way of life of the Romanized Illyrians, both in the coastal cities and in the interior, there was no need to mention them by the contemporary writers.⁸⁹

After the division of the Roman Empire in 395 AD, the Romanized Illyrians were split between the provinces of Prevalitania, the New Epirus and the Old Epirus, which corresponded to the territory of present-day Albania.⁹⁰ Albanian archaeologists insisted from the beginning that the Illyrian population led an undisturbed life of cultural continuity and that “*the elements of the old social relationships are still*

⁸⁷ Korkuti, 2006

⁸⁸ Ibid

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Ibid

present.”⁹¹ Listing the cities of Skodra, Lisi, Dyrrah, Bylis, Kanina, Onhezmi, Buthrotus, Berat, Pogradeci, Symiza in Korce, Korkuti maintained that “*such continuity*” is proved by the mere fact that they continued being inhabited. Furthermore, the Albanian land experienced some revival, particularly in the period of late antiquity and the rule of Justinian, “*another Roman Emperor of Albanian origin*”⁹² which witnessed a “*widespread creative activity in the field of monumental church constructions, which can be seen in their architecture, their mosaics and the decorative and architectonic structure.*”⁹³

For Albanian scholars, the argument about the continuous undisturbed life of the Romanized Illyrians is crucial, because it has a double role: firstly, it is a convenient substitute for the missing link between the Illyrian and Albanian ethnicities and, secondly, it confirms the notion of the Albanians as true inheritors of Roman traditions, as opposed to the Greek monopoly on ancient autochthony and the Slavic usurpation of the territory.

Recently, the research of an American academic of Romanian origin, Florin Curta, based on the comprehensive analysis of the primary sources, archaeological findings and accompanying interpretations dating from the 1950s onwards, challenged the Albanian arguments entirely. Curta asserted that by the time of the 3rd-4th centuries there was a sharp decline in the Balkan population as a whole because of the scarce evidence of peasant settlements and complete disappearance of *villae rusticae*.⁹⁴ Similarly, the disturbances over the Danubian *limes* and along the line of the main roads suggest a great decline in the economy and population.⁹⁵

Curta concluded that by 500 AD most of the major cities in the Balkans had contracted and regrouped around the fortified precinct of its major church. The traditional street grid of Roman urbanization “*was altered without any respect for the accessibility to the neighbouring houses, the forum was filled with smaller houses of a poorer quality of construction, whilst public baths were usually abandoned. Large houses were divided into smaller dwellings and, especially after 500 AD, public buildings had ceased to have their previous function.*”⁹⁶ The erection of “*monumental*

⁹¹ Korkuti, 2006

⁹² Jacques, 1995, 16

⁹³ Korkuti, 2006. Modern Macedonian state and its new narrative asserts that Justinian was “an ethnic Macedonian.” See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 348

⁹⁴ Curta, 2006, 48. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 11

⁹⁵ Curta, 2006, 40

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 42

churches” took over the role of public buildings and became the touchstone of urban prosperity. However, the presence of monumental churches could not hide the fact that the region suffered serious depopulation, “*witnessed both by the absence of any significant agricultural tools and the contemporary legislative measures which aimed to improve the situation by tax exemptions.*”⁹⁷ Curta’s conclusions suggest that beyond the coastal cities, after the 4th century, there was not only stagnation, but a rapid decline in all aspects of human activities, except the military. General depopulation resulted in recruitment shortages and made barbarian invasions easier.

Procopius recorded Justinian’s attempts to secure Balkan imperial territories in the mid-6th century by creating a network of nearly 600 newly built or renewed fortifications⁹⁸ as a defence line along the Danube, main roads and important mountain passes.⁹⁹ Because of the required urgency, these structures were basic both in the material used and execution techniques. Decorative stone plastic was non-existent in the most of the identified sites from this period.¹⁰⁰ Justinian’s fortification programme for the protection of the Balkans did not achieve the expected results, because small numbers of people could not support the network of military outposts on such a vast territory for long. Ultimately, Justinian’s programme only exhausted the treasury and postponed the consolidation of the Empire until well into the 7th century.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, it enabled the invading Slavs and Bulgars to settle in the depopulated Roman territory.

The invasion of the Slavs and the Avars and the final settlement of the Slavs in the early 7th century marked the beginning of the end of over two hundred years of permanent political and economic disturbance for the Balkan part of the Empire.¹⁰² Roman rule survived in the eastern Adriatic coastal cities, because they could be protected by the still strong Roman/Byzantine navy. However, there is no evidence on the situation in the interior. The establishment of the Bulgarian state at the end of the 7th century and its subsequent struggle for territories with the Byzantines in the course

⁹⁷ Ibid, 45

⁹⁸ Not all of these fortifications are discovered and for a number of those that are, it is difficult to establish their names and function and place them in the network with neighbouring fortifications. A number of researchers doubted the number of fortifications stated by Procopius, but that is irrelevant for this analysis.

⁹⁹ Procopius, *Buildings IV*, 229 - Greek text and English translation edited by H. B. Dewing. 7 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Harvard University Press and London, Hutchinson, 1914-40. Greek text and English translation; Curta, 2006, 43

¹⁰⁰ Curta, 2006, 46

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 45

¹⁰² See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 11-12.

of the next three centuries did not improve this picture, but, for Albanian scholars this period is important, because it witnessed the appearance of the Komani-Kruja culture around Kruja and in Dyrrachion hinterland.¹⁰³

The Komani-Kruja culture, originally dated from the late-6th/-early-7th to the late-8th/early-9th centuries, was analysed primarily through its burial patterns, with stone-lined graves and multiple skeletons, which Albanian scholars interpreted as representation of the kin ties of the autochthonous tribe named the Arbërs.¹⁰⁴ They associated these finds with the Albanian tribal loyalties of the later periods and, subsequently, as evidence of the survival of the Illyrians in the post-Roman period. For Korkuti and his followers, this was undoubtedly a proof of the self-achieved cultural development of the autochthonous population that survived the tide of the Slavic incursion. Korkuti summarised this process of transformation of the Illyrians into Arbers as:

*“The national and medieval name of **Arbër** and **Arbëri** (**Albani**) has been inherited by the Illyrian. The historical sources, especially the works of the ancient authors, write about names of place, people and populations formed with the root arb (alb). These names are encountered chiefly in the territory of South and Central Illyria; arbaios – means for Arbers in an inscription of the 3rd century BC found in Finiq; the city of Arbon is mentioned by the historian Polibius in the 2nd Century BC; the city of Albanopoli as well as the Albans one can run across in the works of Ptolemy, 2nd century BC; the population called Abroi and the city of Arbon, with its inhabitants called Arbonios and Arbonites are mentioned by Stephen the Byzantine in the 6th century AD.*

Out of these data, fragmented as they are, the remark of Ptolemy that in the rear of Dyrrah there lived an Illyrian tribe by the name of Alban, arbanite, constitutes the basis of the dissemination and use of this name with a wider implication. During the 7th-8th century AD and later, this population became ever more important. The local medieval population that had preserved its ancient name gave the name to the region, Arbanon, Arberi. Initially, it was the name of a definite territory limited in space. Later it spread even to the other inhabitants of the provinces, which shared the same characteristics with the people of arbanon, including Prevalitania, New Epirus, Old

¹⁰³ Gilkes, 2006, 6

¹⁰⁴ Džino, D. – *Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat – Identity Transformations in Post-Roman and Early Mediaeval Dalmatia*, Brill, 2010, 85; In 2005, an Albanian scholar Etleva Nallbani proposed re-dating of the Komani-Kruja culture from the late-5th to 9th centuries.

Epirus and Dardania. Arbanon was initially the name of a small territory, which kept growing until it became a general denomination. The generalisation of the name was favoured by numerous converging economic, cultural, linguistic and ethnic factors, which were the same for all the population of the provinces we mentioned and which consequently were called by the same name, Arbëri."¹⁰⁵ (sic!)

The usage of the burials of the Komani-Kruja culture as the evidence of continuum between the Illyrian and Albanian ethnicities faced a problem of its relatively limited distribution in the area of central and northern Albania.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, similar finds were discovered in the territory of modern Macedonia and Bulgaria, along the route of the famous Via Egnatia, far beyond traditional Illyrian borders.¹⁰⁷ Although the long established theory that the Via Egnatia was completely abandoned during the early Middle Ages, there is evidence that some segments between Ohrid and Edessa and along the present Bulgarian-Greek border were repaired during the 8th century, when the most important cemeteries of the Komani culture were dated. The matter was further complicated after the resemblance of the burial artefacts (dress accessories, weapons and belt fittings) with discoveries in the Late Avar cemeteries in Hungary was noticed, which prompted some researchers to point to the association of the Komani-Kruja culture with the Avar ethnicity.¹⁰⁸

The heated debate between Albanian and scholars from neighbouring countries on the Komani-Kruja culture is of primary importance for the ethnic territoriality of the mediaeval Albanians. The Croat author Džino argued that a relatively small presence of Christian artefacts reflected that, except for the some members of the elite, the population was not Christianised or had lost it by the time of the invasion of the Slavs.¹⁰⁹ If correct, this assertion disputes the Albanian argument of Romanized and Christianized Illyrians/Arbëri in its entirety.¹¹⁰

Petty principalities that existed in the Albanian territories under Byzantine, Norman or Serbian nobles throughout the Middle Ages did not leave a notion of the

¹⁰⁵ Korkuti, 2006

¹⁰⁶ Bowden, W. – *The Construction of Identities in Post-Roman Albania in Theory and Practise in Late Antique Archaeology*, ed. Lavan, L. and Bowden, W., *Late Antique Archaeology*, Vol.1, Boston, 2003, 57-62

¹⁰⁷ Bulgarian O. Minaeva, 2001 and Macedonian V. Malenko, 1985, both quoted in Curta, 2006, 104; Bowden, 2003, 62

¹⁰⁸ Curta, 2006, 106

¹⁰⁹ Džino, 2010, 86

¹¹⁰ The problem of the graves is their orientation. A significant number of them is not in the traditional Christian W-E or E-W position and Christian features were found only sporadically. See, Curta, 2006, Bowden, 2003 and Džino, 2010

ethnic Albanian noble class. However, the Albanian scholars maintain the belief in a Christianised Arbëri population continuing its existence throughout the Middle Ages until the Ottoman conquest. Even though there are no remains of architectural structures, such as churches and monasteries dating from the period that could be closely associated with the Komani-Kruja culture and corroborate this theory, the Albanian official narrative maintains their Christian autochthony. For that purpose, the majority of the museum displays in Albania proper contain the small grave artefacts from this period, all presented in a manner that supports this argument. Thus, the insistence on the Albanian ethnicity of the Komani-Kruja culture by the Albanian scholars represents the only evidence for the Continuation theory. Furthermore, the significant quantity of findings of the Komani-Kruja culture, discovered around the city of Kruja, conveniently continue the national narrative to the rise to power of the only uncontested Albanian of the Late Middle Ages: Skanderbeg.

3.6.2 The noble Albanian

The central square of the Albanian capital Tirana, the Skanderbeg Square, is dominated by the equestrian monument to Skanderbeg, erected in 1968 on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of Skanderbeg's death (Fig. 3.9). When Enver Hoxha proclaimed Albania an atheist state in 1967, almost all surviving churches and mosques were closed, demolished or converted into public buildings for the use of the socialist regime. An American catholic missionary and a great supporter of the Albanian cause, late Edwin Jacques stated that the religious persecution by May 1967 totalled: "2169 various religious establishments, of which 600 Orthodox and 327 Catholic."¹¹¹ Only a few religious monuments were left intact, albeit without religious services.

As the religious prohibition coincided with state promotion of archaeological theories of the continuous presence of Albanians in the Balkans, the historical character of George Kastrioti Skanderbeg (Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu, 1405-1468) was prominently displayed as the embodiment of national feelings. The celebration of Skanderbeg ran parallel with the newly introduced Albanian policies of severe self-isolation, which relied on a strong message: "We stayed once alone in this part of the world to face our enemies and we will stay alone to do the same again!" Additionally,

¹¹¹ Jacques, 1995, 487

Skanderbeg was a national hero who embodied both the Christian and Islamic traditions of the Albanian past. Even though religion was officially forbidden, Skanderbeg's unquestionably Albanian ethnic background directly influenced the collective subconsciousness, as he was one of the last Balkan knights who stood against the Ottoman conquest. Juxtaposing the national myth of the continuous presence of Albanians in the Balkans with the solitude of Skanderbeg's noble resistance, Hohxa attempted to impose another figure solely responsible for Albania's survival – himself. Building his own personality cult, Hohxa represented himself as a natural successor of Skanderbeg, prepared to lead his people to another noble fight for national independence.



Fig. 3.9 – Monument to Skanderbeg in Tirana, work of Odishe Paskali (1903-1985), first Albanian sculptor and the founder of the School of Painting in Tirana. The majority of monumental sculptures in other Albanian towns and cities were his work.

Skanderbeg's name is most frequently linked to the town of Kruje, established in 1190 as the centre of the principality headed by archon Progon.¹¹² Whilst modern Albanian historians are adamant that Progon was an ethnic Albanian, there is nothing to suggest whether either Progon or any of the few nobles with seemingly Albanian names linked to the period of the 4th Crusade, actually were, since they all bore Greek

¹¹² Gilkes, 2006, 18

names. They were certainly related to Byzantium, but there are no records of their family ancestry, loyalties or allegiances.¹¹³ In the course of the following three centuries, the Kruje town walls were added and expanded, only to become the site of the famous 1450 siege in which Sultan Murad II was defeated by Skanderbeg. Throughout the 15th century, the city was captured and lost to the Ottomans four times, only to be taken over completely in 1478. Little of the original structure survived intact and was additionally destroyed by the earthquake in 1617 and subsequent warfare (Fig. 3.10). However, in 1982 it was restored to the point of “disneyfication,” featuring prominently the newly inaugurated Skanderbeg Museum (Fig. 3.11). The display within the museum is “a triumph of political museology, showing in concrete form the accepted story of Albania’s mediaeval genesis.”¹¹⁴

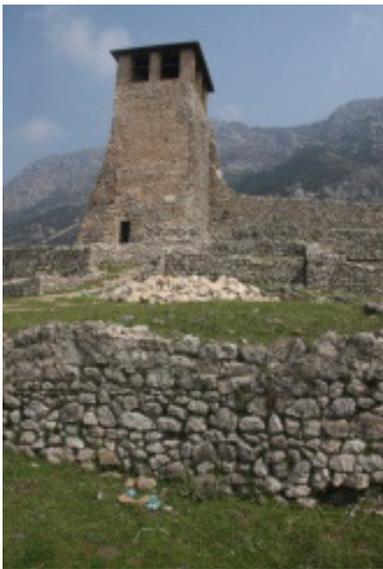


Fig. 3.10 – The remaining original watchtower at Kruje.



Fig. 3.11 – The Skanderbeg Museum at Kruje erected in the 1990s.

3.6.3 Five centuries of the “Ottoman interlude”

The Ottoman period brought a swift conversion to Islam and much of the previous Christian heritage was quickly transformed for the needs of the new religion. As the Ottoman state supported neither social nor cultural development of its Christian subjects, the only way for an individual to advance his prospects was to adopt entirely the Ottoman way of life. Thus, the entire pre-Ottoman Albania underwent significant change and amongst the pockets of the remaining Christian

¹¹³ Winniffrith, 2002, 89

¹¹⁴ Gilkes, 2006, 18

population only a few, now abandoned, ruined Byzantine churches survived. Some coastal and mainland towns took on Oriental features, but the urban architectural achievements bear no signs of authentic Albanian national style.

In the course of the five centuries, Albania was one of many Ottoman provinces, ruled by the numerous Ottoman officials. Frequently, these Ottoman bureaucrats were natives of Albania, but when nationalism did not manifest itself as it did in the 19th and 20th centuries, it is unclear how much they contributed to the creation and development of the Albanian sense of national identity. It is often claimed that the unique clan-system was the bearer of the Albanian national identity under the Ottomans. Similar to Montenegro, the tribal structure of society persisted until well into the 20th century.¹¹⁵ The tribal loyalties, reinforced by the patriarchal oral *Dukagjini Code*, up to a certain point petrified the mediaeval highland mentality and prevented any social restructuring and educational development.

It is not fully clear whether tribal loyalties enabled the development of *Bektashism*, a less strict form of Islam, or whether it was a natural evolution of the faith caused by the geo-climatic conditions of the region. Whatever the case, for the 19th and early 20th century foreign authors, educated in the classical manner, the *in situ* observations gained an aura of a romantic antiquity.

After Skanderbeg, Albanian history records several notable characters, most of whom lived between the 18th and 20th centuries and were subject to the historical circumstances in the period of Ottoman decline. The dynamic personality of Ali Pasha of Yanina (1740-1822), romanticized and immortalised by the writings of Lord Byron and Alexandre Dumas, was an important figure for both Greek and Albanian national histories of the early modern era (Fig. 3.12). However, his rise through the Ottoman ranks and service to the Porte did not contribute to the Albanian national awakening. Rather, his demise in 1822 accelerated the beginning of the Greek War of Independence.

Throughout the 19th century, there were no nationally enlightened personalities that could unify various tribes behind the attempts to exert any Albanian national or territorial claims. In reality, most were pursuing personal aims to acquire more land and power. Moreover, their Muslim faith kept them tied to the Ottomans and there

¹¹⁵ Schwandner-Sievers, S. – *Narratives of Power – Capacities of Myth in Albania* in Schwandner-Sievers, S. and Fischer, B.J. – *Albanian Identities, Myth and History*, London, 2002, 6

were no thoughts of creating a separate Albanian nation state.¹¹⁶ Additionally, difficult mountainous terrain prevented autochthonous cultural development in the critical period of national awakening. Naturally, the Muslim Albanians sided with the Ottoman policies, whilst the Christian subjects tried to re-assert their religious rights.



Fig. 3.12 – Monument to Ali Pasha in Tepelenë by Mumtaz Dhrami (b. 1936) was erected in 1972 on 150th anniversary of Ali Pasha's death.

3.7 Albanian national awakening

The turmoil surrounding the Eastern Question resulted in the foundation of the *Prizren League* in 1878, in the town of Prizren in the Ottoman Kosovo Vilayet. Most of the 300 delegates attending the meeting of the 18 June 1878 were primarily conservative Muslim landowners from the Kosovo Vilayet, whose main interest was to maintain strong Ottoman control of Kosovo against increasingly hostile Balkan neighbours. The League, admittedly, included a few intellectuals, such as Abdyl Frashëri (1839-1892), a Bektashi Muslim who, inspired by European ideas of nationalism, was interested in unifying the Albanian people within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. The *Prizren League* proceedings did not initiate calls for national awakening, did not consider any educational and social reforms needed for

¹¹⁶ Kola, P. – *The Search for Greater Albania*, London, 2003, 8

the Albanians and did not issue any national programme. Instead, it focused on a military organization, ready to fight for the Sultan and prevent the penetration of foreign troops into the province.¹¹⁷ The Porte initially supported the League because it wanted to install pan-Islamic ideology as a counterbalance to Christian and Slavic influences, coming from Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece.

The Albanian national narrative considers the *Prizren League* to be the beginning of the Albanian national movement because of the presence of Abdyl, the oldest of the Frashëri brothers (Fig. 3.13). The Frashëris, Abdyl, Naim and Sami, originating in the south of Albania, spent most of their lives in Constantinople and other larger Ottoman cities, trying to obtain support for the Albanian national cause. They saw Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek national movements as a threat and perceived that only the protection of the Ottoman Muslim state could help Albanian national assertion. However, as the Ottoman Empire weakened and the Porte withdrew its support, the League embraced ideas of national autonomy.



Fig. 3.13 – Abdyl Frashëri (1839-1892) envisaged Albanian national unity within the Ottoman Empire.

During the Congress of Berlin, Abdyl Frashëri sent a letter to the European participants pleading for the Albanian question to be resolved. His efforts were ignored. Overlooked by Europe, the Albanian intellectuals became disappointed, whilst the League itself became increasingly anti-Christian, causing considerable

¹¹⁷ Malcolm, N. – *Kosovo, A Short History*, London, 1998, 221

anxiety among Christian Albanians and especially among the Serbs.¹¹⁸ However, as the tensions grew between the Great Powers prior to the First World War, the Albanian national movement conveniently became yet another tool in the hands of the competing European empires. Russia, Austro-Hungary, Great Britain and France had enormous vested interests in the declining Ottoman Empire and played the emerging Balkan nation-states against each other well.¹¹⁹ Kosovo and Metohija became the centre of discontent after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary in 1908. Curbing the Serbian nationalism in the territories under Austro-Hungarian direct control and obtaining the full control of the foreign policy of the Serbian Principality, Vienna began a programme of dividing the Southern Slavs and preparing the slow penetration into the bordering Ottoman provinces of Sanjak and Kosovo and Metohija.

The extensive diplomatic and propagandistic activities of all Great Powers and the Balkan states emerging from the Ottoman decline contributed to the contradictory reports written in this period. Trying to maintain some balance in the region, European observers in the region, especially after the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 took the positions of their own governments and produced reports that still resonate in the current fragile state of balance in the Balkans.¹²⁰ For example, following the Treaty of London and on the eve of Albanian independence in May 1913, Wadham Peacock, Consul-General in North Albania in Scutari,¹²¹ wrote for *The Fortnightly Review*:

“Happily the Serbian attempt to ignore the Albanians and to represent Scodra, Durazzo, and the plains near them as Slav because the Serbian Czars held them at intervals from the seventh to the fourteenth centuries, has failed, chiefly, it must be admitted, owing to the assertion by Austria-Hungary of her own interests, and not to any love for historical justice on the part of Europe. Except that they have not one chieftain over all the tribes, and have had a much wider extent of territory to defend against more numerous enemies, the case of the Shkypetars is exactly parallel to that

¹¹⁸ <http://lamar.colostate.edu/~grjan/kosovohistory.html> – An official web-site of Prof. Richard Jansen, Colorado State University – *Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo: An Abbreviated History - An Opening for the The Islamic Jihad in Europe*, July 22, 2008, Author: Richard Jansen – Accessed on 14/11/2010

¹¹⁹ The concurrent and competing nation-building processes that were taking place within these countries were most dynamic in Macedonia. See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 323-332.

¹²⁰ Much of the writings about the Albanians and Albania were result of the *realpolitik* at the time. Their modern redeployment fits well within the framework of normative historiography.

¹²¹ (Alb.) Shkodër, (Serb) Skadar

of the Montenegrins. The Montenegrins held their own for five hundred years in a little block of mountains against the Turks only; the Shkypetars have held their own for considerably over a thousand years against successive waves of Slavs, Bulgars, and Turks....They are the last remnants of the oldest race in Europe, for they represent peoples who preceded the Greeks. They were deep-rooted in the soil of the Balkan peninsula ages before the first Slav crossed the Danube, and if the Serb and the Bulgar have acquired a right to the lands from which they drove the ancient tribes, at least those original inhabitants have justified their claim to the rocks and shore, from which no enemy, Slav, Bulgar, or Turk has been able to dislodge them."¹²²

A little earlier in his writing, Peacock argued that the hatred between the Albanians and the Serbs dates from the time when the Slavs settled in the Balkans and that "*this explains why the modern Albanian has always been friendlier with the Moslem Turk than with the Christian Slav. The brutalities committed by the Turks were trifles compared with the atrocities of the Slav.*"¹²³

Peacock's writings represented the typical arrogance of the superior civilised Westerner of the time, as they perceived "*all South Slavs as inferior and semi-barbarous*" and persisted in their opinion that they "*were a stumbling block for any solution of the problem of Turkey and her European provinces.*"¹²⁴ Bearing in mind the efforts of the British Government to maintain the existence of the "Sick Man of Europe" over the Balkans as long as possible, Peacock's reports corresponded well with this doctrine. Simultaneously, it benefitted diplomatically the policy of appeasement to Austro-Hungary's anger over the Serbian and Greek success in the Balkan Wars.

3.8 The Albanian state

The London Conference of 1913 and the establishment of an independent Albania on 28 November brought into existence for the first time an Albanian nation state. This outcome was convincingly argued by Austro-Hungary and Italy which both had their political reasons for supporting the Albanian cause. The adopted state-flag was designed to resemble that of Skanderbeg: a *black* double-headed eagle on a

¹²² Peacock, W. – *The 'Wild Albanian'* in *The Fortnightly Review*, May, 1913, reprint Centre for Albanian Studies, 2000, 16

¹²³ *Ibid*, 10

¹²⁴ *Miss Irby and Her Friends*, 1966, quoted in Todorova, 1997, 101

red background (Fig. 3.14). However, most of the surviving representations of the Skanderbeg's coat-of-arms dating from before 1913 depict a *white* double headed eagle, which was traditionally the imperial insignia of the Byzantine Emperors. As most of the Balkan princes on the eve of the Ottoman conquest regarded themselves as the legitimate heirs to the Byzantine throne, Skanderbeg was no exception; after all, in his own lifetime Constantinople was conquered and there were not many generals around able to undertake the defence of Christendom. Thus, his acquisition of the Byzantine eagle as his own emblem was both natural and understandable. Five centuries later, the eagle of Skanderbeg changed its colour from white into black. This was not accidental. Albania was formed under the patronage of another Empire which bore the mark of a black double-headed eagle, so the imposed heraldic solution of that state indicated her political intentions.



Fig. 3.14 – The first Albanian flag, designed and used in 1912-1914. With various modifications, it remained in use until the present.

3.8.1 The Albanian nation-building

Ismail Qemali Bey (Fig. 1.a.18) advised the provisional Albanian government to choose Elbasan as the new capital due to its central geographical position and its central position among the Albanian dialects. His proposal was refused as the provisional government was not recognised by the Great Powers and

Shkodër was chosen instead.¹²⁵ However, even Shkodër did not remain the capital for long. As was the case when Greece, Bulgaria and Romania gained independence, the designated ruler Wilhelm of Wied (1876-1945, ruled March-September 1914) was German but fled his throne within six months after a series of local revolts. Wilhelm had preferred Durrës as his capital, but after the outbreak of the First World War, most of the remaining Albanian leaders withdrew to Tirana because of its distance from the fighting and foreign armies. That is when Tirana acquired the status of capital.¹²⁶

Founded in the 17th century along the Ottoman caravan routes, Tirana was until the early 19th century a small provincial town. It bore all the traditional Ottoman characteristics which included the main mosque in the city centre, erected in 1614 by Sulejman Pasha, as well as a *hammam* and a *bazaar*. The houses were in traditional oriental style, with wooden structures and tiled roofs.¹²⁷ In the 1820s, the great-grandson of Sulejman Pasha, Haxhi Ethem Bey, finished the reconstruction of the mosque (Fig. 3.15). Still existing, Et'hem Bey mosque is one of the very few structures in use in Albania built earlier than the 20th century. However, when British illustrator Edward Lear (1812-1888) visited Tirana in 1850, he drew the centre of town (Fig. 3.16) and the comment on its sad appearance:

*“I entered the town (whose streets, broader than those of Elbassan, were only raftered and matted half way across), it was at once easy to perceive that Tyrana was as wretched and disgusting as its fellow city, save only that it excelled in religious architecture and spacious market places.”*¹²⁸

When Albania became an internationally recognized state, a tribal warfare erupted and lasted until the end of the First World War, preventing the modernization. Frequent changes of governments and constant violence did little for the development of national culture. Thus, little had changed in the appearance of Tirana between the time of Lear's visit and 1917, when an occupying Austro-Hungarian army engaged a team of surveyors to produce the first plan of the city. Nothing more on the town's urban and architectural features was done until 1923 when a need arose to modernize

¹²⁵ Bleta, I. – *Influences of Political Regime Shifts on the Urban Scene of a Capital City – Case Study: Tirana*, Thesis submitted to the School of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2010, 27

¹²⁶ Ibid, 29

¹²⁷ Ibid, 29

¹²⁸ Lear, E. – *Journals of a landscape painter in Albania, &co.*, London, 1851, 100

the city. When Ahmet Zogu (Fig. 1.a.19), a member of the powerful Muslim Mat clan, won power in 1925, a programme of modernization could begin.



Fig. 3.15 – Et'hem Bey Mosque, built in 1614, reconstructed 1789-1823, one of the few pre-20th century structures in Tirana.



Fig. 3.16 – Edward Lear's drawing of Tirana city centre and Et'ham Bey's Mosque in 1850.

Despite some modest developments since 1920, “*the new capital was actually little more than an enlarged Moslem village... ..and consisted primarily of a bazaar used for hanging offenders of the peace, four mosques, several barracks and a number of legations. Tirana gave the appearance of a gold rush town in the late 19th century American West, with its saloons, gambling casinos and ever present guns and gun-belts. A rickety Ford progressing slowly along the muddy unpaved unlit streets was the only sign of the twentieth century. The buildings of the town were rather unostentatious. Most of them consisted of old shanties interspersed with an occasional small villa, belonging to some Moslem worthy, many of which were in such a state of disrepair as to give the visitor the impression that the whole town had been recently under shell-fire. Two such unassuming buildings, dating back to Turkish times, became the presidential office building and Zogu's residence.*”¹²⁹

Because Albania suffered endemic illiteracy and lacked trained architects and artists, King Zogu invited a number of Italian architects to work on the transformation of Tirana into a proper European capital. The choice of Italian professionals was not accidental. According to the Treaty of London of 1915, Italy was granted rights to conduct the foreign affairs of Albania.¹³⁰ The Italians quickly took over the entire economy and internal affairs and effectively turned Albania into a colony.

The main projects that Zogu's government undertook under Italian patronage were related to the construction of infrastructure and improvements of the road network, primarily in urban areas. Italian plans for urban centres included changing the oriental features of towns. Florestano de Fausto (1890-1965) and Armando Brasini (1879-1965), prominent architects of the Mussolini era (Fig. 3.17 and Fig. 3.18), were charged with the task of creating a new Tirana, envisaging monumental governmental buildings in the Italian colonial style and with Neo-Classical influences.¹³¹ Several plans were developed, but only Brasini's idea of the *Skënderbej Square* was partly executed (Fig. 3.19). The planned equestrian monument of Skanderbeg was not erected until 1968, but by then, the first generation of Albanian architects was ready to undertake the nation-building programme.

¹²⁹ Fischer, B.J. – *King Zog and the struggle for stability in Albania*, Boulder, 1984, 81

¹³⁰ Bleta, 2010, 37

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 39



Fig. 3.17 – Florestano di Fausto (1890-1965)



Fig. 3.18 – Armando Brasini (1879-1965)



Fig. 3.19 – The archival aerial view of the first nucleus of Tirana with the mosque of Sulejman Pashë Bargjini at lower left. The Skanderbeg Square in the lower centre, after Bleta, 2010, 30.

3.8.2 Zogu's dictatorship (1928-1939)

Supported by the Italians, Zogu proclaimed himself king in 1928. To strengthen the economy and legitimise his prestige among the rival clan leaders, he sought support from Italy to begin the urbanization of major towns and building royal palaces and residences around the country. Mussolini's bureaucracy that ran Albania was already engaged in a project for creating a "New Roman Empire" and the significant sums that Fascists spent on erecting royal palaces for Zogu, aimed to secure his loyalty.¹³² Despite publicly proclaiming that priorities were to build the infrastructure, much needed by the growing population of Tirana, Zogu pursued building large governmental buildings and even planned to erect a royal palace on the outskirts of Tirana.¹³³

In 1929, Zogu inaugurated works on the first boulevard in Tirana, conveniently named *Zogu I*. At the same time, the works on the construction of the first royal palace began. The palace, designed by the Italian architects, was not completed until the end of the Second World War and Zogu never lived in it. During Zogu's reign, the most important public buildings in Tirana were built by Italian architects: the National Bank Headquarters (Fig. 3.20) in the manner of provincial *Modernism*, and the *Circolo Italo-Albanese Scanderbeg* (Fig. 3.21), a centre for culture. Inaugurated in 1938, the National Bank building, located on the western side of *Skenderbej Square*, was designed by Vittorio Ballio Morpurgo (1890-1966). Morpurgo, an exponent of the Roman school of architecture, was infamous for designing the initial protective building around the Augustus' mausoleum of *Ara Pacis* (now demolished) and *Palazzo della Farnesina* in Rome on Mussolini's orders. In Albania he designed the ranches of the National Bank in other cities, like Durrës, Korçe and Vlore.¹³⁴

Clearly, none of the institutional buildings in Albania erected in the interwar period were constructed to celebrate the Albanian nation. On the contrary, Italian economic and then military occupation supported Mussolini's colonial policies, marked by the words which described Albania as *quinta sponda* (*fifth shore*).¹³⁵

¹³² Bleta, 2010, 39

¹³³ Giusti, M.A. - *Albania - architettura e città: 1925 - 1943*, Firenze, 2006, 167 quoted in Bleta, 2010, 47

¹³⁴ Ibid, 51

¹³⁵ Bleta, 2010, 54



Fig. 3.20 – The National Bank in Tirana, designed by Vittorio Morpurgo in 1938, after Bleta, 2010, 52

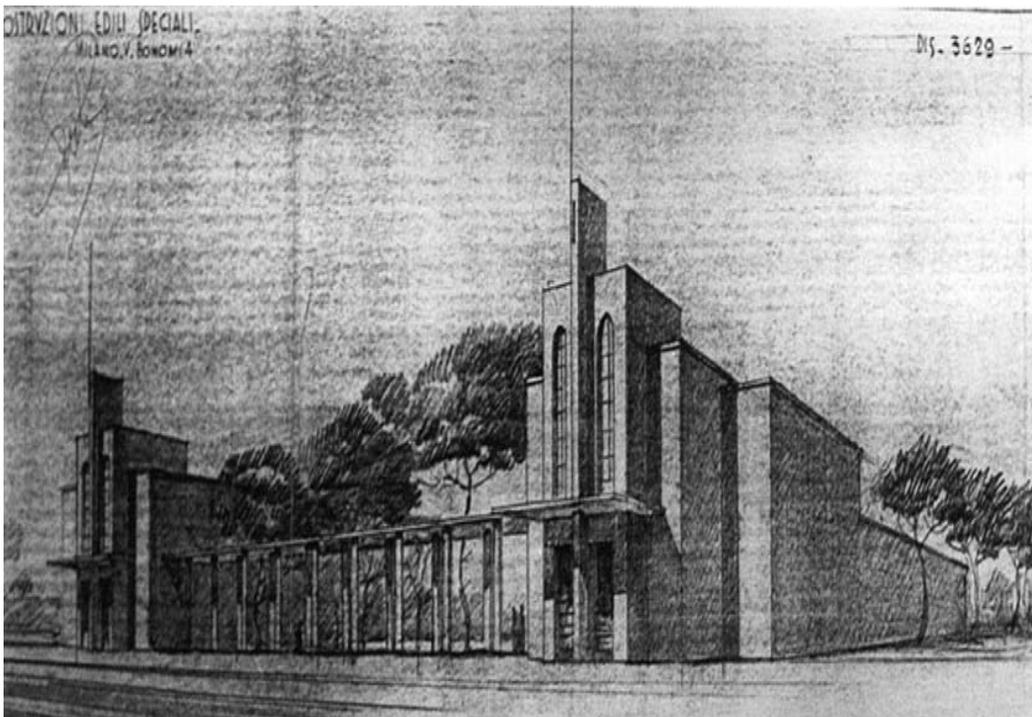


Fig. 3.21 – Perspective drawing of the building of *Circolo Italo-Albanese Scanderbeg*, the first building where prefabricated construction techniques were applied in a rationalist design by Pater – *Costruzioni edili speciali*, 1938, after Bleta, 2010, 52.

3.8.3 Hoxha – the nation-builder

The period of Italian occupation 1939-1943 envisaged giving Albania Italian colonial features in accordance with Mussolini's policies of creating the "New Rome," but little was done during the Second World War. However, after 1945 the Communist regime embarked on an enormous task of building both the country and the nation simultaneously. As economic and financial circumstances did not allow any grand scale public projects, the focus of nation building was on the Marxist refinement of the early continuation theories and their practical implementation. The Soviet style industrialization of the country centred on the creation of industry and expansion of social housing which symbolized nation-building suitable for the working class. However, the educational programmes that sought to achieve national homogenization required the story of a "founding father." The natural choice for a founding father was, of course, Skanderbeg.

The use of Skanderbeg's extraordinary character was logical and reasonable, following the changing fortunes of the Albanian people in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century. His choice as a prime national hero was the best example of the politicization of a national myth: Skanderbeg was brought up a Muslim, but in order to regain his father's possessions, he converted to the Catholic faith.¹³⁶ The conversion of Skanderbeg's religious beliefs was interpreted as a strong unifying factor for the Albanians wherever they live. The proclamation of Albania as "the first atheist state in the world" coincided with the 500th anniversary of Skanderbeg's death. On this occasion, an equestrian figure of Skanderbeg was unveiled in Skanderbeg Square in Tirana. It was the work of the first Albanian sculptor educated in Italy, Odhise Paskali (1903-1985) and marked the beginning of erecting such monuments to the important personalities from the Albanian history.

Since all religions were condemned from 1945 and officially banned in 1967, the interpretation of the dual character of Skanderbeg was to reiterate the unique position of the Albanians surrounded by hostile Greeks and South Slavs. In the same year when "Albanianism" was proclaimed "the only true religion of the Albanians," Hoxha began the programme of construction of military bunkers all over the country

¹³⁶ Skanderbeg's conversion is now interpreted as the "return to his father's faith" and a "natural inclination of the Albanians towards Catholicism." However, as the last Byzantine emperors from the House of Paleologue also converted to Catholicism hoping to receive military support from the West, Skanderbeg's conversion should be viewed in the same light: as the pragmatic move in an attempt to secure support from the Pope and Catholic states.

in order to protect Albania from possible invasion not only from neighbouring Greece and Yugoslavia, but also NATO and Warsaw Pact countries. Some 700,000, popularly called “pillboxes” were built in the next twenty five years, costing the country money which could have been spent in more productive way (Fig. 3.22).



Fig. 3.22 – Concrete bunkers of the Hoxha era (1967-1987). Popularly called “pillboxes,” their estimated number of nearly 750,000 – each one for four people – now represent a tourist attraction.

The isolation and badly managed economy hindered the development of national style in architecture. When the first generation of Albanians educated to university level was finally ready to begin work on nation-building in the 1970s, their achievements contained no references to the earlier historical epochs, in accordance with Hoxha’s interpretation of Communism. Thus, when the building of the National Historical Museum of Albania (*Muzeu Historik Kombëtar*), designed by the leading architect of the Hoxha era, Enver Faja (1934-2011), was finally inaugurated in 1981, its design followed the prescribed aesthetics of social realism (Fig. 3.23). The gigantic mosaic above the main entrance (Fig. 3.24) clearly refers to the guiding ideology of the national partisan struggle in the Second World War which enabled the prosperity of the communist Albania.

Hoxha died in 1985. Soon after, the situation in Europe and in the Balkans began to change rapidly. Albania, still under heavy oppression by Hoxha’s successors did not begin to relax its regime until 1991. By then, the war in Yugoslavia had

already commenced putting into focus Albanian interests in the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia, primarily inhabiting the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija and western Macedonia. As the international political situation changed, the time for the assertion of Albanian national claims had come.



Fig. 3.23 – National Museum, built in Tirana in 1976-1981, after the design of Enver Faja (1934-2011), leading Albanian architect of the Hohxa period.



Fig. 3.24 – The mosaic above entrance depicts Albanian national costumes in the *Soc-Realist* manner.

3.9 The (inter)national assertion of the Albanian national narrative

The first multi-party elections in Albania were held 1992, resulting in the change of the regime and violent disturbances that lasted until 1997. After the anarchy ended, all efforts of Albanian politicians and scholars alike have been focused on securing the Western political and military support. The international response was positive and followed by the increased interest in the Albanian Studies. Aware that basing arguments on highly polemical evidence, often openly disputed, particularly by neighbouring Serbian and Greek scholars, Albanian scientific research objectives were directed to a full re-assertion of the Albanian nation in the European family of nations. This effort received political support from the West, which sought to protect its own interests in the region.

The greatest number of published works on Albanian history and archaeology concerning the Albanian autochthonous presence in the Balkans was published exactly in the years after 1992 and involved a number of authors writing on the subject in both Albanian and other major languages. Unfortunately, historiography concerning the Balkans at the end of the 20th century did not advance much beyond political propaganda. As was the case at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, when western scholars praised Balkan Christian struggles against the Ottoman Empire, modern western academia is fully employed in promoting the pan-Albanian struggle against the “hostile” Slav regimes in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. As Greece traditionally represented European values on the peninsula, the Greek argument always commanded strong support from the West. However, with the apparent change within the EU in recent years, it appears that the Greek argument is slowly losing its influence. This is most evident in the academic analysis of the problem of the expelled Albanian Chams from Greece after the Second World War.¹³⁷ So far, it has been completely neglected in academic literature. With the increased European involvement in the Balkans, there is a slow shift towards this issue.

This contemporary change of attitude in the Western academic circles had as a direct consequence not only a full acceptance of the Albanian national narrative developed in the 20th century, but also its refinements, including a full reinterpretation

¹³⁷ The Chams are Muslim Albanians from northern Epirus, a region they call Chameria. The animosity between them and the Orthodox Greeks during the disturbances of the 19th and early 20th centuries resulted in Chams supporting the Italians and Germans during the Second World War. After the war the entire Muslim Cham population was expelled to Albania. Since 1990, the Chams and their descendents have been campaigning for the return to Greece.

of the political and historical events of the 19th and 20th centuries when Albanian nationalism began. The support that the Albanian Muslim population in Kosovo and Metohija received in the 1990s against the Serbian Christians is to be viewed in the light of the wars that are currently fought far away from the Balkans. Following the outcomes of the “War on Terror” and growing anti-Islamic feelings in Europe and the US, the Western governments sought to present their overwhelming support for the Balkan Muslims as moral defence of democratic values irrespective of religious adherence.¹³⁸ The political rhetoric resulted in the creation of several new theories explaining the special character of the Balkan Muslims. Both the Albanians and the Bosnian Muslims have been presented as holding deeply rooted Christian values below their Islamic features.

3.9.1 Balkan Muslims – true bearers of original Christian values

During the wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the American and European involvement was followed by a strong propaganda which had since become an official narrative in the senior academic institutions of these countries. Preceding the unilaterally proclaimed independence of the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija in 2008, the objective of the Anglo-Saxon and German academic efforts began with the works of journalists turned historians. Preparing the involvement in the Yugoslav cauldron, Noel Malcolm (b.1956), a British historian working for *The Spectator* and the *Daily Telegraph* at a time, was charged with the task of revising the history of the region. In 1994 he published a book *Bosnia, A Short History* which set the course for the future revisionism of Balkan history. In 1998, a year before the open war between NATO and the remainder of Yugoslavia escalated, Malcolm (Fig. 5.23) published a second book *Kosovo, A Short History*, in which he formulated the basic postulate according to which the “pagan mediaeval Serbs” only occupied Kosovo in the late 12th century.¹³⁹ Using the research methods that neglected the majority of the primary sources and the scholarship from the period of Austro-Hungarian expansion through the Balkans in the later 19th century, Malcolm created the narrative since followed by the Albanian scholars in both Albania and Kosovo and Metohija. Because the majority of the bureaucrats responsible for the implementation

¹³⁸ Todorova, 1997, 185

¹³⁹ Malcolm, N. – *Kosovo, A Short History*, London, 1998, 26; Malcolm’s damaging influence on the scholarship of former Yugoslavia is further discussed in *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 436-439.

of the Western policies within the post-war Balkan institutions are obliged to adhere to the revisionism of the 1990s, those sent to work in the post-conflict areas of former Yugoslavia actively propagate the refinements of these newly invented narratives.

The most telling argument about the deeply rooted Christian values amongst the Albanians, was forced by the academics close to the political leadership of those Western countries backing the Albanian cause. Unsurprisingly, the notion of Christian values among predominantly Muslim Albanians came not from scholars of Albanian background, but from the West. The term “Crypto-Catholicism,” invented by an American scholar Anna Di Lellio (Fig. 3.25) plainly argued that the Albanians are actually “*Crypto-Catholics, who only feign to be Muslim.*”¹⁴⁰ As such, it resonated well with contemporary western supporters of the Albanian national claims. The term “Crypto-Catholic” itself served to obfuscate the lack of logic behind Western support for the growing Islamic fundamentalism among the Balkan Muslims. Consequently, Skanderbeg’s historical conversion from Islam to Catholicism was conveniently used as an example of Crypto-Catholic national feelings among the Albanians since the Ottoman conquest. In defending the decision for the proclamation of Kosovo’s independence, Anna Di Lellio in 2008 wrote:

*“In the 1990s, when Kosovo started to aspire to independence, there was an open discussion on converting en masse to Catholicism, the faith of ancestors, in order to correct the error of mass conversion to Islam. The plan for a mass conversion to Catholicism was shelved till the spring of 2008, when the public adhesions to the Church by an extended family revived the debate about the Christian origin and identity of the Albanian nation.”*¹⁴¹

No such arguments ever came from the Albanian scholars, particularly not from inside Albania, whose Catholic population is situated mainly in the North, around the town of Shkodër and in coastal areas. The Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija, predominantly Muslim, had to have this claim re-interpreted in the light of the existing material heritage. As the debate on Dardanian-Illyrian original inhabitants of Kosovo and Metohija was far too controversial and difficult for explanation to the general public because of lack of material evidence, the territorial extension of the Albanian ethnic core in the lands which bear no Albanian heritage had to be justified through the creation of a new myth: that of the Serbian “illegal occupation of

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 8

¹⁴¹ Di Lellio, 2009, 34

Kosovo” in the past century. Serbian Christian monuments dating from the Middle Ages in Kosovo and Metohija were simply declared to be of Albanian Catholic origins, overtaken by the Serbs during the Middle Ages. The discrepancy related to their peculiar characteristics of Serbian mediaeval Orthodoxy were simply renamed as “*Paleologian Penaisance*” (Fig. 3.26 and Fig. 3.27).¹⁴²



Fig. 3.25 – Anna Di Lellio, a US Sociologist, formulated in 2009 a new Kosovo Battle myth which negates the participation of the Serbs in the battle and negates most of the historical and folklore sources.



Fig. 3.26 – Monastery of Dečani, built 1327-1335 by Vito of Kotor for King Stefan III Nemanjić, as his mausoleum. It is one of the last examples of the *Raška School of Architecture*, which contains visible *Romanesque* influences.

¹⁴² See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 49-51 for more detailed analysis of Serbian mediaeval architecture.



Fig. 3.27 – The Charter of the Monastery of Dečani, issued by King Stefan Uroš III in 1330, now in the National Library of Serbia in Belgrade.

Malcolm's theory of the Serbian occupation of Kosovo and Metohija served the purpose of justifying the Western interventionism in the 1990s. Merged with Di Lellio's invention of the Albanian Kosovo Battle myth,¹⁴³ it was designed to solve both the problem of the Albanian territorial expansionism and the perceived threat of Islam in Europe. The Albanian scholars wholeheartedly accepted this help for their own national purposes, particularly as there is no surviving material heritage that would corroborate any of the claims, emanating from the prestigious international academic institutions.¹⁴⁴ After Malcolm's initial assertion in 1998, the Albanian scholars argued that the existing Serbian Christian heritage in Kosovo and Metohija was actually acquired by the Serbs only in the 12th century.¹⁴⁵

As the surviving founding charters of the churches and monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija are either in the Belgrade archives or inscribed in stone in the buildings themselves, this remark is usually countered by the assertion that back in the 12th-14th centuries Serbian rulers of Kosovo and Metohija simply produced the forged

¹⁴³ See Chapter I – *The Serbs*, p. 119-121

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 118-120

¹⁴⁵ Malcolm, 1998, 45-46 – Malcolm's application of *normative historiography* reads as: "It was only later....in the fourteenth century that Kosovo gained any real importance for the Nemanjid (sic!) church-building programme."

documents.¹⁴⁶ As this claim is again impossible to prove, the evidence is sought in the surviving characteristic architectural features of the monuments.

3.9.2 The Crypto-Catholic theory – The Western justification for the creation of a second Albanian state

Amidst growing disquiet over the question of Islam and its place in Europe, the Western supporters of the Albanian national cause are currently establishing a second myth: that Christian values amongst Albanians had never been lost, despite five centuries of Ottoman rule. The presentation of the Crypto-Catholic theory, first asserted by Di Lellio, derives again from the Western authors:

*“The identification of the Albanians with the Christian world...is not surprising, although the majority of Albanians are identified as Muslims, particularly in Kosovo. At different times in the modern history of the Albanians, anxiety about historical discontinuity and perceived backwardness has been expressed through a Manichean vision of the Islamic East (bad) and Christian West (good)...”*¹⁴⁷ and *“Albanians are one of the oldest European Christian nations and they can bracket 500 years of their Ottoman past as a temporary interlude.”*¹⁴⁸

The “temporary interlude” is relatively frequent in the Albanian historical timeline. Just as the Continuation theory sought to bridge several centuries between the Illyrian kingdoms and the Albanian mediaeval lordships using the scientific descriptors of linguistics, ethnology, anthropology and those few written documents that refer to the Albanian lands since their entry into written history in the mid-11th century, the Crypto-Catholic theory attempts to connect the newly devised narrative about Albanian Christian identity to the territory of Kosovo and Metohija.¹⁴⁹ Because there are neither surviving material evidence that the Albanians inhabited Kosovo and Metohija in great numbers prior to the 18th century nor the Ottoman *defters* confirming this, and especially, as there are no recorded folk traditions in the forms of epic, legends and fairytales, the Albanian scholars and their Western supporters are forcibly converting the Serbian myths and legends linked to the territory. Generally,

¹⁴⁶ The notion of “forged mediaeval documents” against the non-existing documents and 21st century claims represent juxtaposition of events distant 600-800 years. As such, it cannot be taken as serious scholarship. See works of Nasim Feri.

¹⁴⁷ Di Lellio, 2009, 32

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 8

¹⁴⁹ See above, p. 267-274

their new narrative is firmly based on the principles laid down by the Austro-Hungarian writings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which continued to serve as sufficient reference to the historical accuracy.

As mentioned earlier, the Centre for Albanian Studies in London is currently undertaking a costly enterprise in re-printing comments of travellers and visitors to the Balkans of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The original comments of these 19th century travellers, usually taken out of context, is frequently followed by the flyleaf assertions of the “megalomaniac neighbours” and their “appetite for Albanian lands.”¹⁵⁰ The 19th century European calls of the travellers and diplomats¹⁵¹ to “help and liberate” the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire, were redeployed as today’s “cry for human rights” by the international community and as such supported by a number of books, written and published by politically engaged intellectuals and journalists.¹⁵² Majority of these modern authors used as their sources the Austro-Hungarian and German official documents produced for the European political climate on the eve of the First World War which sought to justify intervention against Serbia, by pointing to Serbian atrocities against the Albanian and Turkish Muslim population in the Balkan Wars.¹⁵³

Unfortunately, the sheer number of authors who wrote and still write explanatory articles of the situation in the Balkans create additional confusion for the public of their own linguistic backgrounds and instead of helping better

¹⁵⁰ Toptani, I. – the Preface for the re-print of Peacock, W. – *The Wild Albanian, May 1913*, 2000, 2. For the most time the language used is bordering the speech of haterid.

¹⁵¹ The writings of Sir Arthur Evans were used in the Prime Minister Gladstone’s political speeches to justify British involvement in the Eastern Question. Similar activities were undertaken by the reporters from other Great Powers. For example, Lav Trotsky was reporting for the Russian newspapers during the Balkan wars of 1912-1913.

¹⁵² Current activities of the Albanian lobby in major Western countries demonstrate an astonishing ability for national organization. Betjullah Destani, the founder of the London-based Centre for Albanian Studies, reaffirms this on the front page of every re-print of 19th and early 20th century works of foreign authors: “*This publication has been made possible by an anonymous Albanian sponsor who is determined to do his best to present the just Albanian cause and hopes that all Albanians with spare cash will do the same.*” Re-print of Peacock, Destani, 2000, Preface, iii

¹⁵³ At the beginning of the Yugoslav crisis in the early 1990s, revisionist authors introduced the notion of Serbian occupation of Kosovo and Macedonia in 1912, followed by a systematic killing of the Albanian population. For this argument the most frequently used source was the *Carnegie Report* of 1913, ordered and produced on behalf of the Austro-Hungarian government. At the same time, no mention was made about the crimes against Serbian population between 1878 and 1912 or, if it was mentioned, it was almost always significantly downplayed and excused. For example, Malcolm, 1998, 228-238 or Mazower, 2000, 118. In the process, they dismissed Serbian documents from the pro-Austrian Obrenović period arguing the opposite. For example, *Documents diplomatiques. Correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo) 1898–1899, Belgrade: Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 1899.*

understanding, directly contribute to some future conflicts that may arise as a result of the unbalanced political approach. An unhidden example of particularism, expressed by the historian James Pettifer (b.1949), openly endorsed the creation of a larger Albanian state, the one that would include Albania, Kosovo and Metohija and western parts of Macedonia:

*“Since the onset of the ground war in Kosovo in 1998, the national question has become increasingly important in pan-Albanian politics. It continues to remain central to the future stability of the southern Balkans...The roots of the new national question lie in this period. The Kosovo war posed the issue for the international community in a concrete form, something that was repeated in 2001 with the conflict in Macedonia. This opened the historic ‘Macedonian Question’ in a new context, with the Albanian minority actively participating in addition to traditional Greek – Bulgarian dichotomy. Some regional spectators, principally Serbia and its allies, have claimed that these developments indicate the emergence of a so-called ‘Greater Albania’ as a threat to peace in the region. It is our argument that this is not the case...”*¹⁵⁴

Arguing the case for the unification Albanian ethnic territories, Pettifer insisted that *“Serbian destruction”* of the *“ancient monuments, mosques and houses in order to commit the culturcide of the Albanian ethnicity”* had to be *“rightfully punished by the International Community”*. He continued that *“churches and mosques have continued to be rebuilt and have growing observant congregations, but to date religion has been a moderate and sensible aspect...”*¹⁵⁵

For those not familiar with the situation, it might be a well placed argument in the aftermath of the media’s coverage of the Kosovo conflict. However, this argument is false. As a result of the conflict, Kosovo and Metohija were entirely ethnically cleansed of its Serbian Christian population. Furthermore, a number of churches and monasteries that remained as a reminder that this was once a predominantly Christian territory, are of the confirmed Serbian ecclesiastical architecture of the High Middle Ages.¹⁵⁶ Following the end of the NATO aggression in June 1999, when Kosovo and

¹⁵⁴ Pettifer, J. and Vickers, M. – *The Albanian Question – reshaping the Balkans*, London, 2009, Preface

¹⁵⁵ Ibid

¹⁵⁶ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/rs> - World Heritage List acknowledges four Mediaeval monuments in Kosovo and Metohija as belonging to Serbia – Accessed 08/05/2015

Metohija were put under the Protectorate of the UNMIK,¹⁵⁷ the Serbian Heritage came under questionable foreign military protection, as there was a reasonable fear that Serbian Christian Orthodox landmarks would be further targeted by the Albanian Muslim extremists (Fig. 1.64).¹⁵⁸ Most of the Christian heritage became inaccessible to the local population, let alone scholars, conservationists and tourists, and following the exodus of the majority of the remaining Serbs, most of them fell into disuse or are attended by small numbers of the Serbian Orthodox priesthood. Visits to those sites are possible only with a military escort.

3.10 Finalization of Albanian nation-building

As re-shaping of the Balkans took place once again as a result of the re-arrangement of international policies, a need arose for a new historical explanation resulting from the changing borders. Unlike scholars from the state of Albania, the Albanians from Yugoslavia held Yugoslav passports and could travel freely until 1992. They enjoyed the full advantage of educational exchange and could maintain learning programmes in the Albanian language until the wars of Yugoslav succession began in 1991. High level of autonomy that Kosovo and Metohija had within Yugoslavia created conditions advantageous demanding an independence. The development of Albanian national narrative under Hohxa attracted Yugoslav Albanian scholars whose territorial claims were met by a fierce opposition of the Serbian and Greek academic circles. As Yugoslav disintegration in the 1990s was followed by the exclusion of Serbian academics from the majority of international institutions,¹⁵⁹ lobbying for the re-writing of national history by Albanian scholars and their western supporters is reaching its mature phase and is very much a contemporary process.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ UNMIK – The abbreviation for United Nations Mission in Kosovo, consisting predominantly from the EU and US military and administrative corps.

¹⁵⁸ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 115-119

¹⁵⁹ In personal correspondence with me a number of Serbian historians from various Serbian institutions maintained that, if not excluded entirely, the presentation of their work was significantly restricted. Of them, the most prominent were Dušan T.Bataković, Director of *Institute for Balkan Studies* in Belgrade and a member of SANU and Mile Bjelajac, *Director of Institute for Modern Serbian History* in Belgrade.

¹⁶⁰ For example, Marcus Tanner, one of the wide publicised journalists-turned-historians of the Balkans, following the success of his 1997 book *Croatia – A Nation Forged in War*, published in 2014 a biography of Edith Durham, *Albania's Mountain Queen: Edith Durham and the Balkans*, in which he regarded Balkan choices and academic methods of R. Seton-Watson as morally and academically wrong. See, Tanner, M. – *Albania's Mountain Queen: Edith Durham and the Balkans*, London, 204-240.

On 17 March 2004, in a massive uprising, the Albanian Muslim extremists targeted and completely destroyed 35 mediaeval churches and monasteries. During the summer of the same year, UNESCO included four of the Kosovo monuments in its list of World Heritage Sites, under the criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv).¹⁶¹ The Dečani Monastery (Fig. 3.26), built in the mid-14th century for the Serbian king Stefan Dečanski as his mausoleum, the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery (Fig. 3.28), a group of four domed churches featuring a series of wall paintings, the 13th-century frescoes of the Church of Holy Apostles painted in a unique, monumental style and early 14th-century frescoes in the church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviška are all listed under the summary name of “Mediaeval Monuments in Kosovo”, in the Serbian section.¹⁶² In July 2006 all four of the monuments were transferred into the List in Danger following concerns for their survival due to the frequent targeting by the Albanian Muslim extremists.



Fig. 3.28 – The Patriarchate of Peć, Monastery church, erected in 1346 in the *Raška Style* of architecture.

Unlike the rest of the World Heritage Sites in Serbia, these monuments were not described as Serbian architectural heritage. There are no indications of their origins, except that they belong to the Byzantine-Romanesque tradition, as described by the

¹⁶¹ See *Introduction*, p. 9

¹⁶² www.unesco.org/en/list - Accessed on 14/06/2010

newly coined vague architectural term of *Paleologian Renaissance* style. The term *Paleologian Renaissance* so far usually referred to the general cultural conditions in the period of restoration of the Byzantine Empire under the Paleologue dynasty (1261-1453) and never as a classification descriptor of the Byzantine architecture.¹⁶³ The term itself does not appear in the official documents of the Greek Ministry of Culture, a country which has the most right to claim authentic Byzantine cultural ancestry.¹⁶⁴ Since Serbia was excluded from participation in UNESCO in the period 1992-2003 (it was re-admitted into a full membership in 2006), there were no legal opportunities to defend Serbian cultural heritage through international professional and experts' institutions. Thus, the terminology used to describe these monuments in an ethnically and religiously contested territory is deliberately vague and ambiguous, and as such part of the process of building a new Albanian national narrative and subsequently new Albanian borders. The last assertion can be confirmed by the comparison with the terminology used for the UNESCO World Heritage Sites within Serbia proper: dating from the same period and of the same architectural style, similar mediaeval monuments there are simply described as "Serbian" mediaeval ecclesiastical architecture.¹⁶⁵

Thus, the notion of Albanian Crypto-Catholic national feelings are evidently contradicted by the Serbian Orthodox features of the monuments.¹⁶⁶ In order to overcome these discrepancies in the material evidence, the Albanian government of Kosovo and Metohija supported a major construction project in the capital, Priština, in the town district renamed Dardania.¹⁶⁷ The project comprises the erection of the tallest Catholic cathedral in the Balkans, dedicated to Mother Teresa (Fig. 3.29), a Skopje-born Albanian. The cathedral that was consecrated in September 2010 features the Neo-Romanesque architecture, particularly on the exterior, glaringly similar to the facades of the nearby Serbian mediaeval ecclesiastical monuments (Fig. 1.65). Such a large and expensive project undertaken by the Kosovo government represents a

¹⁶³ The problem with the term *Paleologian Renaissance* further complicates when the new Macedonian narrative adopts the same term for its *Vardar School* heritage, stylistically very different from the dominant *Raška School* in Kosovo and Metohija.

¹⁶⁴ <http://odysseus.culture.gr/> – The official web-site of the Greek Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs – No search produced the term *Paleologian Renaissance* – Accessed on 14/06/2010

¹⁶⁵ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/96> – The term *Raška School* is rightfully used on the UNESCO World Heritage List – Accessed on 10/05/2015

¹⁶⁶ Di Lellio, 2009, 33

¹⁶⁷ The name Dardania was devised after the Garašanin-Korkuti polemics about the ethnic affiliations of the ancient Dardani tribe. See discussion above. It came into use in the early 2000s.

political statement aiming to prove Kosovo's multiculturalism to the world. However, the fact that less than 4% of the population of Kosovo and Metohija is Catholic, the building itself has only a function of giving Kosovo a European face.¹⁶⁸



Fig. 3.29 – Mother Teresa (1910-1997), a Skopje born Albanian Catholic missionary in India and the Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1979. Except for the new cathedral in Priština, the central airport in Tirana is named after her.

Newly written school syllabuses of history of the semi-independent Kosovo state read that the majority of the Christian monuments in Kosovo and Metohija were originally built by the Albanians when they were still Christian and only later occupied by the invading Serbs.¹⁶⁹ This assertion stems directly from the modern writings of Noel Malcolm, who was the first to state that the Serbs converted to Christianity as late as 12th century, “*when they occupied Kosovo.*”¹⁷⁰ His writings influenced subsequent works of Albanian authors from Kosovo, but the problem arising for the support of this premise is that all of these works were published from the late 1990s until the present and did not produce convincing connection to the existing material heritage.

Similarly, as there were no conservation and archaeological activities in either Kosovo or in western Macedonia in the past two decades, most of the research in the regions inhabited by the ethnic Albanians was executed in the period of stability of the Yugoslav state. Thus, all the archives on the excavations and preservation of

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http://www.b92.net/putovanja/destinacije/evropa.php?yyyy=2011&mm=02&dd=03&nav_category=823&nav_id=490377 – Accessed on 02/02/2011

¹⁶⁹ According to her own statement, Anna Di Lellio initiated this version of the new Albanian narrative to be introduced in the school syllabuses. See Di Lellio, 2009, Introduction.

¹⁷⁰ Malcolm, 1998, 71, Di Lellio, 2009, 32

known heritage sites are in the museums and heritage institutions in Belgrade and Skopje, often authorised and signed by the archaeologists from the non-Albanian ethnic backgrounds. As the number of the professionals in these fields from the Albanian ethnic background was insignificant prior to the 1970s, there is greater attention now in training the new generations of students, particularly at foreign universities, who will be able to continue the construction of the national myth. Muzafer Korkuti, “*the father of the Albanian archaeology and heritage studies*” after receiving a corresponding membership of the Archaeological Institute of America in January 2010, proudly announced that: “45% of Albania's archaeologists are young, having completed their postgraduate degrees (mostly abroad) over the past 5 years or so...”¹⁷¹

Only a year after the proclamation of independence of Kosovo and Metohija, the Albanian government in Priština dedicated a 6m tall bronze monument to the former American President Bill Clinton (1946, president 1993-2001) as a sign of gratitude for his support during the war of secession from Serbia in 1999. The work of a Tirana sculptor Izeir Mustafa, representing the former President holding a signed document which enabled the American troops to enter Kosovo and Metohija, was unveiled on 1 November 2012 (Fig. 3.30).¹⁷² Together with the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (1953), Bill Clinton is now considered as one of the “saviours” of the Albanians.



Fig. 3.30 – Monument of gratitude to the former American president Bill Clinton in Priština, unveiled on 1 November 2009.

¹⁷¹ An Interview given to Richard Hodges, Director of the Institute of World Archaeology in the University of East Anglia and Scientific Director of Tile Butrint Foundation. Available on <http://mkorkuti.tripod.com/id8.html> - Dr Korkuti's personal web-page

¹⁷² Bill Clinton was present during the ceremony on 1 November 2009 and actually unveiled the monument to himself personally. The monument is placed on the Bill Clinton Square in part of Priština named Dardania.

In May 2012, the celebration of the centenary of the creation of an independent Albania began. Various appropriate programmes that continued nationwide throughout 2013 also included the erection of a monument in central Tirana dedicated to the centenary of Albanian independence (Fig. 3.31). The contemporary two-part open structure in the form of a broken *cuboid*, designed by two young German architects of Albanian origin, Visar Obrija and Kai Roman Kiklas, “combines symbolic cultural characteristics of the traditional architecture of an Albanian living and defense tower (*kulla*) with historical elements, such as the Albanian double-headed eagle and an engraving of the Declaration of Independence.”¹⁷³



Fig. 3.31 – The monument of *100 Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the Albanian State*, unveiled in Tirana on 28 November 2012.

Albania joined NATO in 2009 together with Croatia. By entering the Western sphere of influence which aims to incorporate the whole of the Balkans in the EU in the foreseeable future, it is to be expected that the Albanian, as well as Croatian, national narratives will receive further revision from the Western political and academic circles. Such an outcome would fit well within the Western framework of achieving *rapprochement* among former political adversaries.¹⁷⁴ The traditional skepticism of scholars interested in serious academic inquiry will remain silenced by the geo-political requirements for the time being. However, such practice will inevitably bring more discord among the West Balkans states and prepare the ground for future potential conflicts.

¹⁷³ <http://beautyofconcrete.wordpress.com/2013/02/23/100years-of-independence> - Accessed on 28/02/2013

¹⁷⁴ See *Introduction*, p. 3-4.

The Macedonians

The small landlocked country in the central Balkans, declared its independence from the SFRY on 8 September 1991 assuming the name Republic of Macedonia. Although it was spared large-scale military campaigns during the wars of Yugoslav succession, its existence was disputed in varying degrees from the very beginning by all its neighbours. Even the use of the name “Macedonia” ignites passionate polemics across the country’s borders, as it is considered to be a threat to the territorial integrity of Greece, or a suppressor of Albanian national and ethnic feelings by the Macedonian Slavic population. Similarly, Bulgarian and, to a lesser extent, Serbian denial of a separate Macedonian national identity undermines the country’s attempts to forge its own nation. The cultural aspects of nationalism in the modern Macedonian state are entirely the product of the 20th century, as they arose from the competing Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian nationalisms of the late 19th century. The appearance and growth of Macedonian nationalism in the first half of the 20th century coincided with the emergence of Albanian nationalism, but it lacked the compactness of the Albanian national mobilization. The reason for this should be sought in the uniqueness of the Albanian language which, in the Macedonian case, was non-existent until 1945. As it will be discussed later, the post-Second World War period was long enough for consolidation of a separate orthography and codification of grammatical principles of the Macedonian language, but the larger and stronger Bulgarian and Serbian cultural traditions will continue to influence the academic polemics about the ethnic origins of the Macedonian Slavs.

4.1 Territoriality of Macedonian nationalism

The historic name of Macedonia exists much longer than the modern Macedonian state and the territory of historic Macedonia encompassed a much larger area than the country that exists today. The problem of territoriality is narrowly linked to three questions:

1. Who are the contemporary Macedonians?
2. What is the justification for the use of the name that has little in common with the ethnic background of contemporary Macedonians? and

3. How to reach a compromise to the mutual satisfaction of the Macedonian state and its neighbours?

From the moment of the proclamation of the People's Republic of Macedonia as an integral part of the Yugoslav Federation on 2 August 1944, a strong Greek objection to the use of the name "Macedonia" arose. However, as the official name for the northern Greek neighbour was Yugoslavia, these objections were less prominent than they are now, when Yugoslavia no longer exists. The creation of the southern Yugoslav federal unit at the end of the Second World War was a political move by the new Communist authorities in Yugoslavia which Greece interpreted as a threat to its territorial integrity. Tito's support of the Greek Communist fighters during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) had certainly contributed to such feelings amongst the Greeks, but the real reason behind the proclamation of a new nation and the creation of a state for it within the Yugoslav Federation had little to do with the Greek territory: it was a move that aimed to settle internal Yugoslav disputes. Trying to curb Serb-Croat dichotomy, Tito, a half-Croat, half-Slovene himself, re-designed the ethnic structure of Yugoslavia in order to reduce the proportion of population defined as Serbs.¹ In the immediate aftermath of war, two new nations, Macedonians and Montenegrins, were formed. Prior to that, the inhabitants of Montenegro were identifying themselves as Serbs, whilst the inhabitants of Macedonia were considered to be "the Serbs of Old Serbia," referring to the core of the mediaeval Serbian state, which was re-incorporated into the Serbian Kingdom in 1913 (Map 4.1).

In the first Yugoslav census conducted after the Second World War in 1948, the newly proclaimed nation numbered just under 800,000 people². In comparison with 4.6 million of Serbs from the same census³, it is clear that this move decreased the percentage of the Serbian population by nearly 17%. By reducing the Serbian influence in Yugoslavia, Tito could implement his policies hidden behind the "brotherhood and unity" slogan, facing less opposition from the previously most numerous constituent nation in the country. Probably unintentionally, the creation of the Macedonian nation under the communist regime that was intended to solve the

¹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 51 and *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 99.

² <http://www.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb2007bazi/Database/Censuses/databasetree.asp> - The official data from 2011 Census of the Republic of Macedonia – Accessed on 05/09/2011

³ <http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/axd/Zip/VJN3.pdf> - The official Census data of the Republic of Serbia – Accessed on 05/09/2011

major nationalist movements within Yugoslavia, caused growth of an entirely new nationalism and spread beyond the frontier into Greece.



Map 4.1 – The formation of the territory encompassing contemporary Republic of Macedonia. After the Second Balkan War and the division of Macedonia between Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria, the part that was given to Serbia in 1913 represented the basis for the creation of the modern Macedonian republic.

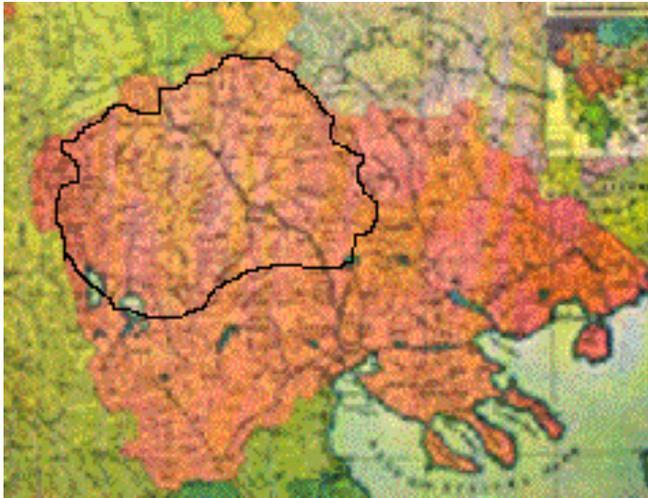
The contemporary ethnic Slav Macedonians number around 1.3 million, according to the 2002 census, whilst the overall population of the country is just over 2 million.⁴ The ethnic composition of the country, according to the same census, is: Macedonian (64.2%), Albanian (25.2%), Turkish (3.9%), Roma-Gypsy (2.7%), Serb (1.8%) and other (2.2%). It is interesting to note that the census list completely omits the Greek minority, whilst the Bulgarian minority counts at 0.1%.⁵ After proclaiming the independence and the subsequent growth of Albanian nationalism in the west of the country, strengthening the idea of national unity by the re-evaluation of narratives created during the Yugoslav state became the main objective of all Macedonian governments since independence.

The first problem that faced the definition of the state-name and ethnic identification of its inhabitants was the relation between the historic land and the people who live on it. The name of Macedonia exists since at least the 8th century BC

⁴ <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/knigaXIII.pdf> - Final results of 2002 Census in the Republic of Macedonia, published in 2005 – Accessed on 05/09/2011. The planned census in 2011 never took place. The same data could be found on the <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mk.html> - Accessed on the same day, 05/09/2011 - The CIA data is assembled from the official statistics from each Balkan state and it is used here for clarity, as the information obtained from the state statistics had been disputed by the Albanian minority and some neighbouring states.

⁵ *ibid*

and denotes the wider geographical area that incorporated the so-called Lower Macedonia, a huge coastal plain around the Thermaic gulf in the north-western Aegean, and Upper Macedonia, a sequence of rugged highland plateaux, stretching from the Dinaric range on the west to the Balkan range to the east (Map 4.2). In 1913 this territory was partitioned among Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. What was then the Serbian proportion of Macedonia is the territory occupied by the modern Republic of Macedonia.⁶ Until then, the population of this territory was under Ottoman rule, extremely mixed and without any clear delineation among the Slavic, Greek, Christian or Muslim communities. Immediately after partition, both Greece and Bulgaria rapidly adopted the policy of enforced ethnic and linguistic assimilation.⁷



Map 4.2 – Geographical Macedonia. Approximate borders of the modern republic marked black.

With the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey, following the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922, the Greek part of Macedonia received an influx of ethnic Greeks from Anatolia, which in turn significantly reduced the percentage of the South Slavs. As Bulgaria received only 11% of the whole of Macedonian territory, assimilation was swift and irreversible. Within a generation, Greek and Bulgarian parts of Macedonia were incorporated into the national cores of these states. However, the Serbian part of Macedonia followed a different path. Indeed, the Serbian authorities tried to introduce the policy of assimilation similar to the Bulgarian one, but as after the First World War Serbia ceased to exist as a separate

⁶ Price, S. and Thonemann, P. – *The Birth of Classical Europe – A History from Troy to Augustine*, London, 2011, 138

⁷ Ibid, 138-139

nation-state, the difficulties of implementing such a policy were immediate and unpreventable. The creation of the Kingdom of SHS was led by the romantic ideals of the 19th century pan-Slavic movement and *realpolitik* in the wider European context, but there was no serious consideration of the possible negative outcomes that the unified state could face. Haste unification immediately imposed on the Kingdom of SHS a series of internal problems resulting from the different national ideas and expectations.

The incorporation of the part of Macedonia into the Kingdom of Serbia was short lived; it lasted for less than two years in 1912-1913 and was discontinued during Bulgarian occupation of 1915-1918. Even though this part of Macedonia was officially called Southern Serbia and its people considered to be Serbs, the population was not integrated into the Serbian national core anywhere near as much as in other Serbian areas, such as those acquired in 1878. A strong Bulgarian substratum remained, but there was a considerable portion of population that felt a strong sense of loyalty towards their own native territory.⁸ Based on these loose ties with Serbia, after another 1941-1944 Bulgarian occupation, the Communist regime of the post-Second World War Yugoslavia was able to introduce in 1944 a nation separate from the Serbs, aiming to reduce the percentage of ethnic Serbs in Yugoslavia, but also separate from the Bulgars, in order to secure loyalty to the Yugoslav territorial integrity. Tito's nation-creators adopted the old Austro-Hungarian method of inciting the local patriotism by creating a link between the local populations to the geographical determinants of the region.⁹ So, they called the newly proclaimed nation "Macedonian" because they lived in geographical Macedonia. We even know its birthday: 2 August 1944.

4.1.1 Creation of the new nation

As the Second World War drew to its close, the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) gathered in the confines of the mediaeval monastery of Prohor Pčinjski, in southern Serbia,¹⁰ and on 2 August 1944

⁸ Ćirković, S. – *The Serbs*, London, 2004, 259

⁹ This method of nation-creation was attempted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1878-1918. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 387-389.

¹⁰ This monastery is still within the Serbian borders, and every year a Macedonian state delegation is sent there to celebrate the "Day of the State". In recent years, the gatherings on 2 August bring into focus the tensions between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the ecumenically unrecognized Macedonian Orthodox Church

decided of the future organization of the Macedonian republic. One of the main outcomes of this meeting was to introduce the Macedonian language that would be in use in the future Macedonian state. From the proceedings of this meeting, the standardization of the language was completed within a year: the alphabet was adopted on 3 May 1945 and orthography on 7 July 1945. “This act marked the realization of the efforts to create a common Macedonian language, based on dialects most different from Serbian and Bulgarian,” maintain all Macedonian school textbooks.¹¹ The fact that the adopted orthography is barely modified Serbian orthography, based on the orthographic solution of 19th century Serbian philologist Vuk Karadžić (Fig. 1.5), is carefully omitted.¹² The Macedonian alphabet differs from the Serbian in three graphemes and the morphological rules are following the Serbian principles. The sentence structure maintains articles and the past participle, but loses almost completely the case declension. This is similar to Bulgarian, but non-existent in Serbian. Macedonian is mutually intelligible to both Serbs and Bulgars. A less sensitive commentator would describe the language spoken in Macedonia as a dialect where Serbian and Bulgarian languages meet. However, Bulgarian linguists consider the language as a Bulgarian dialect, whilst the Serbian linguistic had been silent on the matter since 1945. The Macedonian linguists, naturally, insist on distinctive character of their language.

During that ASNOM meeting on 2 August 1944, among other committee members was Blaže Koneski (1921-1993), a young partisan communist and former student of Serbian Language and Literature at the University of Belgrade (Fig. 4.1). Considered to be the best cadre who could execute the swift implementation of the Party’s decisions, Koneski quickly assumed the leading role in the standardization of the Macedonian language and orthography and went on to become one of the first professors of the Macedonian language and literature at the newly founded University of Skopje (1949). When the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MANU) was inaugurated in 1967, Koneski was its first president. For his services to the Macedonian republic, the Faculty of Philology in Skopje was named after him. In 1993, he received a state funeral and is regarded as one of the most important figures

¹¹ Павловски, Ј. и Павловски, М. – *Македонија, вчера и днес*, Книгоиздателство, Скопје, 1996 – Pavlovski, J. and Pavlovski, M. – *Macedonia, yesterday and today* – Knigoizdatelstvo, Skopje, 1996, 10 – Bilingual, Macedonian and English

¹² In Macedonian, Ѓ replaces Serbian Ђ, Ќ replaces Serbian Ћ, but have equal pronunciation, whilst Latin S was added for the use of consonants that are not written, although present in Serbian.

of modern Macedonian culture. In 1952 and 1954, Koneski assembled and published two volumes of Macedonian grammar. In collaboration with Krum Tošev, Koneski published in 1950 the initial orthography and dictionary, intended as a complement to the 1946 *Macedonian Grammar* (*Македонска граматика*) by Krume Kepeski (1909-1988).

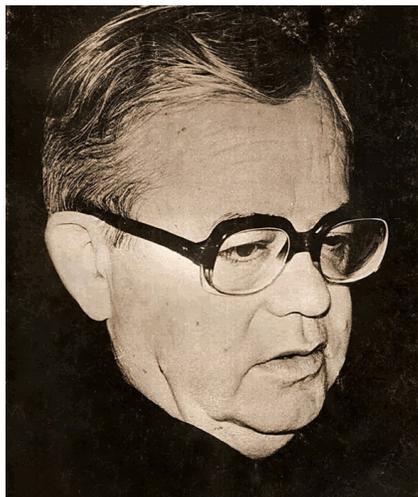


Fig. 4.1 – Blaže Koneski (1921-1993)

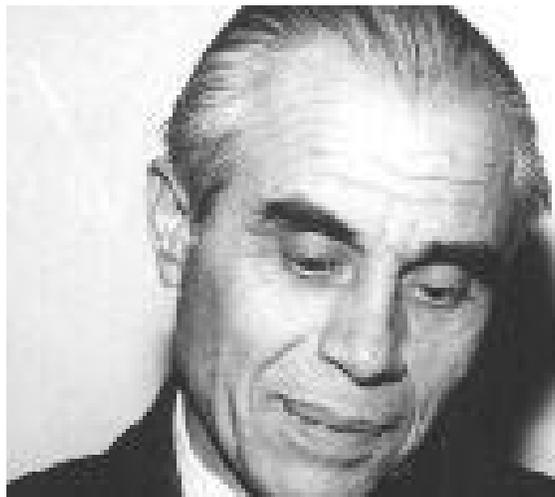


Fig. 4.2 – Krume Kepeski (1909-1988)

In the Introduction of the *Macedonian Grammar*, Kepeski (Fig. 4.2) defined the programme for the creation of Macedonian nation:

*“Who are your people? They are called the Macedonians. **What is a nation? A nation is a big group of people that live together in one place, maintain the same customs, speak the same language, have similar economic wealth and same psychological characteristics – the same mentality.** Do Macedonian people have all these characteristics? Yes, and that is why they are recognized as a separate people who live together with the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Montenegrins in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.....”*¹³

For achieving the plan of the same language, customs and psychological characteristics, appropriate educational institutions were needed. Thus, the first faculty within the new University was the Faculty of Philosophy which consisted of two schools: History and Philology, which supported by the Communist regime in the

¹³ Кеписки, К. – *Македонска Граматика*, Скопје, 1946, 5 – My translation. Part of the text, emphasised in bold by myself, underlines the principles applied during the proclamation of Macedonian nation.

following two decades, began work on the creation of literature and written history in the Macedonian language. The majority of the initially employed staff of the University of Skopje were graduates from Belgrade and Zagreb and organized the educational curriculum which followed the approved lines of the Yugoslav central administration.

As the creation of the Macedonian republic was taking place, the response of the neighbouring Greece and Bulgaria was swift. In 1953, the foundation of the *Institute for Balkan Studies* in Thessaloniki prompted the establishment of a wide network of cooperation with various academic institutions worldwide, which later enabled the discovery of the Royal Macedonian tombs at Vergina in Greek Macedonia in 1978 to be largely publicised. After the fall of the *junta* in 1974, the Thessaloniki *Institute for Balkan Studies* was placed under the direct supervision of the Greek Ministry of Culture which guaranteed the state support for Greek defence of their own national policies. On the other hand, the scholars from the leading Bulgarian University St. Clement of Ohrid in Sofia¹⁴ already had an established tradition of nation-building which maintained that the outcomes of the Balkan wars unjustly deprived Bulgaria of its ethnic territories and accused Belgrade for attempting to “Serbianize” ethnic Bulgarians in Macedonia. However, after 1945, Serbian arguments were silenced by Tito’s government in Belgrade. This transferred the 19th century Bulgarian-Serbian polemics about the character and history of Macedonian Slavs from Belgrade-Sofia to the Skopje-Sofia line. The polemic remained throughout the Yugoslav period and was exacerbated by the independence of Macedonia in 1991.

4.1.2 The Ambiguity of Macedonian identity

Four critical points between the historical narratives emanating from Macedonia and those of its neighbours could be identified:

1. The question of the ethnic character of Ancient Macedonia and the ethnic affiliations of modern Macedonians. This question poisons Athens-Skopje relations and has grown from a local academic dispute into a serious international problem with strong political consequences.

¹⁴ The University of Sofia, St. Clement of Ohrid was named after one of the fathers of Slavic literacy. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 18

2. The question of the name and ethnic character of the short-lived 9th century Samuil's Empire in relation to the Bulgarian historical perspective. Whilst Sofia maintains the thesis of the exclusively Bulgarian character of Samuil's state and denies the existence of any separate Macedonian Slavic state in the mediaeval period, Skopje points to certain discrepancies that appear in the Bulgarian theories.
3. The ethnic affiliation of the 14th century rulers of Macedonia, especially King Marko Mrnjavčević (1371-1395), legendary Kraljević Marko. Whilst for the Serbian scholars Marko is unquestionably Serbian, Skopje regards him as a Macedonian.
4. Finally, the fourth academic dispute is directed to Tirana and relates to the problem of the hypothetical border area between the ancient Illyria-Dardania and Ancient Macedonian state and the nature of the link between the ancient inhabitants of Dardania with the Illyrians and modern Albanians. The dispute sours Skopje-Tirana relations and is currently growing into a heated debate which can have as a consequence the federalization of the republic into two parts: one Slavic – Macedonian and the other Albanian.

These four problems that the modern Macedonian Republic faces today clearly arise from the geo-strategic position which was so violently contested between its neighbours over the past hundred and fifty years. It is not surprising, then, that the academic rhetoric employed by all sides involved, echoes the national interests of each respective nation. Amongst them, the Macedonian argument, amplified after the proclamation of independence, attempted to gain prominence and support by the relevant international academic and political institutions. But the outcome was only partially successful. Instead of reaching consensus about the critical questions listed above, it divided academic opinions and it appears that overall consensus will never be reached.

4.2 Imagined aspects of the Macedonian reality – The origins of the Macedonian Question

The “scramble for Macedonia” began in the 19th century, when the re-assertion of the nation-states of the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars was supported by the Great

Powers. When in 1870 the Russian Empire enforced the foundation of the Bulgarian Exarchate, a Bulgarian Orthodox Church independent from the Greek Patriarchate in Constantinople, the latter, as the only legitimate Christian Church within the Ottoman Empire, strongly objected as it feared that the spread of the Exarchate's influence will place the Macedonian Slav population under its control. The response of the Serbian Principality was equally negative, as the Serbian national narrative had already been formulated around the notion of "Old Serbia" which regarded the north of geographical Macedonia as its core ethnic territory.

The Great Powers saw the formation of the Exarchate as Russian attempt to establish its dominance over the Balkan Peninsula through the Orthodox Church. Greece was Orthodox, but not Slavic and was, by then, under the influence of Britain, so Russian manoeuvring space was limited to the Slavic lands.¹⁵ This was not a new political approach to the Balkans by Russia, as Russia had regarded itself as a defender of Orthodoxy and the oppressed Slavs within the Ottoman Empire since the early 18th century. But the 1870 event had little to do with religion or support of Slav brothers. By mid-19th century, the world trading routes and natural resources were exclusively controlled by the Great Powers, which made the position of the Turkish Straits vital to Russian strategic interests. Of the two Orthodox Slav Balkan nations, Bulgaria was closer geographically, still without its state and more reliant upon Russian support. Serbia already had a certain level of independence and its internal dynastic problems exposed her to the Austro-Hungarian influence. Between the two, Russia's choice was naturally in favour of Bulgaria.¹⁶ Even though the Pan-Slavic ideas of the 1840s were still strong both within Russian society and the other Slavic lands without nation-states of their own, Russian national interests had priority.

The following decade was the most turbulent in the Balkans, since the beginning of the 19th century. The great Eastern Question that opened with the Serbian uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875 continued with Serbian-Turkish and Russo-Turkish wars of 1876-1878. Turkish defeat sanctioned *de facto* Serbian and Montenegrin independence and expanded their territories. However, the *Treaty of San Stefano* in March 1878 which ended the wars, envisaged the existence of a large Bulgarian Principality which would include not only a vast part of Macedonia, but

¹⁵ Barker, E. – *Macedonia – Its Place in Balkan Power Politics* – Re-print of the 1950 Royal Institute of International Affairs, London 1980, 7

¹⁶ Barker, 1980, 8

also a great part of Thrace, southern Serbia and smaller parts of Albania and Kosovo and Metohija. Alerted to the possibility of such a large sphere of Russian influence, Austro-Hungary, France and Great Britain forced Russia to abandon this treaty at the *Congress of Berlin* three months later. The size of the Bulgarian Principality was significantly reduced and Macedonia was restored to the Ottoman control.

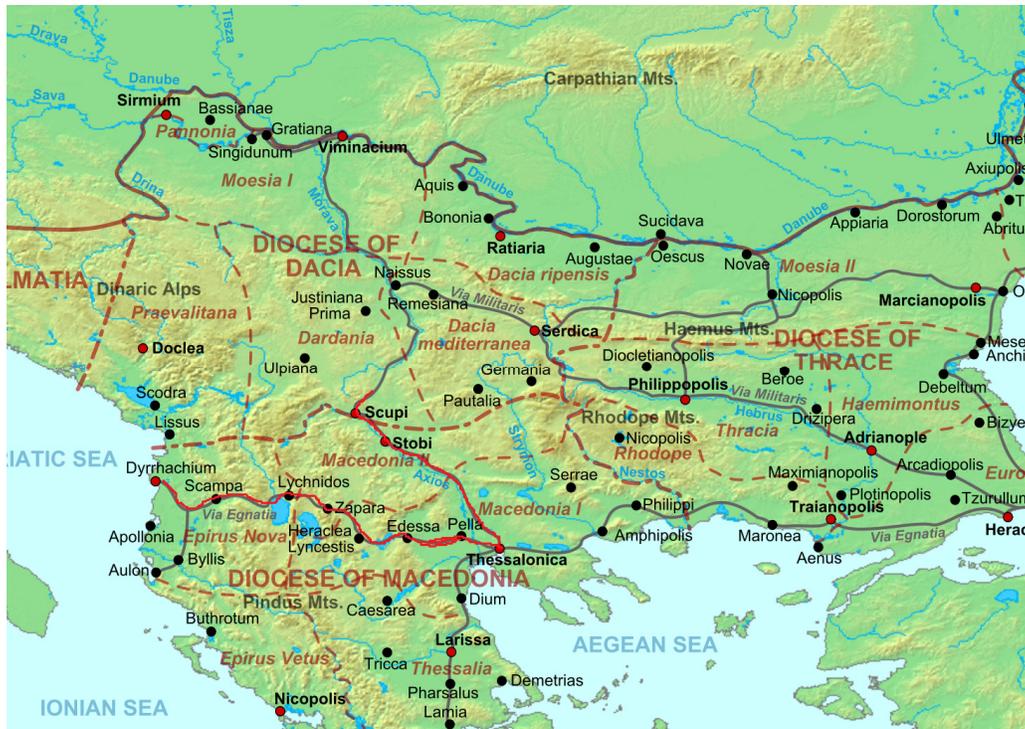
In relation to Balkan nation-state building, the outcomes of the Congress of Berlin were twofold; firstly, it tied the nascent Bulgarian state to Russia and secondly, it placed Serbia under the direct patronage of Austro-Hungary which immediately imposed on her economically exhausting duties.¹⁷ This meant that the Serbian economy, as well as educational exchange which was until then distributed between Russian and Habsburg/Austro-Hungarian influences was now completely turned towards the latter. Even though finally formally free from the Ottomans, both Serbia and Bulgaria fared badly under the Austria-Hungary and Russia, respectively. Both countries were forced to allow their great “protectors” the free use of their resources and had little liberties in deciding their foreign policies.¹⁸

Because the land road to the Thessaloniki port ran through Serbia and down the Vardar valley (along the southern branch of the ancient *Via Militaris*), where it diverted to the east towards Constantinople (along the line of ancient *Via Egnatia*) the crucial geo-strategic clash erupted in the place where *Via Egnatia* met *Via Militaris*: Macedonia (Map 4.3). Both Russia and Austro-Hungary wished to avoid open warfare, so the struggle to control this key crossroad was transferred to their client states, Serbia and Bulgaria. Similarly, British interests in Greece were carefully observed and protecting the Thermaic gulf and the hinterland of Thessaloniki became the corner-stone of the British activities in Greece. This distribution of interests of the three powers anticipated the future partition of the traditional Macedonian territories after the Balkan Wars. Whilst the official diplomacy of the Great Powers advocated peace and confirmed it through the series of treaties signed after the *Congress of Berlin*,¹⁹ their economic and political influence in the Balkans was maintained not only by the political pressure on the local governments, but through the means of *soft power*.

¹⁷ Jelavich, C. – *Tsarist Russia and Balkan Nationalism – Russian Influence on the internal affairs of Bulgaria and Serbia, 1879 – 1886* – Re-print of the 1958 Greenwood Press, 1978, 56 – The Serbian government was forced to build the railway infrastructure by accepting unfavourable credits from Austro-Hungarian banks.

¹⁸ Jelavich, 1978, 65

¹⁹ *Triple Alliance* of 1882, *Reinsurance Treaty* of 1887, *Franco-Russian Alliance* of 1892-1894, etc.



Map. 4.3 – Since the Roman times, southern branch of *Via Militaris* and eastern of *Via Egnatia* (marked red) crossed on the territory of Macedonia. The road route followed the major Balkan river valleys and remained in use in modern period.

The *soft power* included cultural influence through scholarships awarded to local students to be educated at their universities.²⁰ After graduation, these young Balkan scholars usually returned to their native countries and actively participated in organizing nascent Balkan educational and university systems, modelled on those acquired in their universities.²¹ They also brought with themselves ideas assimilated during their studies, embedded within the specific mind-set that can be understood as political mentoring of the Great Powers in order to protect their interests.²² The

²⁰ See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 66-68

²¹ For example, those who studied History in Vienna and Graz accepted the Austrian interpretation of the distinction between the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Macedonians. Similarly, the students of St. Petersburg and Moscow accepted the preferred Russian interpretation of the Bulgarian nature of the Macedonian Slavs which was asserted during the first part of the 19th century. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 37-38 for the general pattern of educating young Balkan elites abroad.

²² Gellner reflected on the educational indoctrination during the process of acquiring national identity. See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p.66-67 – When client-states of the Great Powers have their elites educated in the universities of their suzerains, the students are usually perceptive for their teachers' views and subsequently can become promoters of their political ideas. However, the reverse process can occur: the students may develop their own, sometimes contrasting, theories using the tools of their teachers. Then, instead of promoting the ideas maintained by the centres of their education, they become their fiercest opponents. This usually results in the “war of ideas” in which the elites of the client-states are usually undermined by their former tutors. As a rule, they acquire a new protector, in the form of the elites of the opposing Great Power. In this manner, the political struggle is transferred to the academic ground where they become mutually entwined, lose objectivity and enable

acquired academic knowledge and skills, through the dissemination of ideas played directly into the hands of the *realpolitik* of the Great Powers. As a consequence, the building of the nation-states in the Balkans in the later part of the 19th century was as much an artificial construct by the Great Powers, as it was the natural desire of the Balkan population to achieve a settled and self-fulfilling existence. As suggested by modern Macedonian scholar Biljana Vankovska-Cvetkovska: “*The Balkan peoples did not realize they were not masters of their own fate, but that decisions concerning them were being made in St. Petersburg, Vienna, London or Paris.*”²³ As the territory of Macedonia became important to both Russia and Austro-Hungary, their 19th century scholars, relying on the then prevailing academic methods, began producing first interpretations of the surviving historical documents on Macedonia. However, all these interpretations were related to the nascent national narratives of Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. No native intellectual of what was to become a modern Macedonian Republic produced any work related to a separate Macedonian Slav nation.

4.3 Cultural aspects and material heritage in the context of Macedonian nationalism

The first scientific works about Macedonia were produced either from outside the region in the first part of the 19th century or from the neighbouring countries, from the 1850s onwards. As the distinct Macedonian orthography and a recognized language did not exist, most of the written sources belong to the linguistic traditions of these early authors.

The first author to mention the exclusively Slavic characteristics of the Macedonian region was from the 19th century Russian professor of Slavic philology and linguistics at Kazan University Victor Grigorovich (1815-1876). In 1845 he travelled through the Balkans and on his return to Russia published his travelogue under the title “*Outline of a Journey through European Turkey.*”²⁴ Drawing exclusively on Byzantine sources, he wrote extensively about the Balkan Slavs and in 1859 published a volume “*Serbia and Its Relations with Neighbouring Powers,*

future conflict of ideas. This theory received the best confirmation in the Balkans as the methods learnt were frequently used against the very same academic theories that served as the educational models for the nascent Balkan states.

²³ Vankovska-Cvetkovska, 1998, quoted in Isakovic, Z. – *Identity and Security in Former Yugoslavia* – Aldershot, 2000, 199

²⁴ Georgevich, T.R. – *Macedonia* – London, 1916, 105. The original title was “Očerk putešestvij po Evropejskoj Turciji”, Kazan, 1848 – This is a Latinic transliteration from the Cyrillic by Georgevich.

Principally in the 14th and 15th Centuries”, where he called the population of Macedonia – Serbian.

A few years before Grigorovich (Fig. 4.3), another Slavic scholar from the Habsburg part of Ukraine, Yuri Venelin (1802-1839), was assigned to a mission of collecting the historical documents related to the Ottoman Slavs (Fig. 4.4). The results of his Balkan travels were published in 1829 volume *“The Ancient and Present Day Bulgarians and Their Political, Ethnographic, Historical and Religious Relations with the Russians”* where he called the population of Macedonia – Bulgarian.²⁵



Fig. 4.3 – Viktor Grigorovich (1815-1876)



Fig. 4.4 – Yuri Venelin (1802-1839)

These early authors were inspired by the growing Pan-Slav movement which was generously supported by the Russian state. Even though the movement originated in the Slavic lands of the Habsburg Empire (Prague, above all), Russia quickly assumed the leading role in the research of its Slavic origins. Russian interests in the Balkan Slavs were guided by the need to expand influence in the region, so publications that served the purpose of the national awakening, had also been used to legitimize Russian political activities. The publication of Venelin’s work caused a great sensation and triggered the interest of the Bulgarian Diaspora in Russia, mainly

²⁵ Georgevich, 1916, 105. It is interesting to note that modern interpretations of the 19th century national awakening among the Balkan peoples rely mostly on the interpretations of the scholars from the ethnic backgrounds of those Great Powers that favour their ethnic territoriality.

the merchant class, to get involved in the matters of national awakening. In Bulgaria itself, Venelin encountered apathy and a lack of response by the local population.²⁶ The reason for that was the high illiteracy rate. The foundation of schools and programmes for basic education were the only solution, if the shaping of the emerging national consciousness was to be done efficiently. Between the end of the Crimean War and Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, Bulgarian nationalism grew considerably, resulting in the upsurge of in Bulgarian education and national re-assertion.²⁷

One of the earliest writers born in the territory of modern Macedonian republic was a monk Kiril Pejčinović (c.1770-1845), who published in 1816 in Budapest a book of orthodox sermons, *Ogledalo (Mirror)*, printed in the local dialect, in Old Church Slavonic orthography (Fig. 4.5). All three orthodox Slavs from the Balkans regard Pejčinović as the early national writer; the Bulgarians regard him as a Bulgarian, asserting that he was writing in the Bulgarian language of Lower Moesia (Fig. 4.6). The Macedonians regard him as a Macedonian, as he was writing in the “Tetovo dialect” of western Macedonia. The Serbs regard him as a Serb, as he wrote the biography of the Serbian mediaeval Prince Lazar²⁸ and had a Serbian surname.



Fig. 4.5 – Kiril Pejčinović (c.1770 – 1845)



Fig. 4.6 – The front page of the *Ogledalo* which states that the writing is aimed “for the needs and benefits of the people in the Bulgarian Lower Moesia.” 1816.

²⁶ Mazower, 2000, 98

²⁷ Roudometof, 2001, 134

²⁸ Of the 1389 Kosovo Battle fame. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 27-28

4.4 Historical and academic sources on Macedonian heritage

The historical primary sources relating to Macedonian territories can be divided into two distinct groups: the sources on Ancient Macedonia, written predominantly in Greek (ancient and modern), and sources on mediaeval Macedonia written in either Byzantine Greek, Old Church Slavonic (9th-12th centuries) or post-12th century mediaeval recensions of Bulgarian or Serbian Church Slavonic. None of them refer to separate Macedonian ethnicity. Additional problem with both sets of sources is their scarcity and great gaps between different historical periods with no surviving written documents. This is particularly relevant for the Slavic texts, as the standardization of the “national” recensions took place relatively late in history, between the 12th and 15th centuries. By the end of the 15th century, almost all Balkan lands were conquered by the Ottomans and native elites disappeared. This resulted in the hindrance of the natural linguistic evolution until the 19th century, when language standardization became central to the nation-building process. Regional dialectological characteristics among Macedonian Slavs were equally understandable to both the Serbs and Bulgarians and as the “scramble for Macedonia” gained momentum, any notion of a separate Macedonian Slav ethnic identity was silenced.

The discovery and evaluation of historical manuscripts in the course of the 19th-20th centuries was influenced by the ideas of Romantic sentiments until the 1870s, when the political usage of national narratives prevailed as the standard practice in nation-building process. As the 19th century authors addressing the Macedonian question were often born outside Macedonia, their remarks on the land and its people were frequently genuinely erroneous or politically charged. The interpretation of the ambiguity of the Ancient and Mediaeval historical manuscripts which do not refer to a separate Macedonian Slav nation by the 19th century scholars provided the basis for the 20th century Macedonian nation-building.

However, from the beginning, writings about Macedonia were marred by divided opinions and confusion. After the formation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, all writings urged the Slavic population in Macedonia under Ottoman rule to fight for its liberation. In those early days, being Christian was the only determinant of the identity of the local Slavs.²⁹ Religious identification was the only way of expressing separateness from the Ottoman authorities. Since Christian religious

²⁹ See *Appendix II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 79

affairs were under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Constantinople, which used the Greek language, the position of the Patriarch was in many respects similar to the position of the papacy in the mediaeval Catholic Church: there existed a universal church, united in terms of religion alone. But just as Protestantism challenged the Pope's supremacy over the matters of nascent nation-states in the West in the 16th century, growing Balkan nationalisms challenged the authority of the exclusively Greek Patriarchate.³⁰

The response from the Patriarch was logical: on 28 September 1872, the Bulgarian Church was proclaimed schismatic and all its adherents to be heretics. From that moment on, the Christian identity was divided along the language line: Greek speaking subjects of Macedonia were naturally supportive of the Patriarchate, whilst the Slavic speakers supported the Exarchate. Russian pressure on Serbian and Romanian churches to recognize the Bulgarian Exarchate in Constantinople accelerated the activities surrounding the implementation of religious practise and the opening of schools for the first time in over five centuries. As a result, those Macedonians who attended the churches that held their rites in Greek were labelled as Greek,³¹ and those who attended the churches that held their rites in Church Slavonic were labelled as Bulgarian. The Serbian Orthodox Church in this period was not able to interfere, as its seat was in Sremski Karlovci, on the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy, whilst the Serbian Principality was under the jurisdiction of the Belgrade Metropolitan who was below the rank of the Patriarch and the Exarch. The opening of the Macedonian Question was initially the duel between the Greek and Bulgarian national narratives to win the support of the local Christian population.

4.4.1 *Salade Macédoines*

Dissemination of books that aimed at creating national identity in Macedonia was problematic from the start. Bulgarian intellectuals of the period based their work on Venelin's enthusiasm and continued the process of national (re)discovery through the medium of magazines and periodicals edited and published not only in the nascent Bulgarian Principality, but abroad as well. The problem, however, was the lack of a standard Bulgarian language and orthography. Between the 1830s and 1870s, about 1600 books were published in Bulgarian vernacular, in non-standardised

³⁰ Roudometof, 2001, 137

³¹ Sometimes, these people were called *Grecoman* – Slavic-speaking Greeks.

orthographies.³² However, the existence of various regional dialects of the Ottoman Slavs, recognized very early on, prevented the swift assimilation of the Macedonian Slavs into the Bulgarian national core, because the pioneering writers and journalists all wrote in their native dialects.

In 1856, Dragan Tsankov (1828-1911), a teacher, and a group of Bulgarian merchants established the *Society for Bulgarian Literature*, for the advancement of Bulgarian letters. Through a series of publications, Bulgarian authors gained an opportunity to do research on history, religion, education, literature, linguistics, folklore, etc. In 1859, Tsankov (Fig. 4.7) began publishing the magazine *Bulgariya*. By 1867, the society helped in the foundation of the *St. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Men's High School*, which opened in 1871 in Thessaloniki. In the following year, the new society *Prosveshthenie (Enlightenment)* was established with the aim of spreading education and national consciousness in Macedonia.³³



Fig. 4.7 – Dragan Tsankov (1828-1911), a liberal politician and future Prime Minister, responsible for foundation of the first Bulgarian language magazine in Macedonia.



Fig. 4.8 – Petko Slavejkov (1827-1895), a teacher, poet and folklorist in Bulgaria. His early career developed in Constantinople, where he argued for Bulgarian national revival.

However, in 1866, another writer and journalist, Petko Slavejkov (1827-1895), began publishing the weekly newspapers *Makedoniya*, in the local Macedonian Slav

³² Genchev, 1977, quoted in Roudometof, 2001, 132

³³ Roudometof, 2001, 134

dialect, printed in Greek letters.³⁴ A few years before *Makedoniya* was being published by Slavejkov (Fig. 4.8), two brothers, teachers from Struga,³⁵ Konstantin (1810-1862) and Dimitar (1830-1862) Miladinov (Fig. 4.9) published in Zagreb in 1861, with the assistance of Bishop Strossmayer a collection of folk songs *Bulgarian Folk Poems*, modelled on the work of Serbian linguist Vuk Stefanović Karadžić.³⁶

The “true” nature of the Miladinovs’ ethnic affiliations became the subject of many academic and political disputes during the formation of Macedonian nation. Konstantin contributed to the confusion himself as he used to sign his surname in 1840 Miladinidis (Greek), in 1855 Miladinos (Grecoman) and, finally Miladinov in 1857 (Bulgarian/Serbian/Macedonian Slav), which perfectly illustrates the transformation of his national identity.³⁷ Bulgarian scholars regard the Miladinov brothers as Bulgarian national writers, who identified themselves as Bulgarian. Macedonian scholars regard them to be the founders of the modern Macedonian literary tradition.



Fig. 4.9 – The Miladinovi Brothers, Konstantin and Dimitar, died in Constantinople, where they were imprisoned on accusation of spying and other subversive activities.

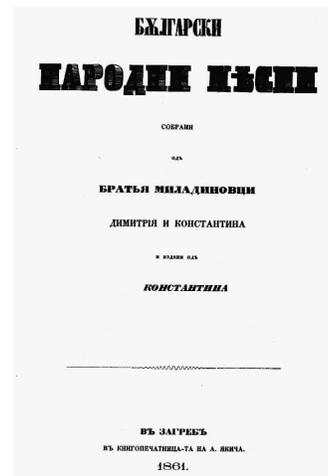


Fig. 4.10 – The cover of the *Bulgarian Folk Poems*, published in Zagreb in 1861, contained 600 Macedonian and 67 Bulgarian poems.

The dispute about their origins had reached the phase in which the Bulgarian scholars accused their Macedonian colleagues of forging the archival editions of the work of the Miladinovs by deliberately deleting the word “Bulgarian” from the front covers and their refusal to display them in museums (Fig. 4.10). On the other hand,

³⁴ Ibid, 134

³⁵ Now on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

³⁶ Roudometof, 2001, 144

³⁷ Ibid, 144

Macedonians insist that the word “Bulgarian” was inserted on the facsimiles of the first editions of the Miladinovs’ works by the Bulgarian nationalists and that the copies displayed in the Macedonian museums are original.³⁸

These frequent changes of ethnic identity within Ottoman Macedonia in the second half of 19th century were both a cause and a consequence of the political unrest of the region. During the Ottoman period, the population of Macedonia was a patchwork of various ethnic groups which, apart from the Greeks, Slavs and Turks, included a large number of Sephardic Jews, Vlachs, Albanians, Romanians and a smaller number of Muslim peoples from Asia Minor settled there after the Ottoman conquest. The clean-cut borders between the groups were impossible to establish, as they varied from one village to another and their loyalties were determined by the religious affiliations. As late as 1900, British diplomat Sir Charles Eliot, wrote that “a race in Macedonia is merely a political party.”³⁹ The loyalty of peasants was most likely to be won by those factions that offered the most stability. Since the political events between 1870 and 1908 were changing frequently and radically, there was no possibility of achieving a slower and more “natural” evolution of national feelings. Similarly, the national self-assertion within the Bulgarian Principality was soured by disagreements among Bulgarian intellectuals themselves on the nature of the language and linguistics, as well as by the increasingly unpopular Russian tutelage of the Bulgarian Principality. The complete upper class within Bulgaria, the officers of the Bulgarian army (all ethnic Russians) and members of the educated elite (all educated at St.Peterburg and Moscow Universities), followed the Russian imperial orders without questions, making the emerging local bourgeois class resentful.⁴⁰

Such tense political atmosphere accompanied by the appointment and short reign of Alexander von Battenberg (1879-1886) as Prince of Bulgaria, affected the development of a codified language and orthography. The Slavic dialect in north-west Macedonia, which was still under Ottoman rule, was different from the dialects spoken in the east, within the Bulgarian state. Despite the arguments, the eastern variant prevailed. This decision was logical because it was natural that the language codification was conducted by the authorities of an independent state of Bulgaria and

³⁸ Kostov, C. – *Contested Ethnic Identity, The Case of Macedonian Immigrants in Toronto 1900-1996* in *Nationalisms Across the Globe*, Vol. 7, Bern, 2010, 93-94. However, it appears that the Bulgarian argument has much stronger support in international academic circles.

³⁹ Eliot, quoted in Mazower, 2001, 104

⁴⁰ Jelavich, C. – *Tsarist Russia and Balkan Nationalism – Russian Influence on the internal affairs of Bulgaria and Serbia, 1879 – 1886* – Re-print of the 1958 Greenwood Press, 1978, 65

that the dialect spoken in the territory under those authorities was to be chosen as an official language. The orthography developed and systematized by Marin Drinov (1838-1906) was finally accepted as official by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education in 1899. Before that, starting from 1835, nearly thirty proposals of the language reform were attempted, with the number of letters ranging from 25 to 44.⁴¹ The linguistic chaos surrounding the codification of the Bulgarian language within Bulgaria enabled the assertion of the Serbian claims over the Macedonian linguistic territory.

Serbian influence in Macedonia was briefly revived after the unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia in 1885. King Milan Obrenović (Fig. 1.16), “a weak man under the best circumstances,” alarmed by Bulgarian state consolidation, attempted to prevent the growth of Bulgarian influence by declaring war on Bulgaria in 1885.⁴² The fourteen-day war was lost and the king was personally humiliated. As the possibility of influencing events in Macedonia militarily had to be abandoned, the only way to exercise Serbian policies towards Macedonian Slavs was through Serbian cultural assertion.

Before 1878, the main bearers of national awakening in Macedonia were the Bulgarian and Greek Orthodox Churches and clergy and, to a lesser extent, those few existing secular schools. After the *Congress of Berlin* Serbia joined in the contest. The three nascent nation-states attempted to implement their national policies through education. The number of secular schools, sponsored by the governments of the three neighbouring countries around 1876-1878, grew considerably. By 1876, there were 350 Bulgarian schools and their number grew to 800 in all Ottoman territories by 1900. Towards the south of Macedonian region, Greek schools counted to 907 by 1894.⁴³ The number of Serbian schools fluctuated, as the San Stefano Bulgaria immediately closed them all down.⁴⁴ The Ottoman government also prevented existence of Serbian schools in the aftermath of war that led to Serbian full independence from Ottoman state.

The struggle for the educational dominance that took place from the 1880s resulted in southern Macedonia to become increasingly Greek and northern, Slavic part, to become the academic battleground between Bulgaria and Serbia. The national

⁴¹ Roudometof, 2002, 92

⁴² Jelavich, 1978, 163

⁴³ Roudometof, 2001, 145

⁴⁴ Roudometof, 2001, 122

historians of the time, regarded today as the pioneering historians of national academies in both Bulgaria and Serbia all adhered to their national views of Macedonia; Marin Drinov (Fig. 4.11), one of the early Bulgarian historians and a language reformer, in his seminal work of 1869 “*The General Overview on Origins of Bulgarian People and the Principle of Bulgarian History*”⁴⁵ maintained that the Slav population of Macedonia was Bulgarian.⁴⁶ At the same time, the Serbian historian Stojan Novaković (Fig. 1.13) in his 1864 work “*Historical Consideration of Bulgaria*”⁴⁷ argued the Serbian origins of the Macedonian Slavs.⁴⁸

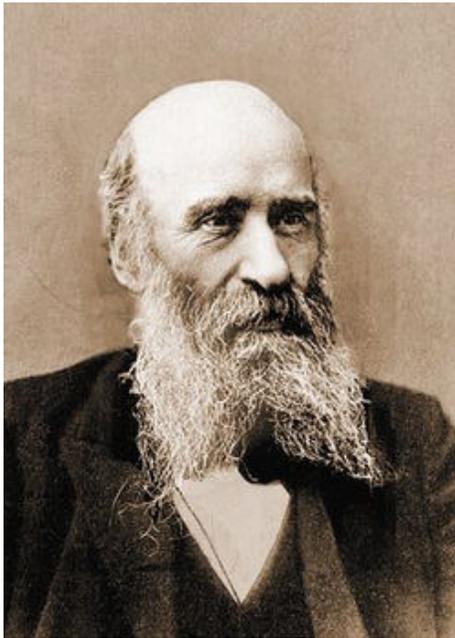


Fig. 4.11 – Marin Drinov (1838-1906), a historian, the founder of the modern Bulgarian historiography and a founding member of the *Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*, which was initially inaugurated under the name *Bulgarian Literary Society* in 1869 in Brăila in the Kingdom of Romania.

Both Drinov and Novaković were part of the early elite of their states; both were extremely well educated, spoke foreign languages, were the founding members of the Bulgarian and Serbian Academies respectively, and believed that they had worked in the best interest of their peoples. The legacy they left regarding the

⁴⁵ Pdf facsimile of the first edition of “Погледъ врѣхъ происхожданье-то на Българскіи народъ и начало-то на Българск-та исторія” отъ Марин Дринов, Виенж, 1869 by Marin Drinov <http://ia700306.us.archive.org/35/items/istoricheskipe00dringoog/istoricheskipe00dringoog.pdf> - Accessed on 24 September 2011 – The English title given here is my translation of the original

⁴⁶ Drinov, 1869, 90-100

⁴⁷ Pdf facsimile of the first edition of “Историјска расматрања о Бугарској” - <http://eng.digital.nb.rs/document/S-II-0212> - Accessed on 24 September 2011 – The English title given here is my translation of the original Serbian edition, now at the National Library, Belgrade, Serbia

⁴⁸ Новаковић, С. – *Историјска расматрања о Бугарској*, Београд, 1864, 12-29

national cultures of Bulgaria and Serbia is still highly valued in both countries. However, the criticism they received by some modern commentators of nationalism and ethnic origins derives from the current understanding of these concepts. Modern valuation of their works, as indeed those of their contemporaries and followers, frequently has little to do with the objectivity of historical perspective, but more with modern manipulation of historical sources.

4.4.2 *On Macedonian Matters*

The 19th century authors who argued for a separate Macedonian nation (and state) are very few in number. There were several reasons for this: firstly, the Ottomans refused to implement the policies of equality for all its citizens, imposed by the *Congress of Berlin*. Secondly, the banditry and general insecurity of life and property were a constant threat. Thirdly, most of the local scholars were educated either in Belgrade or in Sofia, where they acquired their use of language and writing, which led to future problematic disputes (or claims) with their neighbours. Finally, the economic difficulties hindered attempts to form lasting intellectual associations that would benefit the local population. Thus, the separateness of the Macedonian Slavs from their Bulgarian and Serbian neighbours came rather late, in the first part of the 20th century, after the partition of Macedonia in 1913.

The earliest attempt to advocate a separate and independent Macedonian Slav nation, independent from the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, came from Petko Slavejkov. In 1871, in his newspaper *Makedoniya*, he wrote that those who live in this region and call themselves *Makedonci* were Macedonians and not Bulgarians⁴⁹ The efforts to achieve some level of political freedom were further complicated by the foundation of the *Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization* (IMRO) in October 1893 in Thessaloniki.⁵⁰ The founding members aimed at an independent Macedonian state.⁵¹ However, by 1878, when Macedonia was returned to Ottoman rule, the Christian population was exposed to revenge of the Muslims, particularly Albanian overlords, and many Christians sought refuge in

⁴⁹ Roudometof, 2001, 145

⁵⁰ If the practice of modern revisionist approach is applied in describing the IMRO, Damjan Gruev and Anton Dimitrov who “formed a movement for the liberation of Macedonia from the Ottoman Empire,” would probably have to be labelled “terrorists” and IMRO a “terrorist organization.” In reality, the IMRO was similar to many European and Balkan organizations at the same period.

⁵¹ Seraphinoff, M. and Stefou, C. – *This Land We Do Not Give – A History of Macedonian Resistance to foreign Occupation*, Nettle Hollow, 2008, 70

Bulgaria proper, Serbia or Greece. Also, there was a considerable Macedonian colony in St. Petersburg, not large in numbers, but comprising Macedonians who had some education.

The number of educated Macedonian Slav refugees was too small to promote efficiently the cause for an independent Macedonian state, which prompted Bulgarian interference. In 1895, the *Supreme Macedonian Revolutionary Organization* (EMRO), the *Vrhovists*, was formed in Sofia, and immediately began agitating for stronger political ties with IMRO. Whilst the IMRO leadership consisted predominantly of teachers and lawyers who studied abroad, the EMRO leaders were dominated by men with a military background.⁵² It soon became obvious that the *Vrhovists* viewed the IMRO as an instrument for Bulgarian policies towards Macedonia. The San Stefano debacle had not been forgotten. Throughout this period, Serbian political influence in Macedonia was dormant, as the political crisis of the accession to the throne of the young King Aleksandar I Obrenović (Fig. 1.17) and subsequent abolition of the liberal 1888 Constitution drew attention away from the problems in Macedonia.

Modern Bulgarian historians view the IMRO movement as representing the will of Macedonian Slavs to join Bulgaria and they underline Bulgarian financial support for the organization. The opinion of Macedonian historians is radically different: “The Bulgarian infiltration into IMRP was not easily recognized, because the Bulgarians spoke Macedonian language readily....Gotse Delchev (Fig. 4.12)⁵³ called the EMRO the Trojan Horse of IMRO...”⁵⁴ Despite the mutual distrust, the two groups cooperated with each other, until the famous Ilinden uprising on 2 August 1903. For just over a week, the rebels captured the city of Kruševo and declared Macedonian independence. However, the Ottomans crushed the revolt swiftly and killed or captured most of their leaders. Alerted to the possibility of new war, Emperor Franz Joseph and Tsar Nicholas II imposed a programme of reforms for Macedonia, which the Porte viewed as a further humiliation and it never fully implemented it. The general dissatisfaction with the lack of reforms became one of the major reasons for the Young Turk revolution of 1908.⁵⁵

⁵² Roudometof, 2001, 146

⁵³ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 38. Delchev was one of the IMRO leaders on the eve of the *Ilinden Uprising* in 1903. Born near Thessaloniki, Bulgarian educated and buried in Skopje after many transfers. Now considered one of the founding fathers of Macedonian state. Bulgarian historians object this assertion as Yugoslav propaganda of Tito's era.

⁵⁴ Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008, 71

⁵⁵ Roudometof, 2001, 146

The Ilinden Uprising of 1903 became mythologized by the modern Macedonian nation-state which considers it to be the beginning of the Macedonian revival. Coinciding with the uprising, Krste Misirkov (1874-1926), a teacher from Macedonia, published in Sofia a book titled *On Macedonian Matters* (*За Македонциите работи*), in which he claimed that the Macedonian Slavs had an identity separate from the Bulgarian (Fig. 4.13).



Fig. 4.12 – Gotse Delchev (1872-1903)



Fig. 4.13 – Krste Misirkov (1874-1926)

Misirkov, regarded as the most important literary figure and national fighter for the Macedonian national identity, as well as the founding father of the Macedonian language, was a highly controversial figure.⁵⁶ In his early-20th century writings, he suggested the separateness of the Macedonian language and proposed the reformed orthography, but his ethnic loyalties changed over time.⁵⁷ While studying at the Universities of Belgrade and St.Petersburg, he lived in Belgrade, Sofia and St. Petersburg, writing and reporting on the events in Macedonia until the outbreak of Balkan wars. In 1902 Misirkov became one of the leading members of the *Macedonian Scientific and Literary Society* founded in St. Peterburg. There he co-

⁵⁶ Misirkov's argument for a separate language was widely used by Koneski during the formation and codification of the Macedonian orthography and language in 1945.

⁵⁷ After the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991, there was an upsurge in publications in Bulgaria related to Krste Misirkov, most of which argued his Bulgarian identity. The 2008 publication of his personal diary dating from the period of Balkan wars was considered a huge success for the Bulgarian scholars arguing the Bulgarian identity of the Macedonian Slavs.

authored a *Memorandum* on the independence of Macedonia, which was sent to the representatives of the Great Powers to the *London Peace Conference* in March 1913.⁵⁸ The *Memorandum*, written in the same year in the manner similar to that of Dako and Grameno on Albanian matters, included a group of authors affiliated to the idea of a possible Macedonian state.⁵⁹ They applied the same type of arguments as their Albanian counterparts:

“1) Macedonia should remain single, indivisible and independent Balkan state within its geographical, ethnographical, historical, economic and political borders.

2) A Macedonian national assembly should be established on the basis of general elections in Salonika in the soonest possible time which would work out in detail the internal structure of the state and determine its relations with the neighbouring countries.”⁶⁰

However, the geo-strategic position and complexity of Macedonia’s mixed population was not taken into full consideration when Macedonia was partitioned among Serbia (38%), Greece (51%) and Bulgaria (11%), following the outcomes of the two Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 (Map 4.4).⁶¹ The partition was sanctioned by the *Treaty of Bucharest* in 1913 and confirmed by the *Treaty of Constantinople* later in the same year. The First World War that followed, brought into existence a temporary Bulgarian state based on the San Stefano borders, but the borders drawn in Bucharest were restored at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919.

Throughout this period, Misirkov changed his ethnic affiliation on at least two occasions. After failing his studies in Belgrade in the early 1890s, he went to Bulgaria, where he had to declare himself a Bulgarian in order to continue his education. Disappointed by life in Sofia, he returned to Serbia where he was expected to declare himself a Serb in order to finish his studies.⁶² Similarly, during his university education in Russia, Misirkov joined the *Bulgarian Student Society* and maintained his Bulgarian identity until the outbreak of the First World War. After

⁵⁸ Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008, 114

⁵⁹ See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 243-245

⁶⁰ *Memorandum*, quoted in Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008, 114

⁶¹ Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008, 259

⁶² *The Scientific centre for Bulgarian National Strategy (Научен Център за Българска Национална Стратегия)* published in 2000 a study *Кръсте П. Мисирков и за Българските работи в Македония* by an eminent Bulgarian scholar Dr Veselin Traikov which re-asserted the Bulgarian claim on the ethnic territory of the current Republic of Macedonia. By arguing that all 20th century writers from Macedonia, now considered the Founding Fathers of the contemporary Macedonian nation, were actually conscious of their Bulgarian identity, Bulgarian nationalism, strengthened by the EU membership, re-established itself in Macedonia almost unnoticed.

1919, he took Bulgarian citizenship and spent last years of his life in Sofia, where he was eventually buried.⁶³ His Bulgarian identity was strongly denied first by the Yugoslav and then by modern Macedonian scholars. In 1953, an *Institute for Macedonian Language “Krstе Misirkov”* was founded in Skopje with aim to standardize a separate Macedonian language.

However, between 1919 and 1945 the Macedonian Slav population and the arguments of the language used in Macedonia officially ceased to exist in all three states covering the territory of Macedonia. In Greece, the Macedonian Slavs were considered Greeks, in Bulgaria – the Bulgars and in Yugoslavia – the Serbs.



Map. 4.4 – Partition of Macedonia after Balkan Wars

⁶³ According to Traikov, Misirkov maintained strong *Serbophobia*, based on his writings against the Serbian *St.Sava Society*. Considering that he first received and then had withdrawn the scholarship of the very same institution, his anti-Serbianism should be viewed as personal vendetta against the Serbian state and its institutions. In that light, Misirkov’s changes of identity, as reflected in his writings, represent a good example for the argument that acquiring a national identity can be viewed as a process influenced by the psychological traits of an individual’s personality. Had Misirkov have not the state support from Bulgaria, one has to question whether his Bulgarian identity would have existed at all.

4.5 The winning of a state

The legitimacy for taking over Macedonia by all three Balkan states in 1912-1913 demanded a convincing narrative that would have credibility in international political and academic circles. By 1923, the Eastern Question crisis was over. With the influx of Greek refugees from Turkey after the Greco-Turkish war of 1922, the ethnic picture of Greek part of Macedonia changed in favour of the Greeks. The Ancient Macedonian history narratives did not play a prominent role in this period, as an independent Macedonia did not exist. The struggle for influence in the rest of Macedonia continued on the line Belgrade-Sofia. This brought into prominence the question of ethnic affiliations during the mediaeval period.

In the second part of the 19th century, Serbian academia asserted the theory of a separate Macedonian Slav ethnic identity of the mediaeval Balkan ruler, Tsar Samuil (997-1014). The argument was based on the fact that Samuil was born in the territory of Macedonia and had his capital transferred from Preslav (Mediaeval Bulgarian capital) to Ohrid (which was taken over from the Byzantines). The debate reached a stalemate, as the analysis of surviving mediaeval manuscripts was inconclusive. The 14th century *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* (written in Latin) and 11th century *Synopsis of Histories* by John Skylitzes (written in Byzantine Greek), the only documents referring to the period of Samuil's rule, were scrutinized on many occasions. The fine nuances of mediaeval Latin and Greek terms were interpreted in accordance with the nationalistic views of Serbia and Bulgaria at the time. Quite often, the misuse of mediaeval terminology was in the interpretation, rather than the direct translation of the original text. These early arguments could not be either confirmed or denied by any other evidence, because proper archaeological excavations and interpretation of inscriptions took place only after the Second World War.

Serbian part of Macedonia, renamed Old Serbia⁶⁴ with added territories of southern Serbia was incorporated into the new Kingdom of SHS. It remained the one of the least developed and poorest parts of the country throughout the Yugoslav period, despite significant governmental efforts to improve economy and infrastructure. Expectedly, the central government in Belgrade imposed education in Serbian language and the official schoolbooks followed the narratives of the 19th and

⁶⁴ Once again it was renamed into Vardarska Banovina in 1929. See Map 1.a.13.

early 20th century scholars, which maintained the theory that Macedonian Slavs were actually Serbs, as based on their customs and folklore. The main premises of the Serbian origins of the Macedonian Slavs was less supported by the similarity of the language – after all, Bulgarian scholars had an equally convincing argument – but on the similarity of customs and tradition. For example, the celebration of a family’s Saint Protector (*Slava*) was considered to be a unique Serbian custom amongst all Orthodox peoples. Bulgarians do not have the custom, but Macedonian Slavs do, which, therefore, indicated their Serbian ethnicity.⁶⁵ Similarly, the fact that Skopje was a mediaeval Serbian capital during reign of the Emperor Stefan IV Dušan in the 14th century, was an additional Serbian argument.⁶⁶

However, throughout the interwar period, Bulgarian academics continued their claim to Macedonian Slavs by emphasizing that the Bulgars were in Macedonia *before* the Serbs, in the time of the First Bulgarian Empire (7th-11th centuries and), under Tsars Symeon (893-927) and Samuil (997-1014), whose reigns epitomised the Bulgarian national “Golden Age.” National grievances for the Bulgarian loss of Macedonia were expressed through the guerrilla activities of the IMRO, which was after the First World War reduced to the terrorist activities against the Greek and Yugoslav states.⁶⁷ The official Bulgarian authorities, even though not responsible for the irregular military incursions into Greece and Yugoslavia, waited until the beginning of the Second World War to re-assert their claim to Macedonia.

The beginning of the Second World War showed all the weaknesses of the united South Slav state. Yugoslavia was partitioned among its neighbours and occupied by Germany (Map 1.a.15). Almost whole of the Yugoslav Macedonia was once again occupied by Bulgaria. The western part with a large Albanian population was incorporated into a Greater Albania in 1941.

With Tito in power in 1945, the Yugoslav borders were restored with slight modifications. Former Serbian Macedonia returned to Yugoslav jurisdiction. The change of regime introduced new official Yugoslav version of history. The Serbian theories from the 19th and first part of the 20th centuries about the “Macedonianism” of Samuil’s state, which served to disentangle the Macedonian Slavs from the

⁶⁵ Georgevich, T.R. – *Macedonia*, London, 1916, 134

⁶⁶ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 38

⁶⁷ In 1923, the IMRO organized the assassination of the Bulgarian Prime Minister Aleksandar Stamboliyski. In 1934, the co-operation with the Croatian Ustaša movement of Ante Pavelić resulted in the assassination of King Aleksandar I of Yugoslavia. See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 200

Bulgars, were re-written and re-used as a grand narrative for the newly proclaimed Macedonian nation. The Communist doctrine of *Brotherhood and Unity*, designed to curb *Greater Serbianism* of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia decreed the foundation of new educational institutions away from the old universities of Belgrade and Zagreb, with aim to counteract the competing national narratives created in those two national centres in the previous six decades. The chief-executors of the *Brotherhood and Unity* were young communist scholars in socialist Yugoslavia, graduates from the Universities of Belgrade and Zagreb and former Partisans.

The pattern for establishing national narratives among the newly proclaimed Yugoslav nations was mirroring those of the Serbs and Croats, during the decades of formation of their national awakening: young students were sent to obtain education abroad, or in this case, Belgrade or Zagreb, where they would acquire a specific mind-set gained at these two centres. On their return, these young communist graduates had a task to re-interpret the existing theories in favour of the new nations. The main seats for these theories were, naturally, in the newly founded universities of Skopje and Sarajevo. On the other hand, in Belgrade and Zagreb, due to the war losses, forced retirement and emigration of the pre-war intellectuals, there was a considerable decline in the quality of instruction.⁶⁸ Because any form of critical inquiry was silenced, the revised past was imposed relatively easily upon the traditionally poorer parts of Yugoslavia which retained a significant Ottoman cultural inheritance.

Writing the history of Macedonia as an ethnic and linguistic entity distinct from its neighbours began only after the Second World War and was based entirely on political and academic arguments promoted in the later 19th and early 20th centuries, during the “scramble for Macedonia.” The newly introduced Macedonian national narrative focused on the Slav Empire of Samuil which was not viewed anymore as pro-Serbian, but anti-Bulgarian, which fitted well within the context of the wider Yugoslav idea. This interpretation of the 9th-12th century Orthodox Slav history remained the main doctrine of the Yugoslav educational syllabus in the Socialist Macedonian Republic until the disintegration of the federal state. It remained a part of the leading doctrine of the newly independent Macedonian state, from 1991 onwards, when the internal weakness required the expanded theories of nation-creation.

⁶⁸ Ćirković, S. – *The Serbs* – London, 2004, 282

The establishment of the new national institutions after 1945 was simultaneous with the establishment of similar institutions in other parts of Federal Yugoslavia which had been promoted into the new nations. The *City of Skopje Museum* was founded in the same year as the University (1949) and housed a series of artefacts from various disciplines, such as archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, history and art history, collected by Serbian archaeologist who began work on excavation and systematization in the interwar period.⁶⁹ However, there was no adequate building to store and display the collected artefacts. Until 1974, various venues such were the Secondary Technical School or the old Turkish Post Office were used as the museum display halls. Most of the artefacts were stored in various warehouses around town and were not available to the public.⁷⁰ Following the devastating earthquake of 1963, the Museum was finally moved to the refurbished building of the Old Railway Station, built in 1938-1940 by a Serbian architect Velimir Gavrilović (Fig. 4.14). The *City of Skopje Museum* was the highest ranking museum in socialist Macedonia until the establishment of the *Museum of Macedonia* in 1977.



Fig. 4.14 – The *Old Railway Station*, erected in 1938-1940 by a Serbian architect Velimir Gavrilović – The earliest photograph, published in the Skopje daily newspapers “Pravda” (no longer issued), dated 23 November 1940. The building itself was a modernist perception of the neo-Byzantine style. Following the 1963 earthquake and extensive adaptation, the building served as the *City of Skopje Museum* from 1974.

⁶⁹ Admittedly, the initiative for a museum was put forward in the 1930s during the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, but the lack of finances prevented the realization of the project.

⁷⁰ <http://www.mgs.org.mk/index.php/mk/istorijat> - The official web-site of the City of Skopje Museum – Accessed on 10/04/2014

The collections amassed after 1945 were not systematically organized until the formal establishment of the *Museum of Macedonia* in 1977, when the first generation of academically trained Macedonian professionals was able to apply the techniques of storing, presenting and interpreting the material findings amassed in the post-Second World War period. Prior to that, the majority of artefacts discovered in Macedonia during the 19th and first part of the 20th century ended up in museums in Sofia and Belgrade, as Serbian and Bulgarian historians and archaeologists were those mostly involved in researching the Macedonian Slavic heritage. The Communist regime supported the development of Macedonian nationalism, but there was a limit to the interpretation of 19th and 20th century events, which had to conform the Party's policies of "brotherhood and unity." The official version of history for the Yugoslav part of Macedonia was that the Socialist Revolution allowed Macedonians to declare for the first time in history their national identity freely. At the same time, the parts of Macedonia belonging to Bulgaria and Greece were regarded as oppressed. The 1912 partition of Macedonia was interpreted as an imperialist attempt by the neighbouring states Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria to conquer the territory and oppress the Macedonian nation.

Naturally, the Greek response was that of suspicion and rejection. The Yugoslav interpretation of Macedonian history was considered to be "*seditions propaganda, distortion of history, anthropological and historical studies of dubious or prejudiced nature that never seriously considered the existence of millions of indigenous Hellenic Macedonians...the maelstrom of political intrigue, marked by the Tito-Stalin scheming relationship and intrigue of the Bulgarian communist leader Georgi Dimitrov...*"⁷¹

4.6 Disputed independence

The sustainability of Macedonia as an independent state after 1991 was seriously shaken from the beginning by the open call by its Albanian minority to join the struggle for the independence of their Kosovo and Metohija compatriots and the Bulgarian assertion of its traditional claim to Macedonia.⁷² The only way to keep the

⁷¹ Papavizas, G. C. – *Claiming Macedonia: The Struggle for the Heritage, Territory and Name of the Historic Hellenic Land, 1862 – 2004*, McFarland&Co. Publishers, Jefferson, North Carolina, 2006, 12

⁷² At this point, Serbia was busy protecting its co-nationals that remained in the newly formed independent states of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, Serbian claim to Macedonia

republic whole and in peace, as the wars in the rest of Yugoslavia were unfolding, was to re-examine its geo-political and national strategies, resulting in the acquisition of a new historical narrative – the one that would create “continuity in discontinuity.”⁷³ Thus, the history of the Republic of Macedonia needed:

- 1) a much larger time span, linking various historical personalities and epochs, if it was to achieve existential legitimacy, and
- 2) the ethnic, blood-links between those periods to validate such claims.

From 1991 and the emergence of a new state of Macedonia (FYROM),⁷⁴ all efforts by the Skopje elites were dedicated to this cause, witnessing in the process the evolution of contemporary nationalism. Whilst the traditional nationalist tendencies in the West were being constantly undermined by the concept of a supra-national citizen state in the shape of the EU, the end of the 20th century in the Balkans saw a full re-deployment of the traditional nation-building tools, widely supported by all forms of public media. The language and the *Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts* – MANU (*Македонската Академија на Науките и Уметностите* – МАНУ), which was created in 1967 by a decree of the Communist authorities, gave impetus to the use of traditional nation-building processes in Macedonia.⁷⁵ A series of publishing programmes organized and promoted by the MANU from 1991 onwards, aimed at asserting the Macedonian national programme, insisting on visibly distinct national narratives from those of the neighbouring countries.

The national self-assertion needed to define the theoretical background using technics and models found in modern studies of nationalism. One of the former presidents of the MANU, Georgi Stardelov (b.1930), re-interpreted the works of Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith in order to establish the credibility of theories promulgated in the Macedonian Republic. The basic argument is a combination of the Smith’s ethno-symbolist approach and Halbwachs’ interpretation of collective memory:

remained behind the argument that developed between Greece, Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonian Republic itself.

⁷³ See *Appendix II – Theories of Nationalism*, p. 73-74

⁷⁴ FYROM – The abbreviation of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the name of the state in the United Nations, because of the Greek veto on the usage of the name Macedonia.

⁷⁵ <http://www.manu.edu.mk/mk/archives-2/founding-of-masa> - Accessed on 04/05/2013 - The official web-site of the MANU. Interestingly, the MANU was created in the same year as the Autocephaly was given to the Ohrid Archbishopry which was until then part of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

“...In the period around 1830, the Serbs and the Bulgars were considered to be one people that spoke the same language. The differentiation enabled them to become separate nations....When one people achieves the same postulates, such as the historical origins of people, a unified territory, language and religion, then the people receives an inner unity, becomes one in terms of both material and spiritual culture...This process enables a people to go through the emotional and intellectual self-identification, self-reflection and renewal of national myths, religious cults, personalities and heroes. In other words, people reach its roots. This inner search enables a nation to acquire a historic patina, and with an emotional and intellectual credo in concordance with spirituality...the autochthonous being becomes embedded in history.”⁷⁶

As the main evidence of the different historical stages when these processes were taking place in the Balkans, Stardelov (Fig. 4.15) employed recent Sundhaussen’s definition of nations that are *based on origins* and nations that are *based on choice*.⁷⁷ Based on this definition, he argued that the differentiation of the nations in the Balkans was taking place according to two models: nation-building where there existed a national state with its institutions and nation-building in Renan’s sense, without the existence of a state and state institutions.⁷⁸ In Macedonia, according to Stardelov, the building of a national state had to take place through culture, which existed before the state. Paraphrasing Smith, Stardelov insisted that the causality of a nation was based on the nation’s needs for existence. However, the pluralistic tendencies of modern nation-states, Stardelov argued, should lead to integrative processes in the Balkans.⁷⁹

Unfortunately, the whole concept that Stardelov developed, albeit fulfilling scholarly techniques, had serious logical misgivings, immediately identified by those disputing any separate Macedonian Slav nation. Namely, if any nation needs to differentiate itself from the wider family of nations, then any notion of the “integrative pluralistic tendencies of the modern world becomes automatically contradictory, as integration excludes, or at the very least, downplays, the differentiation. Thus, the narrative supported by the theory conceptualised around

⁷⁶ Старделов, Г. у Група аутора – *Уметничко богатство на Македонија* – Македонска книга, Скопје, 1998, 59-60 – My translation

⁷⁷ Sundhaussen, 1998, quoted in Старделов, 1998, 59

⁷⁸ Старделов, 1998, 61

⁷⁹ Старделов, 1998, 66-68

mutually exclusive premises received an unprecedented scrutiny by the neighbouring states and international scholars researching the region.

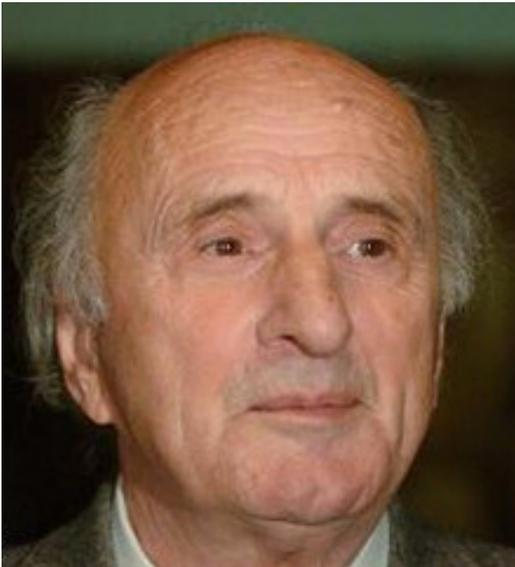


Fig. 4.15 – Georgi Stardelov (b.1930), provided the theory of nation which argued that “acquiring historic patina could be reached through the renewal of national myths” without defining to whom these national myths belong.

4.6.1 The Amalgamation Theory

The historical narrative referring to the nature of the Samuil’s state and the changing ethnic affiliations of the 19th-20th Macedonian Slav national revivalists, were not enough to strengthen the territoriality of the independent Macedonian state. Even though Bulgaria was the first country to officially recognize the independence of Macedonia in January 1992, it negated the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. For Bulgaria, Macedonia is simply another Bulgarian state and Bulgarian identity is intimately bound to Macedonia as an area inhabited by Bulgarians. In other words, a separate state can exist in FYROM, but there can be no Macedonian nation.⁸⁰ To overcome this existential problem, Macedonian scholars have developed in the past twenty years a theory which would enable the extension of the Macedonian Slav history deep into the period when the Balkans were not inhabited by the Slavs or Bulgarians. Parallel with the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the Macedonian scholars and politicians have stirred the academic debates among the international scholars about the ethnic separateness of the Ancient Macedonians from the Ancient Greeks. Behind the initial argument that “*the Slavs who domesticated*

⁸⁰ Craft, 1996, quoted in Isakovic, 2000, 201

themselves on the Balkans inherited the name and decided to call themselves Macedonians,” they persistently insisted on the ethnic difference between two ancient states in order to overcome the Bulgarian argument that cannot stretch in the past further than the 7th century AD.⁸¹

The theory based on the re-interpretation of the ancient writers and putting them in the context of modern understanding of terms *nation* and *ethnic* was somewhat cynically named as *The Amalgamation Theory*.⁸² Modern Macedonian scholars, supported by the MANU, emphasised the ambiguity of the surviving ancient texts which refer to the Ancient Macedonians as “barbarians.” Insisting on the difference of the state systems between the Macedonian Kingdom and Greek *poleis*, the creators of the new Macedonian national narrative hoped to win the approval of the international academic circles which could lead to winning the political support of the main powers presently influencing the Balkans.

All Macedonian scholars charged with the creation of the new narrative insisted on the word “barbarian” as a major demarcation line between the Macedonians and the Greeks. They argued at large that “*in the 6th century BC Macedonia did not have close contacts with the Greek state and culture, as it was a society of a ‘military democracy’ which started the process of unification under Alexander I (c.498-454BC).*”⁸³ Aleksandar Donski (b.1960), from the *Institute of History and Archaeology Goce Delčev University* in Štip, has gone furthest in this argument. In 2010, Donski (Fig. 4.16) authored an extensive memorandum, comprising quotes and maps supporting the Macedonian cause. Under the title *The Ancient Macedonians Were NOT Greeks! (In Defence of Macedonia)* addressed to the USA President, EU and NATO officials and selected world universities, Donski replied to the similar memorandum sent by Greek scholars to the same institutions in May 2009, which demanded the withdrawal of the recognition of the Republic of Macedonia under that name. So far, Greece blocked all attempts by the former Yugoslav republic to join international institutions under the name of Macedonia since 1991, as it considers Macedonia part of its own heritage. In 70 pages of the document, Donski argued that territory of modern Macedonian Republic belonged to the ancient *Paionia*, later renamed into *Macedonia* – “a land that was never Greek.” He also argued that

⁸¹ Todorovski in Čausidis, N. & All – *Macedonia – Cultural Heritage* – Mislja, Skopje, 1995, 7

⁸² The term was borrowed from Papavizas.

⁸³ Todorovski in Čausidis, 1995, 7

Alexander the Great, the most important figure of Ancient Macedonia never considered himself a Greek:

“The term ‘Macedonian Geeks,’ referring to the ancient Macedonians, is a time-honoured and meaningless canard. No biographer of Alexander the Great of Macedonia ever characterized the ancient Macedonians as ‘Macedonian Greeks,’ but only as Macedonians. It is difficult to understand how these expert signatories could invent a nonexistent term to support their core premise. One suspects that since no ancient biographer of Alexander ever used the term ‘Macedonian Greeks,’ these ‘experts’ decided that this term needed to be invented to better align their argument with the official Greek policies and propaganda that their letter supports. Objective contemporary experts agree that the writing of the ancient authors who directly observed these societies is far more valuable and valid than the expedient inventions of the signatories’... position that Alexander the Great was Greek is effectively discredited with his own words: ‘O Macedonians and Grecian allies... I have collected you together into the same spot, so that I may either persuade you to march forward with me, or may be persuaded by you to return.’”⁸⁴



Fig. 4.16 – Aleksandar Donski (b.1960) authored in 2009 the theory which argued for separate ethnic identities of the Ancient Macedonians and Ancient Greeks.

⁸⁴ Donski, A. – *The Ancinet Macedonians Were NOT Greeks! In Defence of Macedonia* –Institute of History and Archeology Goce Delčev University – Štip, Republic of Macedonia, 2010, 12-14

Insisting on the difference between the Macedonians and the Greeks emphasised the difference of the state organization and certain customs, as well as the fact that non-Greeks were not allowed to participate in the Olympic Games. According to the new Macedonian narrative, Alexander I of Macedon (498-454BC) was allowed to participate only when he “forged” his Greek origin, because he was “*not from Argos in Peloponnesus, but from Argos in Orestikon in Upper Macedonia.*”⁸⁵ Since no Ancient Macedonian language texts existed, the usage of Attic Greek for most of Ancient Macedonian history was usually explained by the notion that it was considered the international language of the time.⁸⁶

Needless to say, the Greek position on this matter is firmly based on the argument that no Slavs could claim Hellenic heritage. Innumerable studies written and published by both Greek and international scholars from the Second World War onwards maintained the view and insisted on the usage of Greek letters and some form of Greek language by the Ancient Macedonians represented sufficient evidence for the claim of the Greek origins of the Macedonians:

*“It is generally accepted that the ethnic name of Macedonians derives from the Greek term Μακεδών that denotes physical characteristics of the highland tribes, distinguishable by their height...”*⁸⁷ wrote Greek scholar Andriotes from the *Institute for Balkan Studies* in Thessaloniki, as early as the 1960s. The main Greek objection was based on the presumption that if the usage of the name of Macedonia by the Slavs was to be allowed, then “*a masterful interplay of the geographical and national concepts of the term, these two concepts would be fused into one....and in the ensuing confusion, the newly-established Macedonian nation could rightfully stake a claim to everything Macedonian.*”⁸⁸ With Macedonian independence from Yugoslavia, Greek activities related to what they consider their historical heritage had become a matter of national interest.

Politically, the situation was further complicated by the adoption of the state symbols for the Republic of Macedonia. The state’s adopted flag, modified *Sun of Vergina*, a symbol on the tomb of Philip II (359-336BC) near Pella (Fig. 4.17), the ancient Macedonian capital, now in Greece was regarded by Greece as a direct provocation (Fig. 4.18). After three years of campaigning, Greece won the argument

⁸⁵ Pavlovski and Pavlovski, 1996, 30

⁸⁶ Ibid, 38

⁸⁷ Andriotes, 1978, 143-147

⁸⁸ Kofos, E. – *Macedonian Question: The Politics of Mutation – Balkan Studies, Vol27*, 1986, 182

and the state flag of FYROM, which was the state-name internationally officially accepted, changed into the modified *Sun of Freedom* (Fig. 4.19).



Fig. 4.17 – Silver plate depicting the *Sun of Vergina*, excavated in Vergina, 100km north of Thessaloniki



Fig. 4.18 – The flag of Republic of Macedonia between 1992 and 1995. Following Greek objections, it was modified into the *Sun of Freedom* in 1995.



Fig. 4.19 – The *Sun of Freedom* serves as a state-symbol of Macedonian Republic. References to the *Sun of Vergina* are clearly visible.

4.6.2 “Antiquisation” of the nation

As material evidence of the Ancient Macedonian kingdom in the Macedonian Republic is scarce in comparison with the evidence unearthed in the Greek part of Macedonia, the honouring of the *Amalgamation Theory* was exacerbated by a number of new monuments erected in the Macedonian Republic in recent years. The erection of monuments dedicated to the great heroes of the past as expression of national pride was a traditional way of confirmation of national identity and underlining the official national narrative. It was widely used in Europe in the

period of building early nation-states during the 19th and early 20th centuries.⁸⁹ However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the usage of the 19th century nation-building techniques appears anachronistic and reflects lack of national self-respect.⁹⁰

The extent of the programme of nation-building through the symbolic usage of monuments reached such a scale that even some of the more prominent scholars in favour of a separate Macedonian identity disparagingly termed it “*Antiquisation*.”⁹¹ The designed project envisaged the erection of thirty monuments dedicated to the famous persons from Ancient Macedonian history. The Macedonian government approved its beginning in 2007 under the title *Skopje 2014*, with aim to rebuild the complex of governmental buildings in the capital and give them the appearance of the classical architectural design.⁹²

Among the erected monuments, the most notable was the gigantic statue of Alexander the Great (Fig. 4.20 and Fig. 4.21), unveiled on 8 September 2011 on the Macedonia Square in Skopje, marking the 20th anniversary of independence. The size of the monument represents an expression of the collective belief in the direct descent of modern Macedonians from the great hero of the Ancient past.

Only a few streets away from the 28m tall bronze *Warrior on the Horse*, as the monument to Alexander was officially named, in the *Autokomanda* part of Skopje, the 8m tall monument to Philip II (Fig. 4.22) was erected simultaneously. From the time of independence, a number of monuments of different sizes, dedicated to Alexander and Philip were unveiled in all major cities and towns in Macedonia. A smaller version of Alexander, pointing a long spear into the sky was erected in Prilep (Fig. 4.23) and Štip, where Alexander is represented with a sword in his hand (Fig. 4.24). Another monument to Philip, also 8m tall was also erected in Bitola in 2011 (Fig. 4.25).

⁸⁹ An excellent essay *The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the ‘invention of tradition’, c.1820-1977* by David Cannadine in Hobsbawm E. and Ranger, T., 1983, 101-165 convincingly summarises the nation-building process of an early British nation-state, which later served as a model to smaller European states. The techniques described by Cannadine were reproduced in a number of more recent nation-building processes.

⁹⁰ Чаусидис, Н. – *Проектот Скопје 2014 – Скици за едно наредно истражување*, Скопје, 2013, 60

⁹¹ Professor Nikos Čausidis from the Department of Archaeology at the University of Skopje openly expressed his disagreements with the governmental programmes of re-building Skopje and some other towns in the Republic of Macedonia. His study *Project Skopje 2014 – Sketches for Future Research* which openly criticizes the “megalomania” of the nation-building programme was refused by the publishers. Because of that, Prof. Čausidis has published his work independently.

⁹² www.beta.rs – News agency BETA – Accessed on 21 June 2011



Fig. 4.20 – *The Warrior on Horse* on Macedonia Square in Skopje, unveiled in 2011. The size and proportion of the monument were criticized as not corresponding to the surrounding architecture.



Fig. 4.22 – *The Warrior on Horse* resembles traditional representation of Alexander the Great



Fig. 4.22 – The Monument to Philip II dominates the vista over Skopje.



Fig. 4.23 – Alexander, 2011, Prilep



Fig. 4.24 – Alexander, 2011, Štip



Fig. 4.25 – Philip II, work of a young Macedonian sculptor Angel Korunovski (b.1979), was unveiled in Bitola in 2011.

Along with these works, a new sports venue, the *National Arena Philip II of Macedon* was built in place of the old stadium, erected in 1978.⁹³ Following major reconstruction in 2008, the international airport in Skopje was renamed the *Skopje Alexander the Great Airport*.⁹⁴ In general, since 1991, the main city squares in most Macedonian towns that used to be named after communist partisan fighters of the Second World War were systematically re-named after most important historical figures and places of Macedonian ancient and mediaeval history. Thus, within the *Skopje 2014 Programme*, the statue of Justinian I was unveiled in 2007 in front of the old *Stone Bridge*,⁹⁵ as some Macedonian archaeologists maintain the theory that *Justiniana Prima*, birthplace of the great Eastern Roman Emperor is actually Skopje (Fig. 4.26). The nearby *Skopje Square* was embellished by the marble statue of Tsar Samuil in 2011, a move that was received with critical amusement by the Bulgarian public (Fig. 4.27).⁹⁶ Similar amusement took place among the Serbian public when the statue of Emperor Stefan Dušan was symbolically unveiled in front of the Supreme Court in 2013 (Fig. 4.28).



Fig. 4.26 – *Monument to Justinian I (527-565)*, considered to be Macedonian, according to the new Macedonian national narrative. In the background, the *Stone Bridge* (current structure re-built by Mehmed II Conqueror in the 15th century on the foundation of the mediaeval bridge built by Stefan Dušan IV in the early 14th century on even earlier Roman foundations. In the background, across the River Vardar, the construction of the new *Archaeological Museum of Macedonia*.

⁹³ The name of the arena was decided in 2008 and the works were completed in 2013.

⁹⁴ Again, the name of the airport was chosen in 2008 and resonates the general pattern of *Antiquisation*.

⁹⁵ The *Old Stone Bridge* was originally called *Dušan's Bridge* after the Serbian Emperor Stephen Dušan IV Nemanjić, who built it on the Roman foundations in the 14th century. Its present form dates from the 15th century Ottoman reconstruction.

⁹⁶ www.novinite.com – Bulgarian News Agency – Accessed on 28 June 2011



Fig. 4.27 – *Monument to Tsar Samuil* on Skopje Square



Fig. 4.28 – *Monument to Emperor Stefan Dušan* was erected in 2013 in front of the Supreme Court as a reference to his *Code* of 1349. Almost immediately it was damaged by the supporters of the ethnic Albanian political parties from Skopje.

The newly urbanized *Pella Square* in Skopje was chosen as a place to honour a controversial Krste Misirkov in 2007 (Fig. 4.29). However, in 2012, the *Pella Square* received a monument worthy of the Imperial Rome: the triumphal arch. (Fig. 4.30).



Fig. 4.29 – Monument to Krste Misirkov



Fig. 4.30 – *Porta Macedonia*, unveiled in 2012. The decorative plastic on the triumphal arch refer to the important periods of Macedonian history. In the background, the *Warrior on Horse*. Both sculptures are by Valentina Stefanovska, a sculptress closely associated to the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.

During the unveiling of *Porta Macedonia*, the current Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski (b.1970) admitted that he personally was the initiator of the Project Skopje 2014.⁹⁷ Judging from the scope of planned works and the scale of costs, it appears that insisting on monumentality aimed to argue the Macedonian version of national history.⁹⁸ For the design of the monuments, the government in Skopje chose twenty-eight sculptors and architects from several Macedonian universities. The author of the *Warrior on Horse* and *Porta Macedonia*, a sculptress Valentina Stefanovska, as the most prominent of them, was commissioned by the state officials to execute the most ambitious monuments.⁹⁹ Her commission is reminiscent of that of Ivan Meštrović during the Kingdom of Yugoslavia when he was one of the key-promoters of *Integral Yugoslavism*.¹⁰⁰ The similarity between Meštrović, the Yugoslav court-artist, and Stefanovska, the state-artist of a newly created nation state, could be observed only in the fact that both worked as promoters of artificial national narratives imposed from the state authorities, rather than from the belief of the general population.¹⁰¹

There is an observed tendency that the smaller and newer the state is, the larger the public monuments are being erected as a clear statement to the wider world that the new state is here to stay. This tendency can be viewed as an act of national self-convincing in the truth of the proscribed national narrative.¹⁰² Therefore, the example of the *Project Skopje 2014* represents a typical case-study of an all-inclusive *banal nationalism* on a collective socio-psychological level, as described by Billig.¹⁰³

4.7 “Acculturation” of the nation

The general idea of the *Amalgamation theory* was to legitimize the existence of the modern nation-state of Macedonia, as a South Slavic state different from both Bulgaria and Serbia. Despite loud Greek objections that it is aimed primarily at Greek national interests, the real reasons behind the acquisition of the ancient heritage by the modern Macedonian state lay in the desire to distinguish itself from its two Slavic

⁹⁷ <http://macedoniaonline.eu/content/view/20045/45/> - Macedonian News Agency, 7 January 2012 – Accessed on 07/05/2013

⁹⁸ Чаусидис, 2013, 68 – Čausidis remarked that the Project Skopje 2014 is nothing but the “plastic surgery on Skopje’s facades.”

⁹⁹ Stefanovska was accused by the press in Macedonia for nepotism and lack of talent.

¹⁰⁰ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 82-83 and *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 201-203.

¹⁰¹ Prior to becoming a court favourite to King Aleksandar I, Meštrović was already renowned artist. Stefanovska, on the other hand, was not known prior to her engagement in the *Project Skopje 2014*.

¹⁰² Чаусидис, 2013, 58

¹⁰³ See *Appendix II – Theories of Nationalism*, p.80

neighbours. It also aims to counteract the Albanian national narrative which claims the ancient Illyrian heritage and the territory of, at least, the western part of the modern republic.

With this in sight, the *Amalgamation Theory* aims to link the historical events between the 6th and 9th centuries with ancient period. The sources referring to the regional socio-political situation relate mainly to the southern Balkans and Adriatic coast. The most important one, Porphyrogenitus' *De Administrando Imperio* from the first part of the 10th century, recorded the names of the various Slavic tribes for the first time in history. Of all the Balkan Slavic tribes mentioned by Porphyrogenitus, only the Serbs and the Croats survived under their names.¹⁰⁴ The tribes which did not preserve their names, such were Draguvites, Sagudats, Strymonians, for example, and which lived in the Thessaloniki hinterland were conveniently deployed by the new Macedonian narrative as the true ancestors of the Macedonian Slavs.¹⁰⁵ According to modern Macedonian scholarship, they could not preserve their ethnic names because they mixed with the local, certainly not Greek, population that survived the demise of the Roman Empire:

*“The inhabitants of Macedonia outlived their physical existence in the material culture they left behind....Towards the close of the Antique Period all these nationalities and minorities were melded into a homogenous ethnic entity, known as Romaioi....The meeting of the Romaic and the Slavonic worlds is a key factor in an interpretation of international relations in Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages. The acculturation occurred through Christianity.”*¹⁰⁶

The lack of information about the tribes inhabiting Macedonia immediately after the settlement of the Slavs is usually discussed as the analogous to the better known Serbian and Croatian early settlements:

“During the 7th century, the Macedonian Slavs twice formed large tribal unions... (which) represented the basis for establishing a (not yet developed) political community; not less developed than the tribal union of the Serbs and the Croats in

¹⁰⁴ D.A.I., Volume I: 29-37. Also, see Chapter I – Historical background, p. 26-27

¹⁰⁵ Павловски, Ј. и Павловски, М. – *Македонија, вчера и днес*, Книгоиздателство, Скопје, 1996 – Pavlovski, J. and Pavlovski, M. – *Macedonia, yesterday and today*, Knigoizdatelstvo, Skopje, 1996, 57. There were no records of the “Slav speaking Macedonians” ever in existence.

¹⁰⁶ Čausidis, 1995, 73-93 – Prof. Čausidis, himself originally from Tashkent, Uzbekistan, was one of the great promoters of the new Macedonian identity in the first years of Macedonian independence. From the theoretical builder of the national identity, nearly two decades later, he became one of the fiercest critics of the manner in which the materialization of the narrative was taking place.

the 9th-10th centuries."¹⁰⁷ The acculturation, according to this theory, was a synthesis of the material, cultural and spiritual values of natives and conquerors and lasted for many centuries. Their co-habitation additionally ascertained that Slavic tribes did not settle in a deserted and empty territory.¹⁰⁸ Direct contact resulted in the interweaving of the two heritages: the old Balkan cultural and mythical with the new Slavic culture and myth."¹⁰⁹

The mixing of the population had inevitably happened, but to what extent it is impossible to determine. A relatively small number of Latin and Greek words that entered Slavic languages point to a lesser percentage of influence. A very few ancient myths and motifs survived in the oral Slavic poetry collected during the 19th and 20th centuries among the Southern Slavs. That suggests that either the Slavs outnumbered the local population to an extent that the assimilation was on the side of the Slavs, or that the area they inhabited was scarcely populated. In the first case, the assimilated local population would have lost the memories of their ancient roots, which would mean that the assimilation into the Slavic stratum severed the links with the pre-Slavic Balkans. In the second case, if the Slavs had encountered the vast empty territory, as some researchers of the period suggest, the link with the pre-Slavic Balkans did not exist from the start.¹¹⁰

However, the remains of the material culture, from the Neolithic period until the settlement of the Slavs, not fully scientifically explored and interpreted, but scattered all over the territory of present-day Macedonia, were being used for another assertion of the *Amalgamation Theory*: the earliest Christians in the Balkans were from the region of Macedonia.

*"The ruins of over 230 basilicas have been located, but only small percentage have been excavated and studied. A third, quite considerable group have not yet been located, although their existence is confirmed by high quality stone samples. This abundance of Early Christian shrines shows Macedonia to have been one of the most magnificent Early Christian centres of the Mediterranean region."*¹¹¹

Similarly, the later spread of Christianity among the settled Slavs conducted by the missionary work of brothers Cyril (827-869) and Methodius (815/820-885),

¹⁰⁷ Pavlovski and Pavlovski, 1996, 12

¹⁰⁸ This directly contradicts Curta's arguments. See discussion below.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 54

¹¹⁰ Curta, 2006, 43-47

¹¹¹ Čausidis, 1995, 73-93

themselves natives of Macedonia, was explained as deriving *exclusively* from the Macedonian linguistic background. Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius, “Apostles to the Slavs,” when creating the first Slavic alphabet, based it on *their native tongue*. According to the *Amalgamation Theory*, this means that the *Old Church Slavonic* was essentially the *Old Macedonian*. The brothers Cyril and Methodius “most probably came from the Bregalnica region, where Methodius was an administrator, although the archaeology has yet to confirm it.”¹¹² The argument augments not only that the missionary brothers were Macedonian Slavs, but that they also spoke the Macedonian Slavic language or, at least, its early version. Equally, the disciples of Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement (840-916) and St. Naum (830-916), founders of one of the earliest Slavic schools in Ohrid were also considered to be of ethnic Macedonian Slav descent.¹¹³ Thus, both pairs of early Slavic scholars, being natives of Macedonia, were worth of monuments within the *Project Skopje 2014* nation-building programme (Fig. 1.a.6 and Fig. 1.a.7).

4.7.1 Mediaeval Empire – Bulgarian 9th-11th centuries?

As mentioned earlier, the ethnic identity of Tsar Samuil (997-1014) from the period of the First Bulgarian Empire (681-1018), caused a great academic debate between Serbian and Bulgarian scholars in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. During Tito’s regime in Yugoslavia, the theory of the *Macedonian Slavic Empire* of Samuil, initially put forward by the Serbian academics of the early 20th century, was further refined and sanctioned for the official use in school syllabuses of the Republic of Macedonia. Macedonian scholars presently argue that Tsar Samuil could not have been a Bulgarian because “in the minds of the Byzantines there was only one empire different from their own in the Balkans: that of the Bulgarians.”¹¹⁴ They further argued that Samuil’s rule, centred on Ohrid in the territory of modern Macedonian republic, was important geo-strategically regarding Byzantium, and indicated Samuil’s intent to “empower Macedonia”, his native country.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Pavlovski and Pavlovski, 1996, 95

¹¹³ All four saints, Cyril, Methodius, Clement and Naum are celebrated by all Slavic Orthodox Churches. Cyril and Methodius are also honoured by the Roman Catholic Church.

¹¹⁴ Čausidis, 1995, 101

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 101

This theory was seriously weakened after the discovery of the Cyrillic inscription in Bitola¹¹⁶ which commemorates the construction of the Fort by Samuil's nephew as "a haven for the salvation of the Bulgarians."¹¹⁷ The inscription, dated between 1014/15, was discovered in 1956, during the demolition of the Ottoman mosque in Bitola (Fig. 4.31). It is currently housed in the Bitola Municipal Museum, although not open to the public.



Fig. 4.31 – Bitola Inscription which corroborated Tsar Samuil's connection with the Bulgars.

In 2006, a huge controversy arose when the French Ministry of Culture undertook the sponsorship of the catalogue representing Macedonian heritage. The front page of the catalogue consisted of the reproduction of the Bitola Inscription. The local government objected to its publication as "Macedonian heritage was presented as Bulgarian". The catalogue was never published.¹¹⁸

The surviving monuments from the period, dispersed all over the region, necessary for the corroboration of the narrative are predominantly of an ecclesiastical character: churches and monasteries. Also, some elements of military structures, such as city walls and fortresses, built with large rectangular stone blocks, survived, but usually lacking sufficient/exact recorded data about their founders and/or architects. Further complication is that very few monuments from this period survived in their

¹¹⁶ Previously, Monastir

¹¹⁷ Zaimov, quoted in Curta, 2006, 246

¹¹⁸ www.dnevnik.com.mk – Accessed on 1 September 2011

original state, due to later additions and conversions, especially during the Ottoman period. The remains of secular architecture of this time are generally insignificant. There are no remnants which would serve as a basis for shaping a picture of palaces, houses or town planning. There are no preserved examples of individual domestic dwellings from the pre-Ottoman era. All architectural units that could be described as individual houses date to the 19th-20th century.¹¹⁹ Such a situation enables speculative interpretation on an unprecedented scale.

For the 9th-11th century period in Macedonia, the most notable is the mediaeval complex of the Ohrid churches and monasteries (Fig. 4.32). When Samuil transferred his capital from Preslav to Ohrid, the disciples of Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement and St. Naum came to Ohrid to continue the work of their teachers. They founded two churches on the opposite sides of the Lake Ohrid, in which they were later buried.¹²⁰

The new Macedonian narrative argues that “during the Macedonian Empire of Samuil, new characteristics appeared in *Macedonian architecture*, long after the Byzantine architectural influence had run its course....This suggests *the existence of a separate Macedonian school of architecture*.”¹²¹ As an example, Pavlovski points to the Monastery of St. Panteleimon, also in Ohrid, consecrated by St. Clement in 893, which had “oval” forms, as opposed to the round 3-conchal buildings (Fig. 4.33). But, the church that survives today is not the original 9th century monument. The whole complex of mediaeval churches and the city walls of Old Ohrid, dated to the period of Samuil’s Empire, were carefully restored in recent years. Parallel with the restoration of mediaeval heritage, a team of archaeologists led by Paško Kuzman of the *Institute and Museum of Ohrid*, excavated the remains of the “ancient fortress, assumed to be built by Philip II of Macedon (Fig. 4.34).”¹²²

¹¹⁹ Pavlovski and Pavlovski, 1996, 131-133

¹²⁰ Čausidis, 1995, 97

¹²¹ Pavlovski and Pavlovski, 1996, 130

¹²² <http://www.culture.in.mk/story.asp?id=12676> – Accessed on 20 September 2011



Fig. 4.32 – The Monastery of St. Naum, Ohrid, late 9th century. Byzantine style of architecture re-named into Macedonian school of architecture



Fig. 4.33 – The Monastery of St. Panteleimon, Ohrid, 9th century. “Oval” forms of the single nave building are now described as a unique *Macedonian school* of architecture.



Fig. 4.34 – The Monastery of St. Panteleimon, 9th century, Ohrid. In the front, the ancient ruins unearthed during the conservation works, now presumed to have been built by Philip II of Macedon in the fourth century BC.

During the Ottoman period, the Ohrid church of St. Panteleimon was converted into a mosque, only to be restored to its previous use after the Ottomans left in 1913. In 2000-2002, the complex underwent major reconstruction and was restored to what it *might have looked like* in the time of its consecration.¹²³ It is now referred to as the most sacred mediaeval monument of the *Macedonian Orthodox Church*. A similar designation was given to other churches and monasteries on the whole territory of the Republic of Macedonia, despite the fact that the *Macedonian Orthodox Church* was never ecumenically recognized.

4.7.2 Macedonian Orthodox heritage – Serbian 13th-14th centuries?

The creation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was a political act of the Communist regime in Yugoslavia. In 1958, the Serbian Orthodox Church was put under pressure to recognize the autonomy of the Ohrid Archbishopric, which was under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate after the creation of Yugoslavia.¹²⁴ In 1967, on the bicentenary of the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopry, the higher

¹²³ For the restoration project, the comparison had to be done to the surviving Byzantine churches from the same period.

¹²⁴ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 107

clergy in the Republic of Macedonia, prompted by the Communist authorities, unilaterally announced its autocephalous status from the Serbian Patriarchate, which in return declared such a move as schismatic.

Since then, all three neighbouring Orthodox churches, Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian blocked the attempts of the Ohrid Archbishopric to become a separate national church. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and the powerful Russian Patriarchate sided with the Serbian Church. The struggle for ecclesiastical supremacy over Macedonia has remained in stalemate ever since. In 2002, the Serbian and Macedonian clergy began negotiations at Niš.¹²⁵ The attempt to reach an agreement, backed by both governments, produced no results. The Macedonian negotiators argued is that the Macedonian Church should be allowed the autocephaly, as it would restore the long tradition of the Ohrid See, established in 535 by the Emperor Justinian.¹²⁶ The Serbian church questioned the ecumenical legality of the Macedonian church.¹²⁷ The dispute resulted in Serbian priests being banned from entering Macedonia. In return, the Serbian church has prevented the celebration of the *Day of the State of Macedonia* within the compounds of the Monastery Prohor Pčinjski, where the Republic of Macedonia was founded in 1944. The dispute between the churches intensified after the Serbian Orthodox Church demanded to take into its care the mediaeval monasteries of the Nemanjić period (12th-14th centuries), which happen to be the best preserved heritage on the territory of the republic. The struggle for jurisdiction over 1200 churches, most of which are dated from the period when the Serbian dynasty ruled Macedonia, effectively turned into a struggle for building the new national identity. Currently, Serbia does not interfere in the church dispute in Macedonia, but Serbian intellectuals regularly warn on the state sponsored eradication of the remnants of the Serbian ethnicity in the Macedonian Republic.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Southern city of Serbia, ancient Naissus

¹²⁶ *NIN*, 19 June 2003 – Serbian weekly magazine

¹²⁷ Macedonian scholar Aneta Serafimova commented on the revival of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 which also included Ohrid See as “failed” because Ohrid “rightfully had prime position” in relation to Justiniana Prima (Serafimova, quoted in Čausidis, 1995, 103 – Macedonian scholars maintain the view that Skopje is Justinian’s town of Justiniana Prima.

¹²⁸ The Serbian Orthodox Church is banned on the territory of Republic of Macedonia since the announcement of autocephaly in 1967. Historian Čedomir Antić pointed to the fact that the number of the remaining Serbs in Macedonia is rapidly falling due to the state assimilation of the Macedonian authorities – <http://www.politika.rs/pogledi/Chedomir-Antic/Zatocenik-savesti.lt.html> - Accessed on 11/07/2013

Serbian state influence in mediaeval Macedonia became significant after 1185. The Nemanjić rulers and their vassals followed the Byzantine tradition of church building. As the main artistic and architectural influence for all orthodox Balkan countries emanated from Byzantium, most of the Orthodox heritage was subject to the great nationalist debates about the ethnic origins of the founders of these monuments. Throughout the mediaeval and Ottoman periods, the churches and monasteries had been destroyed, rebuilt, converted and returned to its previous use. Only in a few cases do inscriptions or charters clearly identify a founder (*ktitor*) or a master-architect.

An extensive in-depth literature on the technical details and artistic influences about all major monuments in the region is available in all Balkan languages and is beyond the scope of this study. What is of concern is the current interpretation of the significance and the change in the nomenclature of architectural styles.¹²⁹ Inventing new names for the existing architectural styles and assigning different characteristics to them is often based on peculiarities of local detailing, rather than significant aesthetic differences. Current academic writings that endorse such practise have function of the nation-building process. By obscuring the origins of the monuments through the invention and re-employment of new names for the specific archaeological heritage and architectural styles – particularly for the ecclesiastical buildings of the exceptional historical value – political and academic elites engaged in the nation-building programme aim to achieve their objectives by frequent repetition of their arguments.

During 9th-11th centuries, according to the new Macedonian interpretation, Constantinople abandoned basilicas as an architectural type. The multitude of monuments in the Balkans from that period has been described as a union of two types: the basilica and the cruciform-domed cupola.¹³⁰ This interpretation of the historic architecture became a “programmatic imperative” for the restoration of the church organization of the Ohrid Archbishopric. As the nobles who commissioned the churches and monasteries were almost exclusively Byzantine, they naturally aimed at copying the Constantinopolitan tastes. In doing so, they were employing foreign master-builders. The case study of the re-interpretation of heritage for modern political purposes could be shown on yet another church dedicated to St. Panteleimon

¹²⁹ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 121-122 and *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 302-303

¹³⁰ Serafimova, in Čausidis, 1995, 111

near Skopje (Fig. 4.35). Built in 1164 by Alexius Porphyrogenitus, grandson of the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118), the Church of Panteleimon was interpreted to have “its walls broken by entrances to the arms of the cross, a sign not of a predestined power of the Empire, but of a family pledge to piety.”¹³¹ This argument can be only partly accepted. The smaller scale of the Balkan monuments is not necessarily linked to the “family pledge” of the ruling nobles, but the need to commission of as many religious objects as possible, as that was the way to keep the population in subjection. The small size of the churches was often caused by the limitation of the older foundations. This explanation points to the conclusion that the later (and better preserved) mediaeval monuments of the Nemanjić period were not a novel approach to building, but the product of local inventiveness.



Fig. 4.35 – The church of St. Panteleimon in Gornji Nerezi near Skopje. Built by the member of the Comneni dynasty in the 12th century, it is now renamed into Macedonian historic architecture.

According to the *Amalgamation Theory*, “one of the most important 14th century monuments, Staro Nagoričino near Kumanovo, built by King Milutin Nemanjić (1282-1321), was in the dominant style of the century: a cross within a square, with a cupola resting on four columns. However, the builders of the Staro

¹³¹ Ibid, 112

Nagoričino used an elongated five-domed cross, precisely because of the shape of the old building, which is now lost.”¹³² Insisting on the limitation of the older foundations should lead to the conclusion that the 13th-14th century Serbian kingdom in Macedonia had a similar “usurping role” like the Byzantium or Bulgaria between the 6th-12th centuries. In reality, the 14th century monuments in Macedonia did indeed develop certain differences from the Constantinopolitan monuments of the same period. Namely, there was a visible increase in Romanesque features, particularly in architectural details. This did not come from the declining Constantinople, but from the North-West, through Serbia. Neither Bulgarian nor Byzantine architectural styles of the period contain Western influences. Serbian styles, on the other hand, do. The reason for this was the proximity of Catholic countries on the northern and western Serbia borders and a strong economic connection with Italian Adriatic city-states. Several styles developed in the 12th-15th century’s Serbian architecture, each named according to the region of its origin.¹³³ It was normal to expect the ruling families in Macedonia to adopt the royal fashion.

4.7.3 *Palaeologian Renaissance* – Macedonian version

The last centuries of the Byzantine Empire under the Palaeologian dynasty (1261-1453) were marked by constant warfare and economic impoverishment.¹³⁴ This period is sometimes referred to as the *Palaeologian Renaissance*, meaning the revival of Orthodox Byzantium under the last Byzantine dynasty after the short period of Latin rule (1204-1261). The term itself, coined in the 1990s, is deliberately misleading and a twofold problematic; the word “Renaissance” was always most commonly associated with the revival of the classical art and architecture in 15th-16th century Italian states and, secondly, the Palaeologi did not have the economic power to implement significant building programmes that would lead to the union of the Western and Eastern architectural styles, despite several attempts to create the union of the churches, split in 1054.

The *Amalgamation Theory* introduced the term *Palaeologian Renaissance* in the aftermath of Yugoslav dissolution in order to describe the surviving 14th century Nemanjić monuments of the *Vardarska School of Architecture* in Macedonia, as

¹³² Serafimova, in Čausidis, 1995, 112

¹³³ See Chapter I – *The Serbs*, p. 49-51

¹³⁴ Mango, C. – *The Oxford History of Byzantium* – Oxford, 2002, 248-307

“those close to the imperial workshop of the Emperor Andronicus II (1282-1328).”¹³⁵ It entirely neglected the fact that the reign of Andronicus II had little or no influence over much of the Empire’s former Balkan territories.¹³⁶ The problem of the terminology was additionally exacerbated by the Albanian acquisition of the term for stylistically very different *Raška School of Architecture* was deployed during their nation-building programmes in the Kosovo and Metohija in the mid-2000s.¹³⁷ Both Albanian and Macedonian arguments, however, neglect the fact that the Byzantine artistic influence was in decline for nearly a hundred years prior to the erection of these monuments in Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia. The weakened Byzantine Empire under the Palaeologues was not able to significantly influence the art and architecture beyond its crumbling borders. The Palaeologian period (1261-1453) was constantly plagued by economic deficiency and the Paleologian emperors were often referred to as “paupers in their own house.”¹³⁸ Building and restoration works of the *Paleologian Renaissance* were modest: “...many of the churches were little more than empty shells and...even the Imperial Palace of Blachernae was crumbling.”¹³⁹ As such, they were in sharp contrast to the extensive works of the Nemanjić kings who ruled over the northern Macedonia since the second part of the 13th century and openly aspired to take over Byzantium.

Re-naming the Serbian *Vardarska School* after the contemporary but absent Byzantine dynasty provided the connection between the “Macedonian Slav Empire of Samuil” and the “Macedonian Kingdom of Prilep” discovered in the 1990s.¹⁴⁰ The invention of a *Palaeologian Renaissance Style* served to legitimize the territoriality of the modern nation-state.

¹³⁵ Serafimova, in Čausidis, 1995, 112-114

¹³⁶ The term does not exist in the Greek academic language related to the architectural heritage of the period and does not appear on the official web-representation of the Greek Ministry of Culture. It was only recently coined by some Western scholars describing the last two centuries of Byzantium in general. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 301-303

¹³⁷ Both the Albanians and Macedonians claim the style as their autochthonous. It seems illogical, however, that two distinct, albeit neighbouring, ethnic groups develop the same sense for the artistic details, supposedly influenced by the non-present Palaeologue dynasty. Additional discrepancy within the theory is a complete rejection of the artistic influence of the ruling Serbian court which was at its apogee.

¹³⁸ Crowley, R. – *Constantinople – The Last Great Siege 1453* – London, 2005, 35

¹³⁹ Norwich, J.J. – *A Short History of Byzantium*, London, 1997, 366

¹⁴⁰ Admittedly, *Vardarska School* was more influenced by Byzantium than the *Raška School* (which includes plenty of the *Romanesque* stone plastic) or *Moravska School* (which adapts *Romanesque* into Byzantine and forms a separate style altogether).

4.7.4 Twilight of Christianity – The Macedonian Kingdom of Prilep

After the death of the Emperor Stefan Dušan in 1355, the Serbian state went into a rapid disintegration. Most of the grand lords from his court ruled as independent princes and fought each other for territorial supremacy. In this sense, the Serbian mediaeval state was no different from Byzantium. The rule over the territory of modern Macedonia was in the hands of the powerful Mrnjavčević brothers, Vukašin (c.1320-1371) and Uglješa (c.1346-1371).¹⁴¹ Vukašin crowned himself king in 1365, usurping the power from a young son of Stefan Dušan. In 1371, however, the brothers lost the *Battle of Maritza*, after which the Vukašin's kingdom became a vassal state to the expanding Ottoman Empire.¹⁴² Vukašin's son Marko ruled in Prilep (southern Macedonia) as a vassal to the Ottomans. He died in 1395 fighting alongside the Ottomans in Wallachia.

King Marko (c.1335-1395) became the most important individual hero of Serbian epic poetry. Admittedly, he appears in both the Macedonian and Bulgarian oral tradition,¹⁴³ but the Serbian folklore references about Marko far outnumber both of them. The earliest, 16th century records referring to Marko come from a Dubrovnik historian Mavro Orbini (d.1614). In his *Il Regno degli Slavi*, published in Pesaro in 1601, Orbini placed the origins of Marko's family somewhere in Herzegovina, but there is no confirmation of this claim. As there are no surviving contemporary written documents about the Mrnjavčević genealogy, it is very difficult to disentangle the historic Marko from the hero of the myth.

The historical Marko left several monuments in the territory which he ruled in the 14th century. The remains of the city walls and a donjon of Marko's castle in Prilep in Macedonia are still visible (Fig. 4.36). The *Marko's Tower* and a few epic poems collected from the area in the early 20th century were considered sufficient enough to establish a new term in Macedonian mediaevalist studies: the short-lived *Kingdom of Prilep* (1365-1395), the last Macedonian national revival before the final Ottoman conquest. From the archaeological evidence, Marko's Tower was built over

¹⁴¹ The Mrnjavčević brothers were well remembered in the Serbian epic poetry. Contemporary documents refer to them as *Rascan* (the other name for the Serbs). The widow of Uglješa, Jelena (1349-1405) wrote the best examples of Late Mediaeval poetry in Serbian: *Lament for a Dead Son* and *Encomium of Prince Lazar*, dedicated to Prince Lazar of the Kosovo Battle fame.

¹⁴² See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 27-29

¹⁴³ Oral tradition in Bulgaria about Krali Marko originates in western Bulgaria. There are no references about Marko in the eastern part of the country.

the much earlier settlement, as, indeed, most of the Balkan mediaeval towns were, but the present condition of the remains cannot give any conclusive answer to the question of the ethnic background of the builders.



Fig. 4.36 – The western wall of Marko's castle in Prilep

Much better preserved, however, is Marko's Monastery, 18km south of Skopje, near the Markova River (Fig. 4.37). The monastery itself was built during the reigns of Vukašin and Marko (1342-1371) and is itself the work of two different building schools: one, influenced by the Byzantine church architecture similar to that in Ohrid, and another, influenced by the Serbian *Morava School*.¹⁴⁴ Based on this analogy of the fusion of the styles, Macedonian scholars boldly asserted that “*no soil for the growth of the new northern plan (which, actually, originated in Mt. Athos (sic!)) was to be found on King Marko's territory...The most evident example is that of the Church of St. Andrew on the River Treska, near Skopje, built in 1388 by Marko's brother Andreas. It differs from the Morava churches both inside – as the cupola rests on the walls – and on the outside, which is cruciform.*”¹⁴⁵ However, the

¹⁴⁴ For *Moravska Style*, see *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 50-51

¹⁴⁵ Serafimova, in Čausidis, 1995, 113

monastery was built in 1388/1389,¹⁴⁶ years in which the Ottoman presence cut off the Moravian influence from the southern lands of the former Serbian Empire (Fig. 4.38). This inevitably influenced the works on the erection of the monastery. Thus, the differences to which modern Macedonian art historians refer in their attempt to describe a separate Macedonian mediaeval architectural style remain unique to this church only. No other mediaeval monument in Macedonia or elsewhere has similar characteristics. Whether this one church is enough to serve as an example of a separate and unique national architectural style in the Macedonian Republic remains within the discourse of the nation-creation programmes on the territory of former Yugoslavia. Except for St. Andrews, built on the eve of the Ottoman conquest, the rest of the 13-14th century churches in this part of Macedonia were built under the Nemanjić kings and their vassals and belong to the *Vardarska School of Architecture*.



Fig. 4.37 – Marko's Monastery near Skopje, built 1342-1371, frescoes 1366-1371

¹⁴⁶ Both 1388 and 1389 are recorded as the years of foundation of the monastery



Fig. 4.38 – St. Andrew's Monastery in Treska Canyon

4.7.5 A five centuries long sleep – Ottoman influence

The Ottoman period marked the penetration of Islamic and Oriental influences in every sphere of life in Macedonia. Similar to the other conquered Balkan states, all higher echelons of the society were either of Turkish/Asian origins or converted native Christians. After the conquest, urban landscape was re-modelled entirely on Oriental principles with the town population predominantly Muslim, with the exception of the Jewish quarters in larger towns.¹⁴⁷ High taxation of the Christian population meant that the money for the repair works of the surviving churches and monasteries from the pre-Ottoman period was frequently inadequate. Equally, there was a great loss of professional labour. The skilled architects were either converts working for the Ottoman commissioners, or they had emigrated to the Christian states.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ For summary description of the Balkan towns during the Ottoman period, see *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 30-31.

¹⁴⁸ The movement northwards began with the Ottoman conquest. The Greek and Bulgarian intellectuals were at first coming to the Serbian and Bosnian courts, and after the fall of these two countries, the migration included Hungary and Italian cities on Dalmatian coast. At the same time conversions took place. Some of those who remained under the Ottoman authorities often converted to Islam, whilst in Hungary and the Italian cities they embraced Catholicism.

Throughout the Ottoman period, most of the surviving churches and monasteries were repaired at some point in history. Depending on the scale of repair and the materials used, the differences in craftsmanship and artistic value are easy to identify. The later works are usually of much poorer quality. The church architecture of the Ottoman period in Macedonia was researched less than the pre-Ottoman heritage, though this was not due to its insignificance. A multitude of small single-aisled, barrel-vaulted village churches were built mostly by anonymous builders. However, these churches, usually situated in remote villages and away from the main trade routes, left them out from the researchers' focus. The churches from the Ottoman period often display significant Islamic influence, usually present in the façade details which frequently consist of semi-arches or sometimes pointed oriental arches.¹⁴⁹

After the conquest, larger towns and cities had undergone a major transformation. The mosques erected from the 15th century onwards were usually in the most prominent parts of the urban settlements and bear all the features of the Ottoman school. The largest surviving monuments from the Ottoman era include the Mustapha Pasha Mosque in Skopje (Fig. 4.39), built in 1492, the Painted Mosque in Tetovo (Fig. 4.40), built in 1495 and the 1558 Yeni Mosque (Fig. 4.41) in Monastir (Bitola). Because most of the mosques were built more than a century after the conquest, "none of the Turkish edifices in this region possesses the tradition of the church building."¹⁵⁰

After the *Gülhane Hattışerif* of 1839, Macedonian towns witnessed the great influx of the peasant (Christian) population.¹⁵¹ The new urbanites were still tied to their land and the emancipation was slow. Thus, the urban architecture of the 19th and early 20th centuries was still greatly influenced by Ottoman aesthetics and petrified patriarchal Christian code. The best representation of this socio-cultural urban model is the Old Town of Ohrid, now a World Heritage Site (Fig. 4. 42).

¹⁴⁹ Serafimova, in Čausidis, 1995, 113

¹⁵⁰ Čausidis, 1995, 125

¹⁵¹ Aleksiev, in Čausidis, 1995, 179



Fig. 4.39 – Mustapha-Pasha Mosque, Skopje, built in 1492.



Fig. 4.40 – Painted Mosque, Tetovo, built in 1495.

The building of churches and monasteries resumed in the mid-19th century, but most of these were modelled on the old mediaeval buildings, with a few novelties, imported from other Orthodox countries. Analysed individually, none of the architectural features of these monuments possess a particularly national character. The reason for this was that the master-builders were moving freely throughout the

Balkans and worked where they could earn their wages. Had they been university educated like their European counterparts of the time, there might have been some notion of the individual architectural achievements. As this was not the case, most of the 19th and early 20th century architecture has a provincial character, albeit with plenty of charm deriving from the specific climate and natural beauty of the region.



Fig. 4.41 – Yeni Mosque, Bitola, built in 1558



Fig. 4.42 – Ohrid, Old Town, 19th century

After the Ottomans lost control of Macedonia in 1913 and in the period during and after the First World War, many of the Islamic buildings, particularly in smaller towns, were demolished. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia attempted modernization, but this was slow and insufficient and often marred by violence and destruction from the remnants of the pro-Bulgarian and pro-Albanian para-military units that dwelt in the mountains and attacked the Yugoslav authorities. Larger public buildings in Skopje and other towns were being erected not earlier than the late 1930s. By then, any process that would result in national self-identification of the population of the *Vardarska Macedonia* with the Serbs was seriously compromised.

4.8 Albanian Macedonia

From the establishment of the Macedonian separate nation until the republic's independence from Yugoslavia, an enormous task for nation-building had been set. The illiteracy that was endemic at the beginning of the 20th century was annihilated within a century and, according to the 2002 census, 96.1% of population was functionally literate.¹⁵² However, the winning of independence posed a new threat to the new Macedonian nation-state, significantly different from the traditional arguments with Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia.

The Republic of Macedonia now faces the rise of the Albanian nationalism in the west of the country. With one quarter of its population being ethnic Albanians, Macedonia is internally under constant pressure to allow the federalization of the state. As early as November 1993, Macedonian police arrested a group of Albanians (including a deputy minister of defence in the government of Macedonia) and accused them of attempting to establish an "autonomous province of Ilirida" in the west of the country where Albanians form the overall majority of the population.¹⁵³

In 1994, the Albanians from the west of the Macedonian Republic established the *University of Tetovo* without applying for the permission from the authorities. With syllabuses identical to the corresponding institutions in Albania and Albanian held Kosovo and Metohija, the lectures were being held exclusively in Albanian. The tensions between the Albanians and Macedonian Slavs grew as the wars in the rest of Yugoslavia were unfolding and culminated after the Kosovo war of 1999 which the Kosovo's Albanians won with the strong military support of NATO. The Albanian population of Macedonia immediately tried to assert their territorial claims to the western part of the country, which, according to the Albanian national narrative, represents a part of the ancient *Dardania*, which they consider the Albanian historic land, usurped by the Slavs.

In January 2001, the insurgency erupted between the Albanian guerrilla fighters and the Macedonian police. The hostilities lasted until November 2001, when both sides, pressed by NATO, stopped fighting. Macedonia was obliged to give a wider range of rights to the Albanian minority, which included proclaiming the Albanian

¹⁵² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mk.html> - Accessed on 28/09/2011

¹⁵³ Isakovic, Z. – *Identity and Security in Former Yugoslavia*, Aldershot 2000, 204

language as the second official language in the country¹⁵⁴ and enable Albanian political parties to participate in all forms of government as well as to allow the decentralization of the country. Albanians, in return, had to denounce their separatist claims. As a result, the *University of Tetovo* was recognized by the Macedonian authorities in 2004.¹⁵⁵

During the hostilities, the main attack happened in the village of Lešok, where a monastery church of St. Atanasius, originally built in the 14th century, was destroyed by the ethnic Albanians (Fig. 4.43).¹⁵⁶ Next to the church was a grave of Kiril Pejčinović (Fig. 4.5), regarded by the Macedonian new narrative as the “the father of Macedonian literature.”¹⁵⁷ The demolition of the church was regarded by the Orthodox Macedonians as an attack on their national and religious culture by the Muslim Albanians. The cessation of hostilities enforced by NATO did not end the tense inter-ethnic relations between the Christian Macedonians and Muslim Albanians.¹⁵⁸ The result of the conflict was a growing distrust between the Macedonian and Albanian political parties.

On 28 November 2008, the *Day of the Albanian Flag* – an official state holiday in Albania – a leader of the Albanian political party and former leader of the insurgents, Ali Ahmeti (b.1959), opened the *Museum of Freedom* in the Albanian part of Skopje. The Museum is dedicated to all Albanian national fighters from the time of the *Prizren League* until the 2001 insurgency. During the inauguration of the Museum, Ahmeti referred to Skopje as “the ancient city in the heart of Dardania.”¹⁵⁹ The Museum is housed in the restored house of the Ottoman official Jašar Bey, built

¹⁵⁴ The Albanian language was already allowed to be used in schools, based on the remnants of the old Yugoslav constitutional practise – Constitution of Macedonia, Paragraph 1 and 2, Article 48. <http://www.sobranje.mk/en/defaulten.asp?ItemID=9F7452BF44EE814B8DB897C1858B71FF> – Accessed on 30/09/2011

¹⁵⁵ It took a decade of the EU and US pressure on the authorities in Skopje to acknowledge the existence of the Albanian university in Tetovo. Forced to negotiate, the Albanians also accepted the lectures to be held in Macedonian Slav language. However, very few Macedonian Slavs enrol to the university and prefer to go to Skopje or elsewhere.

¹⁵⁶ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1503946.stm> - Accessed on 1 October 2011

¹⁵⁷ The mediaeval monastery of St. Atanasius survived the Ottoman conquest, but was destroyed by the janissaries in 1710. Pejčinović himself obtained the permission from the local Ottoman authorities to rebuild it in 1818. It was damaged in the First World War. Even though there was no surviving accurate documentation on the original appearance, the church was reconstructed again in 1927 in the *Varadarski Style* under the Karadjordjević dynasty. <http://www.culture.in.mk/story.asp?id=2247&rub=-> - Portal Culture in Republic of Macedonia – Accessed 01/10/2011

¹⁵⁸ A new insurgency erupted in April 2015, resulting in many deaths in Kumanovo.

¹⁵⁹ Karajkov, R.– *The Museum of Freedom* – Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso, pdf, 2009, 1

around 1885 and listed as a building of historic importance in 2007 (Fig. 4.44).¹⁶⁰ The Albanian historian from Macedonia, Skender Asani said at the opening ceremony that the *Museum of Freedom* “was the greatest day for Albanians since 2001,” which indicates that military clashes between ethnic Albanians and Macedonian police are considered as rightful fight for Albanian national territory.¹⁶¹



Fig. 4.43 – St. Atanasius Church, Lešok, destroyed in 2001 and reconstructed in 2005. In the front, the grave of Kiril Pejčinović.

¹⁶⁰ The restoration of the house took place prior to obtaining permission from the Ministry of Culture. Paško Kuzman, an archaeologist responsible for the “discovery of Philip II’s walls around Ohrid” had by now become a director of the *Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage*, opposed the project arguing that the Jašar Bey house was a site of historic significance protected by law, and that it could not be refurbished without permission. However, the Albanian party leaders simply ignored the Institute.

¹⁶¹ Karajkov, R. – *The Museum of Freedom – Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso*, pdf, 2009, 3



Fig. 4.44 – The *Albanian Museum of Freedom*, opened in Skopje in 2008, causing a lot of controversy.

4.8.1 *Encyclopaedia*

In 2009, the MANU published a new *Encyclopaedia*, edited by the historian Blaže Ristovski (b.1931).¹⁶² Unsurprisingly, it included most of the Macedonian arguments about state, peoples and history as discussed in this study. Macedonian schools based their educational syllabuses on the narratives given in the *Encyclopaedia* and endorsed by the Macedonian Academia. However, the *Encyclopaedia* was immediately condemned by the Albanians, who opposed being interpreted as “*Arnauts* and *Shqiptars* – the highland people who moved into the territory of the present-day Macedonia in the 16th century, following the Ottoman programme of awarding the land to the converts to Islam.”¹⁶³ The Albanian

¹⁶² Ristovski authored *Macedonian nation and Macedonian national consciousness* in 1968, two years after the opening of the national question in Yugoslavia. He argued of the separateness of the Macedonian nation and influenced later development of the national narrative.

¹⁶³ Interestingly, the authors of the Macedonian *Encyclopaedia* used the same narrative that Noel Malcolm used for arguing the appearance of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina as taking place in the 16th century. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 437-438.

population regarded this part of the *Encyclopaedia* as historically incorrect, insulting and required the withdrawal of the publication.¹⁶⁴ This, however, did not happen, resulting in the school syllabuses in Albanian schools in Macedonia and the University of Tetovo being based on the official publications of the Albanian Academy in Albania. Consequently, two ethnic groups, living in the same territory, educate their young generations on two mutually exclusive interpretations of national history.

In July 2011, the Albanian political parties won the right for the Albanian ministers in the Macedonian Government to make public announcements and answer the questions within the Parliament Building in the Albanian language.¹⁶⁵ The Macedonian public regarded this move as another concession by the Macedonian politicians, whilst the Albanians saw it as a failure to win the full recognition of Albanian human, cultural and historical rights.¹⁶⁶

4.9 So, *Who are the Macedonians?*

Macedonia became a UN member in 1993 under the “technical” name of FYROM – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, following the Greek objections about the name. At that time, the Macedonian Foreign Minister argued:

*“We have used that name (Macedonia) for centuries to try to draw a distinction between us as a people and the surrounding people, the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Greeks and the Albanians...It is very important to our identity. So, if we eliminated the word ‘Macedonia’ from our name we would in fact create a crisis of identity, we would sterilize the region where we live and we would reopen a century-long debate about who the people who live here are...”*¹⁶⁷

This explanation revealed a somewhat contradictory remark that the Slav Macedonian identity and state were better protected within the Second Yugoslavia than after gaining the independence. The loud insistence on the uniqueness of Macedonian nation and newly created national narrative, reflect a certain lack in confidence that such a small state would be able to survive as an independent entity.

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/region/U-planu-josh-novija-Makedonska-enciklopedija.lt.html> - Accessed on 2 October 2011

¹⁶⁵ The Government in Skopje, again pressed by the EU and US reluctantly agreed to this compromise.

¹⁶⁶ http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2011&mm=07&dd=16&nav_id=525888 - Accessed on 2 October 2011

¹⁶⁷ Perry, 1992, quoted in Isakovic, 2000, 206

The more stubborn the Macedonian insistence on its right to claim the Ancient Macedonian heritage, the more likely the Greek opposition to its northern neighbour will remain. Despite the economic hardship that engulfed Greece in recent years, its academic influence worldwide is far stronger than that of the Macedonian republic. The international academics who favour the Greek view outnumber by far those scholars who support the Macedonian objections to the Greek ownership of the Ancient Heritage.¹⁶⁸ Greece certainly shows no interest in acquiring the territory of the republic, but is greatly concerned about the potential outcome of the full recognition of the Republic of Macedonia and the adoption of its ancient heritage, as it may lead to territorial aspirations towards Greece by Macedonia itself.

On the other hand, the Macedonians themselves do not help much to allay Greek fears. In 2008, Seraphinoff and Stefou, following the line of some intellectuals and politicians in Skopje, argued that:

*“...if some new international conference on the Balkans should be on the table, the old Macedonian Question must be also revisited in all its variants. This should include the possibility of a Greater Macedonia that would incorporate portions of Albania, Bulgaria and Greece into a present-day Republic of Macedonia.”*¹⁶⁹

As far as its eastern neighbour is concerned, the problem is not the lack of the recognition of the state, but of the nation itself. Even though Bulgaria was the first state to recognize Macedonian independence on 15 January 1992, it did not recognize the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. The Bulgarian state and National Academia refer to the Macedonian language and state merely as a part of the Bulgarian cultural domain. There has been an increase in cultural activities sponsored by Bulgaria aiming at establishing closer links between Bulgaria and Macedonia. The *Bulgarian Cultural Club* was founded in Skopje in 2008 and soon developed a network of local branches in all major Macedonian towns. This move is, in a sense, comparable to the establishment of the Bulgarian schools after the creation of the Exarchate in 1870. The Macedonian acquisition of Samuil's Empire is a source of amusement in Bulgaria, but the practical politics is fully focused on re-building Bulgarian national consciousness among the Macedonian Slavs.

¹⁶⁸ This is not surprising, as the Macedonian narrative is less than three decades old, as opposed to the Greek narrative that had been established nearly two centuries ago and relatively successfully maintained ever since.

¹⁶⁹ Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008, 254 – It is not clear, however, what is the “old Macedonian Question” to which Seraphinoff and Stefou refer.

Thus far, Bulgaria was greatly helped by most of the Macedonian post-independence governments, which were regarded as strongly pro-Bulgarian. This is not surprising, as Skopje needed to completely disassociate itself from the Belgrade regime during the 1990s wars. This culminated with the application of the former Vice-President of Macedonia, Ljupčo Georgijevski (b.1966), for a Bulgarian passport.¹⁷⁰ On its part, immediately after joining the EU, Bulgaria introduced the scheme of awarding Bulgarian citizenship to all “Bulgarian nationals” from the neighbouring countries.¹⁷¹ This had an enormous impact on Macedonia, as Macedonians applying for Bulgarian citizenship had to declare themselves as Bulgarian. Because Bulgaria was admitted to the EU before Macedonia, the opportunity to travel, live and work abroad that was forbidden for Macedonian citizens since 1991 was fully exploited by Bulgarian politics aiming at the incorporation of Macedonia into Bulgarian state.

The current Serbian position regarding Macedonia is defensive. As a state that lost the Wars of Yugoslav Succession and under constant international pressure which aims at further reduction of its territory, Serbia is in no position to exercise its influence over Macedonia. Being put in the situation to fight for the preservation of its own national core, it is less likely that Serbia in the near future will be able to claim any territorial rights regarding Macedonia. However, the pending dispute concerning the Ohrid Archbishopric shows no signs of being solved. Similarly, the acquisition of King Marko’s mediaeval state as the *Macedonian Kingdom of Prilep* is received with the same amount of amusement in Serbia, as that in Bulgaria regarding Tsar Samuil. On the other hand, several decades of the *Brotherhood and Unity* within Yugoslavia, left family and emotional ties at the grassroots levels of the Macedonian society and those could be severed only from the top establishment which discourages the usage of Serbian language in schools and forbids the entrance to the country to the members of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The growing problem with the Albanian national assertion within the country and the establishment of the *Bulgarian Cultural Club* slowly undermine the existence of the Republic itself. Because of the Greek blocking of the opening of the

¹⁷⁰ Georgijevski became a Bulgarian citizen in 2006 and now lives and works in Blagoevgrad, the capital of the Bulgarian part of Macedonia. In 2003 he founded VMPPR-NP, a strong bulgarophile party in Macedonian Republic.

¹⁷¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1526256/Bulgaria-opens-back-door-to-the-EU-with-give-away-passports-bonanza.html> - Accessed on 2 October 2011

negotiations to join the EU, it seems that Macedonia does not have much chance for survival as an independent state. In that sense, a few new steps to form closer relationships with Serbia were made during 2011. The reason for this may be that of all neighbouring states, Serbia was the only one to recognize both the Macedonian nation (including its name and language) and the Macedonian state (including its unitary organization). There has been observed a minimal increase of Serbian cultural influence in the last few years in terms of books, media and arts. It is almost certain that after its national consolidation, Serbia will re-assert its influence over Macedonia.

In all this social turmoil, however, the voice of the people was ominously left out from the media reports and academic surveys. Thus, the question *Who are the Macedonians?* will remain unresolved for a very long time.

The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The central republic of federal Yugoslavia declared its independence on 2 March 1992, following the results of the referendum which was boycotted by the majority of the Serbian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Barely a month later, on 6 April 1992, the European Economic Community led by Germany recognized its independence, following the recommendations of the Badinter Committee, the principal body set up by the EEC for conducting the peace talks in Former Yugoslavia. It argued that the Serbs outside the border of Serbian republic cannot be considered a constituent people in other Yugoslav republics, but rather as ethnic minorities.¹ Considering that the Serbs counted for nearly 32% of the overall population of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time of the outbreak of war (Map 5.1), this recommendation became a serious concern of the Serbs, following the events in the Republic of Croatia which, prior to its proclamation of independence in 1991, introduced constitutional changes which downgraded the Serbs to minority status and suppressed the use of Serbian national symbols, language and religion. The Serbs of Bosnia, therefore, refused to vote in the referendum, whilst the combined Muslim and Croat population, amounting to 64% voted in favour of independence.² The recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina accelerated the outbreak of war which lasted for nearly four years, until the Dayton Agreement of 21 November 1995 finally marked the end of hostilities.

After that, Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into two parts: Republika Srpska (containing majority of the Serbs of the republic) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (containing the majority of the Muslims and Croats). Still nominally united, Bosnia and Herzegovina was placed under the international supervision, which was meant to act as a guarantor of the republic's unity. However, it is highly unlikely that the Serbs of Republika Srpska will ever willingly accept the imposed unification under the government in Sarajevo, that the Croats will remain satisfied until their demand for the creation of the third, Croat, polity within the state or that the Muslims will accept the existence of the Serbs or Croats within their borders. The full reconciliation will be unlikely mostly because of the inability of the international

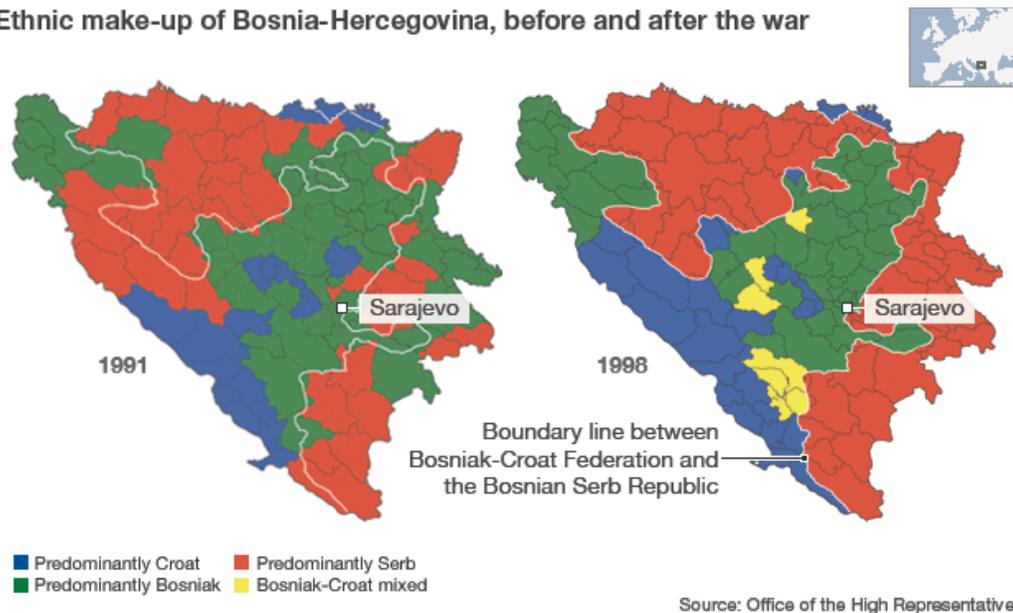
¹ Pellet, A. - *The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration Committee A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples*, Paris, 1992, 184

² Malcolm, N. - *Bosnia, A Short History*, London, 1994, 231

community to accept all sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina as equal parties with equally valid arguments.

In order to justify their current policies towards the Balkans, Western governments instigated parts of Western academia to promote a separate Bosnian Muslim ethnicity, stemming from the Tito's decision to create a nation out of the religious community. This political concept, developed and further refined during the conflicts of the 1990s, enabled the creation and then the recognition of a new nation – that of the Bosniaks.³

Ethnic make-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina, before and after the war



Map 5.1 – Ethnic and territorial map of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991 and 1998

5.1 Territoriality of “Bosniak” nationalism

The population of the contemporary republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to the estimations for the census scheduled for April 2013, counts just under 3.9 million. The same estimates predict the ethnic composition as: Muslim (40%), Serbian (31%), Croat (15%) and others (14%).⁴ The last census conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina was that of 1991, when the overall population amounted to 4.38 million with ethnic composition that included Muslims (44%), Serbs (32%), Croats

³ As a matter of fact, most of the contemporary writings on Bosnia is mutual referencing between the Sarajevo and Western academics, with little use of the primary sources.

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html> - Accessed on 01/09/2012

(17%), Yugoslavs (5.5%) and others (2.5%).⁵ There were some attempts by the UNHCR and the International Community to conduct the census immediately after the end of hostilities in 1996, but the scheme collapsed as the Sarajevo Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina refused to recognize the results which came up with the results that just over 3.9 million people in Bosnia include Muslim (46%), Serbian (38%), Croat (14.5%) and others (1.5%). The reason stated for refusal is that accepting the UNHCR statistics would “legitimize the ethnic cleansing committed in the 1992-1995 war.”⁶ In the following years, consensus between the Federation and Republika Srpska could not be achieved, because the Bosnian-Muslim entity insisted that the census results should not include religious, ethnic and language designations arguing that it could provoke new ethnic cleansing. On the other hand, Republika Srpska insisted on these as it wanted the power-share within the republic to be based on the participation of the Bosnian ethnicities, as originally agreed by the accords of the Dayton Agreement in 1995.⁷ The political stalemate that has lasted for the past twenty years shows no signs of moving ahead and both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina accuse each other of hindering the process of reconciliation.

5.1.1 Opening of the “Bosniak Question”

For most of its early history, Herzegovina was a separate political unit, known under the name of Hum since the arrival of the Slavs (Map 5.2). It was briefly incorporated into the Kingdom of Bosnia in the late 14th century and then again added to the Vilayet of Bosnia during the Ottoman period. Slightly modified, current borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina date from the period of Austro-Hungarian occupation in 1878-1908, which was part of the outcome of the Eastern Question crisis. Measured by modern standards, these borders never corresponded to the ethnic borders and the population of Bosnia was a mix of Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim confessionals that all spoke the same language and lived until the late 19th and early 20th century, in segregated villages.

⁵ Group of Authors – *Istorijski atlas* (1st Ed.) – Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva & Geokarta, Belgrade, 1997, 91

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographic_history_of_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina - Accessed on 01/09/2012

⁷ http://setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/02/23/feature-01 - Accessed on 01/09/2012



Map 5.2 – Bosnia, marked darker colour and Herzegovina, marked lighter colour

Because the Austro-Hungarian occupation coincided with the general development of nationalism in Europe, the first awareness of national identity among the Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina date from this period. The disturbances of the First and Second World Wars which witnessed the terrible casualties that the local population inflicted upon each other and subsequent inclusion of the very same population under the umbrella of a nationally ambiguous Yugoslavia prevented the natural development of a healthy nationalism based on mutual tolerance and respect for diversity. As during the Yugoslav period there was no political and academic discourse that would address the former grievances of the Bosnian peoples,⁸ the notion of the Bosnian identities resurfaced during the 1990s and resulted in an unprecedented division of opinions about the nature of the term “Bosnian.” The most commonly asked questions are:

1. Is the term “Bosnian” only a geographical expression? or, if not,
2. Who are the Bosnians?
3. What are their ethnic origins?

⁸ Ćirković, 2004, 290

4. What is the difference between the terms Bosnian and Bosniak?

Even though there were serious attempts by the Austro-Hungarian authorities to establish a new nation in the territory of the occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1879 that never materialized. From about this period date the first competing theories coming from the academic circles in Zagreb and Belgrade about the nature of the identity of the Bosnian Muslims. As they were ethnic Slavs and spoke the same dialect as their Catholic and Orthodox compatriots, the educated elites in Zagreb and Belgrade saw them as the converts from their respective ethnic communities. The Bosnian Muslims, on the other hand, identified themselves as “Turks” until the early 20th century.⁹

During the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Bosnian Muslims were mostly gathered around the Yugoslav Muslim Organization led by Dr Mehmed Spaho (1883-1939) and declared themselves as Serbs or Croats of the Islamic faith, as there was no constitutional recognition of Bosnian Muslims as a separate nation. This trend continued after the Second World War and in the first constitution of Federal Yugoslavia in 1946 the Montenegrins and Macedonians were recognized as separate nations, whilst the Bosnian Muslims were still considered to be converted Serbs or Croats. The situation, however, changed in the period of the re-opening of the national question in the 1960s, when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina announced the need for the Muslims in Yugoslavia to have a separate nation.¹⁰ Three years later, in 1971, the Muslim Slavs of Yugoslavia were recognized as a separate nation – the Muslims. This national designation was to include not only Bosnian Muslims, but also Muslims of Raška/Sanjak in Republic of Serbia and Slav Muslims from Kosovo and Metohija in the southern Serbian province. The term Bosniak with exactly the same meaning did not appear until 1993, when the Bosnian Muslims re-named themselves Bosniaks. Even though sounding similar, the terms “Bosnian” and “Bosniak” have different meanings. “Bosnian” denominates a native to Bosnia, from all three confessional backgrounds, whilst “Bosniak” is exclusively linked to those Slavs of the Islamic faith, that is, the Muslims. It is in this context that the two terms will be used throughout this work.

⁹ Mažuranić, M. – *Pogled u Bosnu ili kratak put u onu Krajinu, 1839-1840*, Zagreb, 1842, p. 71. Hangi, A. – *Život i običaji Muslimana u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo, 2009, 17 – A re-print of the original work of the Croatian teacher who worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, originally published in “Osvit”, Tisak hrvatske dioničke tiskarne, Mostar, 1900

¹⁰ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 104

5.1.2 The Ambiguity of Bosnian identity

Political division into Croat-Muslim and Serbian parts of the state opened path for the division and opposing interpretations of educational systems and national narratives. With the University of Sarajevo split in 1992 into its Serbian and Muslim branches, a fertile soil for the invention and dissemination of new “grand narratives” was created. Whilst the Serbs throughout the war and at present retained the traditional historical narratives that were used in the Republic of Serbia,¹¹ the Muslim side needed an expediently formulated new national narrative that would emphasize its difference from the Serbs and, to a lesser extent, the Croats.

In 1993, a group of Bosnian Muslim intellectuals gathered in Zürich, Switzerland, and founded *Matica Bošnjaka*, the supreme cultural institution of the Bosnian Muslims. Its foundation was initiated by the Bosnian Muslim émigré Adil Zulfikarpašić (1921-2008) who previously founded the *Bosnian Institute* in Zürich in June 1988, aiming to promote the Bosnian Muslims in the West.¹² The conclusions of the foundation meeting of the *Matica Bošnjaka* were published in a manifesto entitled *Bosnia, Bosnianism and Bosnian Language (Bosna, Bošnjastvo i bosanski jezik)*, which was printed in Zagreb later in 1993. This manifesto marked the beginning of the creation of the new Bosniak nation, separate from Serbian and Croatian. Supplemented by publications of the *Bosnian Institute*, of which a journal published in the German language *Islam und der Westen* was the most important, the notion of a separate Bosniak identity was fully formulated and presented to the outside world.

During the period of Communist Yugoslavia, the authorities, guided by the principle of “brotherhood and unity” which aimed at reducing the Serbo-Croat dichotomy, formulated the notion of the separateness of the Bosnian Muslims. This was done by adopting modified Austro-Hungarian theories, introduced and developed after the 1878 occupation for the purpose of securing Bosnia and Herzegovina’s loyalty to Vienna. However, this was not done until 1971, because the communist authorities insisted on secularization of the entire Yugoslav territory. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War they retained the political and legal solutions of the Yugoslav kingdom, which treated the Muslim Slavs as Serb/Croat converts to Islam. Thus Federal

¹¹ See *Chapter I – The Serbs* for general outline of the Serbian national narrative. The Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina argue against revisionism even more than the Serbs from Serbia.

¹² <http://www.bosnjackiinstitut.ba/home/sadrzaj/74#/gallery/foto/102009/vakif/adil-beg03.jpg> - the official web-page of the Bosnian Institute, now situated in Sarajevo – Accessed on 02/09/2012

Constitution of 1946 did not recognize the the Bosnian Muslims as separate nations, such was the case with the Macedonians and Montenegrins. Already in 1943, a senior Party member Edvard Kardelj (an ethnic Slovene) remarked that “*we cannot speak of the Muslims as a nation, but...as a separate ethnic group.*”¹³ No further discussions on Bosnian Muslim nationhood took place at the time.

As Party’s policies included opening of the higher educational institutions in areas where they were non-existing, the University of Sarajevo was established in 1949, the same year the University of Skopje was founded. Admittedly, there were attempts to improve the need for higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the last days of the Yugoslav kingdom, with the establishment of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry in 1940, but nothing related to the study of history, linguistics and local culture was done prior to the establishment of the Faculty of Philosophy in 1950.¹⁴ In the same year, the communist authorities throughout Yugoslavia closed a number of Islamic faith schools, *mektebas*, and introduced the ban on *burka* veils.¹⁵

However, the first post-Second World War Yugoslav census, conducted in 1948, allowed the people to declare themselves ethnically undetermined. Nearly 30% of the overall population of Bosnia and Herzegovina (roughly 778,000 people at the time) had chosen this option, which was in the course of the 1990s interpreted as the decision of the Bosnian Muslim population not to identify with the Serbs or Croats. However, the same census included 72,000 Muslims who declared themselves ethnic Serbs and 25,000 Muslims who declared themselves Croats.¹⁶ As the undeclared population did not stipulate their religious affiliation, it is difficult to accept that among 778,000 people there were no other ethnicities, except the Muslims. For example, as during the 1990s, a great number of people left Bosnia and Herzegovina as refugees and emigrants, a significant number being from a mixed Christian (of both denominations)/Muslim background who respected their ancestral heritage equally; as the Second Yugoslavia had almost two million interethnic marriages, many of these refused to adhere to any ethnic group.¹⁷ This poses a question whether in 1948 a significant number of people from the mixed background had also refused to declare their ethnic affiliation because

¹³ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 98

¹⁴ http://unsa.ba/s/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=27&Itemid=78 – The official website of the University of Sarajevo, Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed 02/09/2012

¹⁵ Malcolm, 1994, 195. See also Fath-Lihić, 2008, 102 – Fath-Lihić has reproduced a word for word Malcolm’s version of Bosnian history.

¹⁶ Malcolm, 1994, 198

¹⁷ Isakovic, 2000, 81

of the similar reasons. Since the census data of 1948 did not include information about the mixed population, any claim that the 778,000 were exclusively Muslims should be taken with great caution. The decision not to declare ethnicity in 1948 should be viewed as a result of several causes: the traumatic war-experience which considered the Bosnian Muslims during the NDH-era to be “the best of the Croats,” the Yugoslav royal period which had a Christian Orthodox King ruling over Bosnia and Herzegovina and even further back, when the Austro-Hungarian foreign Emperor began to change the traditional Bosnian society with its reforms. Nevertheless, this census was taken as a starting point for building a separate Bosnian Muslim nation.

5.2 Imagined aspects of the Bosniak national narrative – The origins of the Bosniak Question

During the Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav royal periods, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina played an important role in balancing the competing nationalisms of the Serbs and Croats. The question of their ethnic identity was first imposed by the Austro-Hungarian occupation authorities to facilitate control of the province. During his twenty years as the governor of *Condominium of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Benjamin von Kállay (1839-1903, in Bosnia from 1882-1903), a high Viennese official of Hungarian origins (Fig. 5.1), became a standard-bearer of an invented “Bosnian consciousness”, promoted on the pretext of preventing the rift between the Serbs, Croats and Turks, as the Bosnian Muslims used to call themselves.

5.2.1 A nation by decree

Immediately after the occupation, in 1879, the Austro-Hungarian authorities conducted a census which showed that of just over 1,158 million of people that included 43% Orthodox, 38% Muslim and 19% Catholic, only 3% were literate.¹⁸ Already on 6 June 1879, the Provincial Government, *Landesregierung*, aiming to strengthen its rule introduced educational reforms. It issued an *Ordinance No.8876* ordering the hiring of elementary school teachers to teach the contrived *Landessprache (Zemaljski jezik, Land Langauge)*, hoping that upholding a Bosnian identity (*Bosniankentum*) by creating a sense of belonging to a Bosnian territory would develop a strong idea of statehood

¹⁸ Milojković-Djurić, J. – *The Eastern Question and the Voices of Reason: Austria-Hungary, Russia and the Balkan States, 1875-1878*, New York, 2002, 134

(*Staatsidee*) and loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.¹⁹ *Landessprache* was in 1885 renamed into *Bosnische Sprache* (*Bosanski jezik, Bosniak*), the name which was not accepted by the leading South Slav intellectuals at the time and which returned into use only in 1993. Kállay explained the invention of a language as a consequence of Bosnia's specific historical features. This decision aimed to prevent the development of closer connections between the Bosnian Serbs with their co-nationals in the Serbian Kingdom. Kállay, who had spent the early days of his diplomatic career in Belgrade (1868-1875), spoke Serbian/Croatian well and had a good understanding of the situation in the Balkans. As a reliable civil servant of the Monarchy, he understood that changes had to be introduced gradually, taking into account the existing circumstances:

“...I knew I had to act decisively if I want to accomplish something worthwhile. That meant to awaken the spirit of the West, the strong feeling of statehood without harming the peculiarities of the single-minded yet not to let the petty and divisive peculiarities to continue to take root...So long that I am at the helm of this land, I shall strive to instil in the Bosnian people the spirit of statehood, and moreover of a great and powerful statehood. So long that I adhere to the gist of our obligations that we have taken in respect of these lands, I will continue with my efforts to create something good not only for the Bosnians, but also for the Monarchy (*sic*).”²⁰

The concept, however, did not survive beyond the bureaucratic attempts, as the majority of literate Serb and Croat teachers, citizens of Austro-Hungary, refused to participate in the programme.²¹ With this background, the Austro-Hungarian authorities had a problem from the onset. As the *Landessprache* was also based on the Herzegovinian dialect, the Provincial Government issued in 1884 guidelines for a new grammar and suggested that “special attention should be paid to the creation of a

¹⁹ Ibid, 78

²⁰ Thallósz, L. von – Einleitung, p.XXXV-XXXVII, quoted in Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 69

²¹ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 81 – Following the *Literary Agreement* signed in Vienna in 1850 between Vuk Karadžić and the *Illirianists*, the Herzegovinian dialect, as the most widespread among the South Slavs, was adopted as the common language of the Serbs and the Croats. The impact of the *Literary Agreement* was such that in 1867 the Croatian Sabor passed a law which established “the Croatian or Serbian language” as official and free for anyone who used either Latin or Cyrillic alphabets. A corresponding law was passed in the Serbian Principality in 1868, marking the beginning of the implementation of Vuk's reforms. Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 81. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 67 and *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 149-150.

election of special expressions that were not originally Bosnian, but became familiar and could not be replaced.”²²



Fig. 5.1 – Benjamin von Kállay (1839-1903) was an Austro-Hungarian official responsible for the introduction of the “Bosnian consciousness.”



Fig. 5.2 – Lajos Thallószy (1857-1916), a historian responsible for implementation of the “Bosnian Consciousness.”

In February 1894, Kállay initiated the foundation and publication of a journal *Nada* (*Hope*) to be printed in the “Bosnian Language” in order to “*provide interesting material from different fields of knowledge and education presented to the native reading public in a simple and persuasive manner befitting their educational horizon and level of understanding. On the other hand, the journal should depict in word and picture the cultural development in Bosnia and Herzegovina in an objective and trustworthy manner in order to further such information abroad.*”²³ The appointed editor-in-chief was Crown Counsel Constantine Hörmann (1850-1921), an Austrian. As with the majority of civil servants of the Provincial Government, Hörmann’s

²² Ordinance No. 5514 of 1885 confirmed this as an official state policy and sanctioned the name change from *Landessprache* into *Bosnischsprache*. Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 81-85

²³ A famous Serbian poet from Novi Sad, Jovan Jovanović-Zmaj (1833-1904) stated that “*he wrote a lot for Serbian and Croat papers...but that Nada, like the Provincial Government itself, will publish articles in the so-called Land Language,*” a notion of “*inventing such an unsuitable name for our beautiful language*” he just cannot support. A similar reply came from Dubrovnik, when Prince Lujo Vojnović (1864-1951) decided to support the Serbs from Vojvodina. Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 100

language abilities were very limited while the response from Serbian and Croat intellectuals to participate in the creation of a new language was a unanimous refusal.²⁴

Nevertheless, the Provincial Government progressed with establishing the primary schools by recruiting low-ranking officers (*Unteroffiziere*) for the position of a “teaching candidate” (*Lehramtskandidat*) and a number of “intelligent lay persons.” Vienna, however, refused to fund the establishment of schools and all the costs were to be paid by the local communities.²⁵ This was further complicated by the fact that the entire Provincial Government was in the hands of bureaucrats who came predominantly from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Bohemia and who did not speak Serbo-Croat or had only some vague knowledge of it. This resulted in the official documents being written in an incorrect syntax, thus making them unclear and prone to misuse.²⁶ The ensuing public debate between the Provincial Government and Serbian and Croatian intellectuals of Austro-Hungary remained in the domain of elite polemics, as illiteracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina was endemic.²⁷

5.2.2 Political reasons behind the attempt to create a “Bosnian nation”

The Austro-Hungarian attempts to reform Bosnia and Herzegovina proved unsuccessful. After the occupation, the promised agrarian reforms were postponed and the old Ottoman system with Muslim overlords and Christian peasants remained fully operational for the whole period of Austro-Hungarian rule.²⁸ This particularly affected the rural areas, as the feudal bondage persisted until the end of the First World War. That meant that the Austrian non-South Slav civil servants who worked for the Provincial Government in Sarajevo had to rely on 200-300 of the wealthiest *bey*s who controlled over one million people. These Muslim nobles were in a position to recognize the Austro-Hungarian suzerainty, but certainly had no interest to work on improving the living and educational conditions of their Christian (and some Muslim) serfs. On the other hand, as long as Austro-Hungarian authorities had free usage of natural resources and the unpaid work of the mandatory labour, there was no interest in

²⁴ Ibid, 101

²⁵ Ibid, 83

²⁶ Ibid, 184

²⁷ Those Serbian and Croatian intellectuals participating in the debate with the Austro-Hungarian authorities, obviously, lived in the “old” Habsburg territories, north of the Danube, which had significantly better education network

²⁸ Malcolm, 1994, 140

changing the social structure of the region. As the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina was received with a certain political discontent within the Empire, its political standing was not to be assigned either to Vienna or to Budapest. The Hungarian part of the Empire feared an incorporation of another million of Slavs and saw it as potential strengthening of the nationalist arguments. On the other hand, Vienna regarded it as a matter of strategic importance in moving forward with their *Drang nach Osten* policies. The problem was solved by assigning the province directly to the Crown and placing it under the Joint Ministry of Finance, with a Provincial Governor, who happened to be a Hungarian.²⁹ This solution was welcomed by the leading Austrian economists at the time that regarded the whole of the Balkan Peninsula of major economic and strategic interest and regularly referred to Bosnia and Herzegovina as “our European India.”³⁰ However, both Vienna and Budapest refused to invest in the economy of the province and decided that the whole burden was to be paid out of the local revenues. Admittedly, to transport Bosnian resources, the authorities immediately started works on improving the road system and even laid down several railway lines. But, even though the Government took the sole credit for these endeavours, the complete work was undertaken by mandatory labour (*kuluk*) which was increased by 10% for all eligible peasants, aged 16-60, who had to work on construction when called, without any pay.³¹ This only contributed to the animosity of the Orthodox population, which began emigrating to the Serbian Principality.

Simultaneously, heavy economic duties imposed on the Serbian Principality (Kingdom from 1882) by the accords of Berlin Congress placed the now officially independent state in the vassal position and prevented any serious involvement in protecting its co-nationals across the Drina.³² The Obrenović government did not have much manoeuvring space and could only help by supporting the Orthodox Church communities on an individual basis. Even this was not looked upon favourably by Vienna, which in order to reduce contacts between the Serbs from both sides of the Drina, began building a *cordon militaire*, a dense network of military watchtowers along the Serbian and Montenegrin borders (Fig. 5.3). The task was to be completed by

²⁹ Malcolm, 1994, 136

³⁰ Singer, *Unsere Orientinteresse*, Vienna, 1878, no page reference, quoted in Ekmečić, M. – *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, 1794-1918, Beograd, 1989, 87

³¹ Ekmečić, M. – *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, 1794-1918, Beograd, 1989, 95

³² See Chapter I – *The Serbs*, p. 70-71, 77-78

1882. In the same year, the traditional Military Frontier, established in 1526 along the Danube was abolished.³³



Fig. 5.3 – The ruins of the watchtower of *Cordon Militaire* in Petrinja near Trebinje in Herzegovina, built during the Austro-Hungarian occupation. This site became politically charged, as famous film director Emir Kusturica (b.1954) used some of the stones for building his town-monument Andrićgrad in Republika Srpska in 2011-2012, much to the dismay of the Muslim-Croat intellectuals of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who regard the Austro-Hungarian period as the period of freedom.

In 1885, Kállay reported that 35 watchtowers were working well and in accordance with the plan. In addition to the excessive cost incurred by the construction of these compounds, the *cordon militaire* almost brought to a halt any contacts between the populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro. Even though the traditional Military Frontier was officially abolished, in reality, it was moved along the Drina and towards the Montenegrin mountains. Additionally, Serbia and Montenegro were denied a common border, which enabled Austro-Hungary to control the Raška/Sanjak passes by positioning an army contingent in Raška. Despite the official explanation that the establishment of the *cordon militaire* was to maintain order, the real intention was to sever contacts between the populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina on one side and the Serbian Kingdom and Montenegrin Principality on the other. Kállay was particularly harsh in his judgement towards Montenegro, as in his report to the Ministry of War, dated 1889 he stated that the *cordon militaire* should “*prevent a continuous contact between the populations and induce the weakening of the mutual feelings of closeness among related tribes by blood and religion. The*

³³ See Appendix I – Historical background, p. 32 and Chapter II – The Croats, p. 170-172

*existing ties with the neighbouring population of Montenegro should be severed and directed to develop a complete and conscious devotion to our state.*³⁴

By severing the free movement of people and goods between the naturally linked and related populations, Kállay provoked feelings of resentment, especially of the orthodox Serbs who, hoping for the improvement of living conditions after the departure of the Ottoman state realised that the new Christian empire would treat them just as badly. Parallel with the building of roads, the Provincial Government undertook the task of “introducing Western values” into the backward Bosnian society. At first, for the use of the bureaucracy and then for “urban planning” the Provincial Government commissioned several public buildings to be built in the architectural style of *historism* that dominated the Empire then, but it did not stop there (Fig. 5.4 and Fig. 5.5).



Fig. 5.4 – *Social Home (Clubhaus)*, built in 1897 by a Czech architect Karel Pařík (1857-1942), now *National Theatre*.

As huge numbers of military personnel and civil servants descended on Sarajevo from around the Monarchy, they contributed significantly to the city’s overall growth as well as to its demographic and religious shifts. When the Austro-Hungarians arrived, Sarajevo’s population was approximately 70% Muslim, 17% Orthodox, 10% Jewish, and 3% Catholic. By 1910 it had changed to 36% Muslim, 35% Catholic, 16%

³⁴ Kállay quoted in Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 81 – My Bold

Orthodox, 12% Jewish and 1% Evangelical.³⁵ This religious shift caused the need to change the Oriental features of the provincial capital and other strategic towns. However, the presence of significant numbers of Muslims required careful management.



Fig. 5.5 – *Officer's Club*, built in 1880 by Karel Pařík, now *Federation Army Centre*

Maintaining the idea of Bosnian uniqueness due to its sizeable Muslim population, a number of imposing public edifices were erected in a pseudo-Moorish style, mostly designed by a Czech architect Karel Pařík (1857-1942), a follower of the Viennese *historism* in architecture. Introducing Islamic elements into Western-style architecture provided a picturesque and colonial atmosphere of the latest Habsburg acquisition. Partly, this was influenced by the Central European perception of Bosnia as an exotic country in a state of arrested development and partly by the need to flatter the Bosnian Muslim landowners who had difficulties accepting the fact that they were now nominally under a Christian state. However, the majority of Viennese architects working on the development of the “Bosnian style” drew inspiration from the Mameluk-inspired architecture of Cairo and architecture of Moorish Spain and North

³⁵ Gunzburger Makaš, E. and Damljanović-Conley, T. – *Chapter 15 – Sarajevo* in *Capital Cities in the Aftermath of Empires: Planning in Central and Southeastern Europe*, London, 2010, 243

Africa. As they were all Catholics from around the empire, no local Muslim nobles participated in these developments. All newly built institutions were either for governmental use or the maintenance of the European lifestyle of the employed civil servants who were non-Muslim (Fig. 5.6 and Fig. 5.7). Unsurprisingly, Muslims did not attend theatre or officers' balls partly because the plays were in the German language and partly because it clashed with their Islamic lifestyle. For the most part, the co-habitation between the Muslim nobility and the Provincial Government rested on Kállay's diplomatic skills and strong military presence. However, government's failure to introduce economic and agrarian changes alienated primarily the Serbian orthodox population, the result of which was growing distrust to the authorities' policies.



Fig. 5.6 – *The City Hall (Vijećnica)*, erected in 1894, after the design of an Austrian architect Alexander Wittek (1852-1894), now *National and University Library*.



Fig. 5.7 – The Railway Station at Bosanski Brod, erected in 1896, after the design of an Austrian architect Hans Niemeckz. Destroyed in 1945, now in ruins.

5.3 Cultural aspects and material heritage in the context of multinational Bosnia and Herzegovina

As noted above, the earliest notion of some form of an independent polity under the name “Bosnia” can be dated in the late 12th century, when the local ruler Ban Kulin, was mentioned in a Cyrillic inscription found in Visoko, to the northwest of Sarajevo.³⁶ The two main documents dealing with the period prior to the 12th century, *De Administrando Imperio* and the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, give no mention of any separate Bosnian tribe or political entity. Porphyrogenitus clearly stated and repeated in chapters 33, 34 and 36 that the Serbs inhabited *Paganía* (the Neretva valley), *Zachlumi* (Zahumlje, Hum), *Terbouniotes* (Trebinje) and *Kanalites* (Konavli), which are now Herzegovina and a large part of Dalmatia and coastland.³⁷ The Croats, on the other hand, inhabited the territory to the northwest of the Cetina River (*Tzentina*, *Τζέντινα*) around the town of Livno (*Chlebena*, *Χλέβενα*).³⁸ If Porphyrogenitus was right, then the Serbs settled all over central and eastern Bosnia, too.³⁹

³⁶ Curta, 2006, 339. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 23

³⁷ *D.A.I., Volume I: 33-37*

³⁸ *D.A.I., Volume I: 30*

³⁹ Bašić, D. - *The Roots of the Religious, Ethnic, and National Identity of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims*, Copyright Denis Bašić, 2009, 53 – A PhD thesis awarded in 2008 by the University of Washington, US

Following this delineation, the claim that the Bosnian Muslims were converts from either Serbs or Croats was first asserted after the revolution of 1848 when both Serbian and Croat historians in the early phases of development of national ideas expressed interest in the history of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By then, the Muslim Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina referred to themselves as Turks and showed no interest in the achievements of European philosophy and science. However, both Vuk Karadžić and his followers and the Croat *Illyrianists* regarded the Bosnian Muslims different to the extent of their religious affiliation. The establishment of *Matica srpska* (1826) and *Matica ilirska* (1842) coincided with the national revival and prompted the research of foreign archives and first publications of the surviving mediaeval manuscripts. This early period did not witness nationalist competition between the Serbian and Croatian authors, as they were immersed in the enthusiastic creation of national grand narratives and the formulation of myths of a “Golden Age.” For the Serbs, the Golden Age was obviously the Nemanjić period, whilst for the Croats the period of rule of the only native Croat dynasty of the Trpimirović period (845-1102). The converted Muslim population showed no signs of identification with the pre-Ottoman Christian state and this trend continued well into the late 19th and early 20th century. An Austro-Hungarian civil servant of Croat origins, a teacher Antun Hangi, wrote in 1900:

*“The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were the Slavs. After the fall of the former Bosnian kingdom in 1463 under the Ottoman suzerainty, many renounced their faith and accepted the Faith of Muhammad and that today they are the most fervent defenders of Islam. Their faith is closely linked to those who brought it here and even now they call themselves Turks and swear oaths by the Turkish faith....Our Muslims do not have feelings strongly devoted to their homeland. Because of it the religious side is predominant, until now they did not even know what their nationality was. Some beys, respectable agas and more learned people call themselves Bosniaks and that they speak Croatian, but the majority of people neither know who they are nor what their nationality is.”*⁴⁰

Since the literacy rates in all former Ottoman territories were notoriously low, the concept of “competition” for the Bosnian population was devised by the Austro-

⁴⁰ Hangi, 2009, 17 – My translation. In many aspects, the situation regarding national self-identification in Bosnia and Herzegovina during Hangi’s work in 1906 is similar to that recorded by an English traveller H.N. Brailsford in 1905 in Macedonia. See *Chapter II – The Theories of Nationalism*, p. 85-86

Hungarian authorities later in the 19th century and was presented as the attempt by Serbia to attract the Serbian population from the Habsburg territories. Hangi's writings about the Muslim population were a result of his observations of the wealthier urban class and were restricted to several larger towns he visited during his service in Bosnia. This situation was clearly favoured by Vienna, as it was easier to maintain the sense of separateness solely on a religious basis. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina's population was predominantly Serbian Orthodox at the time, Viennese authorities shifted their favouritism towards the Catholics of Bosnia, as combined Muslim and Croat population could outnumber the Serbs.

Of all three religious communities, the Catholics were to gain the most. Along with the traditional Franciscans, the Jesuits were introduced for the first time. Two new seminaries were established and the civil servants, merchants and other professionals from Catholic parts of the Empire were moving into Bosnia which was perceived as a land of opportunities for the quick advancement of their careers.⁴¹ This class, relatively better educated than the local peasants or Muslim nobility brought with them European lifestyle which was considered more advanced in comparison with the Ottoman.⁴²

The Provincial Government sought to present its takeover from the Ottomans as a success story by establishing European-style cultural institutions. Under Kállay's personal supervision, the *Museum Association (Musealenverein)* was formed in 1884. A Croatian archaeologist Dr Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942) was charged to guide a newly established association and generate public interest for the preservation of archaeological sites in situ and valuable artefacts from the past. The association gained importance in 1887, when it was promoted into a research institution aiming to promote the idea of a future *Landesmuseum*.⁴³ Already in February 1888, von Kállay approved

⁴¹ Malcolm, 1994, 144. In June 2014, Tamara Scheer asserted that, on the eve of the First World War, Austro-Hungarian military personnel perceived life in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general as a life of pastoral enjoyment: Scheer, T. – *A Pleasant Garrison without National Antagonism: Bosnia-Herzegovina on the Eve of the First World War through the eyes of Habsburg Officers*. For giving a general picture, she used a handful of surviving diaries from the soldiers stationed in Sarajevo and a few other towns at a time. The assertion fits well within modern EU revisionism which illustrates Austro-Hungarian occupation as civilizational step-forward. In reality, the percentage of discovered diaries is minute in comparison with the overall number of officers. *Sarajevo 1914: Spark and Impact*, International Conference, University of Southampton, 26-28 June 2014.

⁴² According to the records, Catholics of Bosnia and Herzegovina had higher literacy rates from both the Serbs and the Muslims. Considering that a number of them arrived to the Province from other parts of the Monarchy, this is not surprising. However, modern interpretations use the favoured position of the Catholic population as "a proof" of European face of Bosnia, as opposed to the "oriental Orthodoxy" of the Serbs.

⁴³ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 146

the foundation of the *Land Museum* (*Landesmuseum, Zemaljski muzej*), the first museum institution on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first director of the Land Museum was no other than the very same Constantine Hörmann, an editor-in-chief of the future journal *Nada* and the first editor of the *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine* (*Herald of the Land Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina*). The *Land Museum* was conceptualised as a centre for research in history, archaeology, ethnology, art history and natural sciences.⁴⁴ As such, it became a place of interest for various Austro-Hungarian scholars, and particularly for those who arrived to work on behalf of the Provincial Government. All journals in Bosnia and Herzegovina that were being published after 1878, including the Museum publications, were subsidised by the Provincial Government, which was particularly keen on developing the sense of separateness between the Bosnian communities, in order to curtail the growing South Slavic feelings at the time.

In the light of the South Slav movement, a number of educated Habsburg Serbs had already expressed interest in Bosnian history. Thus, in 1867, a Dalmatian Serb Božidar Petranović (1809-1874) published in Zadar⁴⁵ his history of the Bosnian Church, titled *Bogomils-The Bosnian church* (*Bogomili-Crkva bosanska*) in which he described the elusive Bosnian Church as a part of Eastern Orthodoxy that fell into schism. Petranović's work immediately attracted the attention of European and Russian scholars and was soon followed by a publication of the work *Bogomili i Patarieni* (*Bogomils and Patarins*) in 1870 by a Croat scholar and cleric Franjo Rački (Fig. 2.10) who hypothesised that the Bosnian Church was heretical, of dualist nature, influenced by the Bulgarian heretical movement of the 9th century.⁴⁶ This hypothesis remained in use until the mid-20th century, when the communist authorities aiming to reduce Serbian influence in Yugoslavia after the Second World War, initiated a new narrative which linked the Bosnian Church to Catholicism.

5.4 Historical and academic sources on heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Vague and contradictory references about the religious situation in mediaeval Bosnia and total absence of archaeological evidence about the Bosnian Church proved

⁴⁴ http://www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja.php - The official web-site of the Land Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed on 11/09/2012

⁴⁵ On the Adriatic coast, now in the Republic of Croatia.

⁴⁶ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 21 and p.25

to be a fertile soil for exploitation by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, which put a significant effort in suppressing the Serbian Orthodox population. Parallel with the introduction of the *Land Language* and foundation of the *Land Museum*, the Provincial Government forbade a number of journals and newspapers that were printed in the Serbian Kingdom and Serbian and Croatian regions within Austro-Hungary.⁴⁷ Simultaneously, the Provincial Government refused funding for a public library on the grounds of a shortage of money.⁴⁸

In 1892, the Joint Ministry in Vienna, on Kállay's recommendation, drafted legislation related to the preservation and upkeep of the monuments of the past. Two years later, in 1894, the Provincial Government hosted an international archaeological congress aiming to present to the world its cultural achievements in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁹ The culmination of these activities was the commissioning Karel Pařík to design a new Museum building that finally opened in 1913 (Fig. 5.8). From 1893, a German Language journal *Wissenschaftliche Mittheilungen aus Bosnien und der Herzegovina* was subsidised for the presentation of the Museum's activities to European scholarly circles.⁵⁰

However, by the end of the century, these efforts became economically unviable, as there was no readership, due to the high illiteracy rates. The dissemination of the "Bosnian consciousness" failed, despite Kállay's decision to grant a privileged position to the Muslim population. Following that policy, Kállay charged Hörmann with the task of collecting Muslim folk poetry, emulating Karadžić's work on recording the Serbian oral traditions nearly seventy years earlier. In January 1888, the publication of this collection was officially approved and subsidised by the Provincial Government, arguing that the poetry of Christians was already published and well known.⁵¹ The expensive and lavishly illustrated publications of the Museum, the congress and costly visits of the foreign scholars, as well as the erection of the imposing Land Museum building served as an advertisement for the Provincial Government, which sought to

⁴⁷ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 117. Until the ban, these were sent from Hungary directly to a post office box in Sarajevo. At the same time, the Provincial Government readily invited pro-Government authors to write about the picturesque landscapes of Bosnia and Herzegovina, never forgetting to take credit for its achievements in introducing culture and civilization into the post-Ottoman society.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 154

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 147

⁵⁰ Ćorović, V. – *Bosna i Hercegovina*, SKZ, Beograd, 1925 – The digital version of the book available at http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/bih/vcorovic-bih-kultura_1.htm – Accessed on 10/09/2012 - My translation

⁵¹ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 148

underline the Austro-Hungarian stewardship to enlightened European circles.⁵² Kállay personally made sure that in the Museum display the emphasis was on the pre-historic and Roman artefacts, which in 1903 numbered around 3000. The mediaeval Slavic past was barely visible and any connections with the Serbs and Croats beyond the provincial borders were deliberately omitted.⁵³



Fig. 5.8 – *Land Museum*, built in 1908-1913, after the design of Karel Pařík

The Bosnian Serbs were particularly concerned with the actions of the Provincial Government, as they feared that they would be forced to convert to Catholicism. This view was strengthened with the arrival of Jesuits in Bosnia in 1881. The Jesuits were considered more aggressive than the local Franciscans who, over the previous decades, had closely cooperated with the local Serbs and the governments in Belgrade. The newly appointed Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sarajevo, a Croat Josip Štadler (1843-1918), was especially ardent in sowing the seed of discord between the Serbs and the Croats, and between the Serbs and the Muslims, by an open call to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia.⁵⁴ Numerous books and brochures containing insulting names

⁵² The cost of two million crowns, paid by the local revenues, was too much for a country that had a significant number of peasant population on the brink of starvation.

⁵³ Čorović, V. – *Bosna i Hercegovina*, SKZ, Beograd, 1925 – The digital version of the book available at http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/bih/vcorovic-bih-kultura_1.htm - Accessed on 10/12/2012 - My Translation

⁵⁴ Robin Okey analysed at length Štadler's negative role in Bosnian Catholic community which represented a setback for Kállay's policies: "*Instead of the Catholic-Muslim alignment against the Serbs he wanted, the Muslims were moving into 'sloga,' or concord, with the Serbs, spurred in part by Stadler's*

for Orthodox Serbs were frequently printed and persecution on a national and religious basis often verged on open racism. The increased pressure on the Serbian Orthodox Christianity only contributed to the growing resentment of the Serbs. Vienna obtained consent from the Patriarchate of Constantinople, to which the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia was formally subjected, to appoint a Metropolitan independently. In 1881, the Orthodox Metropolitan of Sarajevo, Sava Kosanović, informed the Serbian government, the Russian Synod and the Viennese ministry that a local government official had attempted to bribe him to convert to the Uniate rite and to recognize the Pope as the supreme religious leader. Because of his firm resistance to Roman Catholic pressure, Metropolitan Kosanović was forced to leave his post and eventually to emigrate from Bosnia.⁵⁵ The Jesuit activities in Bosnia were followed by the erection of a number of Catholic churches and monasteries throughout the Province. On the initiative and with the support of Archbishop Štadler (Fig. 5.9), a new cathedral in Sarajevo was built on the site of the former Janissary military camp in Neo-Gothic style. The commissioned architect was a Hungarian born architect Josip Vancaš (1859-1932), who was invited by the Provincial Government in 1883 to work on re-building Sarajevo (Fig. 5.10).

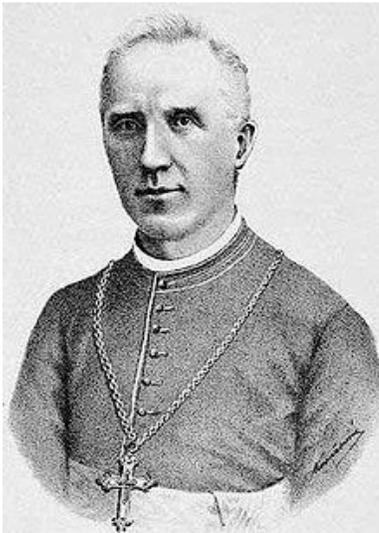


Fig. 5.9 – Archbishop Josip Štadler (1843-1918)



Fig. 5.10 – Catholic Cathedral of Sacred Heart, built 1884-1887, after the design of Josip Vancaš.

conversion policy.” Okey, R. – *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg ‘Civilizing Mission’ in Bosnia, 1878-1914*, Oxford, 2007, 108-122

⁵⁵ Kurtović, S. – *O nacionalizovanju Muslimana*, Sarajevo, 1914; Donia, R. J. – *Islam under the Double Eagle: The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina 1878-1914*, Boulder Colorado 1980, both quoted in Bataković, D. - *The Balkan Piedmont Serbia and the Yugoslav Question*, originally published in *Dialog*, Paris, 1994, 25-73

5.4.1 The problem of the validity of sources – the initial misreading

Kállay was a perfectly chosen chief executor of the Austro-Hungarian policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As an astute historian, Kállay understood well the national sentiments of the Southern Slavs that were forming against the background of the Eastern Question. Prior to and during his engagement in both the Serbian Principality and Bosnia and Herzegovina, he travelled widely through the region and conducted an extensive research of the Serbian National Library and Archive which was then immersed in the project of collecting old manuscripts.⁵⁶ On his first travels through the Serbian Principality in late 1868, he was accompanied by Felix Kanitz (1829-1904), who had already published his extensive works on Serbia in Leipzig.

Kállay recorded the scarcity of road network and churches in Serbia in the late 1860s: approximately one in ten villages had a church without a belfry and bell-ringing was disallowed even in towns.⁵⁷ His views on Serbs and Serbia were expressed in his *History of Serbs (Geschichte der Serben)*, which he published in Budapest in 1877. In the foreword to his book, Kállay noted that he “copied about 600 documents from the University Library⁵⁸ in Belgrade that were, to a large extent, not yet published.”⁵⁹ Serbian scholars of the period welcomed the book. Stojan Novaković (Fig. 1.13) noted at the time that Kállay produced “a book that was written by a scholar with an open mind.”⁶⁰

However, immediately after taking the post in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kállay previously heavily criticized in both Vienna and Budapest for his “pro-Serbian” views assumed a completely different attitude towards the Serbs and Serbian state. Kállay went so far as to forbid the printing and distribution of his own *Geschichte der Serben*

⁵⁶ Kállay witnessed the beginning of the process of rebuilding the Serbian state after the Ottoman withdrawal, encouraged by the Obrenović princes who sought to introduce Serbia into the family of European Christian nations by abandoning the Ottoman heritage. The rebuilding programme in the Serbian Principality naturally began in the most important towns, but the road network and the rural areas were still underdeveloped. Kállay reported a number of ruined churches, monasteries and mediaeval towns and noted that even the smallest repairs to some of the ecclesiastical buildings required permission by the Muslim overlords which was hard to achieve. As Serbia was still not independent, the Ottoman authorities were still obstructing the inevitable changes. See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 44.

⁵⁷ This was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, too. The upsurge of the church-building in the region could only happen after the Ottoman withdrawal. Noel Malcolm, uses this fact to assert that no Orthodox Serbs existed in Bosnia before the 16th century.

⁵⁸ The University was then officially called *Grand School (Велика школа, Velika škola)*

⁵⁹ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 62

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 61

on the territory of the Condominium.⁶¹ Implementation of the Austro-Hungarian policies towards Bosnia and Herzegovina was accompanied by a strong anti-Orthodox rhetoric, because it was deemed that the Eastern and Western Christianity were not equal in character. Vienna maintained that an exaggerated ethnic individualism of the Eastern Christianity hindered the creation of a powerful state.⁶² Thus, in his dealings with the Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kállay was obliged to refer to the Serbian Church as *Orientalische Orthodox Kirche*, *Orientalische Orthodoxe Gemeinde* or *Orientalische Orthodoxe Confession*, in order to replace any mention of the Serbs in the Province.⁶³ His adopted political views were finally presented in his *Geschichte des Serbischen Aufstandes, 1807-1810* published posthumously in Vienna 1910.⁶⁴ Stojan Novaković commented on this academic u-turn as “*an approach of a politician and a diplomat carefully formulating his evaluations.*”⁶⁵

A deliberate avoidance of implementing agrarian reform, an open state support for Roman Catholics and enforced fabrication of the new *Land Language* achieved the first objective of dividing Bosnian religious communities, but resulted in a total failure of the concept of a Bosnian nation as envisaged by Vienna. Indeed, it was much easier to rule over divided communities, but ultimately it was precisely that division which prevented the creation of a unified national identity through the loyalty to the territory. Both the Serbian and the Croat communities relied more and more on financial support from their co-religionists from Serbia and Croatia for opening and funding schools and paying for the education of their children. As far as the Bosnian Muslims were concerned, the most they could achieve at that period was to create a Muslim Movement, an association of Muslim landowners in 1899. There were some Bosnian Muslim intellectuals loyal to the Habsburg government owing to the fact that the

⁶¹ Ćorović, V. – *Političke prilike u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Biblioteka “Politika”, Beograd, 1939 – http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/bih/vcorovic-politika-bih_1.html#_Toc535925849 – Accessed on 10/09/2012

⁶² This would cause the Orthodox Christians to rally behind their ethnic churches, as opposed behind the universal Catholic Church which supported the Emperor. Subsequently, on the level of the internal politics, this would undermine the imperial authority; externally, it would enable the growth of Russian influence.

⁶³ These terms will resurrect in the 1990s and now the scholars and political workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia refer to the Serbian population outside Serbia as “Orthodox,” without ethnic denomination. The most blatant misuse of the term is in the memorial complex of the Concentration Camp of Jasenovac in Croatia, where Serbian victims are simply termed as “Orthodox.”

⁶⁴ The book was revised by his friend and historian Lajos Thallóczy and coincided with the period of the Annexation crisis, when political relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were at their lowest point.

⁶⁵ Новаковић, С. – *Васкрс државе српске и његови историци, Годишњица Николе Чутића*, Вол. 30, Београд, Државна штампарија, 1910, 5-6

government offered them scholarship and employed them in the Bosnian bureaucracy. But, there was no a strong Bosnian Muslim bourgeoisie, intellectual elite or bureaucrats to stimulate, organize and lead Bosnian Muslim nationalism and national movement. Consequently, the Muslim community was led by *ulemas* (clerics) and *begs* (landowners).⁶⁶

5.4.2 Invent a narrative, and then divide and rule

The first generation of intellectuals born in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and educated in the universities of the Dual Monarchy appeared towards the very end of the 19th century. Similar to their counterparts from the Serbian Kingdom, the students from these communities acquired the ideas of nationalism and national identity in the centres of their studies. As most of them returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina after graduation, they sought to spread basic education among the people through the works of Choral Societies, which were carefully observed by the authorities, particularly during religious festivities or celebrations of historical events.⁶⁷ Whilst in the Serbian Kingdom the returnees had some relative freedom to express their adopted knowledge, in Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, they were expected to conform to official state policies, which discouraged the exchange of ideas between the intellectuals of Bosnia and Herzegovina with their counterparts in Belgrade and Zagreb.

This suppression of Serbian and Croatian national consciousness coincided with an emigration of several thousand Muslim families from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unwilling to submit to the new Christian state or frightened by it, many Muslim families decided to immigrate to Turkey. Vienna did little to prevent this, as by 1882 it already had in place the plan for the colonization of the Germans and Hungarians in the areas bordering the Serbian Kingdom. Kállay observed that the Hungarians should be settled along the Danube in order to separate “*our Serbs from those on the other side.*”⁶⁸ The emigration of the Muslims was, therefore, considered convenient by Vienna. Similarly, Serbs willing to go to Serbia were encouraged to do so. During the 1880s a

⁶⁶ Sancaktar, C. – *Historical Construction and Development of Bosniak Nation* in Turkish Journal of International Relations, Vol. 11, No. 1, Spring 2012, Yalova, 6

⁶⁷ Following the celebration of St.Sava’s Day in Tuzla in January 1879, it took six years prior obtaining permission to found a Choral Society in 1885. This was the first Choral Society on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁶⁸ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 71

slow implementation of the plan started, but was abandoned prior to the end of the century due to relocation costs. The number of Muslims who left the country in the period 1878-1914 became seriously contested in the 1990s when the Muslim nation of Bosnia finally received its international recognition. Modern Serbian historian, Dušan Bataković quotes a number of nearly 140,000 of both Muslims and Serbs leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina by 1914.⁶⁹ Current Bosnian Muslim historians claim the number of purely Muslim émigrés was 300,000, whilst the number given by Noel Malcolm stands at 100,000.⁷⁰ Whatever the number, the forced resettling of the Muslims unintentionally helped the consolidation of Serbian and Croatian national feelings which eventually gained full confirmation in the foundation of their respective national societies aiming at spreading education and national consciousness among their co-nationals.

In January 1901, a group of Sarajevo's Serbs requested the foundation of a society *Prosvjeta (Enlightenment)*, to support Serbian pupils and students from Bosnia and Herzegovina educated elsewhere in the Monarchy. About a month later, a similar request was sent to the authorities from a group of Mostar's Croats to found a similar society named *Napredak (Advancement)*. Nearly two years later, in February 1903, the newly established Muslim Society for Support of Students *Gajret (Society)* made a similar request arguing that two other societies, Orthodox and Catholic were already established. The Provincial Government granted permission to all three, reasoning that if *Gajret* was permitted to exist, it will prevent young Muslims from participating in Croatian and Serbian societies.⁷¹

By 1908, the year of the Annexation crisis, the Provincial Government managed to open 251 elementary schools using local revenues for their construction and maintenance. During the same period and in the same manner, 266 military watchtowers similar to that in Petrinja were built to the detriment of financial education. According to the official report prepared by a special Austrian committee headed by J.M. Bärenreiter, in 1905/1906 school year, only 14% of eligible school children attended elementary schools.⁷² Despite the government's efforts, the Muslim

⁶⁹ Bataković, D. - *The Balkan Piedmont Serbia and the Yugoslav Question*, originally published in *Dialog*, Paris, 1994, 25-73 – Available at <http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/batakovic> - Accessed on 11/09/2012

⁷⁰ Malcom, 1994, 140

⁷¹ Milojković-Djurić, 2002, 156-161

⁷² Bärenreiter, J.M. – *Bosnische Eindrücke*, Vienna, 1908, 14, quoted in Cvijić, J. - *Sabrana dela, Knjiga 3 (Tom I): Govori i članci, Aneksija Bosne i Hercegovine i srpsko pitanje*, Beograd, 1987 - Cvijić, J. –

population remained dormant regarding the development of its national narrative. This was partly due to the sense of alienation from the Austrian authorities and partly due to their disconnection from the core of the Ottoman state that was undergoing societal disintegration prior to the Young Turk Revolution. Additionally, as the majority of Bosnian Muslims did not speak Turkish and were aware of their Slavic (Serbian or Croatian) origins, they could not engage in any process of building a national identity that would enable them to declare themselves anything else but the Serbs or Croats of the Muslim faith. As late as 1930s, the Bosnian Muslims were still observing the Christian holidays and in some cases participating in village celebrations along with Christian villagers. They maintained a number of pre-Ottoman customs, connected to the days of St. George and John the Baptist. Most interestingly, they observed the days of St. Procopius, St. Peter and St. Ilija, Good Friday, Easter and Christmas according to the Julian calendar and in some cases, they celebrated the custom of *slava*, a uniquely Serbian Orthodox tradition.⁷³ In this ambiguous situation, it was natural for the emerging Muslim intellectuals to apply diplomatic positioning between the Serbs and the Croats and assert themselves as the true leaders of the Muslim population.⁷⁴

Since researchers who were the citizens of the Serbian Kingdom were not allowed into Bosna and Herzegovina, a number of Croat scholars, citizens of Austro-Hungary, undertook the opportunity to explore the past of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Authors like Antun Hangi, wrote about the Bosnian Muslims as converted Croats. This was not unnoticed by the Serbian authors from both states. Luka Grdjić-Bjelokosić, an ethnographer from Mostar, criticized Hangi's approach in his book *Life and Customs of the Mohammedans of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, published in Serbia in 1903, in response to the Austro-Hungarian effort to separate the Bosnian Muslims from the Serbs.⁷⁵ Since Serbian authors in Bosnia and Herzegovina were heavily suppressed by

Collected Works, Book 3 (Vol. I): *Speeches and Articles, Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serbian Question*, Belgrade, 1987 – The article was originally published in Serbian, during the Annexation Crisis in 1908, and immediately after that in French, Russian, Czech and only partly in English. All publications were forbidden in Austria-Hungary. The English translation of the title is my own. – Available at <http://www.rastko.rs/antropologija/cvijic/govori-clanci/jcvijic-aneksija.html> - Accessed on 12/09/2012

⁷³ Djordjević, T. – *Preislamski ostaci medju jugoslovenskim Muslimanima*, originally published in *Naš narodni život*, Vol. VI, Belgrade, 1932, 25-25, quoted in Fine, J.V.A. – *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation* originally published in New York, 1975. Re-published by the Bosnian Institute, London, 2007, 36

⁷⁴ Ванас, 1994, 58

⁷⁵ Грђић-Бјелокосић, Л. – “Живот и обичаји Мухамеданаца у Босни и Херцеговини,” написао А. Ханги, Караџић, бр.1, год. IV, Алексинац, 1903, no page numbers. The translation into English is my own.

the authorities from publishing their works related to the province, they naturally turned towards Serbia.⁷⁶

The decade of the 1890s was marked by the appearance of the nationalist claims by both the Serbs and the Croats over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Already mentioned Franjo Rački, the author of the *Bogomil Theory* of the Bosnian Church, believed that “*the Croat people had a legal and permanent right of ownership to the whole space from the Bojana River (southern border of Montenegro) to the Drina and Danube.*”⁷⁷ The competition was facilitated by the counter-claim that the Serbs had an equal right, as the majority of the Bosnian population was of Serbian Orthodox origin due to historical development in the Middle Ages. Naturally, the Austro-Hungarian authorities could not support any idea that would encourage any idea of independence of the Austrian Serbs, the Serbian argument was dismissed as the attempt of the Serbian Kingdom to destabilize the Monarchy and expand its borders towards the West. The Serbian response was labelled as “Greater Serbian expansionism” towards Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷⁸

However, the threat from Hungarian nationalism in Croatia Proper and Slavonia prompted Rački and Bishop Strossmayer (Fig. 2.9) to adhere to the idea of the cooperation and unity of all South Slavs. This resulted in an absurd situation in which the Serbian and Croatian intellectuals from those provinces of the Dual Monarchy cooperated in their attempt to confront the attempt of the Austro-Hungarian authorities to suppress Slavic nationalism. Simultaneously, they were developing disagreements over the sizeable Muslim population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, now living within the imperial borders. Similarly, the authorities in Vienna and Budapest were playing their own power-games, with the Austrians supporting the Croats against the Hungarians and the Hungarians supporting the Serbs against the Austrians.⁷⁹ The result was a growing rift between the Serbs and the Croats themselves, unnoticed at the time by the leading intellectuals of Yugoslav orientation.

⁷⁶ The Serbian Academy gave all necessary support and a number of Serbian authors joined the growing debate.

⁷⁷ Banac, 1994, 90

⁷⁸ Malcolm, 1994, 150. Malcolm recycled the term “Greater Serbian expansionism” for the second time in the 1990s, nearly fifty years after it was re-employed by the communist authorities in 1945. What was readily omitted was the fact that the Kingdom of Serbia at the time neither had financial nor political power to be on a par to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the production of academic works and political manifestos. See also Fath-Lihić, 2008, 74

⁷⁹ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 75

5.4.3 The Sarajevo assassination

Sarajevo assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June 1914 was used as a pretext to begin the First World War. The real causes and events surrounding the beginning of the Great War were traditionally explained as the mutual resentment of the Great Powers during the imperialist race.⁸⁰ For this study, the important notion was the impact that the First World War had on the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The immediate action of the Provincial Government was to organize anti-Serbian demonstrations and mobilize Catholic and Muslim population against the Serbs, as retaliation for the killed Duke. The authorities encouraged the terror against the Serbs, arguing that the “Greater Serbianism” was the threat for all population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁸¹

Generally, the rhetoric used by the authorities in the decade prior to the First World War was reflecting the fervent anti-Serbianism of the *Croatian Party of Right*. At the same time, the authorities adopted a patronising attitude towards the Muslims explaining that “*the Serbian enemy will destroy all the Muslims if they take over the Muslim territories.*”⁸² This attitude was echoed in the *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conducts of the Balkan Wars*, which was issued in Washington DC by the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* on behalf of the government in Vienna. Its main objective was to promote the policy of appeasement on the eve of the First World War.⁸³ The Austro-Hungarian authorities welcomed this report, as it was published just in time when the preparations for the war were taking place.

The anti-Serbian feelings were exacerbated by the politically motivated trials against the prominent Serbs in Austro-Hungary, which culminated in their deportation

⁸⁰ However, the revisionism in the last few years re-interprets the causes of the war as “sleepwalking” of the Great Powers into the internal conflict of the Balkans, for which the prime guilty party is Serbia.

⁸¹ Ćorović, V. – *Crna knjiga - Patnje Srba Bosne i Hercegovine za vreme svetskog rata 1914-1918 godine*, Beograd, 1920 – Available at http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/vcorovic-crna.1.html#_Toc536798383 – Accessed on 19/09/2012. Following the news of assassination, Constantine Hörmann, former editor-in-chief of the *Herald of the Landesmuseum*, openly called for hanging all the Serbs. Hörmann was later appointed a chief-commissar in the occupied Serbia. See *Chapter III – The Serbs*, p. 75

⁸² *Ibid*

⁸³ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – *International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conducts of the Balkan Wars*, Washington DC, 1914. The report itself was written by eight members of the committee which included Austrian, German, Russian, French, British and US members.

to detention camps in Arad, Nežider, Doboj and Šopronje.⁸⁴ One of the survivors of the camp was a native of Mostar, historian Vladimir Ćorović (Fig. 1.42), who recorded the events of the First World War in Bosnia and Herzegovina in his work *The Black Book – The Sufferings of the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the World War 1914-1918*. Without prejudice, Ćorović described in detail how the anti-Serbian feelings were incited among *some parts* of the Croat and Muslim population and underlined that the antagonisms would not happen if they were not manipulated from the outside.⁸⁵

5.5 The First Yugoslavia and its Muslims

After the establishment of *Gajret*, the pro-Serbian feelings prevailed among the Bosnian Muslims whose leading western educated politicians during the Austro-Hungarian era began advocating the unified South Slav state.⁸⁶ When the First World War ended, the Yugoslav Muslim Organization (YMO) was formed as a political organization based on the transformed Muslim Movement.⁸⁷ As the Kingdom of SHS recognized only the nations of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the Slav Muslims were permitted to declare themselves as either Serbs or Croats.

Politically, that meant that they became the lever that regulated the political discourse between the Serbs and the Croats, when the economic disparity and differing views on state-organization became obvious in the first post-war years. The immediate action of the Belgrade Government was to introduce much needed agrarian reforms and to abolish the serfdom, retained by the Austro-Hungarian authorities in four decades after the Ottoman departure.⁸⁸ Naturally, this affected the Muslim landowners as their privileges, maintained by both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian states, guaranteed their control over the majority of the population. The adopted economic measures

⁸⁴ An assassin of the Archduke, Gavrilo Princip (1894-1918), a nineteen-year old member of the *Young Bosnia* organization, which was behind the assassination, did not survive the Terezín prison and died in the last year of the war. Princip's co-conspirator, a Muslim Slav Muhamed Mehmedbašić (1886–1943), escaped to Montenegro and survived the war. He was killed by the *Ustaše* units during the Second World War.

⁸⁵ Ćorović, V. – *Crna Knjiga – Patnje Srba Bosne i Hercegovineza vreme svetskog rata 1914-1918 godine*, Beograd, 1920 – Available at http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/vcorovic-crna_1.html#_Toc536798383 – Accessed on 18/09/2012 – My translation. Admittedly, a similar notion on the belligerent Balkan petty-nations was given in the Carnegie Report of the 1914, but the real blame in that report was put on the Balkan states of Serbia and Greece in relation to the Ottoman state.

⁸⁶ Malcom, 1994, 166

⁸⁷ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 68

⁸⁸ Bosnia and Herzegovina were not directly affected by war damage, but suffered great food shortages and in order to increase grain production, the Belgrade Government accelerated the process of reforms, which lasted until 1931.

somewhat eased the growing food shortages, but alienated politically part of the leading Muslim politicians. Nevertheless, throughout the period of royal Yugoslavia, YMO leadership actively participated in the royal government. Mehmed Spaho (1883-1939), the undisputed YMO leader throughout the interwar years, held important Ministries of Economy (1919) and Trade and Industry in several parliaments until the death of King Alexander in 1934 (Fig. 5.11). None of the leading Muslim politicians at the time opposed the measures of the central government.⁸⁹ Similarly, the YMO supported the Cvetković-Maček *Sporazum* when it was signed in 1939.⁹⁰



Fig. 5.11 – Mehmed Spaho (1883-1939), the leader of Yugoslav Muslim Organization and the most influential Muslim politician in the interwar period.

In this period, however, the Muslim political front became more fragmented, as younger intellectuals sought to re-assert Islamic cultural values, but was divided whether it should be sought within Yugoslavia, as an autonomous region, or within a union with all Balkan Muslims, which would be a separate state.⁹¹ This particularly affected the younger and educated Muslim intellectuals who were divided between various pan-Islamic groups and the League of Communists. Their affiliation will

⁸⁹ Donia, Robert J. & Fine, John V.A. – *Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, New York, 1994, 129

⁹⁰ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 45-46

⁹¹ Bougarel, Z. – *Bosnian Muslims and the Yugoslav Idea* in Djokic, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 104

directly determine which side to join during the Second World War. The YMO, however, remained the main political power of the Bosnian Muslims.

5.5.1 Integral Yugoslavism

The period of royal Yugoslavia was marked by attempts to impose the policies of “integral Yugoslavism.”⁹² As far as Bosnia and Herzegovina was concerned, the Government’s immediate action was to expand primary education as the illiteracy rates, together with Kosovo and Metohija, were still among the highest in the state. The only noteworthy academic activities that were taking place in Yugoslavia were in Zagreb and Belgrade and from this period date the first serious academic debates on the ethnic nature of the Yugoslav Muslims. As there were no Muslim academics who would introduce a narrative of a separate Muslim nation and the Austro-Hungarian sponsorship of the “Bosnian consciousness” had failed, the Croat and Serbian scholars, reflecting the political stalemate in the parliament, transferred political disagreements into the scholarly debate on the ethnic nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 1925, Vladimir Ćorović argued that the historical, cultural and educational backwardness of Bosnia and Herzegovina was a direct consequence of the divisive policies of the Ottoman-Habsburg periods and insisted that the nature of Bosnia that became contested between the Serbs and Croats was implemented from the outside.⁹³ Ćorović emphasised that the cultural mix in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the 19th century had reached such a point that it had become impossible to disentangle them. This was, according to Ćorović, most visible in a few surviving examples of the mediaeval ecclesiastical architecture which was frequently orthodox in base, but richly decorated by the Romanesque and Gothic details of the coastal towns of Dalmatia (Fig. 5.12).⁹⁴ Ćorović also reported that the largest number of the surviving Ottoman heritage was concentrated in central Bosnia, bore visible Levantine features and was little or not researched at all. He advocated a professional assessment of the remaining heritage, which would help scholars to come to a better understanding of Bosnia’s cultural

⁹² See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 82

⁹³ Ćorović, V. – *Bosna i Hercegovina*, SKZ, Beograd, 1925, *Introduction* – Available at http://www.rastko.org.rs/rastko-bl/istorija/corovic/bih/vcorovic-bih-kultura_1.htm - Accessed on 14/09/2012 - My translation

⁹⁴ As early as 1925, Ćorović warned that both ecclesiastical and vernacular Christian heritage architecture of both denominations dating from the pre-Ottoman and Ottoman periods was in great danger of complete disappearance and that even the next generation of researchers might lack sufficient data to undertake full-scale studies. *Ibid*

position in the new South Slav state.⁹⁵ His views, however, were influenced by the general acceptance of “integral Yugoslavism,” as he stated in the introduction of his work that “during the 19th century, there existed a serious threat that Bosnia might become an apple of discord between the Serbs and the Croats...luckily, with the unification that threat was removed, as desires of both were fulfilled.”⁹⁶



Fig. 5.12 – Monastery of Krupa, on the River Vrbas in central Bosnia, 13th-14th century. Destroyed and rebuilt several times. Romanesque windows and elongated bell-tower point to the Catholic influences from the Adriatic coast.

Another important representative of the “integral Yugoslavism” was Ivo Andrić (1892-1975), a Bosnian Croat who later declared himself a Serb (Fig. 2.53). A distinguished writer and diplomat of the first part of the 20th century, he immortalized the intricate nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the most famous of his novels *The Bridge on Drina*, published in 1945. The novel was centred on the famous bridge (Fig. 5.13) built by Mehmed-Pasha Sokolović (1509-1579) in Višegrad (Fig. 5.14), on the border between the Belgrade and Bosnian Pashaliks, as an allegory of bridges between the peoples, cultures and religions. For his work, Andrić was awarded a Nobel Prize in

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Ibid

1961. Andrić was one of the first intellectuals who pointed out that the concept of “integral Yugoslavism” was far broader than the Serb-Croat dichotomies.⁹⁷



Fig. 5.13 – The Bridge on Drina, built in 1571-1577 by Mimar Sinan (1489-1588), a chief Court architect in Constantinople, often called “the Ottoman Michelangelo.” Listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 2007.



Fig. 5.14 – Mehmed-Pasha Sokolović, born Rade Sokolović, the Ottoman Grand Vizier (1565-1579), erected many bridges and mosques throughout his native Bosnia and re-established the Serbian Patriarchal Seat in Peć (Kosovo and Metohija) in 1557.

⁹⁷ Wachtel, A.B. – *Ivan Meštrović, Ivo Andrić and the Synthetic Yugoslav Culture of the Interwar Period* in Djokic, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 246

5.5.2 Becoming Croat

By 1939 the divisions between Serbian and Croatian scholars on the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina took divergent paths. The appearance of racist theories in Europe at the end of the 19th century was most visible in the Habsburg influenced parts of the Balkans, especially in Croatia, where Ante Starčević (Fig. 2.16) formulated a Croat national ideology that denied the existence of any South Slav nation other than Croat. In 1881 Starčević founded the *Party of Rights* that advocated secession from the Habsburg Empire.⁹⁸ Because this was not politically possible, by the end of the century, the party ideology turned against the Serbs, arguing that “*the Serbs were actually orthodox Croats and the Slovenes were Highland Croats.*”⁹⁹ In the interwar period, Starčević’s postulates were adopted and expanded by the *Ustaše* ideology which included in the Croat national spectrum his perception of the Bosnian Muslim elite as “*Croat by nationality and the oldest and purest nobility in Europe.*”¹⁰⁰

Ever since 1878, the politically prominent Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina generally applied political pragmatism, cooperating with current regimes. Thus, the political clashes between the Serbian and Croatian parliamentarians in the interwar period paid little attention to the Muslims, but determined their orientation during the Second World War, when the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina was included into the NDH. During the NDH a significant number of the Bosnian Muslims joined the *Ustaše* regime, declared themselves Croats and participated in the genocide of the Serbs, Jews and Roma.¹⁰¹ Embracing the NDH state policies which based their theory of ethnogenesis on the highly polemical *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, some Muslim leaders like Uzeiraga Hadžihasanović and Nedžad-beg Sulejmanpašić in the 1940s assumed the Gothic, that is German, heritage of the Bosnian Muslims.¹⁰² However, as the Second World War in Yugoslavia was also a civil war, a number of Bosnian Muslims also joined the communist Partisans.

⁹⁸ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 161-162.

⁹⁹ Banac, 1994, 86

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 108

¹⁰¹ Malcolm, 1994, 185; Donia & Fine, 1994, 142 – All these authors have an apologetic view for the choice made by the Muslim leaders during the Second World War. However, as their accounts were written during the 1990s, it was deemed politically necessary to present the Bosnian Muslims as the only victims of the Yugoslav wars.

¹⁰² Bašić, 2009, 59

5.6 The Second Yugoslavia and its Muslims

The reconstructed federal Yugoslavia under Tito immediately imposed the “brotherhood and unity” policies that were designed to diminish the Croat-Serbian antagonisms. Since the Serbs still presented the most numerous national group in the state, the introduction of the new nations was directed towards reducing Serbian influence in Yugoslavia. Equally, Croat participation on the side of the Axis was used to re-assess the Muslim participation in the war as resulting from coercion by the Pavelić regime to “*secure the practice of Islam unmolested.*”¹⁰³ For this purpose, the Serbian royalist units *Četniks* (*Četnici*) led by General Draža Mihajlović (1893-1946) which fought for a while on the side of the Allies became equivalent to the Croatian *Ustaše* units which fought on the side of the Axis. This designation led to the creation of the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the borders that roughly corresponded to those of the Austro-Hungarian occupation.

When the Second Yugoslavia was established, the Communist leadership also considered transferring the capital to Sarajevo, where no single religious community had a majority. The republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was, therefore, a good representation of the new Yugoslavia. The new authorities immediately undertook reconstruction projects which aimed to rebuild the entire Yugoslav territory on the Soviet model. The underdeveloped parts of the state, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Metohija, Montenegro and Macedonija benefited the most, as large sums of the budget money were directed towards the urbanization and industrialization of these regions. The Five Year plans, devised on the Soviet model, prompted large numbers of the rural population to move towards the rapidly expanding towns.

Apart from Sarajevo, traditional local centres such as Banja Luka, Mostar, Travnik and Tuzla also experienced an economic growth and territorial expansion. In contrast to the urban areas, rural parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced decline, because the economic emphasis was on towns and industrialization. A number of villages that were completely destroyed during the war were slowly recovering, as there was no infrastructure to connect them to the more prosperous towns.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, due to the loss of population, some villages were never re-populated and the only

¹⁰³ Malcolm, 1994, 185

¹⁰⁴ Hasić, T. – *Reconstruction Planning in Post-Conflict Zones – Bosnia and Herzegovina and the International Community*, Stockholm, 2004, 378

demographic expansion took place in towns. The re-built towns bore no national character, but rather the grey features of Socialist Realism, like elsewhere in the Communist Yugoslavia.¹⁰⁵

5.6.1 Discovering the heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Similar to other parts of Yugoslavia and in accordance with the “brotherhood and unity” policies which required that every federal republic should have corresponding university and cultural institutions, these were developing by the decree. After the initial re-building of the country, the efforts of the Yugoslav authorities did indeed bring some progress in institutional research and preservation of heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The *People’s Library* was founded in October 1945 and was situated in the former Town Council palace (*Vijećnica*), built in 1895 in the neo-Moorish style (Fig. 5.6).¹⁰⁶ The new Act on Protection of Monuments of 1945 regulated the foundation of the *Land’s Institute for Protection and Scientific Research of Cultural Monuments and Natural Landscapes of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. The Institute itself was placed in one wing of the *Land Museum*,¹⁰⁷ but did not commence work until 1947, when it consisted of only one member of staff. By the end of 1948, the Institute re-employed one retired museologist, one historian and, two years later, its first archaeologist, albeit a student. The first architect-conservationist was employed in 1952. The *Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina* was founded in 1947, but that institution too lacked sufficiently trained staff. The central museum institution in the republic, *Zemaljski muzej*, suffered lasting shortages of academically trained professionals and consolidated only in the beginning of the 1960s.¹⁰⁸ A special *Oriental Institute* was established in Sarajevo in 1950, to research and publish historical documents relating to Bosnia or written in Turkish, Arabic and Persian by the natives of Bosnia during the Ottoman period.¹⁰⁹ However, the first *Scientific Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (*Naučno društvo Bosne i Hercegovine*) was founded only in 1951 in order to support and promote the spread of education.

¹⁰⁵ Donia & Fine, 1994, 186

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.sarajevo.ba/ba/stream.php?kat=45> – Accessed on 18/09/2012

¹⁰⁷ The original Austro-Hungarian name of the museum was retained throughout the Communist period and later.

¹⁰⁸ http://www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja.php - Accessed on 27/09/2012

¹⁰⁹ http://www.ois.unsa.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=19 – The official web-site of the Oriental Institute of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed on 18/09/2012

Despite initial enthusiasm for the educational and cultural development, the programme for researching of political, cultural and socio-economic relations in the 19th and 20th century began only in 1956.¹¹⁰ Understandably, this situation, because of the inexperienced staff and money shortages prevented any re-thinking of the Bosnian past to take place, except in relation to communist interpretation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Second World War. Nevertheless, the first survey-volume on mediaeval settlements in Bosnia and Herzegovina was published in Sarajevo in 1957.¹¹¹ In the following decades, the works on mapping the archaeological and architectural heritage increased, with the support of the Universities of Belgrade and Zagreb. Scholars involved in research were frequently natives of Bosnia who completed their studies in Belgrade or Zagreb, but focused their research on Bosnia. However, not before 1978 the first comprehensive work on Bosnian mediaeval towns appeared. In that year, a Bosnian Serb urban historian, native of Sarajevo, Desanka Kovačević-Kojić (b.1925) published her extensive study on mediaeval towns in Bosnia in the 14th and 15th centuries. This study was orientated strictly to the urban features of the pre-Ottoman towns and was based on the available information from various archives and archaeological data collection. In accordance with the official Yugoslav historiography, it bore no national assignations.¹¹²

Similarly, the conservation works were undertaken on the most important monuments belonging to the heritage of all three religious communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The old towns of Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Jajce, *stećci* in Radimlja, Srebrenica, but also bridges in Mostar (Fig. 5.15) and Višegrad underwent major restorations, albeit with substantial help from the experts from Belgrade and Zagreb.

¹¹⁰ <http://www.arhivbih.gov.ba/osnivanje-i-rad-arhiva-bosne-i-hercegovine> - The official web-site of the Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed on 18/09/2012

¹¹¹ Мишић, С. – *Лексикон градова и тргова средњовековних српских земаља – према писаним изворима* – Београд, 2010, 15

¹¹² *Ibid*, 16



Fig. 5.15 – The Mostar Bridge, built by an apprentice of Mimar Sinan in 1566 on place of an older Mediaeval bridge, destroyed in 1993 by Croat forces in Herzegovina. Rebuilt in 2004 by various international agencies, without participation of local conservation experts. Inscribed in the UNESCO's *World Heritage List* in 2005.

5.6.2 The Muslim Nation

In 1966, the Scientific Society was upgraded into an *Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (ANUBiH) which resulted from the change in political thinking against the background of the European events of 1968 and re-opening of the national question in Yugoslavia.¹¹³ The Yugoslav top communist establishment, whilst seemingly opening towards the West, sought to maintain their privileges at any cost. This resulted in modification of the old Austro-Hungarian methods of invention of the national grand narratives which would instil the sense of loyalty to the Communist Yugoslavia.

Parallel with the official party-line of historiography that adopted much of Rački's initial assessment that Bosnian Muslims were descendants of the converted members of the dualist Bosnian Church, a new line of argument was developed under the influence of some Croat émigré historians and their Western colleagues who

¹¹³ <http://www.anubih.ba> – The official web-site of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Accessed on 27/09/2012 – Despite the name-change, the ANUBiH maintains that it was formed in 1951.

claimed that the elusive Bosnian Church of the Middle Ages was neither Bogomil-dualist nor in any contact with the Serbian Orthodox Church. The revolutionary thesis that the little understood mediaeval Bosnian Church was actually a renegade Roman Catholic Order was promulgated by the American scholar John V.A. Fine (b.1939) in his book *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation*, published in New York in 1975. Fine (Fig. 5.16) based his research exclusively on the late 19th and early 20th century's interpretation of the surviving mediaeval manuscripts of the Dubrovnik, Vatican, Venice, Budapest and other archives of the Roman Catholic world, dismissing in the process Orthodox sources and stressing that his work was the result of receiving a Yugoslav government grant in the 1960s.¹¹⁴ The book was dismissed as not being a genuine work of scholarship with an arguably well-intended motivation.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, Fine proceeded to create some relatively well accepted books on the mediaeval Balkans in the early 1980s, which became standard reference points in the English language after Yugoslav dissolution in 1991.

However, the process of building a Muslim nation based on material evidence was seriously undermined by three important facts: firstly, there were no surviving contemporary sources written by the natives of Bosnia who referred to themselves as of Bosnian identity; secondly, the surviving pre-Ottoman heritage belonged clearly to either Catholic or Orthodox traditions and those two religions were already “nationally acquired” by the Croats and the Serbs; finally, a complete absence of church ruins that could be related to the Bosnian Church with certainty made any conclusive argument impossible. Because Islam appeared in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina only in the mid-15th century and the Slavic-speaking converts identified themselves as Turks until the late 19th century, the question whether they belonged to the Serbs or the Croats was really a debate between the Serbs and Croats.¹¹⁶ The heresy in mediaeval Bosnia that was mentioned on several occasions between the 12th and the 15th century in various

¹¹⁴ Fine, J.V.A. – *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation* originally published in New York, 1975. A New edition re-published by the Bosnian Institute, London, 2007, 14. The Yugoslav government provided the grant for Fine's research, signalling the approval of narrative that sought to diminish the “Greater Serbian hegemony” in historiography.

¹¹⁵ Petrin, N. – *A Review of The Bosnian Church by John V. A. Fine, Jr*, Eastern European Quarterly, 1975 – Available at <http://www.sabornik.com/index.php?lang=en&idd=glasniktexts&tid=1002> – Accessed on 18/09/2012 – In the 1990s, Fine's work was used to justify the revisionist accounts of Bosnian history and identity. See further discussion.

¹¹⁶ Denis Bašić, a modern historian of Bosnian Muslim origins. Adherent to the normative historiography, Bašić's interpretations of the existing literature on Bosnian Church rely on assumptions. See, Bašić, 2009, p. 192-198.

primary sources of both Catholic and Orthodox origins could be interpreted in either way, as the evidence of its existence was contradictory and inconsistent. Therefore, the attempts to link the Bosnian Church to the pre-Ottoman archaeological and cultural heritage resulted in assigning the characteristics of the Bosnian Church to the mediaeval tombstones known as *stećci* (Fig. 5.17). The problem appeared instantly, as many of those tombstones were unequivocally either Serbian Orthodox or Croat Catholic and could be found outside Bosnia proper, in the territories of Serbia and Croatia.



Fig. 5.16 – John V.A. Fine (b.1939) interpreted the Bosnian Church as emanating from the misinterpreted Catholicism in mediaeval Bosnia. In his research, he used almost exclusively the late 19th and early 20th century Croat interpretations of the Bosnian identity.



Fig. 5.17 – *Stećci* in Radimlja – Mediaeval graveyard specific to the Balkans. As the greatest number of tombs is situated in Bosnia and Herzegovina, serious attempts were to associate them with the elusive Bosnian Church.

5.6.3 The Bogomil Theory

As noted above, the Bogomil Theory of the nature of the Bosnian Church was first advocated in the 19th century by the Catholic priest and historian Franjo Rački. The Bogomil Theory served the purpose of “bridging the gap” between the medieval times and the massive conversions that occurred after 1463.¹¹⁷ The main emphasis was on the dualism of the church doctrine which linked the Bogomil heresy that appeared in 9th century Bulgaria with the sparse information about the “Bosnian heretics” of the 12th-15th centuries. This dualism arguably identified by the unusual hierarchy of the clergy, described as having a bishop *Djed* (*Grandfather*), *Strojnik* (prior, iguman?) and his inferior *Starac* (*Old Man*) and superior *Gost* (*Guest*).¹¹⁸ These titles appear in the several surviving mediaeval manuscripts and represent the only indication of the existence of some religious peculiarity in that period. They were all written in the Cyrillic of the Old Church Slavonic of Serbian redaction (*Manuel’s Gospel*, *Batalo’s Gospel*, *Hval’s Gospel*), with visible Catholic-style illuminations. However, these gospels were arranged to follow the Orthodox creed and even Fine, the author of the “catholic interpretation” of the Bosnian Church, admitted that some of these gospels were used by the Serbian Orthodox Church in the centuries after the Ottoman conquest.¹¹⁹

The problem, however, was a complete absence of any archaeological evidence that could confirm the existence of the Bosnian Church except for the remains of a few Orthodox and Catholic monasteries in pre-Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina. The key explanation of the lack of the material evidence was the dualist doctrine itself: the dualists did not require church structures and built no monasteries. However, the *stećci* monuments that were erected in the same period (12th-15th century) were declared to be a product of separate and unique Bosnian Church activities, as the majority of them were situated in the territory of and coincided with the existence of the mediaeval Bosnian state. Some estimates suggest the existence of nearly 70,000 *stećci* tombstones in the central Balkans, the majority of which (nearly 58,000) are in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹²⁰ However, until the mid-20th century, the local peasants

¹¹⁷ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 37

¹¹⁸ Džaja, S.M., Lovrenović, D. – *Srednjovjekovna Crkva bosanska*, Hrvatski leksikografski institut, Mostar, 2007, 10

¹¹⁹ Fine, 2007, 86

¹²⁰

http://www.kons.gov.ba/main.php?mod=vijesti&extra=aktuelnost&action=view&id_vijesti=667&lang

used to call the *stećci* “the Greek graves” (Orthodox graves).¹²¹ Symbolically, the tombstones display a myriad of motifs that have both Orthodox and Catholic features whose origins and artistic development are still not fully explained.¹²²

The Bogomil theory was accepted for most of the 20th century as an accurate explanation for religious practices in pre-Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the Second Yugoslavia, the most prominent Bosnian Muslim scholars accepted the argument that the dualism of the Bosnian Church, persecuted by both the much stronger Orthodox and Catholic Churches that were competing in Bosnia, was the main reason for the swift conversion to Islam of its members. The Yugoslav Muslim scholars maintained that the dualist nature and weak church organization prevented the firm establishment of Christianity among the Bosnian population, which later contributed to the much quicker penetration of Islam in Bosnia.

Among Muslim scholars who accepted this thesis was Atif Purivatra (1928-2001), who devised the theory of the evolution of the Muslim national identity in Bosnia in the years prior to their recognition as a nation in Yugoslavia in 1971. Purivatra argued that the most prominent members of the Bosnian Church were the ruling aristocrats who accepted Islam immediately after the conquest in order to retain their privileges. He concluded that the contemporary Bosnian Muslims were the descendants of the mediaeval nobility.¹²³ This theory, however, could not extrapolate the scale of conversion of the Albanians, which are not known to have been subject to heresy in the pre-Ottoman times and also lived in the mountainous areas, similar to those in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The theoretical debate on the nature of pre-Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina was exacerbated by increased archaeological research. A number of epigraphic monuments related to the *stećci* were discovered and presented to the public, but the debates on the nature of the Bosnian Church differed on the interpretation of details rather than its essence. This was partly because the theory itself was very much in accordance with the South Slav idea, retained by the Yugoslav Communists. When the Bogomil Theory was first devised in the Romantic and post-Romantic periods, it fitted well with the idea of the unity of all South Slavs. After the 1918 unification, it was easily incorporated

[≡](#) – Accessed on 29/09/2012 (nearly 6,000 are in the territory of Raška in Serbia, and the rest in Lika, Croatia and in Montenegro)

¹²¹ Ibid, 92

¹²² Fath-Lihić, Sarajevo, 2008, 39

¹²³ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 38

into the policy of “integral Yugoslavism” on the basis that it was devised by a Croat historian, who incorporated the Serbian influences through its links to the Orthodox material evidence. After 1945, again, it was easily incorporated into the Yugoslav “brotherhood and unity” policy, as the “dualism” of the Bosnian Church, illustrated by the intertwined *stećci* motifs, was explained by Bosnia and Herzegovina belonging to all three peoples equally. As such, it was accepted by the wider academic circles both in Yugoslavia and internationally for the most part of the 20th century.

However, the opening of the national question in Yugoslavia in the 1960s implied that the Bogomil Theory was considered to be too close to Serbian Orthodoxy. A new theory was developed that denied the link between the Bogomils and the Bosnian Church.¹²⁴ The new theory did not comprise new ideas, but revised arguments that appeared for the first time on the eve of the Second World War and during the existence of the NDH.

5.6.4 The Cyrillic Catholic Theory

In the midst of the Second World War, some Croat historians asserted that the nature of the Bosnian Church could not have been dualist, but Catholic that fell into the schism. Ćiro Truhelka (Fig. 5.18), the very same man who was behind von Kállay’s enterprise of awakening the “Bosnian state-consciousness” in his final book *Studije o podrijetlu. Etnološka razmatranja iz Bosne i Hercegovine*, published by Matica Hrvatska in 1942, asserted that the Bosnian Church was established as a consequence of transferring the Archbishopric of Bosnia to Đakovo in the mid-13th century.¹²⁵ Because the religious practices were still not fully established, the changing jurisdictions between the Archbishoprics of Bar (Doclea), Split or Dubrovnik, Catholics fell into the schism.¹²⁶ Truhelka pointed to the surviving Latin sources which indicated that the creed of the Bosnian Church did not show signs of heresy, but rather a “uniquely Bosnian version” of Catholicism. Similarly, this theory associated the name of *krstjani*¹²⁷ which frequently appeared on the *stećci* tombstones and in some

¹²⁴ Ibid, 39

¹²⁵ A town in Croatia, the very same diocese from where Strossmayer agitated for the South Slav unity.

¹²⁶ Mužić, I. – *Vjera Crkve bosanske*, Split, 2008, 14

¹²⁷ The name *Krstjani*, meaning Christians, was described as different from the contemporary Croat *Kršćani* and Serbian *Hrišćani* with the same meaning. In my opinion, it is a dialectological differentiation from the contemporary pronunciation. Since modern Serbian/Croatian/Bosniac languages are basically the same, despite the insistence on differences by some modern linguists, it is reasonable to argue that in the Middle Ages the linguistic South Slav continuum was even closer.

documents as evidence of belonging to the hierarchically well-organized church with autochthonous religious practices. Since the evidence of these practices were contradictory and the remaining archaeological sites difficult to decipher, he concluded that the Bosnian Church was essentially Catholic, built in the “Oriental style” and used the Slavic Language and Cyrillic traditions of Cyril and Methodius.¹²⁸

To corroborate the Catholic Cyrillic theory, Truhelka pointed to the existence of a so-called *bosančica*, a Cyrillic script allegedly used by the Franciscan monks in the 17th century in Bosnia.¹²⁹ The name of *bosančica* was first invented in 1889 by Truhelka himself during his tenure of the *Landesmuseum* in Sarajevo. In accordance with von Kállay’s policies, Truhelka asserted that *bosančica* was native to Bosnia and had no connection with the Cyrillic of the Serbian mediaeval courts.¹³⁰



Fig. 5.18 – Dr Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942) worked on the development of Bosnian identity under von Kállay’s tenure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and coined the term of *bosančica* (meaning: script of Bosnia) for the mediaeval Serbian manuscripts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The main drawback to this theory was that there were no remains that would corroborate the existence of the Bosnian Church buildings. Whilst the Bogomil Theory

¹²⁸ Fath-Lihic, 2008, 41 – An interesting omission of all revisionists was the claim that the Catholic Church allowed usage of languages and alphabets other than Latin throughout its mediaeval history.

¹²⁹ Truhelka, Ć. – *Uspomene jednog pionira*, Zagreb, 1942, 135. Truhelka published his *Memoirs of a Pioneer* in Zagreb in 1942, the year in which he died.

¹³⁰ This theory was criticized equally by both Serbian and Croatian scholars at the time. A Catholic Serb linguist Milan Rešetar (1860-1942) from Dubrovnik asserted that this was a geographical denomination. The term “Oriental” was endorsed by the Provincial Government as a euphemism for Orthodox. It was later accepted and expanded by a Croat linguist Jaroslav Šidak (1903-1986) in the mid-20th century.

argued that the nature of the heresy was to reject any church structure, the Cyrillic Catholic Theory insisted that “the monasteries of the Bosnian Church were built in the Oriental style.”¹³¹ Even though it included some valid arguments on the discrepancies and huge time-gaps in the Bogomil theory, its main disadvantage was the interpretations based on probability, rather than hard evidence.

This Cyrillic Catholic theory, because of the time and place of its appearance, was abandoned immediately after the Second World War and the Bogomil Theory prevailed.¹³² However, it was preserved by the Croat émigré historians close to the Nazi-regime of the NDH who left Yugoslavia after 1945 and continued their work abroad. The special position of Yugoslavia in relation to the rest of the communist countries favoured the development of Yugoslav studies in a number of foreign universities. The primary interest was, of course, in modern history and culture, whilst the mediaeval period was studied in passing and was usually based on the contemporary historiography sanctioned by the Yugoslav government. Apart from the works of John V.A. Fine, an in-depth analysis of the early history of Yugoslav peoples in the majority of Western countries was non-existent. This proved fatal after 1990.

5.7 Becoming a nation

In the two decades after the introduction of the “brotherhood and unity,” many Serbs were systematically removed from the key-party positions at both republican and Federal level. By 1965, there were no high-level Serbs in the Bosnian Communist Party branch.¹³³ Similarly, the Christian population of the republic went into a rapid decline and by the 1960s, the Muslims became individually the most numerous ethnic group.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 40 – Modern Bosnian Croat scholar Fath-Lihić uses the word “Oriental” as opposed to “Orthodox” in the same manner that von Kállay envisaged during his governance.

¹³² The *Ustaše* regime during 1941-1945 sought to construct a Croat identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina that would completely eradicate the existence of Serbian Orthodoxy and presence of Serbs there. The reason for abandoning this theory after the war in Yugoslavia was its close relation to the Nazis. All modern revisionists who based their works on the interpretations dating from the late Austro-Hungarian period until the end of the Second World War used Malcolm’s work as a reference point which dismissed the racist nature of its origins.

¹³³ Malcolm, 1994, 198

¹³⁴ See census data from 1961 and 1971. The Serbs were individually the most numerous of the Bosnian population from the first Austro-Hungarian census in 1879, when they represented nearly 43% of the overall population (Muslims, 39%, Croats, 18%, etc.) until 1961 (Serbs, 43%, Muslims, 26%, Croats, 22%, Yugoslavs 8%, etc.). Ten years later, the Muslims became the individually most numerous group with nearly 40% (Serbs, 37%, Croats, 21%, etc.). There were attempts to explain this as caused by the emigration of the Serbs to other parts of Yugoslavia, but the demographic explosion of the Muslim population is also partly the cause for the change in ethnic structure. Similarly, the demographic losses

The assertion by the Muslims to be a nation separate from the Serbs and the Croats also raised the question of the contemporary religious situation in Yugoslavia. Even though religions were not officially banned, their open practice was discouraged. The role of the Muslims in communist Yugoslavia was much the same as during the Austro-Hungarian occupation and royal Yugoslavia: that of the buffer-zone between the Serbs and Croats.¹³⁵ The extensive programmes for the eradication of illiteracy that took place in the first years after the Second World War and strict secularization for the first time brought into existence the secular Muslim intellectuals who worked under the aegis of the Communist ideology. However, from the 1960s, the Bosnian Muslim communist leaders were increasingly involved in the “clientelistic” conflicts among the different communities and nations in Yugoslavia.¹³⁶

The League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina issued a resolution in the revolutionary 1968, which stated that:

*“The practice has shown the harmfulness, in the past period, of the different forms of pressure and injunction aiming to make Muslims declare themselves nationally as Serbs or Croats, since it has appeared in the past and it is confirmed by the present socialist practice, that **Muslims form a distinct nation.**”*¹³⁷

The national confirmation was finally sanctioned in the 1974 Constitution.

5.7.1 *The Islamic Declaration*

From 1974, the leading Muslim Marxist intellectuals, such as Atif Purivatra, Muhamed Filipović, and many others, supported by the CPY leadership, worked fervently for the promotion of Bosnian Muslim history and literature, albeit within the Yugoslav framework. The exception was, however, the pan-Islamic movement, whose informal leader, Alija Izetbegović (1925-2003) advocated the re-establishment of the Islamic values in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1970, Izetbegović (Fig. 5.19) published a manifesto entitled the *Islamic Declaration*, which proposed that the Yugoslav Muslims should adopt as their political role-model the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, a country created after the secession of the Muslim part of a large multiethnic state,

of the Second World War which counted nearly 72% of the Serbs, 16% Muslims and 4% Croats were difficult to recover.

¹³⁵ Bougarel, Z. – *Bosnian Muslims and the Yugoslav Idea* in Djokic, 2003, 108

¹³⁶ Ibid, 108

¹³⁷ Purivatra, A. – *Nacionalni i politički razvoj Muslimana*, Sarajevo, 1969, 65-129, quoted in Bougarel, 2003, 107

basing its national identity on Islam.¹³⁸ Izetbegović's views on the pan-Islamic movement were expressed as a call for the "establishment of the great Islamic federation from Morocco to Indonesia, from subtropical Africa to Central Asia."¹³⁹ Since this publication roughly coincided with the period of the Croatian Spring, the Yugoslav authorities forbade it as they saw it as a threat to state security.¹⁴⁰ Izetbegović, himself a member of the SS Handžar Division¹⁴¹ during the Second World War, was not tried until 1983, following the 1980 publication of yet another manifesto, titled *Islam between East and West*. His lengthy prison sentence ended in 1988 with the beginning of the political upheaval in Yugoslavia, when Izetbegović was released from prison. Almost immediately he assumed the leadership of the first post-communist Muslim party, the *Party of Democratic Action (Stranka Demokratske Akcije, SDA)*, founded on 27th March 1990 from some members of the pan-Islamic movement and former Muslim Communists.¹⁴² Izetbegović's fundamentalism was a key Serbian argument in the 1992-1995 war, but was mostly ignored by the West.

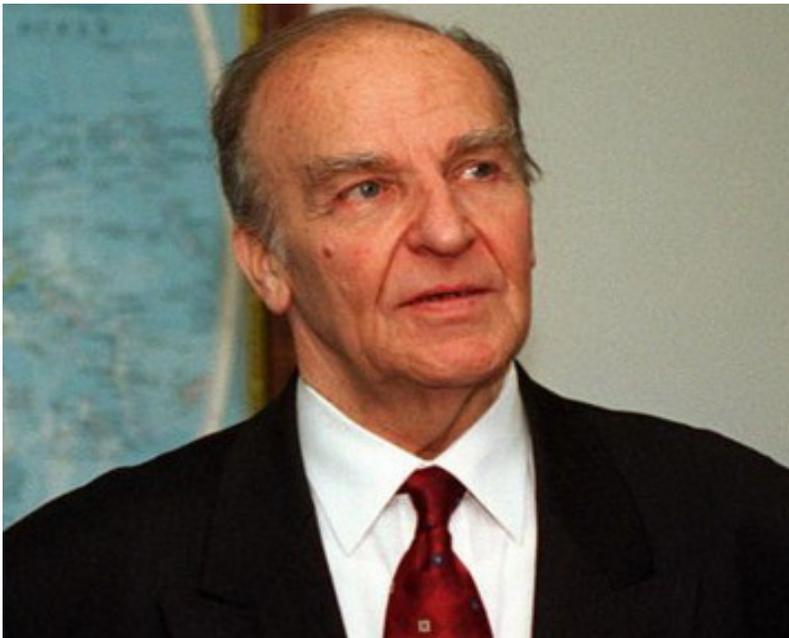


Fig. 5.19 – Alija Izetbegović (1925-2003), the leader of the Bosnian Muslims during the wars of Yugoslav succession in the 1990s.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 109

¹³⁹ Izetbegović, A. – *Islamska deklaracija*, Sarajevo, 1970, 47

¹⁴⁰ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 214-216

¹⁴¹ *SS Handžar Division* was created from the Nazi *13th Waffen Mountain Division* of the *SS Handschar* (1st Croatian) in early 1944.

¹⁴² Bougarel in Djokic, 2003, 109

5.7.2 Ethnic divisions

The first multi-party elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina of November 1990, as expected, showed deep divisions among the nation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Croats and Serbs stood behind their national parties the *Croatian Democratic Union* (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ) and the *Serbian Democratic Party* (*Srpska Demokratska Stranka*, SDS), whilst the Muslims rallied behind the SDA. Until spring 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina was locked in internal disagreements. The Croats, naturally, wanted to join their co-nationals in the recently proclaimed independent Croatia, whilst the Serbs insisted on remaining with other Serbs and Montenegrins within Yugoslavia. If either were allowed self-determination, the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina would inevitably end up changed. This would further leave the Muslims between two choices: either to join the new states of Serbia and Croatia in the new borders or to form a minute Muslim republic in the area of central Bosnia, around Sarajevo, where they had a majority. The first option was not allowed by the international community. The second option was not acceptable to the Muslims, as that would mean significant reduction of their influence. All attempts by the international mediators to find an acceptable solution failed as the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina rejected the partition of the state either pressed by the pro-Croat faction within the SDA or on the advice of the Americans.¹⁴³ Whichever was the case, the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent state within the borders determined by Tito occurred on the unhappy date of 6th April 1992.¹⁴⁴ It now marked the beginning of a three year war, which the major western media seized upon to justify the interventionist policies of their governments.

The brutality of the war exposed all the weaknesses of the previous Yugoslav system. Since an open debate on the ethnic and national conflicts between the Yugoslav peoples after the world wars were silenced in order to maintain the “brotherhood and unity”, the suppressed unsolved enmities exploded. In the initial stages of the war, the JNA in Bosnia and Herzegovina disintegrated along national lines, much as had happened in other parts of Yugoslavia. The JNA officers defected to the newly formed national armies and acted on the pretext of protecting their co-nationals from ethnic

¹⁴³ Bougarel in Djokic, 113. Similar disintegration of the Yugoslav army during the Kingdom of Yugoslavia took place in 1941. See *Chapter I – Historical background*, p. 58

¹⁴⁴ On 6 April 1941 Belgrade was razed to the ground by the *Luftwaffe*, marking the beginning of the Second World War in Yugoslavia.

cleansing. Initial accounts of war reported nearly 250,000 lives lost, but some recent research suggests that the real number is closer to 100,000.¹⁴⁵ The destruction of towns, urban structures and rural areas is still subject to analysis, as early reports on destruction were focused only on the most prominent towns and most significant historic structures and in some cases were grossly exaggerated for the purpose of war propaganda.¹⁴⁶

5.7.3 The war of the monuments

One of the most memorable pictures of the destruction of heritage was certainly the destruction of the Old Bridge in Mostar. The film shots of its savage destruction on 9th November 1993 shocked the world (Fig. 5.20). The bridge as it was had existed for over four centuries, although there is a document dating back into the XV century which refers to the mediaeval wooden hanged bridge, built before the Ottoman conquest. According to the Ottoman sources, by the mid-XVI century the wooden structure of the previous bridge decayed and the new stone structure was erected in 1566 under the supervision of the main architect, Hayrudin, the apprentice of the Ottoman Court-architect, Mimar Sinan.¹⁴⁷ The bridge was built in order to span the banks of the river Neretva, and had no significance or outstanding architectural features. Its value derived from the centuries of use and, more importantly, because the city built around it was named and identified by the bridge: Mostar. *Most* in the language of Southern Slavs means *Bridge*, hence the name of the city, Mostar.¹⁴⁸ Because the Old Bridge represented the Islamic heritage in Europe, the Croatian military units in Herzegovina destroyed it.

¹⁴⁵ Roberts, A. – *Lives and Statistics: Are 90% of War victims Civilians?* – *Survival*, Vol.2, June-July 2010 – Available at <http://ccw.modhist.ox.ac.uk/publications/Survival%20vol%2052%20no%203%20-%20Adam%20Roberts%20on%20lives%20%20statistics%20-%20non-printable.pdf> – Accessed on 16/04/2012

¹⁴⁶ Similar to what was happening during the war in Croatia, the *journalism of attachment* presented the case of destruction of Islamic monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina as that of the non-tolerant Christians. Compare with *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 222-223.

¹⁴⁷ Apart from the Bridge on Drina, Sinan built the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, Süleymanie Mosque in Istanbul and a number of Imperial edifices in the Ottoman capital and other important cities.

¹⁴⁸ Lazarević, D. - *Contracts for International Conservation Practice - A practical proposal* – An MSc dissertation awarded by the University of Bath, Bath, UK, 2007, 33 – Unpublished material.



Fig. 5.20 – The moment of destruction of the Old Bridge, as captured by the camera in 1993.

Mimar Sinan was also commissioned to design a second major bridge in Bosnia on the initiative of the Grand Vizier Mehmed-Pasha Sokolović (1505/6-1579), a native of the area around Višegrad (Fig. 5.14). Built between 1571 and 1577, the Bridge on the Drina survived several centuries and was not directly endangered during the 1992-1995 war. However, this bridge played a prominent role in defining the Serbian identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as its benefactor, Mehmed-Pasha initiated the renewal of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć in 1557, abolished after the fall of the Despotate in 1459.¹⁴⁹ The bridge on the Drina was presented as an allegorical symbol of Bosnia belonging to all three religions and nations in the Nobel Prize awarded novel *The Bridge on the Drina* written by Ivo Andrić (Fig. 2.53) during the Second World War. Andrić's vivid descriptions of hatred and intolerance in Bosnia, which reflected the time of his own youth during the Austro-Hungarian occupation, was carefully balanced by the images of interwoven cultures and symbolic bridges, as a common heritage of Bosnia's population.¹⁵⁰ After Andrić died in 1975, a monument to him was erected in Višegrad. In 1992 the busts that were dedicated to him in several Bosnian towns in the 1970s and

¹⁴⁹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 28-29

¹⁵⁰ Aleksov, B. – *Adamant and Treacherous: Serbian Historians on Religious Conversions in Religion in Eastern Europe XXVI, 1* (February 2006), 25. The book brought him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1961.

1980s were destroyed by the Muslims. The first one to be destroyed was the one in Višegrad (Fig. 5.21).¹⁵¹



Fig. 5.21 – The re-erected statue to Ivo Andrić (1892-1975) in Višegrad's monument complex Andrićgrad, built by Emir Kusturica in 2011-2014 – The monument is a replica of the statue that was erected in central Belgrade in 1992, on the centenary of Andrić's birth. In Bosnia, the centenary marked the beginning of war and the busts and monuments to Andrić were either collectively removed or destroyed in the territories held by the Muslim forces.

No systematic data on the destroyed heritage was collected during and immediately after the war ended in 1995. In 1997/1998 the Council of Europe undertook the initial assessment of the destroyed heritage, but the programme was carried out only partially, because some (mainly Serbian) parts of Bosnia were omitted from the programme. The first acceptable, albeit partial, assessment about the destruction of the architectural and archaeological heritage in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina was published only in March 2010, fifteen years after the end of the conflict. In a lengthy document, the presented data reported 2771 damaged architectural structures, both secular and ecclesiastical, whilst 713 heritage units were completely destroyed and 554 burnt beyond repair.¹⁵² Particular destruction was inflicted upon

¹⁵¹ Upon opening the national question in Yugoslavia and the assertion of Muslims as a separate nation, Andrić was accused of harbouring anti-Muslim bias. Isakovic, 2000, 109

¹⁵² The report was produced under the supervision of the European Commission and Council of Europe http://www.kons.gov.ba/main.php?mod=vijesti&extra=aktuelnost&action=view&id_vijesti=667&lang=1 – The official web-site of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (under the jurisdiction of the Muslim-Croat Federation) – Accessed on 20/09/2012 – One of the main deficiencies of this document is that it does not state whether the given data is related only

listed monuments of religious significance especially those dating from the 15th-19th centuries and included listed buildings of both the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian periods.

Numerous mosques, dating from the 16th-19th centuries, were destroyed or suffered heavy damages. The most prominent was certainly the Ferhat-Pasha Mosque, built in 1579 in Banja Luka and destroyed by the Serbian forces in 1993. Together with the Old Bridge in Mostar, it became iconic evidence of the suffering of the Bosnian Muslims. As war destruction in Yugoslavia was fervently followed by the international media, the nature of war was explained in terms of Serbian aggression, rather than a civil war. Thus, the destruction of the Croat Catholic and Serbian Orthodox religious edifices was less pronounced by the Western media, which argued that the number of destroyed Islamic objects far exceeded those of both Christian denominations.¹⁵³ This argument was used for singling out the Serbs as the main war initiators. The Republic of Serbia was directly accused to be the main aggressor, despite the fact that the majority of Serbian army deployed in the war operations was formed and consisted of the natives of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The involvement of NATO was followed by general condemnation of the Serbs, irrespective of whether they were natives of the Republics of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia or Montenegro. Parallel with the media coverage, Serbian arguments and their institutions were silenced by the harsh sanctions imposed on the Republic of Serbia including all aspects of academic debate. This scholarly vacuum enabled the formulation and popularization of a new grand narrative for the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina originating predominantly in the English and German linguistic traditions.

5.8 The Bosniaks – The South Slavs autochthonous to Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 23rd January 1993 a group of Bosnian Muslim intellectuals gathered in Zürich to establish *Matica Bošnjaka* as the highest cultural institution of the Bosnian

to the territory of the Federation, or to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole. As Republika Srpska has its own Conservation Institute with its own data, it is most likely that the data covers just the Croat-Muslim part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹⁵³ In numerous reports from the period and selective and often contradictory journalists' reports about the number of destroyed objects it is often said that the number of Islamic heritage edifices was the greatest because they were the most numerous in Bosnia and Herzegovina. See, for example, http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/tema_sedmice_vjerski_objekti/1733524.html for one such report.

Muslims.¹⁵⁴ The manifesto, *Bosnia, Bosniadom and the Bosnian Language*, published in Zagreb later in the same year, introduced a notion of the separate character of the Bosnian Language and Bosnian national identity. Even though based on the 19th century Serbian and Croat language manifestos, its tone differed from those in the aggressive expression of the need for the individuality of the Bosnian Muslim identity which would be based on the religion. Thus, in the introductory article *Kultura na nišanu* (*Culture Targeted*), Dr Smail Balić (1920-2002), an Austrian of Bosnian Muslim origins, reported that “by January 1993 the Serbian aggressor has destroyed or damaged over 1000 mosques, or two-fifths of all mosques in the country, as well as the building of the Oriental Institute and the National Library in Sarajevo.”¹⁵⁵ He proceeded in a highly emotional tone to describe the aesthetic values of the Islamic heritage exposed to “Četnik destruction.”¹⁵⁶

In the same manifesto, in the article *Bosnian Language-Myth or Reality?* Dr Ante Granić, a Croat from Herzegovina, formulated the theory of a separate Bosnian Language, based on the hypothetical interpretation of some mediaeval manuscripts which referred to the pre-Ottoman Bosnian state. Those were mainly the charters issued by Bosnian mediaeval rulers, which alternated between the Cyrillic and Latin scripts and indicated, according to Granić, the “unawareness of the existence of Serbian and Croatian languages in the territory of Bosnia.” Granić admitted that the difference between the Serbian and Croatian languages was less than the difference between the American and British English, but asserted that “in those parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina where the Croats live, it is likely that the language policy will correspond to that in Croatia and where the Serbs live, the language policy will correspond to that in Serbia...Thus, it was essential that the language used exclusively by the Muslims should be called **Bosnian**.”¹⁵⁷ He insisted that the Bosnian Language was unique in its richness of Turkish words, use of the sounds H and F and was essentially pluralistic, as

¹⁵⁴ The foundation of *Matica Bošnjaka* unintentionally exploited the tradition of the 19th century national institutions modelled on *Matica srpska* and *Matica hrvatska*.

¹⁵⁵ Balić, S. – *Kultura na nišanu in Bosna, Bošnjaštvo i bosanski jezik – Zbornik referata sa Osnivačke skupštine Matice Bošnjaka*, Zürich, printed in Zagreb, Zagreb, 1993, 7

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 8

¹⁵⁷ My bold. The EU and US administrators in Bosnia and Herzegovina insist on all three religious communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to use the same language and show patriotism towards their state (much in the same way von Kállay envisaged it in the late 19th century). However, this statement points to the exclusive right of the Bosnian Muslims to own the territory by naming their language “*Bosniak*.” Neither the Serbs nor Croats accept this.

it was written in both scripts.¹⁵⁸ Finally, Ganić admitted that the policies of Benjamin von Kállay were for the benefit of the Bosnian people and called for the re-examination of his time as the Governor of Bosnia.¹⁵⁹

The foundation of *Matica Bošnjaka* in Zürich was helped by the *Bosniac Institute* that had been founded in Zürich in 1988 on the initiative of Adil-beg Zulfikarpašić (1921-2008), a Muslim intellectual-dissident, who emigrated from Yugoslavia in the 1960s (Fig. 5.22).¹⁶⁰ The *Bosniac Institute* in Switzerland played a prominent role in organizing pro-Muslim media campaigns in the West. The central argument of the *Bosniac Institute* during the civil war, was the need to maintain Bosnia and Herzegovina as a unified state at any cost, despite the wishes of Serbs and Croats. Since the West did not support the idea of an Islamic state within Europe, maintaining Bosnian unity became a political tool for the interventionism. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was depicted as the aggression of Republic of Serbia on a sovereign, internationally recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina. The key-problem was how to justify the intervention, as the Serbs of Bosnia had at least an equally valid argument for having the right to choose the state in which to live. Thus, the Western governments, already embarrassed in Iraq and Afghanistan, seized the opportunity to exonerate themselves from the accusations of European Christian intolerance against Islam. By showing support for the Muslims, albeit of white race and in Europe, the West presented itself as tolerant of Islam in the light of "the political, religious and cultural frustrations and contradictions inherent to the regions and societies outside the Balkans."¹⁶¹

5.8.1 The Bosnian Institute

During the war in 1993, British historian and journalist Noel Malcolm undertook the task of writing a short history of Bosnia which would depart from the standard history textbooks that existed until then. The book *Bosnia, A Short History* was published in 1994 and was widely publicized as "a brilliant work of history which set the terrible war in the Balkans in its full historical context."¹⁶² Acknowledging that he

¹⁵⁸ Ganić, A. – *Bosanski jezik – Mit ili stvarnost?* in the same volume, Zagreb, 1993, 23-47

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 40

¹⁶⁰ Zulfikarpašić was a descendant of an old Muslim aristocratic family, married to a Croat and advocated a democratic secular society. In 1990 he returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina to found SDA and gave support to Izetbegović, but they soon parted, as Izetbegović ignored his conciliatory approach.

¹⁶¹ Todorova, 1997, 188

¹⁶² Malcolm, 1994, cover page

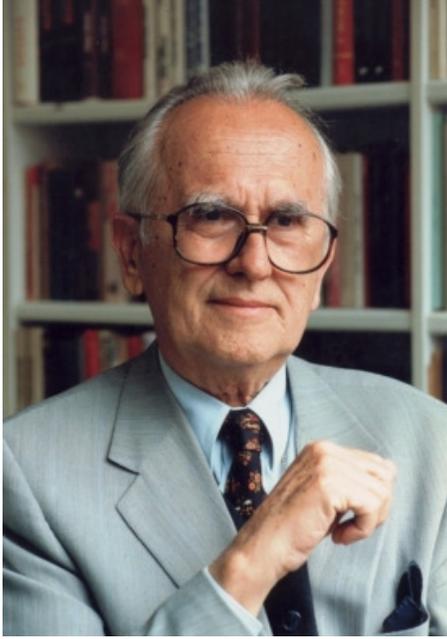


Fig. 5.22 – Adil-beg Zulfikarpašić (1921-2007) promoted the picture of Bosnian Muslims as essentially secular and European-orientated. As such, he was in conflict with Alija Izetbegović.

never visited Sarajevo libraries,¹⁶³ Malcolm wrote an eloquent and well referenced account, based predominantly on a distorted use of secondary sources, written mostly by the late 19th century Austro-Hungarian and 20th century Croat émigré historians close to the NDH regime of the Second World War, openly hostile towards the Serbs.¹⁶⁴ For a non-specialist, the book reads like a genuine work of scholarship. One problem was a total absence of references to any primary source and some mistranslations of the Serbian/Croatian words.¹⁶⁵ Malcolm (Fig. 5.23) re-asserted the Austro-Hungarian theory of the autochthonous *Bosniak* nation, different from the Serbs and the Croats and invented the notion that the Serbs appeared in Bosnia for the first time after 1532, when “an Orthodox Metropolitan” of Sarajevo was mentioned in the sources.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Malcolm, 1994, Acknowledgements

¹⁶⁴ Ković, M. – *Knowledge or Intent: Contemporary World Historiography on Serbs in 19th Century*, Sociologija, Vol. LIII (2011), No. 4, Belgrade, 403

¹⁶⁵ For example, one such mistranslation related to the Bosnian Church reads as: “*The Bosnian Church monasteries frequently played a role in lay society by acting as hospital – either inns for travellers or hospitals for the sick. The keeper of hospitium was a hospitalarius or, more simply, a hospes: a host. And this is a literal meaning of the title Gost which we later find used by prominent members of the Bosnian Church.*” (Malcom, N. – *Bosnia, A Short History*, London, 1994, 34). In reality, a *host* is a complete opposite of the *gost*. The former indeed has a meaning the one who looks after the guests (in Serbo/Croat *domaćin, ugostitelj*). *Gost* has the meaning of *Guest*, which is the one who is to be hosted (at a given place).

¹⁶⁶ Malcom, 1994, 71



Fig. 5.23 – Noel Malcom (b.1956) invented a new national narrative for the Bosnian Muslims in 1994. He did the same for the Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija.

According to Malcolm, Serbian Orthodoxy was brought to Bosnia only after the Ottoman conquest in the 15th century. Being a religion “favoured by the Porte,” it initiated the large migrations of the Serbs in the 16th century because Bosnia offered better prospects. As evidence that the Orthodox Serbs never existed in Bosnia before the Ottomans re-settled them there, Malcolm employed Fine’s speculative account on the Bosnian Church.¹⁶⁷ Malcolm adopted the view of a Croat émigré author Dominik Mandić (Fig. 2.55) who asserted that the predominance of the Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina until the mid-20th century was a consequence not only of migrations after 1463, but also “forceful conversions of the Catholics to Orthodoxy during the Ottoman period.”¹⁶⁸ Finally, for Mandić and subsequently Malcolm, a significant majority of the Orthodox population of the pre-ottoman Bosnia were not ethnic Serbs at all, but the *Vlachs*, who were incorporated into the Serbian nation only in the 19th century, when “Greater Serbian propaganda” convinced them that they were Serbs. For Malcolm, thus, the Bosnian Muslims were converted Croats.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ See above, p. 422-423

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 71

¹⁶⁹ Bašić, 2009, 314; Malcom, 1994, 72. With this assertion, Malcolm exonerated the Nazi-nature of the NDH state-narrative and side-lined the genocide against the Orthodox Serbs in the Second World War.

It is often said that it is not dangerous reading many books, but reading just one.¹⁷⁰ Malcolm's book became of crucial significance in the process of historical revisionism in the West Balkans and creation of a new Bosnian nation. All subsequent books written on Bosnia either in English or in the "Land Language" of the new independent state were based on his premises that the Serbs have neither historical nor moral claim to live in Bosnia, unless they accept their new Bosniak identity. For this purpose, Malcolm and a group of Muslim and Croat émigrés and their Western supporters, founded the *Bosnian Institute* in London in 1997, a charity that became "a key organization internationally in providing education and information on the history and culture of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a special concern for the past and present development of its social, economic, governmental, legal and cultural conditions, organizations and institutions (sic)."¹⁷¹ The Bosnian Institute now stores a collection of works on Bosnia in English and other major languages, written and published since 1990 and from the time of its foundation represents the main institution for the application of *normative historiography* in the Balkans. The most notable achievement of its activities was the complete rehabilitation of the pro-*Ustaše* movement and the ideology of the *Croat Party of Right* which inspired it. The Communist historiography of the Yugoslav period was used selectively and described as essentially "Greater Serbian" and anti-democratic. The dominance of the English language in historiographical writing after 1989 enabled Malcolm's version of Balkan events to become a standard reference point.¹⁷² Personally, Malcolm profited by being awarded a number of prestigious academic posts both in the United Kingdom and abroad.¹⁷³ These significant titles

¹⁷⁰ Kiš's comment on books censorship by totalitarian regimes in his *Enciklopedija mrtvih*. For those English readers unacquainted with Danilo Kiš, a concise article reviewing the latest translation of the *Enciklopedija mrtvih (The Encyclopedia of the Dead)* into English can be found at: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jun/02/encyclopedia-of-the-dead-danilo-kis-review-fitting-tribute> - Accessed on 02/06/2015.

¹⁷¹ <http://www.bosnia.org.uk/about/default.cfm> - The official web-site of the London-based Bosnian Institute – Accessed on 22/09/2012

¹⁷² Ković, 2011, 406. Malcolm proceeded to write his similarly well-advertised *Kosovo, A Short History*, published in 1998, one year before another intervention against the Serbs took place. This was written in a similar manner which deliberately misused the secondary sources and asserted that the Serbs never lived in Kosovo and Metohija prior to the late 12th century, thus justifying the ethnic cleansing committed by the Kosovo and Metohija's Albanians. Malcolm, N. – *Kosovo, A Short History*, London, 1998, 44. This theory was further advanced by Di Lellio in her fabrication of the Serbian epics as purely Albanian in 2009. See Di Lellio, A. – *The of Kosovo 1389 – An Albanian Epic*, London, 2009. See, *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 294-296.

¹⁷³ Malcolm was knighted in 2014. Senior Research Fellowship at All Souls, Oxford in 2002, an Honorary Fellowship at Peterhouse, Cambridge in 2010 and an Honorary Fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge in 2011. Malcolm is also a Member of the newly formed ethnic Albanian Academy of Arts and Sciences of Kosovo.

enabled him to influence the present generation of British, Bosnian Muslim and Albanian scholars, especially as very few modern Western students of the region speak Serbian/Croatian and take the revised work of the 1990s as academically indisputable.

5.8.2 The *Bosniak Narrative*

After the creation of the *Matica Bošnjaka* and Malcolm's invention of the new Bosnian historical narrative, the Muslim scholars in Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted this war-time revisionism and developed it further in order to fully establish the Bosnian nation, separate from the Serbs and the Croats. With the end of the war and the establishment of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an alleged multinational state of the Bosnian Muslims, renamed Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, an impressive academic effort had been put forward to inject the new narrative and strengthen the Bosnian consciousness among the population through educational and cultural programmes. This new narrative became operational in the Muslim-Croat Federation, whilst Republika Srpska retained educational system equivalent to that of the Republic of Serbia. In the Muslim-Croat Federation, the Croats displayed dissatisfaction with the narrative that negates their ethnicity. Thus, for the Bosnian Serbs, Ćorović's interpretation that the Bosnian Muslims were converted Serbs is still part of their grand narrative. Among the Croats, Mandić's argument that the Bosnian Muslims were converted Croats reflects the guiding theme of their own national narrative.¹⁷⁴

According to some modern Muslim scholars who advocate the *Bosniak narrative*, the Bosnian Muslims are descendants of an ancient Slavic tribe "Bosna."¹⁷⁵ Enver Imamović (b.1940) adopted the view which traces the origins of the Bosnian Muslims to the Illyrian tribe "Posen."¹⁷⁶ The "Gothic" origins of the tribe "Bossi," as argued by the influential merchant Uzeiraga Haždihasanović in the early 20th century were largely dismissed because of their original misuse during the NDH, although they still occasionally appear in the popular literature.¹⁷⁷ Since the evidence for any of these claims provided by written sources, archaeology and linguistic studies were either

¹⁷⁴ Bašić, 2009, 81

¹⁷⁵ Not mentioned by Porphyrogenitus in *De Administrando Imperio*, but the theory was nevertheless asserted by Mustafa Imamović (b.1941) in his book *Historija Bosne*, published in Sarajevo in 1996.

¹⁷⁶ This theory was asserted in his *Porijeklo i propadnost stanovništva Bosne i Hercegovine (The Origins and belongings of the Population of Bosnia and Herzegovina – My translation)*, published in Sarajevo in 1998.

¹⁷⁷ This being based on the manipulation of the introductory chapters of the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*.

insufficient or contradictory, the argument turned towards the numbers of the conquering Slavs in the early 7th century.¹⁷⁸ According to this theory, the Serbs and the Croats came in small numbers to the Balkans and subjected the indigenous Romanized Illyrian population, which later adopted their language. Thus, Denis Bašić adopted Malcolm's argument that the terms "Serbs" or "Croats" were nothing but the tribal labels which differed significantly in the 7th-12th centuries. Based on this premise, he developed the theory that neither the Serbs nor the Croats were Slavs in a genetic sense, and therefore, could not be linked to modern day Serbs or Croats.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, Bašić concluded that the Bosnian Muslims cannot be related to the Serbs or Croats for the same reason.¹⁸⁰

Since the myths of origins were very difficult to conceptualize, the adherents of the Bosniak narrative turned towards the mediaeval Christian aristocracy, focusing on the only ruling family of Kotromanić (1250-1463) with its greatest ruler, King Tvrtko I (Fig. 1.a.10). They asserted that the Kotromanićs felt and described themselves as *Bosniaks*. This assumption, of course, is difficult to corroborate, as most of the surviving evidence related to the mediaeval Bosnian aristocracy link them to either Serbs or Croats. The Kotromanić rulers frequently intermarried with the Nemanjić and other Serbian high nobles, most notably the Kosača family which ruled Herzegovina and held the title *Duke of St.Sava*¹⁸¹ in the mid-15th century. Equally, on several occasions they intermarried with the Croat noble houses of Nelipčić and Hrvatinić. Because Bosnia and Herzegovina was from the beginning an area where the Catholicism and Orthodoxy mixed, it was not unusual for the nobles to have family members belonging to both creeds. This practise, interpreted by Malcolm as loyalty to the territory of Bosnia, derived directly from von Kállay's argument of a separate Bosnian consciousness, and as such was no older than the 1880s.¹⁸² This premise, now a core argument of the Bosniak narrative, was used to underline a separate identity of

¹⁷⁸ Bašić, 2009, 83. The ensuing debate augmented the *narcissism of minor differences*, as defined by Freud in his *Civilization and Its Discontent*, New York, 1961, 305.

¹⁷⁹ Bašić used some general theories referring to the analyses of the genetic structure of the Homo Sapiens (!) in relation to the modern Europeans in order to support his argument that the genetic mutations of the Y-chromosomes of the Balkan haplotypes display that the Bosnian Muslims significantly differ from that of the Serbs and Croats. Bašić, 2009, 86-100.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 47

¹⁸¹ Title taken in honour of St. Sava Nemanjić (1174-1236), the founder of the Serbian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1217.

¹⁸² Malcolm, 1994, 17. Again, interpreting distant past through modern terms represents the *political intent* hidden behind the *normative historiography*.

the mediaeval Bosnian rulers, thus making the Serbs and Croats not only separate ethnically, but foreign in their native land. Of course, it is not possible to speak of any national identity in the modern sense for the people of the 14th or 15th centuries, but this convenient modern re-invention of von Kállay's thesis provided a further assertion that the modern state of Bosnia and Herzegovina essentially possesses a Central European character. The notion that the majority of the mediaeval rulers and nobles in the surviving charters frequently took Serbian and Croat titles, was interpreted as they being more concerned with their own grandeur, rather than with the question of national identity.

Apart from the Serbs of Bosnia who reject the Bosniak theory in its entirety, the Croats of Bosnia seem to be more satisfied with the argument that there was no Orthodoxy in Bosnia prior to the 16th century. Bosnian Croat scholar, Monika Fath-Lihić quoted a modern Croat historian Lovrenović who without any references argued that the majority of the Bosnian population in the 15th century was Catholic.¹⁸³ As there were no traces of Catholic monasteries in Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to the mid-14th century, and only sixteen by the time of the conquest, this argument resulted from the current revisionism.¹⁸⁴ An additional problem was that the majority of the surviving mediaeval manuscripts “do not show any striking deviations from Orthodox belief. They were all written in Cyrillic and include Canonical Christian scriptures.”¹⁸⁵ The pre-Ottoman ecclesiastical structures bear Orthodox characteristics. The Bosniak narrative explained these by Malcolm's argument about “the Ottoman favouritism of the Orthodoxy at the expense of Catholicism and deliberate destruction of the Catholic churches by the Orthodox and Muslim population during the Ottoman period.”¹⁸⁶

Finally, the transformation of the Muslims into Bosniaks according to the Bosniak theory was neither *en masse* nor forced upon the Christians. Basing their argument exclusively on the Croat émigré authors of the 20th century, Western scholars who advocated the anti-Serbian campaign in the 1990s, developed a theory that Bosnia was tolerant and multicultural where no religious enmities existed prior to the 20th century

¹⁸³ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 58

¹⁸⁴ Even Fine admits that there was no language dispute between the Latin and Slavic speaking clerics in the mediaeval period. Fine, 2007, 102

¹⁸⁵ Bašić, 2009, 202

¹⁸⁶ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 63. The similar argument is used by the Doclean narrative in Montenegro, which describes lack of evidence of the Catholic churches in the Montenegrin hinterland as a deliberate Serbian destruction in the 12th century. See *Chapter VI – The Montenegrins*, p. 471-472

“Serbian aggression” towards Muslim population.¹⁸⁷ The necessity for separation of Serbs, Croats and Muslims through the invention of a new myth of origins was also explained by some Western scholars as dividing “bad, Orthodox, backward, rural Serbs” from “secular, Central European, urbanite Bosniaks.” By invoking the 1914 *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* and Austro-Hungarian arguments from the period as evidence that the Serbs were prone to barbarism and that the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina was that of “enlightenment,” they successfully rehabilitated the *Drang nach Osten* for the modern times. The contrasting depiction of the Austro-Hungarian rule as peaceful and prosperous and of the Habsburgs as benign dynasts was mirrored by the representation of the Karadjordjević kings and the Serbian army simply as “aggressors.”¹⁸⁸

5.8.3 Gavrilo Princip (1894-1918), a hero or a terrorist?

The advancement of this argument led to the re-interpretation of the events surrounding the outbreak of the First World War: the assassin of Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand, Gavrilo Princip (1894-1918) was during the existence of both Yugoslav states described as a “member of *Young Bosnia* who gave his life for freedom.” Modern revisionists re-labelled him into a plain “terrorist.”¹⁸⁹ The changing interpretation of Princip (Fig. 5.24) was well illustrated by the fate of the house in Sarajevo where Princip lived before the assassination. During the First World War it was demolished by the Austro-Hungarian authorities; after the war, it was re-erected and turned into a memorial-home, only to be demolished for the second time by the *Ustaše* regime during the Second World War. After 1945, it was rebuilt and turned into a museum dedicated to the communist narrative of Yugoslav “brotherly struggle against foreign oppressors and home-grown traitors.”¹⁹⁰ During the 1990s, the Muslim authorities demolished it as they saw it as a symbol of “Greater Serbianism” and it was never rebuilt. Similar fate was of some other museums and street-names dedicated to Princip, most of which were renamed. His birth-house in a village near Bosansko Grahovo was razed to the ground in 1995 by the Croat forces, and all memorabilia which included the authentic plans for the assassination were destroyed (Fig. 5.25).

¹⁸⁷ Donia & Fine, 1994, 63-69

¹⁸⁸ Malcom, 1994, 162-16. See *Chapter III – The Serbs*, p. 72, footnote 183.

¹⁸⁹ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 77.

¹⁹⁰ A phrase commonly used in Yugoslav media and school textbooks between 1945 and 1990.

The Latin Bridge in Sarajevo (Fig. 5.26), an actual place where the assassination happened in 1914, had the memorial plaque removed and the Commission to Preserve National Monuments are currently campaigning for the re-erection of the monument to Franz Ferdinand which was erected by the Austro-Hungarian authorities in 1916, but removed in 1918 (Fig. 5.27).¹⁹¹



Fig. 5.24 – Gavrilo Princip (1894-1918), the assassin of Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand was a member of the revolutionary organization *Young Bosnia*, modelled on the Italian irredentism of the 19th and 20th century. Together with other Serbian, Croat and Muslim members, of which the most prominent was the future Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić, they advocated the South Slav unification.



Fig. 5.25 – Princip's birth house in the village near Bosansko Grahovo. Destroyed during the 1990s. In the process of reconstruction.

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http://www.kons.gov.ba/main.php?mod=vijesti&extra=saopstenja&action=view&id_vijesti=316&lang=1 – The official web-site of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (under the jurisdiction of the Muslim-Croat Federation) – Accessed on 29/09/2012



Fig. 5.26 – Erected in the late 18th century by the Ottomans, after the Austro-Hungarian occupation in 1878, the bridge was repaired and named the *Latin Bridge*. It gained fame as a place of the assassination of Arch- duke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June 1914. The date of the Austro-Hungarian military manoeuvres was deliberately chosen to coincide with the Serbian national day, *Vidovdan*, the date of the eponymous *Kosovo Battle*. During both Yugoslav eras, the bridge was renamed into the *Princip's Bridge*, in honour of Gavrilo Princip, only to have the name *Latin Bridge* restored after the Yugoslav wars of succession.

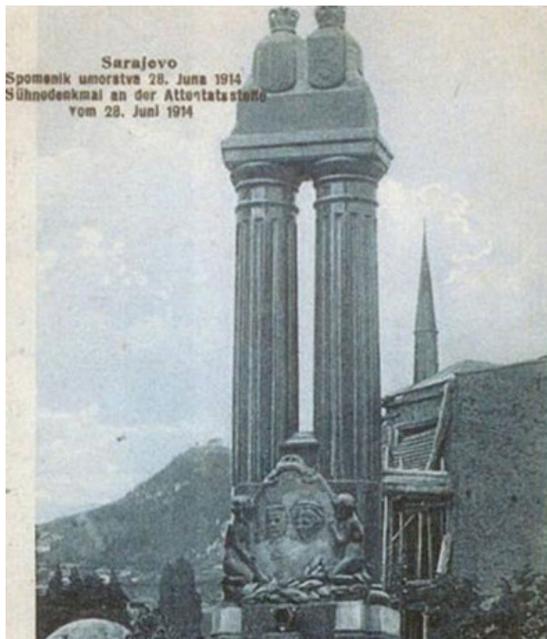


Fig. 5.27 – The monument to the ill-fated Arch- duke Franz Ferdinand was erected near the place of assassination in 1917, only to be demolished a year later. The Sarajevo authorities initiated the re-erection of the monument to coincide with the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, but the financial difficulties postponed it for the future.

On the other hand, for the Serbs in Republika Srpska (and other Serbian lands), Princip is still venerated as a young idealist who would sacrifice his life for freedom. The centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in June 2014 stirred the ethnic feelings in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Federation authorities and media, supported by the majority of the Western scholars involved in the revisionist accounts of the First World War, want to mark the anniversary as “*facing the fact that a Serbian terrorist kick-started a war in which millions died.*”¹⁹² Contrary to that, the Serbian side argued that neither the Serbian government at the time nor the act of Princip himself were the main cause of the war and that the word “terrorist” reflects modern reasons behind current military campaigns.¹⁹³ Following the trends set up by Malcolm and the leading Western media, the majority of the Western scholars seemingly adopted this version of the outbreak of the First World War.¹⁹⁴

5.9 Bosnia and Herzegovina – Muslim and Christian

The Dayton Peace treaty of 1995 *de facto* divided the country into its Serbian (49%) and Muslim-Croat (51%) parts, even though any legal separation was denied. The capital of the Federation is Sarajevo, whilst the capital of Republika Srpska is Eastern Sarajevo, the pre-war suburbs of the city of Sarajevo. The population of the country, displaced during the war, concentrated in their ethnic entities. A very few Serbs returned to the Federation, and a very few Muslims and Croats to Republika Srpska. All pre-war institutions were divided into their Muslim/Croat and Serbian equivalents. Politically, the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina was placed under the supervision of the High Representative, usually a European bureaucrat, with rights to approve or reject the decisions of the two governments. The two entities are forced

¹⁹² <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Republika-Srpska/331459/Mediji-zapoceli-kampanju-u-kojoj-se-Gavrilo-Princip-prikazuje-kao-Srbin-terorista> - Belgrade daily “Blic” brought this story on 20 July 2012 – Accessed on 29/09/2012

¹⁹³ *ibid*

¹⁹⁴ An excellent example of the revisionist approach to the subject can be found, for example, in Christopher Clark – *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*, published in London on 2012. However, the reasons for the revisionist accounts should be sought far beyond the Balkans. The fragile European unity requires its nations to live in communities which do not maintain mutual resentments. The re-evaluation of the previously held beliefs demands the change of opinion regarding the European bloody history. Placing the blame for war on Serbia, which is still far away from Europe, represents a convenient substitute for making a new myth of European common values. Ironically, the attempt to build an artificial EU consciousness reminds one of Tito’s “brotherhood and unity.” This argument, however, is beyond the scope of this work and will not be discussed further.

to co-operate, but rarely a common agreement could be achieved in twenty years after the war.

Academic and cultural institutions were also divided along ethnic lines. The University of Sarajevo in the Federation, placed in the buildings built during Austro-Hungarian occupation, claims that its beginning could be dated back to 1531, when Gazi-Husrevbeg founded the Sufi School for studying the Islam (Fig. 5.28).¹⁹⁵ The University of Eastern Sarajevo, on the territory of Republika Srpska (Fig. 5.29), consisting of the staff and students of Serbian background who left Sarajevo in 1992, was established in the same year and asserts that the foundation of the university was the opening of the Faculty of Theology of the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1882 in Sarajevo. Both universities consider themselves the legal successor to the first University of Sarajevo founded in 1949.¹⁹⁶



Fig. 5.28 – The Rectory of the University of Sarajevo, Muslim-Croat Federation. Erected during the Austro-Hungarian occupation in Neo-Classist style.

¹⁹⁵ http://unsa.ba/s/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=27&Itemid=78 – The official web-site of the University of Sarajevo – Accessed on 28/09/2012

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.ues.rs.ba/cir/univerzitet/o-univerzitetu/istorijat> - The official web-site of the University of Eastern Sarajevo – Accessed on 28/09/2012



Fig. 5.29 – The Faculty of Electronics of the University of East Sarajevo, located in the Serbian part of Sarajevo, Pale, erected in the 1960s in Soc-Realist style. The building itself has been subject to the ownership dispute between the University of Sarajevo and University of East Sarajevo for the past decade.

The *Zemaljski muzej*, initiated by von Kállay in 1888 and built in 1913 remained the central museum of the Federation and the centre of the Institute for the Protection of Monuments of the Bosnian/Croat entity. In Republika Srpska, a former *Museum of Bosanska Krajina* in Banja Luka, founded by King Alexander I Karadjordjević in 1930, was renamed the *Museum of Republika Srpska* and as such became responsible for the heritage on the territory of the Serbian entity (Fig. 5.30). The National and University Library of the Federation in Sarajevo returned to the refurbished *Vijećnica* (Fig. 5.6),¹⁹⁷ whilst the National and University Library of Republika Srpska was established in Banja Luka in 1999 in the former Library of Vrbaska Banovina, established in 1935 under the Karadjordjevićs.¹⁹⁸ Similar divisions of the institutions remain present on all levels of life and society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In practice, the co-operation between these institutions is non-existent.

¹⁹⁷ *Vijećnica* (City Hall), after extensive restoration opened again on 28 June 2014, as part of the celebration of the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.nub.rs/index.php?id=15> – The official web-site of the National and University Library of Republika Srpska – Accessed on 28/09/2012



Fig. 5.30 – *Museum of Republika Srpska* in Banja Luka, currently in the former building of the *Home of Worker's Solidarity*, erected in the early 1970s, following the catastrophic earthquake that destroyed much of the old town.

The international community through the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina (OHR) oversees the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, but also has the mandate for insisting on the implementation of the regulations that would enable the return of the refugees and rebuilding of the damaged infrastructure. Among these, there has been a special interest for the reconstruction of the damaged and destroyed monuments. The UN, EU and UNESCO donated and controlled the majority of the reconstruction works executed in the Federation. For example, the reconstruction of the *Old Bridge* in Mostar was supervised by UNESCO and paid for by the World Bank.¹⁹⁹ The reconstruction of *Vijećnica* was financed by Austrian donations and various EU funds, whilst the *Zemaljski Muzej* had donations from various European countries of which the Swiss contributions were significant.²⁰⁰ The OHR has exercised its powers to put pressure on both entities to enable the reconstruction of the destroyed heritage of the opposing religious communities on its

¹⁹⁹ Lazarević, D. - Contracts for International Conservation Practice - A practical proposal – An MSc dissertation, 2007, 34 – Unpublished material

²⁰⁰ http://www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja.php - Accessed on 29/09/2012

territories, but it appears that the result was only partially successful. The Saborna Church of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Sarajevo, built 1863-1874, was reconstructed by donations from the Greek government (Fig. 5.31), whilst the reconstruction of the Ferhad-Pašina Mosque, erected in 1579 in Banja Luka and destroyed in 1993 by Serbian forces, was paid by the donations of the Islamic Community in Banja Luka and the Government of Republika Srpska (Fig. 5.32). The reconstruction of other monuments in Republika Srpska were mainly paid by donations from Russia, Serbia and Greece.

This pattern was repeated throughout the country on local levels, but an obvious reluctance of both entities to allow the return of refugees and the rebuilding of the symbols of other religions above the minimal level became omnipresent. The insistence of the OHR to impose the laws and regulations that would enable the gradual unification of Bosnia and Herzegovina into a state whose citizens will have loyalty to the territory was particularly strongly opposed by the Serbs. They understood these measures as repeating the attempt of the Austro-Hungarian Provincial Government to do the same a century ago.



Fig. 5.31 – The *Saborna Church*, Sarajevo, erected in 1863-1874, photographed in 2011.



Fig. 5.32 – The *Ferhad-Pašina Mosque*, Banja Luka, erected in 1579, photographed in the 1970s, before the destruction in 1993. The re-constructed *Ferhad-Pašina Mosque* is scheduled to open in July 2016.

The vacuum created by the Serbs' refusal to adhere to the demands of the West enabled the Islamic countries to assert their support for the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apart from Turkey which provided financial support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Ottoman heritage, Saudi Arabia was also involved in strengthening its influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The help offered by the Islamic world was strategically motivated, as the Federation territory is undergoing a process of transformation which includes building new mosques and calls for the introduction of Sharia-Law.²⁰¹ Despite the official call for the multiculturalism, there was a clear return of Islamic values, as the opening of the religious schools flourished. In Sarajevo, which currently consists from nearly 80% of the Muslim population, it became usual to see women wearing *hijab* or *burka*, an unusual feature for Sarajevo until twenty years ago. This situation conflicts directly with political decisions of the West to present Bosnia and a democratic state with European values. Because financial donations from the West directly influenced the formulation of the Bosniak narrative, the Muslim

²⁰¹ Fath-Lihić, 2008, 164. In the purely Muslim territories a number of mosques built after 1995, were financed exclusively by Saudi Arabia, whose investors insisted on the introduction of the strict Islamic laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

authorities in Sarajevo approved some recognition of the pre-Ottoman history of Bosnia. Thus, the mediaeval history of the Bosnian Kingdom, interpreted in Kállay's terms of loyalty to the territory, brought to the recognition of the Bosnian Christian Kingdom and Kotromanić rulers. Several monuments dedicated to King Tvrtko I and some other members of the dynasty were erected in recent years in the Muslim-Croat Federation. Expectedly, all their connections to Serbian mediaeval state were carefully omitted (Fig. 1.a.10).²⁰²

On the other hand, Republika Srpska places an emphasis on its Serbian Orthodoxy and insists precisely on the connections which the Muslim and Croat side wants to forget. Apart from the rebuilding of smaller churches in its territory, certainly the most ambitious project is the erection of *Andrićgrad* (*Andrić's Town*) in the proximity of the Višegrad's *Stone Bridge* (Fig. 5.13). As its name suggests, it is a monument-town envisaged to be a memorial not only to Višegrad's most famous citizen, Ivo Andrić, but also to the South Slav Balkans. The project was initiated by Emir Kusturica (b.1954), the internationally renowned film-director (Fig. 5.33).²⁰³



Fig. 5.33 – Emir Kusturica (b.1954), two-times winner of the *Palme d'Or* at Cannes, was born in Sarajevo in the Muslim family. When the war in Yugoslavia began, he declared himself a Serb and moved to Belgrade. He initiated a number of cultural manifestations celebrating Slavic heritage.

²⁰² See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 26

²⁰³ Emir Kusturica is a Bosnian Muslim, but during the war declared himself a Serb

Kusturica's ambitious idea was to create a complex of buildings "as a reaction to the demolition of the monument to Ivo Andrić in 1992."²⁰⁴ The Andrićgrad complex, thus, consists of the central town's piazza, named after the famous Serbian scientist Nikola Tesla (1856-1943) and surrounding streets that include 46 buildings built in all architectural styles that existed in the territory of former Yugoslavia. The Town Hall bears Renaissance features, but the Orthodox Church is a replica of the Kosovo's Dečani Monastery (Fig. 3.26). Also, a Caravan-Serai and a Catholic church were planned to be in prominent positions. According to Kusturica, "Andrićgrad is an attempt to reconcile Byzantine, Serbian Mediaeval, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian heritage."²⁰⁵ Andrićgrad (Fig. 5.34) will be surrounded by the outer walls, which represent the protection of culture. The works on Andrićgrad symbolically began on 28 June 2011 (*Vidovdan*), and the scheduled end of construction was Vidovdan 2014.²⁰⁶

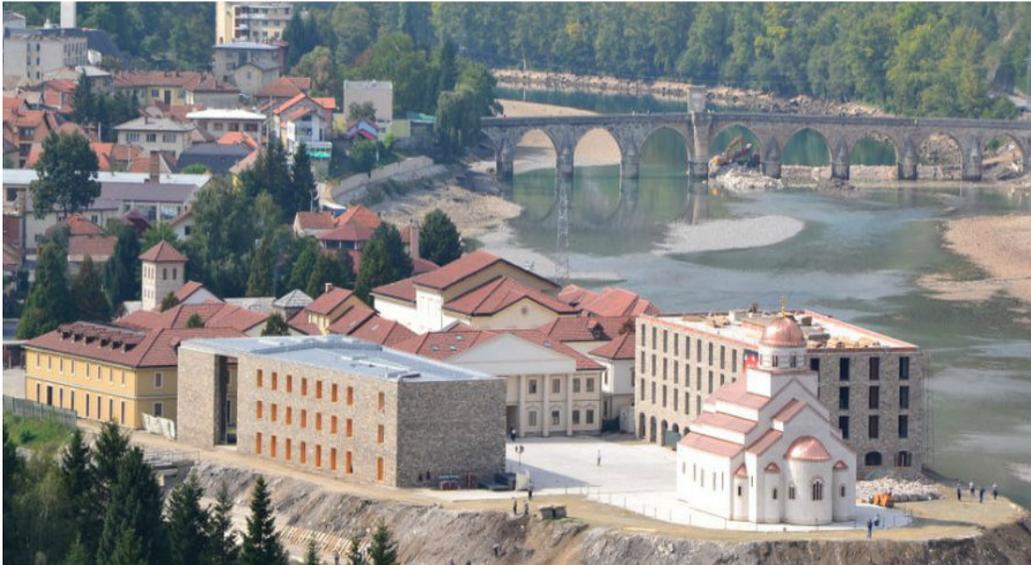


Fig. 5.34 – Panoramic view of Andrićgrad. The construction began in 2011 on the initiative of the film-director Emir Kusturica. Main square opened in June 2014, whilst the surrounding walls are still to be built. In the background is the Višegrad Bridge, built by Mehmed-Paša Sokolović, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007.

²⁰⁴ Kusturica, Speech given during the unveiling of the monument to Ivo Andrić in Višegrad on 28/06/2012 - <http://www.rts.rs/> - Archived news – Accessed on 28/09/2012

²⁰⁵ Kusturica, an intervju given to the Belgrade daily *Večernje novosti* on 26 June 2012. Available at <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/aktuelno.293.html:385927-Spomenik-Andricu-u-Visegradu> – Accessed on 28/09/2012

²⁰⁶ On 28 June 2012, a 2,4m tall replica of the monument to Ivo Andrić, identical to the one in Belgrade, was unveiled in Andrićgrad marking the first anniversary of the beginning of works. See Fig. 5.20 above. Unsurprisingly, the Federation officials do not approve of this enterprise and argue that Andrićgrad is "anachronistic and stylistically chaotic ideas of pseudo-historical replicas" – Dr Ljiljana Ševo, a member of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments in an interview to the Belgrade daily "Večernje novosti", published on 30th September 2012.

The architects and conservationists from the Sarajevo's Institute for the Protection of Monuments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the corresponding Institute in Banja Luka both agreed that there was no improvement in inter-religious relations between the entities. Afraid for their own careers, professionals from each institution during interviews with me emphasized that they were stating their personal opinion. The answers, however, were astonishingly similar: *"Politics keeps the Institutions separated. Republika Srpska's main goal is to sever any connection with the Federation, whilst the Federation claims to support cooperation. In reality, that is questionable. The professionals outside the institutions do cooperate, but their hands are tied. The education is directly influenced by the religion and also divided. In a myriad of newly established universities, the student organizations are also divided and the students are prone to manipulation. Since their organizations are weak, students, as the bearers of avant-garde, are disabled to make any changes. Generally, the foreigners who de facto rule seem to maintain this situation, as it gives them the reason to exist and there are no indications that they will attempt to impose any order that would be necessary for the normal functioning of the state."*²⁰⁷

5.10 The *Cul-de-Sac* of Nation-Building

European bureaucrats that ran Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1995 proved unable to work on reconciliation. Their deliberate partiality, personal ineptitude and greed contributed more to the maintenance of the tense atmosphere than to its easing, despite their rhetoric. The arrogant attitude towards all Bosnian ethnic and religious communities contributed to the entrenchment of the national ideas and narratives among the Serbs, Croats and Muslims and made their own nation-building efforts only more prolific and mutually exclusive. Recently, the Council of Europe initiated and imposed the idea of forming an *Act on Protection and Care of Cultural and Historical Heritage* for the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The draft document was submitted to the Parliament in Sarajevo, but it was never discussed between the two entities. In 2008, a new draft was submitted to the Parliament, but Republika Srpska rejected it, seeing this Act as a violation of the Dayton Agreement and the restriction

²⁰⁷ In a series of personal conversations and interviews I conducted between 2006-2012, most of my colleagues agreed on the subject. The quotation above is from an interviewee R. S., a 50 year old Architect-Conservationist, with 19 years of work-experience at the Sarajevo Institute for the Protection of Monuments.

of its powers.²⁰⁸ Thus, the protection and care of heritage in accordance with leading national narratives is territorial and depends on the governments of the two Bosnian entities. As there are no joint Ministries of Culture and Education for the whole territory of the state, there is no legislation that would be equally applicable for all three religious communities. Such a situation stems not only from the latest war, but from the religious resentments that date back further in the past and which caused three major inter-ethnic conflicts in the 20th century alone.

The by-products of those clashes were the invention of the nation of Bosniaks, the formulation of their national narrative, as well as further fortification of Serbian and Croat national narratives regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina. The inconsistencies in the Bosniak narrative, which aims to present Bosnian Muslims as an autochthonous ethnic community, different from both the Serbs and Croats, will continue to be challenged by both. Additionally, re-introduced Islamic values already expressed disagreements with the attempt to present Bosnia as a state with European heritage. With growing anti-Islamic feelings throughout Europe, the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina seems uncertain.

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http://www.kons.gov.ba/main.php?mod=vijesti&extra=aktuelnost&action=view&id_vijesti=667&lang=1 – The official web-site of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (under the jurisdiction of the Muslim-Croat Federation) – Accessed on 29/09/2012

The Montenegrins

The smallest of the former Yugoslav republics, Montenegro, declared its independence from the state union with Serbia on 3 June 2006. This followed a decade of controversial campaigns by the Montenegrin government for a separate state, generously helped by external political factors (Map 6.1). During the wars of Yugoslav succession, the primary focus of the international participants was on Serbian nationalism, perceiving the Montenegrins were indistinguishable from the Serbian national corpus and too small for any significant political impact. Indeed, until 1945 there was no separate Montenegrin nation; the language, history, religion and culture were considered Serbian. Not even the creation of a separate Montenegrin nation after the Second World War altered the traditional ethnic and religious identification, despite the fervent communist attempts to create a separate Montenegrin Orthodox Church, in the same manner as it had occurred in Macedonia. This was prevented by the Montenegrins themselves, as the majority of the Serbian political elite in Belgrade after 1945 were of Montenegrin origin who regarded themselves as “quintessentially Serbian.”¹ With the exception of Aleksandar Ranković (Fig. 1.a.22), all top positions in the Serbian branch of the CPY were held by party members born in Montenegro. The removal of Serbs from Serbia from the top federal posts in the first two decades after the war was in accordance with Tito’s policies of curbing “Greater Serbian tendencies” in Yugoslavia. Their replacement by the more conformist natives of Montenegro enabled a number of prominent personalities to enjoy successful political careers. Politically, they varied from some of the most prominent dissidents such as Milovan Djilas (Fig. 1.a.21) to the Serbian president Slobodan Milošević (Fig. 1.a.25). On the other side of national spectrum, the Patriarch Gavrilo (Fig. 1.58) and numerous scholars and artists residing in Serbia and writing about Serbia were also natives of Montenegro.

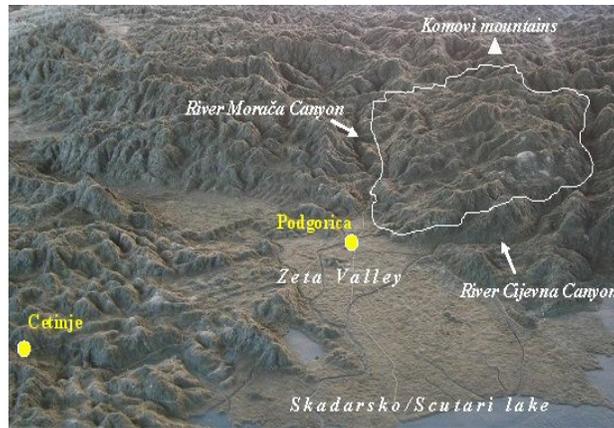
However, the general condemnation of Serbia in the 1990s and the crippling economic situation divided the politicians in the Montenegrin capital, Podgorica, in relation to the future of the state. Being regarded as a junior partner in the Serbian political spectrum and economically equally affected by the wars, the political elite in

¹ Roberts, E. – *Realm of the Black Mountain – A History of Montenegro* – London, 2007, 3. Not until 2000, when the last Yugoslav President became Vojislav Koštunica, were the Serbs born in Serbia in the top echelons of the Government.

Podgorica decided to distinguish Montenegro from Serbia. This resulted in the swift construction of the new Montenegrin ethnic identity, which was not only considered separate from Serbian, but its total denial. The split among the political elite in Montenegro was quickly transferred to all parts of society, particularly affecting the Orthodox Christian population of the republic, which in the late 1990s split between those who still wanted closer ties with Serbia and those who were passionately against it. A Montenegrin sociologist Srdjan Darmanović, explained this division of the Montenegrin identity as that of a national *homo duplex*, “a victim of double or divided consciousness,” caused by the shared Serbian-Montenegrin identity, until recently conferred by language and religion.²



Map 6.1 – Montenegro today



Map 6.2 – Zeta Valley with Cetinje and Podgorica, two Montenegrin capitals, surrounded by the Komovi Mountains, one of the three tallest mountains in the region.

6.1 Territoriality of Montenegrin nationalism

The historic name of Montenegro is an Italianised version of the Serbian native name *Crna Gora*, meaning: *Black Mountain*. The term Montenegro came into use at the end of the 15th century, when this part of the former Serbian Empire came under the rule of the House of Crnojević (1326-1516), which replaced the former House of Balšić (?-1421). Before the name Montenegro became common, the territory that was held by the Nemanjić dynasty and their liege family of Balšić during the 14th century was usually referred to as *Zeta*, named after the area of confluence of two major rivers, Zeta and Morača, that met in the immediate vicinity of the ancient town of Doclea (modern Podgorica). The term *Zeta*, however, replaced an even earlier name

² Roberts, 2007, 6

Duklja, a Slavic version of the Roman *Doclea*, in use after the settlement of the Slavs in the 7th century and during the rule of the Vojislavljević dynasty (11th-12th century).³

The seat of the last native rulers of Zeta prior to the Ottoman conquest, the Crnojević family, was situated in Cetinje in the late 15th century, in the mountains overlooking the Bay of Kotor. In this period, the contacts with the Venetians were frequent, so the Italians named the territory of Montenegro after the Crnojević family name.⁴ However, what became Montenegro in its present borders was the result of the first Yugoslav Constitution of 1946 which abolished the monarchy and institutionalized the Communist regime.

The republic today occupies less than 14,000km² of predominantly *karst* terrain of the southern Dinaric range, which abruptly plunges into the Adriatic near the Bay of Kotor. Inhospitable and barren mountains surround the valley of the Zeta River, which runs from the north and forms a confluence with the River Morača near the capital Podgorica. These two rivers form the Zeta Plain that stretches from Lake Skadar to the vicinity of Podgorica forming the only hospitable region with a moderate climate (Map 6.2). Because of the difficulty of access towards the rest of the Balkan Peninsula, small agricultural potential and poor mineral wealth, Montenegro is not strategically important to the modern Great Powers to the same extent as Croatia or Serbia. However, its overland link with Serbia provided an invaluable sea-access for Serbia through the important port of Bar.⁵ Thus, preventing Serbia to acquire sea-exit increased Montenegro's importance in regional geo-politics. Because the Montenegrins were always regarded as "the highlander Serbs," the problem of Montenegrin national territoriality became closely related to severing these links with Serbia. This could be achieved only by creating an entirely new Montenegrin identity through the employment of the traditional methods of re-interpretation of historical narrative and its replacement with a politically acceptable construct. The questions, therefore, are:

1. Who are the people inhabiting the territory of modern Montenegro, and
2. Who were their ancestors?

³ Fine, 1983, 193

⁴ *Crn* means *black*. Thus, *Crnojević* – *those of the black lands*.

⁵ Serbia expressed its strategic interest towards the sea on several occasions during the 20th century with only partial success. With the separation of Montenegro, Serbia found itself once again without a safe trade route.

The first post-war Constitution, drafted principally by Tito's chief Communist theorist and a Politburo member, the Slovene Edvard Kardelj (1910-1979), was based on the premise that "Greater Serbianism" of the Karadjordjević's Yugoslavia had to be suppressed at any cost. Concurrently with the debate over the borders of the new federal republic, the issue of a separate Montenegrin identity arose, causing a rift within the CPY.⁶ Despite the fact that the greatest number of the Partisan army consisted of Bosnian and Montenegrin Serbs and 36% of all Partisan generals were of Montenegrin origin, the CPY political leadership consisted mainly of Croat and Slovene communists.⁷ With a minority of the Serbian communists at the top echelons of the CPY, the proclamation of a new Montenegrin nation in 1945 passed relatively smoothly, much to the dismay of the Serbian members of the Politburo.

In the first post-war census conducted in 1948, the new Montenegrin nation numbered just over 340,000 people.⁸ Interestingly, all subsequent censuses, including the final Yugoslav census in 1991, witnessed serious fluctuation in the ethnic composition of the tiny republic: the percentage of those who declared themselves Montenegrins within the republic dropped from 90% in 1948 down to 62% in 1991 and 43% in 2003 in favour of those who regarded themselves Serbs.⁹ In all these censuses the official language in use was Serbo-Croat during the existence of federal Yugoslavia and Serbian from 1993 until 2002.

The present ethnic composition of Montenegro is just over 620,000 people. According to the 2003 census was: 43% Montenegrin, 32% Serbian, 8% Bosniak, 5% Albanian and 12% others.¹⁰ However, in 2002 the authorities in Montenegro introduced a new official language, Montenegrin, which was, in the first census of 2003 spoken by 22% of the population of the republic. In the same census, 63% of the population spoke Serbian. Less than a decade later, the census data of 2011 showed a dramatic fall of the Serbs in the overall population of Montenegro, which did not show any significant demographic change, still numbering around 620,000 people: Montenegrins (45%), Serbs (28%), Bosniak/Muslim Slavs (12%), Albanian (5%). At the same time, the languages spoken by the Montenegrin citizens were: Montenegrin

⁶ Roberts, 2007, 397-401

⁷ Andrijašević, Ž. and Rastoder, Š. – *The History of Montenegro from Ancient times to 2003*, Podgorica, 2006, 227

⁸ Group of Authors – *Istorijski atlas* (1st ed.) – Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva & Geokarta, Beograd, 1997, 91

⁹ <http://www.njegos.org/census/princip.jpg> - Accessed on 05/05/2012

¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mj.html> - Accessed on 05/05/2012

(37%), Serbian (43%), Bosniak (5%). According to the same census, nearly 5% of the overall population refused to declare their nationality.¹¹

This sharp change in the ethnic structure of Montenegro was the result of a systematic effort by the Montenegrin government in the past 15 years to forge a new Slavic nation in the Balkans. Aided by some Western politicians and scholars, the Montenegrin government, led by the eternal President and Prime Minister Milo Đukanović (b. 1962, in power since 1991), adopted the programme of the recently established *Doclean Academy of Sciences and Arts* which sought to promote an alternative version of national history. According to the *Doclean Academy*, the Montenegrins speak a Slavic language akin to Serbian, Croatian or Bosniak, but as a nation they descended directly from the mixed Illyrian, Roman and Slav population that inhabited the territory of present Montenegro in Ancient and Mediaeval times. As such, they are separate from other South Slavs and have characteristics that distinguish them from their other South Slav neighbours.¹²

Even though the separate Montenegrin nation was introduced after the Second World War, there were no major alterations of historical narratives established in the 19th and 20th century until the late 1990s. With the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s and the general condemnation of Serbia by the Western part of the international community, Montenegrin politicians, supported by the key international players in these developments, began the task of disassociating Montenegro from Serbia, hoping to achieve the political and economic benefits. However, in the 1992 referendum, Montenegro opted to stay in union with Serbia in what became known as “rump Yugoslavia” – Federal Republic Yugoslavia. This state lasted until 2003, when it was transformed into a loose federation called Serbia and Montenegro, only to be dissolved in 2006.

In 1993 the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro, a minor political party in favour of independence, together with some representatives of an NGO sector sponsored from abroad gathered in the old capital Cetinje and proclaimed the Montenegrin Orthodox

¹¹ [http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf) – Accessed on 05/05/2012 – The official record of the Montenegrin Statistical Office, pdf form, published in July 2011

¹² Freud defined such behaviour in 1930 as “narcissism of minor differences” in relation to the internal aggression towards ethnic and other conflicts – Freud, S. – *Civilization and Its Discontents*, New York, 1961, 61. Since Freud, many authors used the term in various disciplines. In his *Blood and Belonging*, Ignatieff applied the term to the nations of the former Yugoslav nations rewording it as “nationalism of minor differences” in 1993. These actions of the Montenegrin government should be understood in Ignatieff’s definition.

Church. The same political party, supported by the Catholic and Muslim members of the *Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts (Crnogorska Akademija Nauka i Umjetnosti – CANU)*, formed in 1998 a separate Academy of Sciences and Arts, called the *Doclean Academy of Sciences and Arts (Dukljanska Akademija Nauka i Umjetnosti – DANU)*, with sole aim to promote an alternative view of Montenegrin history, separate from the Serbian. Since popular support for an independent church, language and state was lacking at the time, the activities surrounding the Montenegrin church remained dormant until the early 2000s, when an open call for the re-establishment of an independent Montenegro prompted a heated debate on all issues regarding national identity, revealing in the process new divisions within Montenegrin society. As a significant number of the Montenegrins still regarded themselves ethnic Serbs, the Orthodox population split between those who still preferred the union with Serbia and those who were passionately against it.

By 1998, a new historical narrative was being formulated. The new narrative finally emerged as *The History of Montenegro*, by Živko Andrijašević and Šerbo Rastorder, both members of the Doclean Academy. It was published and widely distributed in 2006, the year that Montenegro seceded from Serbia. In the same period, following the successful promotion of the new Bosnian Muslim and Kosovo's Albanian narratives, the West sought to support the formation of the new Montenegrin narrative by fomenting some English speaking authors to support and promote this new version of the history of Montenegro, its people and identity. So far, the most significant example of this effort represented the book by a former diplomat Elizabeth Roberts, *Realm of the Black Mountain – A History of Montenegro*, published in London in 2007. This general historical overview offered to the English-speaking readers was quickly followed by the work of Kenneth Morrison entitled *Montenegro – A Modern History*, which concentrated on contemporary Montenegrin events. Both works reaffirmed attempts to introduce a new country and its history into the family of newly established European nations in the light of the current political context and were offered as a digested read to foreign scholars interested in researching the subject, but non-fluent in Serbian/Croatian:

“Very little has been written exclusively on Montenegro by non-Montenegrins. This book attempts to fill a gap by offering a consecutive general history....covering

such a long period inevitably required reliance on secondary sources where these exist and recognition of the lack of detailed knowledge at other times.”¹³

This statement inadvertently confirmed that behind the *political intent* of contemporary Great Powers involved in regional Balkan politics advocating the creation of new nations in the Yugoslav successor states, aim was to re-interpret the past and place it in the context of the 1990s wars of Yugoslav succession. The validity of this claim can be tested by comparing the sources used by foreign historians. These rarely include primary sources and the 19th century secondary sources written in Serbo-Croat, with the exception of those written in the latter part of the 20th century.¹⁴

6.2 Imagined aspects of the Montenegrin national narrative – Montenegrin Serbdom

Between the departure of the last Crnojević lord in 1496 and the appearance of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty in 1697, there were no contemporary written sources about the situation in Montenegro in existence, except in the coastal towns ruled by Venice. The inhospitable terrain prevented the full penetration of the Ottomans into the *Brda* (Hills), where the remaining Serbian Orthodox population withdrew, reverting over centuries to a tribal society. The Ottomans conquered more accessible areas in the valleys of Zeta and Morača, whilst the Venetians acquired the coast. The coastal towns, firmly under the Venetians between the 15th century and 1797, underwent a major change, as all the Orthodox population was duly expelled into the mountains.¹⁵ The remaining Catholic population lived under the Italian cultural influence, similar to that in Dalmatia.

During these three centuries, the inaccessible hinterland was ruled by the Prince-Bishops (*Vladikas*) elected by the tribes. The Orthodoxy in Montenegrin mountains survived as a church institution virtually independent from the Patriarchate in Constantinople. After the abolition of the Serbian Patriarchate in 1459, the Montenegrin *Vladikas* never accepted the supremacy of the Greek Patriarch and preserved the Serbian Orthodox Calendar and hierarchy.

¹³ Roberts, 2007, xiv. My bold.

¹⁴ In my communication with Dr Morrison, there was an obvious lack of language skills; yet, he listed a significant number of books in Serbian/Croatian as his sources. Dr Morrison acknowledged a number of interviewees who are all English speaking, but it is highly questionable whether they were also translating for Dr Morrison's study.

¹⁵ Roberts, 2007, 92

The establishment of the hereditary theocracy of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty in 1697, coincided with the growing power of Russia.¹⁶ Regarded as defender of the Orthodoxy, Russia's influence in Montenegro quickly assumed the most important political influence. In order to introduce Montenegro to the Russian Court, Vladika Vasilije Petrović-Njegoš (1709-1766, ruled from 1744), published in Moscow in 1754 the *History of Montenegro* (Fig. 6.1). This was the first written account about the history of Montenegro since the time of the Priest of Doclea in the 12th century.¹⁷

Subsequent Montenegrin rulers communicated with the Russian and Habsburg courts, usually asking for help against the Ottomans. However, no educational activities through the publication of general histories took place. When romantic nationalism appeared during the reign of Peter II Petrović-Njegoš (1813-1851, ruled from 1830), there was some increase of interest in Montenegro (Fig. 6.2). However, this was limited to occasional visits by European travellers, who left vignettes about the life, customs and the fight against the Ottomans in the Montenegrin highlands.



Fig. 6.1 – Vasilije Petrović-Njegoš (1709-1766, ruled from 1744) Fig. 6.2 – Petar II Petrović-Njegoš (1813-1851, ruled from 1830)

On the personal invitation of Peter II, Vuk Karadžić (Fig. 1.5) spent 1834-1835 in Montenegro collecting poems and other ethnographical material.¹⁸ In 1837 he published this collection entitled *Montenegro and the Montenegrins* in Stuttgart in the

¹⁶ Russia was not directly responsible for the rise of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty, but it soon became influential in those parts of Montenegro in which neither the Italians nor the Venetians had access.

¹⁷ A significant part of this history was dedicated to the Kosovo Battle which was for Vasilije a source of great pride. http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/vladika_vasilije-istorija_o_crnoj_gori.html - An integral version translated into contemporary Serbian by Prof. Radoje Marojević – Accessed on 05/05/2012

¹⁸ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 34-36

German language.¹⁹ Karadžić, himself a descendant of the Montenegrin-Herzegovinian tribe of Drobñjak, considered the Montenegrins to be nothing else but ethnic Serbs. This view was maintained throughout the 19th and the first part of the 20th century, as Serbia and Montenegro, although both officially recognized as independent states after the *Congress of Berlin* in 1878, were regarded as two Serbian states. The diplomatic correspondence after 1876-1878 recorded the political peculiarities within the Montenegrin Principality, but the question of identity was never on the agenda.

The development of the national idea and the nation-state in the Serbian Principality in the 19th century and the *Serbian Learned Society's* programme of collecting historical documents and recording the material heritage understandably did not differ from Karadžić's, Šafarīk's and Jireček's observations about the Montenegrin identity.²⁰ Neither did foreign visitors ever question the Serbian identity of Orthodox Montenegrins.²¹

This view of the Serbian identity of Montenegrins was upheld until the mid-20th century. All Serbian historians from the period of *Enlightenment* until the Second World War based their conclusions on the prevailing understanding of the surviving mediaeval sources. For them, the Serbian identity of the Montenegrins was unquestionable. But they were not writing exclusively from the perspective of the 19th century nation-building. They were greatly helped by the Petrović-Njegoš dynasts themselves who, in all their writings, always insisted on their Serbian identity and used the terms Montenegro and Montenegrins in geographical context.²²

¹⁹ <http://www.rastko.rs/knjizevnost/vuk/vkaradzic-crnagora.html> - Accessed on 05/05/2012

²⁰ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 33. Vuk Karadžić proudly displayed his ancestors from the Drobñjak tribe which inhabited both Montenegro and Herzegovina.

²¹ For example, Sir Arthur Evans, during his travels through Montenegro, used the term “Old Serbian church” for describing the sad state of the heritage around the town of Pljevlja. Evans, 1886, 133

²² For the collection of writings of Peter I, Peter II, Danilo and Nikola, see the online network of the electronic libraries, professional and academic institution and local communities – www.rastko.rs – „Projekat Rastko“, neprofitna mreža elektronskih biblioteka, stručnih ustanova i lokalnih zajednica posvećenih umetnostima, tradicijama i društvenim naukama. – Sadly, a very few articles are available in English, which may prove problematic for wider readership. However, as it is expected that any serious scholar researching the former Yugoslav countries speaks the language, the library is an invaluable source for the 19th-20th centuries most important collections in digital version.

6.3 Cultural aspects and material heritage in the context of Montenegrin nationalism

The earliest mention of a separate Montenegrin identity occurred in the aftermath of the First World War, when the exiled King Nikola (1842-1921, ruled 1860-1916, king from 1910), angry at the loss of support from the Entente powers ferociously attacked the new Kingdom SHS headed by his own grandson, Aleksandar Karadjordjević, as the enemy of the Montenegrins. Until 1916, Nikola considered himself “the first among the Serbs,” but when the Austro-Hungarian army occupied Montenegro in 1916, he abandoned his country, seeking refuge in Italy and France. At the same time, his Serbian son-in-law, King Peter I Karadjordjević (Fig. 1.37) remained with his army during the eponymous withdrawal through Albania.²³ This cost Nikola not only his reputation, but his throne. His disappointment with the creation of the new kingdom which had a place for only one king was understandable. His open denouncement of his Serbian identity had more to do with his injured personal pride rather than the political choice to discover a new ethnic identity of his state (Fig. 6.3).²⁴ Subsequently, Nikola’s supporters in Montenegro, the so-called *Greens*, seized upon this message and organized an unsuccessful rebellion against the Karadjordjević regime.²⁵ However, the words of a deposed king and the events of the early 1920s provided convenient justification for the formulation of a separate Montenegrin identity and nation in the course of the 20th century.



Fig. 6.3 – King Nikola I Petrović-Njegoš (1842-1921, ruled 1860-1916, king from 1910)

²³ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 80-81

²⁴ http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/kralj_nikola/npetrovic_3.html - Letter of King Nikola dated, 6 January 1919, Ney, France

²⁵ Roberts, 2007, 332-335

Nikola's and his supporter's anger was quickly seized upon by the Croat nationalists during the Kingdom of SHS and Second World War. Despite maintaining the idea that Montenegro was part of historic Croatian lands, Pavelić's regime could not annex any part of Montenegro, as it was occupied by Italy. Nevertheless, the NDH leadership supported the former Montenegrin *Greens*, who attempted to re-establish the Kingdom of Montenegro under Italian protectorate. The attempt had failed as King Nikola's son, Prince Mihajlo Petrović-Njegoš, refused to take the throne arguing that such an act would mean "*the treason to Serbian people.*"²⁶ However, after 1945, these Croat efforts were extinguished in Yugoslavia. They survived among the Croat diaspora closely related to the NDH.²⁷

6.4 Historical and academic sources on Montenegrin heritage

All existing sources from the 18th to the 20th century referred to Montenegrins as the Serbs. Since there were no autochthonous sources between the 15th and 18th centuries, only two primary sources from the mediaeval pre-Nemanjić period have value for studying the history of Montenegro: *De Administrando Imperio* of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, written in the 10th century, and *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, written by an anonymous monk in the 13th century. Both sources survived in much later copies and were open to contested interpretations, because no other contemporary documents which would confirm or contradict their contents exist. Of these two documents *De Administrando Imperio* was considered more reliable, due to the completeness of the manuscript. *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea* was regarded as an early work written by an ethnic Slav. So far, Archaeology has been unable to corroborate these manuscripts, as the field-research related to the 8th-12th centuries is "notoriously underdeveloped."²⁸

It is precisely the ambiguity of the two sources and insufficient archaeological research that enabled the promoters of the new Montenegrin national identity to develop a theory which argues that the Montenegrins are a Separate Slav group entering the Balkans in the 6th-7th centuries. According to this premise, the ancestors of modern Montenegrins were a product of mixing with Romanized Illyrians and Albanians, which created a unique identity, separate from all other South Slavs.

²⁶ Пипер, Марко М. – *Краљ Никола Први*, Крагујевац, 2001, 160-161

²⁷ After 1945, Dominik Mandić (Fig. 2.55) maintained the idea of the Croat origins of Montenegrins through Starčević's notion of Red Croatia (Map 2.4). See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 170-171.

²⁸ Curta, 2006, 211

6.4.1 The problem of the validity of the sources – The Doclean narrative

To create a connection between the modern Montenegrins and Ancient Roman/Illyrian inhabitants of Montenegro, members of the DANU asserted that two principal primary sources related to the territory of Montenegro should be re-interpreted in a manner that would dismiss previous reading of the historians from the past several centuries. *De Administrando Imperio* did not record any separate Montenegrin tribe, but it stated that the tribes surrounding Doclea were all Serbian: *Zachlumi*, *Terbounites* and *Kanalites* (living in the territory of modern Herzegovina and western Bosnia) as well as *Pagani/Arentani* who lived in Dalmatia. For Doclea, the former territory of the Romanised Illyrians and Roman veterans settled by Diocletian, Porphyrogenitus gave no tribal identity:

*“(Diocleia)...was repopulated in the time of Heraclius the emperor, just as were Croatia and Serbia and the country of the Zachlumi and Terbounia and the country of Kanali...”*²⁹



Fig. 6.4 – The remains of Doclea, 4km away from the city centre of Podgorica

²⁹ *DAI, Volume I: 35, 36*

Traditionally, the mediaevalists studying this part of the world understood the Greek geographical and etymological derivatives from Porphyrogenitus' description that the Slavic tribes around the ancient Dioclea, being surrounded by the Serbian tribes of Zachlumi, Terbounites and Kanalites, were actually Serbs. This was not limited only on the native historians, but also the foreign scholars.³⁰ They argued that even if the ethnic affiliations of the early Slavs around the ancient Doclea (Fig. 6.4) were left open to discussion, the later centuries of self-identification with the Serbs and, particularly from the late 18th century, the insistence in all written documents on belonging to the Serbian national corpus by the Montenegrins themselves, pointed to this conclusion. However, from 1999, the approved reading of the *De Administrando Imperio* by the Montenegrin government, DANU and their Western supporters relied exclusively on interpretation, rather than on material evidence. As a result, in 2006, Živko Andrijašević (Montenegrin, b.1967) and Šerbo Rastoder (a Montenegrin Muslim, b.1956) provided an explanation that would secure this missing link between the modern Montenegro and that of the 7th century:

*“As Constantine Porphyrogenitus did not supply any data about the ethnic origin of Docleans, **it may be assumed** that he viewed them as a separate ethnic group, just like the Serbs or Croats. Unlike the Docleans, Porphyrogenitus ascribes Serb origins to all other Slavic tribes named after a notion or toponym...Constantine Porphyrogenitus **may not have known** the real ethnic origins of the Docleans, but he **obviously did not regard them as Serbs or Croats**, for otherwise he would have put them into one of the two groups....Irrespective of all these controversies over their ethnic origin, by **setting up a state**, founding a dynasty and developing an awareness of their political distinctness, in historical terms, the Docleans **unequivocally managed to distinguish themselves** from all other tribes and ethnic groups surrounding them.”³¹*

Despite the probabilistic terminology used by the current Montenegrin historians in order to connect their newly propagated to an early Doclean identity, there were no indications that there was any firm state structure in Doclea prior to the end of the 10th century, when the Doclean princes joined the Byzantine-Bulgarian

³⁰ John V.A.Fine, author of the influential 20th century work on the mediaeval Balkans in the English language accepted this interpretation. Fine, 1983, 53

³¹ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 10 – My bold

wars in the time of Samuil (976-1014).³² Indeed, Porphyrogenitus himself stated that in his time “*Doclea was under the emperor of the Romans.*”³³

The existence of Doclean princes and later kings in the 11th century was corroborated by *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, a highly unreliable source, “*long dismissed as a collection of fact and fiction, especially in relation to the coverage of earlier periods.*”³⁴ Numerous studies of the manuscript that appeared from the early 19th century pointed to the incompleteness of the text and overall confusion of the events and personalities described. The Slavic original did not survive, but later Latin translation consists of three main parts: *The Croat Chronicle (Libellus Gothorum)*, which connected the Croats to the Goths,³⁵ *The Hagiography of St. John Vladimir* and the third, written as a history of Serbian rulers in Zeta.³⁶ The problem of the manuscript, especially its first volume, was the artificial connection between the events, personalities and often invented characters. Clearly, the Priest of Doclea did not differentiate the Serbs from the Croats and provided no dates, which made some of the rulers to have abnormally long reigns or the rulers from different epochs coincide with each other.³⁷ For these reasons, a number of scholars regarded the manuscript more a literary than historical document.

Despite all its deficiencies, the second part of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*, the *Hagiography of St. John Vladimir*, were taken as the basis of the new national narrative in Montenegro, which could conveniently be named the Doclean Narrative.³⁸ The narrative focused on the character of John Vladimir (c.990-1016), a Doclean prince from the time of the Byzantine-Bulgarian wars which ended the First

³² See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 335.

³³ Curta, 2006, 210

³⁴ *Ibid*, 14

³⁵ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 165. Initially, Starčević asserted the non-Slavic origin of the Croats, but did not develop the idea further. This least consistent part of *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea* which asserted the Gothic origin of the Croats was later fully developed for the needs of the NDH.

³⁶ Мијушковић, С. – *Летопис попа Дукљанина – пријевод и објашњење* – Београд, 1988 – Slavko Mijušković – *Chronicle of Priest of Doclea – translation and explanation* – Belgrade, 1988 (the text of the Chronicle within this work was quoted as the *Chronicle*, whilst the explanations were quoted as Mijušković's work)

³⁷ For example, in the first part of the *Chronicle*, the King of the Ostrogoths Totila (d. 552AD) coincides with the Emperor Anastasius (491-518)

³⁸ The two editions of the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea* used here are by Dr Slavko Mijušković (1912-1989), a former Director of Archives in Kotor, from 1988 – *Летопис попа Дукљанина – превод и објашњење*, СКЗ, Београд, 1988 and Dr Nikola Banašević (1895-1992), a professor of Classics at the Belgrade University, from 1971 – *Летопис попа Дукљанина и народна предања*, СКЗ, Београд, 1971. The reason for this is that the two academics conducted heated debates over the fine nuances of translation of the Latin manuscript. However, both of them considered the story of John Vladimir to belong to Serbian historiography.

Bulgarian Empire of Samuil.³⁹ The only existing reference to his ethnic origin given in the manuscript is his Serbian (Raškan) descent through his father Petrislav (his existence was not confirmed by the contemporary Byzantine sources) who ruled Zeta before the Bulgarian expansion under Samuil.⁴⁰

The Doclean Narrative described John Vladimir as the Prince of Doclea whose realm had incorporated the territory between the Bojana River and Boka Kotorska,⁴¹ the Adriatic Coast and the upper valley of the Morača River which, conveniently, corresponds to the modern territory of Montenegro.⁴² The reference about the Serbian origin of John Vladimir was completely ignored, which provided the basis to further expand the argument about a separate Montenegrin identity dating back from the 11th century. Additionally, after his execution in 1016 in Prespa by the Bulgarian Tsar John Vladislav (1015-1018), John Vladimir became the first Slavic saint to be venerated throughout Orthodox Christianity. His cult was celebrated by all Orthodox Churches that gained autocephaly after 1204. However, the Doclean Narrative insisted that the much stronger cults of the Nemanjić saint kings later maintained by the Serbian Orthodox Church were because “*Vladimir’s sainthood did not suit the future Nemanjić rulers.*”⁴³ In reality, after the Kosovo Battle the cult of Prince Lazar, with the exception of the cult of St. Sava,⁴⁴ superseded all other cults within the Serbian Orthodox Church, but the cult of John Vladimir was never lost.⁴⁵ This argument, coined a few years ago, subtly enabled the construction of a new theory, which by insisting on the non-Serbian identity of John Vladimir, proceeded to the claim that the subsequent rulers of Doclea, the Vojislavljević dynasty (1034-1186), were not ethnic Serbs.

The Vojislavljević dynasty ruled for a century and a half over the Serbs before the Nemanjić kings came to power. According to the *Chronicle*, the first Vojislavljević, Stefan Vojislav (1040-1043),⁴⁶ was John Vladimir’s nephew, whilst his mother was a princess of Raška.⁴⁷ Even if the Priest of Doclea invented this, the claim

³⁹ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 21-22.

⁴⁰ *Chronicle*, XXIV-XXXVI

⁴¹ Bay of Kotor, Bocche di Cattaro

⁴² Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 11

⁴³ Roberts, 2007, 54

⁴⁴ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 24

⁴⁵ The Day of St. John Vladimir is still observed on 22 May, the day of his death in 1016, in all Eastern Orthodox Churches, including Serbian.

⁴⁶ In the *Chronicle* referred to as Dobroslav, whilst all Byzantine authors call him Stefan Vojislav.

⁴⁷ *Chronicle*, XXXVII

of his Serbian ethnicity was confirmed by the contemporary Byzantine authors, such as Keukamenos, Zonaras, Cedrenus and John Skylitzes.⁴⁸ However, the Doclean Narrative ignored these sources and without any explanation simply termed the Vojislavljević dynasty as Doclean (Montenegrin.)⁴⁹ Insisting on the fact that Doclean rulers, by receiving the royal insignia from the Pope around 1077 had exercised their power over all other Serbian lands which were Orthodox, confirmed their Catholic, that is, ethnic Doclean identity.⁵⁰

6.4.2 The Serbian occupation of Doclea, now renamed Zeta and “the beginning” of the Montenegrin identity

This oversimplified version of the turbulent events of the 11th century was not put into the context of the regional politics at the time. The Byzantine-Bulgarian wars at the beginning of the century, the Great Schism of 1054, the loss at Manzikert and Bari in 1071 and Norman advances under Robert Guiscard all had their impact on the political developments in the Slavic parts of the Balkans. Of these, particularly important was the changing religious affiliation of the Slavic aristocracy. Both Roman Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy were exercising their influence on the local lords and, depending on which was ascendant at the time, they would swear allegiance to one or the other. The Papal recognition of the Doclean kings implies their Catholic allegiance at that time. However, the renewed Byzantine influence under the Comneni dynasty re-installed Orthodoxy in the Balkans, bringing into political prominence another Serbian land – The Grand Principality of Raška.⁵¹ According to the new Doclean Narrative, the Raškan influence that soon expanded over the Doclean kingdom was solely a result of conquest by the alien Nemanjić Serbs:

“Stefan Nemanja entered Doclea not as a hereditary ruler but as a conqueror. His biographers’ claims that he was related to the Docelan dynasty and that he occupied Doclea as their legitimate descendant and heir, were merely an attempt to

⁴⁸ Analysis of these sources is beyond the scope of this thesis. As they are ignored by the authors of the new Montenegrin narrative, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea* is a sufficient example of selective and manipulative modern interpretation.

⁴⁹ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 14-17

⁵⁰ One interesting detail from the new Montenegrin narrative is that the Orthodoxy was enforced over the Montenegrins, whilst their “true” faith was Catholic. Similar argument was used by the Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija, who are predominantly Muslim. This argument has modern political usage, as it serves as a “proof” of belonging to the Western European civilization.

⁵¹ The first Nemanjić king of Serbia, Stefan the Firstcrowned (1196-1228, king from 1217) received his crown from the Pope as a Catholic.

give legitimacy to his invasion. The Doclean dynasty he allegedly belonged to was banished, and the towns he came to take over as his inheritance, were the first to be demolished.”⁵²

This claim ignores the family ties between the Houses of Nemanjić and Vojislavljević, recorded in the *Chronicle* and several later biographies of Stefan Nemanja, written by his sons,⁵³ Stefan the Firstcrowned and St.Sava in the early 13th century, as well as that of Domentian of Hilandar.⁵⁴ In the version written by Nemanja’s son Stefan, the first of the Nemanjić dynasts, Stefan Nemanja, was born in Ribnica⁵⁵ and baptised according to the Catholic rite.⁵⁶ All three biographies asserted that “Zeta was the fatherland and the first kingdom” of Stefan Nemanja, which was later confirmed by its special status: all Nemanjić heirs to the throne bore the title “Prince of Zeta” similar to the title “Prince of Wales,” borne by English male heirs to the throne.

Renaming Doclea into Zeta occurred gradually. Zeta was originally one *župa* (a baronial estate) within the Doclean kingdom. Being the most important territory that belonged to the crown, when the Nemanjićs took over the suzerainty, the whole territory of Doclea was being referred to as Zeta. The term itself, however, was first used by the Byzantine historian Keukamenos in 1080.⁵⁷ Andrijašević, in accordance with the Doclean Narrative, argued that “the Nemanjić invaders stripped the formal status of kingdom from Doclea” in order to acquire the crown for themselves and renamed Doclea as Zeta.⁵⁸

In order to strengthen the belief in the 2006 version of the history of Montenegro, all mediaeval writers that were studied within the Literature and History curricula in schools throughout Montenegro were officially removed from the

⁵² Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 16

⁵³ The biographies of Stefan Nemanja by Stefan the Firstcrowned used here are:

- a 1970 edition by Dragoljub Pavlović in the series “Serbian Literature in One Hundred books”, Book 1 – Св. Сава – Живот Стефана Немање, Едиција “Стара српска књижевност у сто књига”, књига прва, Нови Сад, 1970

- a 1988 edition by Liljana Juhas-Georgievaska in the series “Old Serbian literature in 24 books”, Book 3 – Стефан Првовенчани, *Сабрани списи*, Просвета и Српска књижевна задруга, Београд, 1988, Едиција “Стара српска књижевност у 24 књиге”, књига трећа

⁵⁴ Domentian finished his chronicle in 1264 in the Serbian redaction of the Old Church Slavonic.

⁵⁵ Today a suburb of Podgorica

⁵⁶ Првовенчани, *Живог светог Симеона*, II

⁵⁷ Fine, 1997, 212 – The Byzantine historian did not refer to the province by its Latin name, but as it was called by the Slavs at the time. On the other hand, the Pope’s recognition of the kingdom implies to the traditional usage of old Roman imperial names by the Catholic Church.

⁵⁸ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 16. Again, the authors offered neither explanations nor references for this claim in the new *History of Montenegro*.

textbooks in September 2011.⁵⁹ They were replaced by the local 20th-21st century authors or the Catholic Renaissance poets from the coastal towns who wrote in Italian and Latin.

6.5 Material evidence “confirming” a separate Montenegrin identity

Because the existing written sources prove insufficient and highly contested, the Doclean narrative sought reliance on the material heritage: the ancient and early mediaeval sites in Montenegro. A problem arose immediately, as the urban characteristics of the post-Roman territory inhabited by the Slavs from 6th-7th centuries were insufficiently researched. Some general synthesis of archaeological research relating to early mediaeval towns and fortresses was published in 1953 and 1956 in two volumes of the *Archaeological sites in Serbia (Arheološka nalazišta u Srbiji)* and in the *Archaeological Lexicon of Bosnia and Herzegovina I-III (Arheološki leksikon Bosne i Hercegovine I-III)* from 1988.⁶⁰ As the University of Montenegro still has no Archaeology Department and that all Montenegrin archaeologists to date were graduates from (mainly) Belgrade or Zagreb Universities, it is expected that future research in Montenegro will take place gradually and will need Western financial support to assert its newly adopted national narrative. For this purpose, the Montenegrin government has created a *Montenegrin Centre for Conservation and Archaeology* in July 2011, with offices in Cetinje and Kotor.⁶¹

However, work done during the existence of Yugoslavia created a solid base for future research. The research done to date underlined major differences in the heritage studies in Montenegro. Firstly, there is a general division between the archaeology and architecture of the coastal towns and the interior. Secondly, the coastal towns once under the Venetians: Kotor, Bar, Budva and Herceg Novi, to mention the most important ones, have been better preserved and possess solid archives. Most of these towns had reasonable urban development under Byzantine, Serbian and Venetian influences until the catastrophic earthquakes of 1563 and 1667 annihilated the early

⁵⁹ http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2012&mm=03&dd=03&nav_category=167&nav_id=587676 – News dated 03/03/2012 – Accessed 15/05/2012

⁶⁰ *Arheološka nalazišta u Srbiji* I-II were written between 1951 and 1954 by Milutin and Draga Garašanin, the key-figures in the post-Second World War Archaeology at the University of Belgrade. As they worked under the heavy restrictions of the post-war Communist regime, their works could hardly be described as nationalist. *Arheološki leksikon Bosne i Hercegovine I-III* was a capital project of the staff of *Zemaljski Muzej* in Sarajevo. Both of these works are now considered out of date and there is a genuine need for more research.

⁶¹ *Sl. list Crne Gore*, br. 47/11, 23.09.2011

mediaeval architecture of the coastal areas. The re-building that took place following this devastation was executed under Venetian influence, giving these coastal towns the unmistakable Renaissance and Baroque Italian-Adriatic features. Thus, early mediaeval monuments survived only in fragments, making the attribution of any ethnic characteristics difficult.⁶² From the 9th century, the Romanesque architecture influenced church-builders in the coastal towns. A few monuments of the period that survived owed much to the dominance the Catholic Church during the Venetian period. In the hinterland, the Romanesque architecture merged with the Byzantine influences transforming in the 12th century into Serbian *Raška School of Architecture*.⁶³

This Serbian influence, according to the new narrative, came from the interior, after the Docleans were subjugated by the Nemanjić kings. As there is no readily available data on the mediaeval urban structures in the interior due to the lack of evidence and insufficient research, the initial archaeological classification, done primarily by Belgrade researchers in the mid-20th century, managed to date the earliest urban settlements to the time of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.⁶⁴ However, in the two centuries between Porphyrogenitus and the Nemanjić kings, most towns in the interior were subject to major alterations and changes and survived only in traces.⁶⁵ Better preserved heritage in the Montenegrin interior dates from the late 12th century, was ecclesiastical in character and generally belonged to the *Raška School*.⁶⁶ The best preserved examples, such as the Morača Monastery unequivocally coincide with the Nemanjić period (Fig. 6.5).

⁶² It is not possible to ascribe any ethnic characteristics to the surviving architecture and archaeology not only because of their fragmentary state, but because it is impossible to think that they were erected as the examples of national culture, since it is not exist as such at the time.

⁶³ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 30 – It is not clear to which monuments the authors refer to. Serbian *Raška School* definitely represents the fusion between the Byzantine and Romanesque forms, but the best preserved examples are in Serbia Proper, not in Montenegro.

⁶⁴ 10th century

⁶⁵ Мишић, С. – *Лексикон градова и тргова средњовековних српских земаља – према писаним изворима* – Београд, 2010,12

⁶⁶ The secular and urban structures were either demolished or heavily altered by the Ottomans during the centuries of their rule. Similarly, no surviving examples of the Vardarska or Moravska School



Fig. 6.5 – The Morača Monastery, built in 1252 in *Raška School* by Stefan Nemanjić, son of Vukan, Prince of Duklja and the eldest son of of Stefan Nemanja.

Because the *Raška School* itself was a fusion of the Catholic and Orthodox influences⁶⁷ that flourished under the early Nemanjić kings, who also showed tendencies towards changing their religious affiliations, it can be argued that the combination of Catholic and Orthodox elements in ecclesiastical architecture reflected the political ambiguity of the rulers, rather than prescribed methods of building. But even this argument can be viewed as an interpellation from the modern perspective, because the general premise on which this work is based is that the sense of national identity and nationalism did not exist prior to the 19th century. The Doclean narrative, however, uses interpellation for its hypothesis that the symbiotic Romanesque-Gothic style was autochthonous to Montenegro. Furthermore, the methods of *normative historiography* were fully employed in analysing the ruins of the mediaeval

⁶⁷ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 49-51 and p. 112-113

monasteries in southern Montenegro and northern Albania, such as St.Sergio and Vakh Church south of Skadar in order to impose the new narrative (Fig. 6.6).⁶⁸ The church, now in ruins, changed its use several times over the centuries, but the new explanation insists that “*the previously Benedictine Monastery suffered certain alterations in the 13th century.*”⁶⁹ In reality, the site was known as a holy ground since the late antiquity and was demolished and rebuilt several times over the centuries. In 1290, Queen Helen of Anjou, the French wife of King Uroš I Nemanjić, built the church on the site of the mediaeval port whose remains had sunk into the river over the centuries. Finally demolished by the Ottomans in the 16th century, the church remained in ruins ever since.⁷⁰



Fig. 6.6 – The only surviving wall of the Church St. Sergio and Vakh, built by Queen Helen in 1290, south of Skadar in Albania. Queen Helen converted to Orthodoxy, but was supportive of the Catholics from the coast. The Doclean Narrative proclaimed the indistinct ruins of St. Sergio and Vakh as its own autochthonous architectural, that is, national style.

⁶⁸ Now in Albania

⁶⁹ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 30

⁷⁰ The ruins still contained identifiable inscriptions when they were first recorded and described by the Russian consul Jastrebov (1839-1894) in the late 19th century. The Doclean narrative barely mentioned Jastrebov, while the inscriptions related to the Queen Helen he reproduced were ignored.

6.5.1 “Catholic nature” of Doclea

Insisting exclusively on archaeologically uncorroborated “Serbian demolition of the 13th century,” the Doclean Narrative provided foundations for its claim of “deliberate destruction of Doclean identity.” Using the method akin to the methods of the new Bosniak, Macedonian and Kosovo and Metohija’s Albanian new narratives created during the 1990s wars in former Yugoslavia, the Doclean Narrative interpreted the mediaeval societies in the context of the politically and militarily charged 1990s.⁷¹ The change of identity in Doclea, as indeed in other Former Yugoslav republics, was executed through the destruction of religious objects and their re-interpretations in primordialistic terms.

According to the new narrative, the undoubted Catholic nature of Doclea was irreversibly changed when the Nemanjić kings enforced conversion to Orthodoxy which limited the Benedictine educational activities previously supported by the Doclean rulers. Since the surviving documents do not confirm the enforced conversion,⁷² Montenegrin Catholic publicist Ivan Jovović in his study *Iz prošlosti Dukljansko-barske nadbiskupije* published by the Catholic Archibishopry of Bar in 2004, explained this lack of evidence as “a joint venture of the Benedictine and Orthodox monks who sought to maintain political order.”⁷³ The Nemanjić kings, continued Jovović, “frequently married Catholic princesses and needed the Pope’s support in obtaining the Doclean crown because the land had significant numbers of Catholics.”⁷⁴ Since the archaeology so far could not locate and confirm the existence of “large numbers” of Catholic churches and monasteries beyond the coast, the

⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, the development of all these narratives were supported with financial help from the West. The main task was to reduce or completely expel Serbian presence and influence in the new independent states. However, the seeds of future discord were sown in the process, when these new national narratives begin to clash over the same territories. For example, the above mentioned St. Sergio and Vakh Church was also being claimed by the ethnic Albanians, willing to prove their Crypto-Christian identity.

⁷² As indeed, there are no material remains of Catholic churches outside a few coastal towns dating from the 11th century.

⁷³ http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/religija/povijest_dukljansko_barske_nadbiskupije.htm – Jovović, I. – *Iz prošlosti Dukljansko-barske nadbiskupije*, Bar, 2004 – Jovović, I. – *From the past of Doclean-Bar Archibishopry*, Bar, 2004 – Accessed on 23/05/2012. Insisting on the exclusively Catholic character of the Doclean kings, without putting it into the context of Catholic-Orthodox relations in the 11th century endorses the modern differentiation of the Montenegrins from Serbs.

⁷⁴ http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/religija/povijest_dukljansko_barske_nadbiskupije.htm – Accessed on 23/05/2012

Doclean narrative explained this by the destruction that occurred after the Ottoman conquest.⁷⁵

6.5.2 Ottoman threat to the Montenegrin identity

As in other Balkan areas, after the Ottoman conquest, towns were transformed according to Levantine models, irrespective of size and importance. Because of the constant warring between the Ottomans and Montenegrin clans, only those towns that were in more accessible areas were garrisoned by Ottoman armies and were re-organized for Ottoman needs. The Islamic Community of Montenegro asserted that 162 mosques were erected during the Ottoman period in the whole territory of Montenegro.⁷⁶

The conquered towns, previously the seats of the pre-Ottoman native rulers featured Christian architecture. After the conquest, the Ottomans carried out the reconstruction which suited their needs. This was usually done by re-using materials from the pre-Ottoman Christian structures. Some pioneering work on locating and describing these pre-Ottoman towns was done by foreign travellers and members of the *Serbian Royal Academy* in the second half of the 19th century,⁷⁷ but the events of the Balkan and the First and Second World Wars prevented more in-depth analysis. In the decades between 1945 and 1991 there were a few genuine attempts to address this problem,⁷⁸ but the studies were limited to the most prominent sites and monasteries because of the lack of funding. Thus, the archaeological sites and monasteries in the territory of Montenegro beyond the narrow coastal strip were little researched. However, as all the surviving urban and monastic heritage of the pre-Ottoman period in Montenegrin hinterland examined to date bears Nemanjić characteristics, the Doclean Narrative argued that by “depriving the Montenegrins of their heritage,” Belgrade committed a deliberate “act of looting, wild destruction and avoidance of research in the years following the Second World War.”⁷⁹

However, this lack of research was not unique to Montenegro. Very few pre-Ottoman towns in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia received due

⁷⁵ *ibid*

⁷⁶ <http://www.monteislam.com/islamska-zajednica/islamska-zajednica-u-crnoj-gori> – Accessed on 24/05/2012

⁷⁷ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 52-55

⁷⁸ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 103-104

⁷⁹ <http://montenegrina.net/fokus/anticko-lice-stare-budve/> - Accessed on 23/05/2012

scientific attention and scholars recognized their genuine lack of knowledge of mediaeval life prior to the conquest.⁸⁰ Whilst in Serbia, theoretical and field research of mediaeval urban lives was revived in the 1990s, albeit restricted by the difficulties caused by economic sanctions and with the majority of this work still unpublished, no such research has been undertaken by Montenegrin scholars as yet. Therefore, the argument of the Doclean Narrative of the Nemanjić occupation and destruction of Catholic Doclea was based solely on the writing of historians belonging to the DANU from 1998 onwards.

Simultaneously, the Western supporters of the Doclean Narrative argued for the existence of the separate identity as early as the 13th-14th century, neglecting the discourse about the appearance of nationalism as late as the 19th century. Using as a pretext poorly documented local revolts that occurred in this period, Elizabeth Roberts, one of the few authors to write about Montenegro in English language, suggested that the sense of identity “*must have existed among the Zetans who did not want to live under the Raškan yoke.*”⁸¹

6.6 Montenegrin culture

After the demise of the Serbian Empire in the second part of the 14th century there was a brief attempt by the Balšić and Crnojević families to win power and restore order. Both families aspired to rule the whole territory of Zeta, but the borders of their dominions were fluid. Throughout the 14th century, the feuding noble families in Zeta rarely held entire territories of what they considered their dominions because of the extremely inaccessible mountain passes. It is precisely the geography of Montenegro that made it a unique case in the formation of statehood. Similar to northern Albania, most of Zeta was unsuited for agriculture and had limited opportunities for trade, so the predominant activity of the population was stock-raising. The rough terrain and constant need for new pastures caused frequent moves by families and their flocks over considerable distances, transforming the societal features into tribal. As some tribes became more or less powerful and widely differed in numbers, it became extremely difficult for the great noble families to assert their

⁸⁰ Мишић, 2010, 20

⁸¹ Roberts, 2007, 70-71. However, even Roberts had to acknowledge that the sense of national identity in the Middle Ages was an entirely different concept from today, which in turn made it impossible to argue the existence of the “Zetan identity” in primordialistic terms.

control over the whole population.⁸² Additionally, certain tribal lords possessed houses in towns that were outside their pastoral zones and since the documents covering the period of the Middle Ages are scarce, drawing accurate conclusions became impossible.

The evidence of final flourishing of the cultural development in the last years before the Ottomans finally ousted the native rulers, however, survived. Ivan Crnojević (1465-1490) moved his court and the Metropolitan seat to Cetinje, where he built a monastery in 1484/85 (Fig. 6.7). Ivan's son Djuradj established there in 1493 a printing press. This was the first Cyrillic printing press in the Balkans and, until it ceased operating in 1496, published five books of liturgical character, mainly Psalters and Hymns, commonly named the *Oktoih* (Fig. 6.8).⁸³



Fig. 6.7 – The Cetinje Monastery, founded by Ivan Crnojević in 1484/85. Destroyed by the Ottomans, the monastery was rebuilt in 1697 by the first Vladika of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty, Danilo I (1670-1735, ruled 1697-1735).

⁸² Fine, 1987, 415

⁸³ Fine, 1987, 603



Fig. 6.8 – The facsimile of the *Oktoih*, 1494, the first printed Cyrillic book in the Balkans

Surviving copies of the *Oktoih*, found in various monasteries in Montenegro, Kosovo and Metohija and Sarajevo are now in kept in the State Museums of Montenegro, National Museum of Serbia and Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Sarajevo and several monastery treasuries. Djuradj also ensured the printing of the text of *Dušan's Code*,⁸⁴ which seems to have been recognized as the legal framework under the Crnojević rulers.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, in 1496, Djuradj was forced into exile in Venice. His departure enabled the Ottomans to advance into the more accessible areas.⁸⁶ Only the mountain peaks remained out of the Ottoman control.

The decline of the central government of the native ruling families in the 14th-15th centuries created an increasing need for self-reliance. The forms of tribal law and hierarchy were established as a substitute for official law. However, the highland tribes, although relatively safe from Ottoman raids, were also cut off from all outside influences, cultural and political development, which took place in Europe from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Montenegrin Orthodox Christians were under the jurisdiction of elected Metropolitans until 1697 when the Petrović-Njegoš tribe

⁸⁴ See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 24

⁸⁵ Fine, 1987, 603

⁸⁶ Ćirković, 2004, 85

secured the right to become hereditary Metropolitans, Prince-Bishops. When the Serbian Patriarchate was abolished in 1459 after the fall of the Despotate, the Orthodox Church in Montenegro remained unaffected by the Patriarch of Constantinople's decisions, as there was no control over the highland territory. However, from the establishment of the hereditary metropolitans, Russia began a long-term policy of supporting and financing Cetinje. Russian support lasted until the beginning of the 20th century.

All Petrović-Njegoš Metropolitans regarded themselves as Serbian, which was first recorded in 1754 in the above mentioned *History of Montenegro* by Vladika Vasilije. The dedication of the book swore allegiance to Peter the Great and his successors and confirmed their determination to fight the Turks, so they would not “fall into slavery like **the rest of Serbia**.”⁸⁷ What is interesting in this history, however, is the recounting of the Myth of Kosovo and the adoration of Miloš Obilić in the same form recorded by Vuk Karadžić six decades later. Another set of written documents dated between 1800 and 1830 by Vladika Peter I Petrović-Njegoš (1748-1830), in which he also identified the Montenegrins as Serbs. The names of Montenegrin and Serbian were used interchangeably, where the Montenegrin marked their geographical belonging, rather than their ethnic identity. The Doclean narrative, however, deliberately ignored any mention of the name of Serbia and insisted that Vasilije “propagated the idea of an independent Montenegro under the protection of a Christian power.”⁸⁸

6.6.1 The Mountain Wreath

The most prominent Prince-Bishop, Petar II Petrović-Njegoš (Fig. 6.2), was a complex personality, studied by many scholars since the second half of the 19th century. He began the modernization of the government by forming a Senate and the rudimentary law-court at Cetinje, but his rule was in many ways restricted by the influence of the Great Powers and an insignificant number of educated professionals able to undertake the task of building the state institutions. Njegoš received his early education in the Cetinje monastery. By the time of Njegoš's education, the old capital

⁸⁷ http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/vladika_vasilije-istorija_o_crnoj_gori.html - An integral version translated into contemporary Serbian by Prof. Radoje Marojević – Accessed on 05/05/2012. My bold. The choice of words, “the rest of Serbia,” in the Serbian language literally means that Vasilije considered Montenegro the integral part of Serbia.

⁸⁸ Andrijašević and Rstoder, 2006, 75; Roberts, 2007, 149.

of the Crnojevićs founded in 1484, was destroyed by the Ottomans in the mid-16th century. The first Prince-Bishop of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty, Danilo I (1697-1735) re-established Cetinje as capital of the Brda (Highlands) when he rebuilt the Monastery in 1697.

Njegoš's tutor, a Serbian romantic poet Sima Milutinović Sarajlija (1791-1847) from Sarajevo, had a profound influence on the young Prince-Bishop, supporting his love for poetry. Like many young nobles, Njegoš travelled throughout Europe and, inspired by the ideas of romantic nationalism, wrote epic poems. The most important was a religious-philosophical epic play written in decasyllabic verse of oral tradition, *The Mountain Wreath*. The central theme was an event of 1702 or 1711, when Danilo I, on the Serbian Orthodox Christmas Eve, ordered the Serbian Christian tribes to slaughter the Serbian Muslim converts. No contemporary accounts exist, but the theme of massacre of the Muslims was first mentioned in 1833 by Prince-Bishop Peter I, repeated by Sarajlija and received its legendary character in *The Mountain Wreath* in 1847. Often referred to as "the Montenegrin Vespers," it was dedicated to the leader of the First Serbian Uprising, Karadjordje (Fig. 1.a.11).⁸⁹ The struggle of the "Cross against the Crescent" was invoked as "the sacred justice of Miloš,"⁹⁰ whilst the Montenegrins were described as the "*best of the Serbs*", who, surviving the Kosovo Battle, withdrew into the Montenegrin mountains (Brda) to continue their fight "*for the honourable Cross and golden freedom.*"⁹¹ The epic verse undoubtedly confirmed that Njegoš regarded Montenegrins as Serbs.⁹²

⁸⁹ Roberts, 2007, 133

⁹⁰ Miloš Obilić, the central figure of the Kosovo Myth.

⁹¹ A recurring verse from the Kosovo epic which Njegoš used as one of the leading lines in his *Mountain Wreath*.

⁹² "*God is angry with the Serbian people.
A dragon with seven heads has appeared
and devoured the entire Serbian nation,
the slanderers as well as the slander.
On the ruins of the heroic empire
Miloš shone forth with his holy justice.
Made immortal and crowned was the glory
of both the true sworn brothers of Miloš
and the lovely wreath of Jugovićs.
The Serbian name has perished everywhere.
Mighty lions have become meek peasants.
Rash and greedy converted to Islam -
- may their Serb milk make them all sick with plague!
Those who escaped before the Turkish sword,
those who did not blaspheme at the True Faith,
those who refused to be thrown into chains,*

The Mountain Wreath was published in Vienna in 1847, the same year in which Vuk Karadžić published his own translation of the New Testament into vernacular Serbian (Fig. 6.9).⁹³ Njegoš shared Karadžić's views about the Serbian language, history and identity and was aware of the need for general education. In 1836 he established the first two primary schools for boys who were taught reading from *The Serb Elementary Reading Book* (Fig. 6.10).⁹⁴ After his visit to Russia, Njegoš brought and installed a printing press in Cetinje in the same year.⁹⁵ Throughout his rule and those of his successors, the Kosovo Myth was carefully maintained, regarding the Montenegrin fight against the Ottomans as a noble cause.



Fig. 6.9 – The front page of the first edition of *The Mountain Wreath*, published in Vienna in 1847 in Slaveno-Serbian alphabet.



Fig. 6.10– *The Serb Elementary Reading Book* re-published by Njegoš in 1836 for the needs of the few schools in Montenegro, in Slaveno-Serbian.

*took refuge here in these lofty mountains
to shed their blood together and to die,
heroically to keep the sacred oath,
their lovely name, and their holy freedom.”*

The first edition of *The Mountain Wreath* in English was published in 1930, in the translation by the first English lector in the Department of English at the University of Belgrade, James W. Wiles, who had learnt Serbian quite well on his arrival to Serbia in 1913. The translation used here is by Dr Vasa D. Mihailovic, a naturalized American and a Slavic scholar at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA, which appeared in the USA in 1997, celebrating the 150th anniversary of its first publication in Vienna in 1847. Even this English edition was criticized as Serbian expansionism. See page below and the accompanying quotation. Also see *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 35-36.

⁹³ This first edition of *The Mountain Wreath* was printed in the old alphabet. Modern creators of the new Montenegrin narrative emphasize that Njegoš did not want to print it in the reformed alphabet of Vuk Karadžić, otherwise he would have done so. In reality, Njegoš and Vuk only met in 1847 and developed close friendship after Njegoš personally witnessed Vuk's efforts.

⁹⁴ <http://www.njegos.org/heritage/educat.htm> - A digital collection of Montenegrin documents which refer to the Montenegrins as Serbs. – Accessed on 27/05/2012 – *The Serb Elementary Reading Book* was originally published by Peter I in 1812 in Venice and re-published by Peter II in Cetinje in 1836.

⁹⁵ Roberts, 2007, 199

According to the newly established Doclean reading of the epic, “regardless of their political agendas, ideological preferences or religious persuasions, every new generation of South Slav historians and politicians appropriates Njegoš’s work hoping to find enough quotations to validate their own views. In every translation of *The Mountain Wreath* in English, one can detect attempts to remodel the original. The latest English version by Professor Vasa D. Mihailović is simply another attempt to colonize Njegoš’s work for the sake of aiding modern political and ideological struggle in the Balkans.”⁹⁶

In reality, throughout the 19th and 20th century, *The Mountain Wreath* was read as an excellent example of the romantic poetry, written in the period of the revolutionary 1848. However, in the 1990s the epic was interpreted as a Serbian myth calling for the genocide of the Muslims. Much quoted book by a Croat author Branimir Anžulović, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide*, published in New York in 1999 was often taken by the Western politicians as the final and correct reading of the entire Serbian epic tradition and assessment of Njegoš.⁹⁷ Aware of these interpretations, the Doclean narrative proposed re-reading the epic as the “New Beginning” and the death of the tribal society:

*“The Beginning is Tragedy. It is the destruction of everything that is and the collapse of the fundamental taboos that regulate the life of an individual and a society. It is the final departure from a past way of life and its radical alteration.”*⁹⁸

This obscured explanation offered in ethno-symbolic terms by the creators of the new Montenegrin narrative represented an attempt to retain Njegoš as the central figure of Montenegrin culture as well as to distance from the influential anti-Serbian rhetoric employed by the Western interventionists during the 1990s Yugoslav wars. However, it became increasingly difficult to re-interpret Njegoš’s political and national self-identification in non-Serbian terms. That Njegoš’s poetry was the reflection of his political views was additionally corroborated by the preserved correspondence that he

⁹⁶ <http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/soi/article/view/8038/7210> - Accessed on 23/05/2012 – Popovic, S. – *The Mountain Wreath: Poetry or a Blueprint for the Final Solution?* (On the margins of Alexander Greenawalt’s article “Kosovo Myths: Karadzic, Njegos and the Transformation of Serb Memory,” spacesofidentity.net – *Journal for tradition, cultural boundaries and identity formation in Central Europe and beyond*, Volume 1. Issue 3. October 2001, Toronto

⁹⁷ Anžulović, of Croat ethnic background, a non-academic presenting himself as an “independent researcher from Washington DC” of undefined professional orientation, selectively put incomplete quotations of Njegoš in the language of contemporary Western media, hoping to accuse entire Serbian nation for the genocide against the non-Serbs which did not actually happen.

⁹⁸ <http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/soi/article/view/8038/7210> - Accessed on 23/05/2012

maintained with the leading politicians in the Serbian Principality. He had good relations with Garašanin (Fig. 1.9) and in a letter dated 5 July 1850 he underlined his sense of belonging to the Serbian nation:

“...My dear and esteemed Mr Garašanin, as backward as our Serbian state of affairs is in our century...I would be sorry for nothing now save for not seeing some progress among our whole people and for not being able in some way to establish the internal government on Montenegro on a firm foundation, and thus I fear that after me all those woes that existed before will return to Montenegro and that this small folk of ours, uneducated but militant and strong in spirit, will remain in perpetual misery. There is not a Serb whom Serbdom loves more sincerely and respects more than you, and there is not a Serb who loves and respects you more than I.”⁹⁹

The Doclean narrative, however, interpreted Njegoš’s identification with the Serbs as a consequence of the “indoctrination” received from his tutor Sarajlija and Karadžić’s propaganda. The greatest proponent of Njegoš’s confusion over his own identity, Dr Novak Kilibarda (b.1934), a professor of literature, published in 2009 a study titled *The Oral Literature in Montenegro (Usmjena književnost Crne Gore)*, in which he negated any presence of Serbian culture in Montenegro, whilst acknowledging only the presence of the Montenegrin and Bosniak (Muslim) cultural tradition.¹⁰⁰ Interpreting Karadžić’s collected poems Kilibarda (Fig. 6.11) carefully replaced any mention of the term “Serbian” with the term “Montenegrin”. For him, all Karadžić’s bards, born in Montenegro, regarded themselves Montenegrin. Similarly, Njegoš’s epic was re-interpreted as “historically inaccurate.”¹⁰¹ Kilibarda’s thesis could have had some academic value, had it not been that before becoming one of the main supporters of the Doclean narrative, Kilibarda himself advocated that Montenegrins and Serbs were ultimately one nation.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ The original letter published on <http://www.njegos.org/petrovics/njegpisma.htm#garas1> – Accessed on 26/05/2012 – The translation used here is partly reproduced from Roberts, 2007, 212 and partly my own.

¹⁰⁰ http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/knjizevnost/usmena_knjizevnost_crne_gore_novak_kilibarda.html - Accessed on 26/05/2012

¹⁰¹ *ibid*

¹⁰² Morrison, K. – *Montenegro – A Modern History*, London, 2009, 88

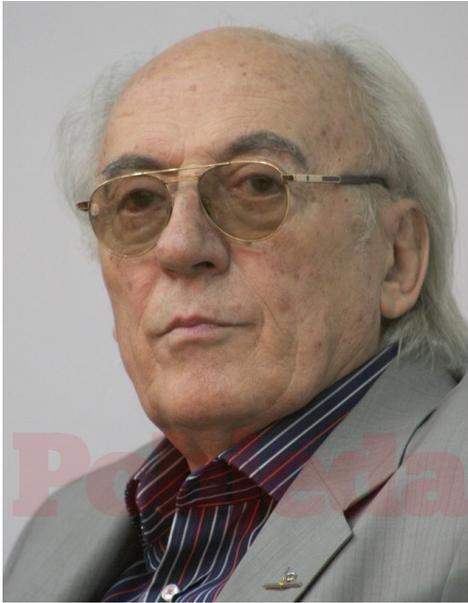


Fig. 6.11 – Dr Novak Kilibarda (b.1934), from a fierce Serb to an even fiercer anti-Serb. He introduced the retrospective reading of the Romantic writers in Montenegro arguing that they were all “confused” about their identity and seduced by the “nationalist propaganda” of Vuk Karadžić.

6.6.2 Dinaric type – Montenegrins as proud and freedom loving highlanders

The impact of *The Mountain Wreath* and wars for independence 1876-1878, which Serbia and Montenegro jointly waged with Russian support, only strengthened the identification of the Montenegrins with Serbs, despite the fact that the two Principalities did not achieve to have a common border. Officially independent after the Congress of Berlin, Montenegro still relied on Russian financial support. In the early 20th century, Serbian academic Jovan Cvijić (Fig. 1.35) systematised the 19th century partial research of European geographers who travelled through the Balkans and complemented them with his own studies.¹⁰³ Cvijić, like other South Slav intellectuals of his time, was greatly influenced by the developing Yugoslav idea and shared the belief that all Southern Slavs were ethnically of the same origin. According to him, the prolonged exposure to different cultural influences developed certain psychological characteristics and mentalities, which adapted to the geographical and climatic peculiarities of various Balkan regions. A series of lectures he gave at the Sorbonne were published in two volumes in Belgrade in 1922 and posthumously in 1931 under the title *Balkan Peninsula and the South Slav countries I and II* (*Balkansko poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje I i II*). The central thesis of these works

¹⁰³ See Chapter I – *The Serbs*, p. 76-77; Also, Chapter V – *The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 404-405.

was the existence of four psychological types amongst the Southern Slavs: *Dinaric* (living in the Dinaric range of the peninsula), *Central* (living in the narrow strip south of the Danube, Southern Morava and Vardar valleys), *Eastern* (living in the eastern part of the Peninsula to the Black Sea) and *Pannonian* (living predominantly in the Pannonian Plain and central Europe). Cvijić emphasized that demarcation lines between the types were fluid and the population was exposed to innumerable mixing and migrations.¹⁰⁴ Cvijić's analysis paid particular attention to the Dinaric type which, according to him, consisted of three quarters of the Serbs. The Dinaric type was a freedom loving skilful soldier and “*burning with desire to avenge Kosovo.*”¹⁰⁵ The Dinaric type carefully maintained the cult of forefathers by knowing all direct ancestors, sometimes up to twenty generations. This respect for ancestors was most prominent in Montenegro, where, except remembering the blood ancestors, existed a form of a collective memory, expressed through the personal acquisition of national, mythical heroes of the epic. “*In Montenegro,*” Cvijić witnessed, “*Miloš Obilić was considered a spiritual ancestor.*”¹⁰⁶

Cvijić wrote his volumes during 1916-1918, at the height of the First World War. His romantic vision of the Dinaric type, of which the Montenegrins were the primary example, was undoubtedly influenced by the late 19th century nationalism and nation building in both Serbia and Montenegro, as well as by the war then in progress. He evoked the epic tradition maintained by Njegoš whose description of the Dinaric Slavs was quoted directly from *The Mountain Wreath*. Cvijić, like his older contemporary Stojan Novaković (Fig. 1.13) of the Serbian Royal Academy, considered the Montenegrins – Serbs. He had a good reason to believe this, as the Montenegrins themselves maintained the same argument throughout the 19th and early 20th century. Furthermore, during the somewhat cold relations between the traditionally pro-Russian Petrović-Njegoš dynasts and the pro-Austrian Obrenovićs in the Serbian Principality (and later kingdom), the Prince (and later King) Nikola considered the Montenegrins to be “*the best of the Serbs.*”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Цвијић, Ј. – *Балканско полуострво и јужнословенске земље II – Основи антропогеографије* – Београд, 1931, 1-13

¹⁰⁵ Cvijić, J. - *Sabrana dela, Knjiga 3 (Tom I): Govori i članci, Aneksija Bosne i Hercegovine i srpsko pitanje*, Beograd, 1987, 15

¹⁰⁶ Цвијић, 1931, 20 – Miloš Obilić is a legendary assassin of Sultan Murad I during the Kosovo Battle in 1389.

¹⁰⁷ http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/istorija/cg_u_xix_vijeku/srpstvo_u_cg.htm – Živko Andrijašević, the creator of the new Montenegrin narrative explains this famous quote of King Nikola as Nikola's invention “for political purposes.” – Accessed on 04/07/2014

Not only that Nikola shared the dream of the resurrection of the Serbian Empire, he also declared his kinship in depicting himself as a brave warrior Prince, the successor of the Nemanjić kings and Lazarević and Branković despots. Admiring the poetry of his great-uncle Peter II, Nikola also wrote patriotic poems, inspired by the epic tradition. His poems dedicated to St.Sava, Olivera,¹⁰⁸ and the *Serbian Fairy*, contained recurring references to the mediaeval Serbian glory. He also wrote a hymn *Onamo 'namo (There, over there)* in 1867 which became a pan-Serbian anthem.¹⁰⁹

During Nikola's rule, partial systematization of the school syllabus took place. The general subjects for primary and secondary schools included *Serbian Grammar, Montenegrin and Serb History*, as well as *Serbian Literature* and *Geography*, which aimed at "studying the Serb lands independent, subjugated and occupied as well as main cities, places and villages in entire Serbdom."¹¹⁰

Nikola's undoubted national self-identification with the Serbs was best represented during his official visit to St.Peterburg in 1869, when Tsar Alexander II presented the young Prince Nikola with the "sabre of King Milutin Nemanjić."¹¹¹ The Doclean narrative recently disputed the authenticity of the sabre, arguing for a late 17th century Russian forgery.¹¹² Whether it was a forgery or not, the symbolism of presenting the sabre that allegedly belonged to the mediaeval Serbian king and its sincere acceptance by the Prince was both a sign of Russian support for the national revival of the Orthodox Slav state and Nikola's desire to play a major role in it. This had little to do with Russian worry over the renewal of Serbian mediaeval glory, as much as with securing Russian influence in the Balkans. As far as Prince Nikola was concerned, he viewed himself as the leader of the never conquered highlanders and even dreamt of Montenegro becoming the leading force among the Serb states in the Balkans.¹¹³

That the Great Powers shared this view of Montenegrin identity being Serbian was expressed, for example, by the articles and speeches of Gladstone during the

¹⁰⁸ Olivera Lazarević (1372 – after 1444) was the youngest daughter of Prince Lazar of the Kosovo fame, married to Sultan Bayezid I. See *Appendix I – Historical background*, p. 24

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.njegos.org/heritage/himne.htm> – The hymn draws heavily on the Kosovo Battle and celebrates Obilić's sacrifice for the freedom of Serbs – Accessed on 27/05/2012

¹¹⁰ <http://www.njegos.org/heritage/educat.htm> – *The Statute of the Organization of Gymnasium in the Princedom of Montenegro*, Prosvjeta, Cetinje, 30th August 1890 – Accessed on 27/05/2012

¹¹¹ Roberts, 2007, 237

¹¹² http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/istorija/cg_u_xix_vijeku/lazna_sablja_kralja_milutina.htm – Accessed 27/05/2012

¹¹³ Pavlović, S. – *Balkan Anschluss – The Annexation of Montenegro and the Creation of the Common South Slavic State*, Purdue University Press, 2008, 46

Eastern Question crisis. Gladstone thought the Montenegrin people were “the most wonderful race alive.”¹¹⁴ But the European politicians of Gladstone’s rank were aware that, on its own, Montenegro was too small to influence regional politics:

*“Montenegro...will not die...It is another question whether their brethren of the Serbian lands will amalgamate with them politically on an extended scale, and revive, either by a federal or an incorporating union, the substance, if not the form, of the old Serbian state.”*¹¹⁵

It was precisely Gladstone’s immense influence that helped Montenegro to obtain the sea exit by acquiring Bar and Ulcinj in 1878. Since the 15th century, these towns were exchanged between the Venetians, Ottomans, the Habsburgs and (briefly) Napoleon. Their inclusion in Montenegro enabled the slow return of the Orthodox population, which was ousted after the Venetians took control in 1443. As in other coastal towns on the eastern side of the Adriatic, the dominant urban structure was Catholic and reflected Italian taste. The arrival of the Orthodox population from the highlands in the 19th century did not bring any significant change in town life, as the newcomers soon adapted. Orthodox churches in Kotor, Bar, and other towns in Montenegro were re-built and *“it appears that there was peaceful co-existence between the two Christian denominations, confirmed by the Concordat signed in 1886.”*¹¹⁶ The co-existence between the Orthodox and Catholic population in the Bar area was best expressed by the common use of the Church of St. Tekla (Fig. 6.12). Originally built as an Orthodox Church in the 14th century, it was converted under the Venetians, only to be given a second altar in the 19th century.¹¹⁷ It is still used by both Catholics and Orthodox.

¹¹⁴ Magnus, Ph. – *Gladstone – A Biography* – London, 1963 (re-printed 1970), 283

¹¹⁵ Roberts, 2007, 249 – Roberts, of course, used this quote to underline her general thesis of a separate Montenegrin identity, although the correct reading should be the expression of concern whether such a small and poor state would have enough political and intellectual power to generate the general consensus amongst the Serbs divided between four different states at the time.

¹¹⁶ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 118

¹¹⁷ Similar practice was maintained throughout the Venetian territories in Montenegro and Dalmatia. For example, the Church of St. Luke in Kotor, built as a Catholic church during the reign of Stefan Nemanja in 1195. In the 17th century, the Venetian authorities gave it to the Orthodox population which escaped the Ottomans for their religious services. It was jointly used until the early 19th century, when it finally became Orthodox.



Fig. 6.12 – Church of St. Tekla, near Bar, 14th century. Unique in the world as one of the few churches where both Orthodox and Catholic services are being held.

After obtaining the full independence in 1878, the Muslim population of Montenegro was duly expelled. The towns and areas that were previously predominantly Muslim, but also with the greatest agricultural potential, were repopulated by the Serbs from the rough highlands and Herzegovina who escaped the Habsburg occupation. As was the case in other Balkan countries that emerged independent from Ottoman rule in the 19th century, most traces of Islamic culture were eliminated.¹¹⁸

6.7 Becoming European

Only after 1878 it became not only possible but necessary to begin the modernization of the state. It was essential to establish an effective educational system. Even though Peter II had began an educational programme in 1836, for most part of the next four decades Montenegro, being under constant threat from the Ottomans and participating in several local wars against them, there was little improvement in education and literacy rates remained relatively low. Before 1878, there were only 53 primary schools and two high schools, the Orthodox Seminary (1868) and the Girl's Institute (1869), both founded in Cetinje.¹¹⁹ For further education, young men were sent to Russia and Serbia, whilst the Catholic youth from

¹¹⁸ Roberts, 2007, 252

¹¹⁹ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 119

the coast usually opted for Zagreb and other universities in the Habsburg Empire. A Gymnasium modelled on European equivalents opened in Cetinje in 1880.

Already recognized as the capital, Cetinje was subject to urban development according to European models. Peter II had built a residence for his personal and state needs within the compound of the Monastery of Cetinje in 1838 (Fig. 6.13). Its design corresponded to Peter's role as a theocratic ruler, so its Russian architect Jakov Ozerckovski, retained the mediaeval features of austere religious architecture. Named *Biljarda*, because the first billiard table in Montenegro was brought there by Njegoš, it served as a dynastic seat until 1867, when a new residence was built for the Serbian widow of Prince Danilo (1851-1860). She passed it on to Prince Nikola and his family (Fig. 6.14).¹²⁰ Even though the name of the architect is now lost, the new residence marked the beginning of the urbanization of Cetinje beyond the Monastery estate, by featuring simple geometrical forms of the Mediterranean town-house. Nikola also commissioned two additional palaces: a splendid neo-Renaissance palace, built for his daughter Zorka and son-in-law Peter Karadjordjević in Bar in 1885 (Fig. 6.15) and another neo-Renaissance palace for his personal use in Nikšić in 1900 (Fig. 6.16).



Fig. 6.13 – *Biljarda*, the residence of Peter II Petrović-Njegoš corresponded to his role of a theocratic ruler and displayed mediaeval monastic features.

¹²⁰ *Muzeji Crne Gore* – Ministarstvo kulture, sporta i medija Republike Crne Gore – Podgorica, 2007, 42 – *Museums of Montenegro* – Ministry of Culture, Sports and Media – Podgorica, 2007, 42



Fig. 6.14 – The residence of Prince, later King Nikola, built in 1867 in simple Mediterranean style marked the beginning of proper urbanization and modernization of Cetinje



Fig. 6.15 – The residence of King Nikola in Bar, built in 1885 in Neo-Renaissance style.



Fig. 6.16 – The residence of King Nikola in Nikšić, built in 1900.

After 1880, the establishment of diplomatic relations between Montenegro and the Great Powers brought first diplomats to Cetinje. To accommodate diplomats and present Montenegro as a serious European state, a series of European *fin de siècle* houses were built. The first one to be built in 1899, the Embassy of Austro-Hungary, was designed by a Dalmatian architect Josip Slade, the Head of the Civil Engineering Administration within the Montenegrin Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1880-1890.¹²¹ Adjoining the main building was a Catholic chapel for the use of Embassy officials. That Slade's design owed much to the influence of Austrian and Italian architecture could be observed on the features of the first Montenegrin theatre building. The *Zetski Dom (The Zeta House)*, built between 1884 and 1896, was a neo-classical representation of similar buildings in the Adriatic region (Fig. 6.17). The same neo-Classical style was used for the new residence of the the Montenegrin heir prince Danilo, built in 1894-1895. Named *Plavi dvorac (The Blue Palace)* after its blue façade, it represented the desire of the Montenegrin princes to finally become recognized among the European ruling elites (Fig. 6.18).

The development of Cetinje as a European-style town was triggered mainly by the housing needs for embassies of the Great Powers. Without exception, they were all works of foreign architects. The Russian Embassy, built in 1903, was designed by an Italian architect A.C. Corradini, who lived and worked in Cetinje until the outbreak of the First Balkan War in 1912. Corradini also designed an Italian Embassy and the

¹²¹ Slade, an Austro-Hungarian citizen, made his name in his native Trogir where he participated in restoration of several renaissance palaces. He also designed the *Museum of Croat Monuments* in Knin for Don Lujo Marun, and had a good working relationship with the Italian major of Šibenik, Antonio Bajamonti. See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 192-194.

Government House, all of them, unsurprisingly, in Italian neo-Classical style. The French Embassy, designed and executed by the Paris architect Auguste Perret, one of the creators *Art Nouveau* and *Secessionism* in France, created in Cetinje a building that corresponded to his design in *Rue Franklin 25* in Paris, an epitome of the late-19th century French architecture. In contrast, the British Embassy was designed in 1912 by an English architect Harty and represented a typical English “cottage.”¹²²



Fig. 6.17 – Theatre *Zetski Dom*, 1884-1896



Fig. 6.18 – *Plavi dvorac*, 1894-1895

¹²² *Cetinje – Historical Core Management Plan* – Government of Montenegro, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Media – Podgorica, 2009, 18

The Serbian Embassy was placed in 1907 in a modest house privately owned by the Serbian King Peter Karadjordjević, son-in-law to Prince Nikola and. The house was built in 1883, as a dowry for Nikola's daughter Zorka, who married the Serbian Prince in the same year (Fig. 6.19). All their children, including the heir to the Serbian throne, Alexander, were born in Cetinje and lived there until 1894.



Fig. 6.19 – Serbian Embassy in Cetinje, erected in 1883, a very simple and inexpensive building in comparison with embassies of European countries erected at the same time.

As demonstrated, none of these urban developments were inspired by national narrative, as was the case in other European and Balkan states at the time. The crippling poverty of the small Principality, as well as the absence of Montenegrin educated classes ready to create the national identity through public monuments prevented the change of traditional mountainous features of the small Principality. At this period, nation-building in the Serbian Kingdom was at its peak.¹²³ Whilst Serbian intellectuals gathered around the Royal Academy and the Grand School and party leaders argued over the constitutional rights of the king, demanding full parliamentary democracy, Montenegro was ruled in the same way as in the 18th and 19th centuries. Nikola, in power since 1860, considered Montenegro his private property and every

¹²³ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 51-61

decision was made by him.¹²⁴ The Senate, introduced by Peter II was replaced by the Council of Ministers in 1879, but there was no constitution. Admittedly, two tribal laws dating from the time of Peter I in the late 18th and early 19th century, modified in 1855 by Prince Danilo (1851-1860) were still in use, but they were insufficient for any serious development of parliamentarism, which in turn, could not promote any state programme of nation-building that was taking place in other European countries.

Lack of public monuments was complemented by two mausoleums that were erected in Cetinje. The first was a small burial chapel that Njegoš built for himself in 1845 on the top of Mount Lovćen, overlooking the Bay of Kotor (Fig. 6.20). In his will, Njegoš wanted to be “buried on the highest peak of Montenegro, from which he can oversee the Serbian lands and the wide sea.”¹²⁵ Afraid that the Ottomans would destroy the chapel, his successors initially buried him within the Cetinje Monastery and transferred his body to the chapel in 1851.¹²⁶ The chapel was eventually destroyed by the Austrians in 1916 and re-built by King Alexander Karadjordjević in 1925.



Fig. 6.20 – Njegoš's burial chapel, built in 1845 was destroyed in 1916. Re-built in 1925, it was demolished again in 1974, the year of ill-fated Yugoslav Constitution which sought to reduce further Serbian nationalism. Photograph from 1972.

¹²⁴ Roberts, 2007, 271

¹²⁵ Much quoted sentence from the testament of Njegoš has become a compulsory subject in the political debate in the new Montenegrin narrative.

¹²⁶ <http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/njegos-kapela.html> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

The second mausoleum to be built was that of Prince Danilo, erected in 1893-1896 on another Lovćen hilltop overlooking Cetinje (Fig. 6.21). This was the first and only public monument erected in Montenegro until 1939, when a monument called *Lovćenska vila* (*Lovćen Fairy*) was erected in front of the building of the former French Embassy, commemorating 350 emigrants who drowned after their ship was torpedoed in 1916 (Fig. 6.22).



Fig. 6.21 – Mausoleum of Prince Danilo on the Lovćen Top *Orlov krš*, erected in 1893-1896

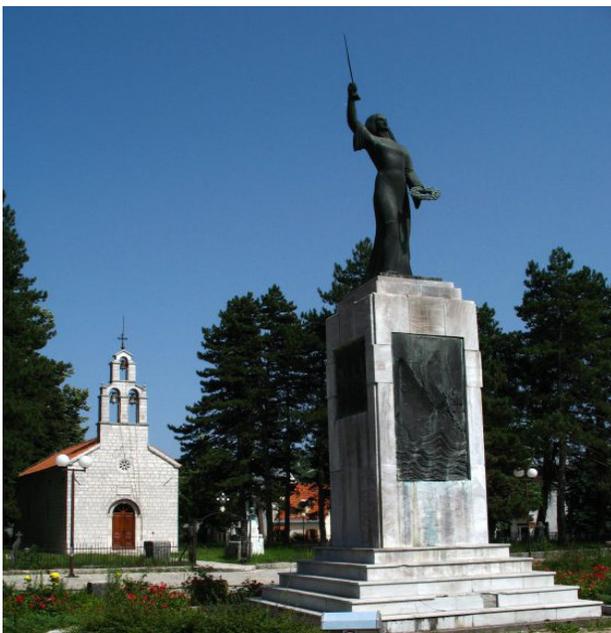


Fig. 6.22 – Monument to *Lovćenska vila*, the only public monument erected in Montenegro until 1939. Designed by Risto Stijović.

6.8 The King's Anger

In 1905, Nikola was forced to adopt a Constitution and create an Assembly, which was called “the Serb Skupština in Montenegro.”¹²⁷ On the golden jubilee of his reign in 1910, he decided to transform Montenegro into a Kingdom. The Doclean narrative recently argued that the reason for this was to “consolidate the reputation of Montenegro and obtain equality with Serbia, its chief political rival.”¹²⁸ Since there is no evidence that Serbia was “the chief political rival of Montenegro at the time,” the reasons behind this act appear to have been more mundane and based on the personal enmities between Nikola, Milan Obrenović and Peter Karadjordjević.

Nikola was a flamboyant personality who was brought up in the romantic period of nationalism. An early education in France seems not to have attracted him to a European lifestyle, as it did Milan (Fig. 1.16) and Peter (Fig. 1.37), two main contenders for the Serbian throne. Nikola was dismissive of both, maintained the cult of Kosovo Battle and respected the message of *The Mountain Wreath*, styling himself as a warrior-Prince. He did not have a competitor in Milan, because King Milan was greatly unpopular for his pro-Austrian politics and scandalous lifestyle. On the other hand, exiled Peter, French educated, was a reflective personality, with a great respect for European culture and clear understanding of the royal duties as those of service to the nation, rather than as an autocratic exercise of power.¹²⁹ Nikola allowed his eldest daughter Zorka to marry Peter in response to the antagonistic relationship with King Milan in Belgrade.

Strategically, Serbia, even though not much more developed than Montenegro was on the main overland route to Asia Minor and as such more attractive to the Great Powers in their regional policies, especially in the aftermath of the 1903 dynastic change in Belgrade and the looming Tax War and the Annexation crisis.¹³⁰ Nikola felt left out from the decision making in regional politics, particularly as Russia, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary and Great Britain regarded Serbia as a key player in the Balkans. Assuming the royal title in time which coincided with exclusion of Serbia from the European political framework, Nikola wanted to show himself as a better

¹²⁷ Report PRO, FO 371/279/8439, quoted in Roberts, 2007, 271

¹²⁸ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 134

¹²⁹ Peter disliked the pompous styles of both Milan and Nikola. The participation in the Herzegovina Uprising of 1875 earned him great respect amongst the Serbs and, as the Obrenović dynasty was losing popular support, his popularity was increasing. After assuming the Serbian throne in 1903, Peter continued to lead modest life.

¹³⁰ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, 52-53.

choice as Serbian leader. His coronation was explained in terms of “the restoration of the Old Serbian line of kings who once ruled Zeta, making him by implication the embodiment of a more ancient dynasty than the king presently reigning in Belgrade.”¹³¹ Despite the official reasons for obtaining a crown which the Belgrade press laughed at, it appears that assuming the royal title indeed was a matter “of vanity, or jealousy of the status of his son-in-law King Peter” as the British chargé d’affaires at Cetinje at the time noticed.¹³² Whether Nikola was jealous of Peter or he genuinely aimed at increasing Montenegro’s reputation bore no consequences because during the Balkan wars in 1912-1913 and in 1914 he firmly stood next to Serbia.

On 28 July, when Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia, Nikola sent a dépêche to Prince Alexander Karadjordjević in Belgrade informing him of Montenegro’s readiness to fight alongside Serbia:

*“The pride of the Serbian tribe did not allow further yielding. Sweet are the sacrifices made in the name of justice and national independence. In the name of God and with the help of our centuries old protectress Russia and the sympathies of all civilized peoples, **our** Serbian people will come out of this temptation forced upon **us** victorious and will secure a glorious future. My Montenegrins are already on the borders, prepared to die for the defence of our independence. Long live, my beloved grandson, for the joy of your dear father and mine! Long live the brave Serbian army! Long live **our** beloved Serbdom!”*¹³³

Similarly, on 6 August, Nikola issued a proclamation calling on the Montenegrins to take arms:

*“...He, who considers himself a hero, let him come and follow in the footsteps of the **two old Serbian kings**: to die and spill our blood for unity and golden freedom! God and Justice are on our side. We wanted peace, but we were forced into war. Accept it as always, Serbian and heroically, and the blessing of your old king will follow you in all your deeds...”*¹³⁴

Whilst both Serbian and foreign historians until the late 1990s never questioned the expressed sense of solidarity as that of **two separate nations**, the Doclean narrative described all the events surrounding the Balkan and the First World Wars as

¹³¹ Report PRO, FO 371/929/33887, quoted in Roberts, 2007, 277

¹³² Report PRO, FO 371/929/12960, quoted in Roberts, 2007, 276

¹³³ http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/kralj_nikola/npetrovic_3.html - The facsimile of the original announcement reproduced in the *Projekat Rastko* electronic library – Accessed on 29/05/2012 – My translation

¹³⁴ *ibid*

the product of the “Greater Serbian Propaganda.” Carefully omitting the words “Serbian people” and “Serbian” from the original source references and replacing them with the words “Montenegrin people,” and “Montenegrin,” the creators of the new interpretations of 19th and 20th century events in Montenegro insist on the non-existing sense of separateness between Serbs in Serbia and Serbs in Montenegro.¹³⁵ The re-interpretation also included the re-evaluation of the war activities as those of “Serbian invasion and occupation of Montenegro” in 1918, employing the official narrative adopted after 1945 by the communist historiography which generally condemned the “Greater Serbianism.”

Admittedly, the first mention of the Montenegrins being distinct from Serbs appeared in 1918, when the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty was removed from power immediately after the unification of Serbia, Montenegro and the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. Angered, King Nikola denounced the unification and the Belgrade government. In the long proclamation issued on 6 January 1919 in Ney near Paris, exiled Nikola accused Serbia of occupying and betraying Montenegro.¹³⁶ This was an understandable reaction of the old King who had to sacrifice his right to the throne in favour of his own grandson, Prince Regent Alexander Karadjordjević. Despite his attempts to resume his kingship in Montenegro, Nikola failed.

The Doclean narrative argued that this was because of the coercion of the members of the Montenegrin Great People’s Assembly in 1918 to support unification.¹³⁷ Similarly, the legal actions surrounding the unification, which took the form of a plebiscite, have been interpreted as the “Greater Serbian violation of the 1905 Montenegrin Constitution.”¹³⁸

The subsequent formation of the Kingdom of SHS changed the political picture of the western Balkans and introduced the policy of *Integral Yugoslavism*. Except for the periodical attempts between 1919 and 1924 of the supporters of King Nikola, the so-called Greens, to organise the guerrilla uprisings against the Karadjordjević dynasty, there were no debates on separate Montenegrin identity. As the parts of the new state that were hit hardest by the war were slow to recover, Montenegro and its

¹³⁵ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 147 – Not unexpectedly, Rastoder, as a Montenegrin Muslim Slav following the Bosniak narrative, is particularly vocal in arguing the separateness of Montenegrins from the Serbs, despite the fact that there is no existing evidence prior to the 1918 to corroborate his claims.

¹³⁶ http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/kralj_nikola/npetrovic_3.html - Accessed on 29/05/2012

¹³⁷ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 160

¹³⁸ Pavlović, 2008, 21

inhabitants were receiving the financial support as much as they could from Serbia, herself being in dire economic situation.¹³⁹

The Montenegrins were considered Serbs, which was re-iterated by the renewal of the Patriarchate of Peć. The unification of the Metropolitanates of Karlovci, Belgrade and Cetinje in 1920, marked the re-establishment of the Patriarchate abolished in 1766. In the following decades, two Serbian Patriarchs, Varnava (1930-1937) and Gavriilo (Fig. 1.58) were natives to Montenegro, as well as a number of Archbishops and Bishops.

6.9 Becoming Montenegrin

Montenegro was not spared loss of life and material destruction during the Second World War. Initially occupied by Italy, Montenegro was soon divided by Nazi forces and their *Ustaša* and Muslim allies who fought against Communist Partisans. This was complicated further by the guerrilla war of royalist Serbian and Montenegrin *Četniks*. It was finally liberated by the Partisan army in 1945.¹⁴⁰ It lost about 10% of its population.¹⁴¹

The destruction of the few towns in Montenegro was such that, for example, Podgorica “*was so devastated by the Allied bombings...that it resembled an archaeological excavation through which only one path had been cleared.*”¹⁴² By late 1944, Montenegrin generals commanded eight out of eighteen Yugoslav partisan corps. According to Rastoder, this was extraordinary, “bearing in mind that the share of the Montenegrin population in the total Yugoslav census was just over 2%.”¹⁴³ There were various attempts to explain this “ethnic anomaly within the Partisan army,” but most of them reflected the traditional perception of Montenegrins as fearsome highland warriors, epitomised by Njegoš’s poetry and Cvijić’s description of the Dinaric Balkan “type.”

The 1946 Constitution officiated Montenegrins one of the five constituent nations in federal Yugoslavia. However, the proclamation of a separate identity was met with a degree of dissension. The Serbian members of the Communist Party

¹³⁹ See Chapter I – *The Serbs*, p. 76-78.

¹⁴⁰ The Partisan army during the Second World War was led by the predominantly Montenegrin generals. Rastoder recently argued that the Communists kept Montenegro in Yugoslavia by occupying force. This further implies that the Montenegrin generals occupied their own country.

¹⁴¹ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 227

¹⁴² Djilas, M. – *Wartime*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977, 445

¹⁴³ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 227

argued strongly against it, but were quickly silenced by Tito's argument that "Greater Serbianism was a defining characteristic of Karadjordjević Yugoslavia."¹⁴⁴ To honour Tito, Podgorica was renamed Titograd and proclaimed the capital, whilst Cetinje remained a city of historic importance.

Milovan Djilas (Fig. 1.a.21), before his spectacular disagreement with Tito, supported the political need to award Montenegro the status of a republic. He argued that the "*Montenegrins were essentially Serbs, but different from other Serbs.*"¹⁴⁵ Citing Njegoš, Djilas insisted that the Montenegro was "a cradle of Serbdom" and that the Montenegrins were not "only the cradle of Serbdom" but "the purest and the best of Serbs." They "had different paths to statehood," although he feared that giving them the new status "would lead to the recognition of a separate nation."¹⁴⁶

Following the policy of "brotherhood and unity" which advocated that every federal republic should have its own educational and cultural institutions resulted in the gradual opening of schools and museums. First to be established was the *College of Education* in Cetinje (1947), followed by the *Montenegrin Historical Institute* (1948) and a number of similar schools in all major towns in Montenegro.¹⁴⁷ However, the University was not established until 1974. As in all other Yugoslav republics, Montenegro had its *Institute for the Protection of Monuments* established in 1948. It was housed in the former Austro-Hungarian Embassy (Fig. 6.23). The first post-war museum in Montenegro, the *Ethnographic Museum*, opened in 1951 in Cetinje on the centenary of Njegoš's death and was situated in his Biljarda Palace. Later it was transferred to the former Serbian Embassy (Fig. 6.19) enabling *Biljarda* (Fig. 6.13) to become solely the *Njegoš Memorial Museum*.

Admittedly, the Karadjordjević dynasty had supported the establishment of cultural institutions. King Alexander opened the *State Museum* in Cetinje in 1926, in the old residence of King Nikola (Fig. 6.14). All other museums that opened before the Second World War were in coastal towns and had a local character, void of nation building process. Museums in Perast (1937) and Kotor (1938) displayed local and maritime artefacts.¹⁴⁸ The *National Museum of Montenegro*, as a complex site was created only in 1989 after several municipal museums merged within the historic core

¹⁴⁴ Roberts, 2007, 400

¹⁴⁵ Djilas, 1947, 3 quoted in Morrison, 2009, 67 – Djilas explained this distinction in Cvijić's terms and as influence by the highland lifestyle.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 67

¹⁴⁷ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 247

¹⁴⁸ *Muzeji Crne Gore*, 2007, 52

of Cetinje. Each palace once owned by the Petrović-Njegoš family and buildings of the former Embassies of Great Powers housed specific displays: the *Historical Museum* was in Corradini's Government House (Fig. 6.24), whilst the *State Museum* was renamed the *King Nikola Museum*, containing the artefacts that belonged to the Petrović-Njegoš family.¹⁴⁹



Fig. 6.23 – Building of the former Austro-Hungarian Embassy, built in 1897-1899 after the designs of Josip Slade, now the Institute for Protection of Monuments of Montenegro.



Fig. 6.24 – *Vladin Dom* (*The Government House*), built in 1910 by the Italian architect Cesare Corradini, now the Historical Museum. Corradini also designed the buildings of Italian and Russian Embassies in Cetinje.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 52

As was the case with all palaces and stately buildings elsewhere in Yugoslavia after 1945, most of them were converted to public use. Thus, the building of the British Embassy was converted into a newly established *Music Academy* in 1980, whilst the Italian and French Embassies jointly became the *National Library of Montenegro*. The *Blue Palace* changed its function several times over the post-war period and is currently used by officials of the Republic. The former Russian Embassy was transformed into the *Faculty of Art*.

All these conversions of the few existing representative buildings imply that there was no conscious nation-building programme in the material sense in Montenegro neither during its existence as an independent state between 1878 and 1918, nor during the Yugoslav period 1918-2003. Old Nikola declared himself Serbian until he lost his throne in 1918, the Metropolitans of Cetinje used Serbian Orthodox Church books until the present and it appears that the general national feeling among the Montenegrin population, was unquestionably Serbian.

The process of national separation of the Montenegrins from the rest of the Serbs began in 1945. As Montenegro had so few public monuments it was necessary to de-Serbianize those few historical personalities who could perform the function of the “fathers of the nation” and give them adequate interpretation through the symbolic use of newly erected monuments and other public buildings. Thus, in 1951, on the centenary of Njegoš’s death, the authorities decided to demolish his burial chapel in Lovćen, re-built by King Alexander. It was decided to erect a monumental mausoleum, designed by Ivan Meštrović, instead (Fig. 6.25). Despite the objections of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which argued that the Prince-Bishop’s last will was to have a modest chapel, the Cetinje City Council replied that the Church had no right to interfere.¹⁵⁰ However, financial difficulties postponed the works until 1971. The Mausoleum finally opened in 1974 and was credited to be the highest in the world. Because of the difficulty of access, a special tunnel with 461 steps was dug through the mountain to lead to the Mausoleum plateau. The Mausoleum was reminiscent of Meštrović’s previous works, in the form of an ancient temple, supported by caryatides (Fig. 6.26). Only, this time there was no programmatic *Integral Yugoslavism* involved, as was the case with the *Monument to the Unknown Hero* on Avala. Meštrović’s signature, the caryatides, dressed in Montenegrin national costumes,

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.rastko.rs/rastko-cg/povijest/njegos-kapela.html> - Accessed 30/05/2012

symbolized the Montenegrin identity. A colossal sculpture of Njegoš, representing him engaged in deep thinking, with an eagle behind his back was placed inside the Mausoleum. The eagle, traditional symbol on the coats-of-arms of the Serbian and Montenegrin rulers was Westernized by being presented with his wings down, raising objections to the representation of theocratic Njegoš in a non-Orthodox pose.¹⁵¹

The Mausoleum's official inauguration coincided with the adoption of the 1974 Federal Constitution which transferred much of the federal powers to the republics. This was followed by the opening of the University, which aimed to strengthen the institutions of each individual republic and province, seriously undermining the Federation in the process. Following these policies, the *Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts* (CANU) was founded in 1976. Until it was split in 1998, it remained the highest cultural and educational institution in the republic. Nevertheless, despite all the efforts, Montenegro, together with Kosovo and Metohija, remained the areas with the least educated population of former Yugoslavia. Only in 2003, did the number of the overall population with primary school education reach 97%.¹⁵²



Fig. 6.25 – The new Mausoleum of Njegoš, after Ivan Meštrović, erected in 1974, in place of the modest chapel that Njegoš designed for himself in 1845.

¹⁵¹ Ever since it has been the subject of debate between Serbian and non-Serbian intellectuals in Yugoslavia.

¹⁵² Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 246



Fig. 6.26 – The atrium of the Mausoleum. All references to Njegoš's theocratic role of the Bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church are deliberately removed and he is celebrated only as a poet and a ruler.

6.10 Turning Doclean

When the wars of Yugoslav succession began, Montenegro followed its tradition to stay closely associated with Serbia. It chose to remain part of the “rump Yugoslavia” and only in 1997, when Western pressure on the country increased, did the Montenegrin politicians decide that it was time to leave the joint state. The 1992 referendum, which resulted in Montenegro’s decision to remain in the federation with Serbia, was soon presented by the Western analysts as staged by the Serbian president Slobodan Milošević, a native of Montenegro himself. Its legality was questioned by both the West and those Montenegrin politicians who began arguing for independence.¹⁵³ Montenegrin intellectuals in favour of separation incited a fearsome debate over the future of the country and accused the CANU for being pro-Serbian. In 1993, the establishment of *Matica Crnogorska* (*Montenegrin Matica*) traced the path for the invention of the separate ethnic origins of the Montenegrins:

“Matica was needed in Montenegro because we considered ourselves to have our own country yet we had no such organization. The official government in Montenegro threw their lot in with Serbia completely. Also there had been a

¹⁵³ Morrison, 2009, 105

suggestion that the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts would be merged into the Serbian Academy. So we formed Montenegrin Matica as a resistance to that.”¹⁵⁴

As *Matica Crnogorska* was modelled on *Matica Srpska* and *Matica Hrvatska*, which as supreme cultural institutions in both Serbia and Croatia began their existence concerned with language, an argument for a separate and “unique” Montenegrin language was devised as “*the right of every nation to have and call its language what it wants.*”¹⁵⁵

Parallel with the language argument there was a call for a separate Montenegrin Orthodox Church. The argument was that the Montenegrin Metropolitanate had been separate from the Serbian Patriarchate since 1766, until it was “*illegally incorporated into the Serbian Orthodox Church*” in 1920. The fact that the two Serbian Patriarchs who conducted the unification in 1920 were natives to Montenegro was termed as “*a betrayal of the national interests*” and that the Serbian Orthodox Church worked on the project of creating the Greater Serbia.¹⁵⁶ The Montenegrin Orthodox Church, in order to distinguish itself from the Serbian, argued that a catholic king St. John Vladimir was a founder of Doclean Kingdom which converted to Orthodoxy only after the “*occupation of Serbian despot Nemanja in 1186.*”¹⁵⁷ Even though ecumenically unrecognized, the Montenegrin Church appealed to the Montenegrin Government to start the process of “*returning the churches and monasteries on the territory of Montenegro to the rightful church, unlawfully held by the Serbian Orthodox Church.*”¹⁵⁸ The current situation regarding the ownership of ecclesiastical buildings is in a stalemate, but it is reasonable to expect that in the near future the priests belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church will be duly expelled and replaced by priests loyal to the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, as was the case in Macedonia.

In 2006 Montenegro declared independence from Serbia and from this time, the Doclean narrative, devised in the 1998-2006 period, received great publicity, both in Montenegro itself and in Western academic circles. Since the new narrative was still

¹⁵⁴ Špadijer, quoted in Morrison, 2009, 113. It is interesting to note that the *Matica Bošnjaka* was formed in the same year. See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 384

¹⁵⁵ Ičić, quoted in Morrison, 2009, 113

¹⁵⁶ Morrison, 2009, 131

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 136

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=454863> – In 2006, immediately after the separation of Montenegro, a respectable Belgrade weekly *Vreme* predicted the problem of the church separation – Article *Ovce i pašnjaci* by Bojan Pantić, *Vreme*, No. 804, 1 June 2006 – The debate is ongoing and with every year the rhetoric fuels the nationalist sentiments between the adherents to the new Montenegrin identity and the remaining Montenegrin Serbs in both Montenegrin and Serbian media. – Accessed on 30/05/2012

in its early days, the separate Montenegrin nation had yet to be confirmed by the invention of a separate language. For this purpose, on the requirement of the Montenegrin Ministry of Education in 2008, members of the DANU and *Matica Crnogorska* developed a new Montenegrin language and orthography. Karadžić's standard language and orthography used both in Serbia and Montenegro since 1868 was replaced by a new alphabet. Instead of 30 letters, it added two new graphemes as separate signs for minor dialectological differences.¹⁵⁹ As in Serbian, the new alphabet retained the duality and it can be written in both Cyrillic and Latin scripts. But this is only declarative. According to Kenneth Morrison, "*ethnic Montenegrins and Montenegrin minorities prefer the use of Latinic script.*"¹⁶⁰ It is very easy to understand the attempt to Latinize traditional Montenegrin language and literature when the ethnic backgrounds of the compilers of the new orthography are taken into account: Dr Milenko Perović, a declared Montenegrin with a permanent position as Professor at the University of Novi Sad (Vojvodina, Serbia), Dr Josip Silić of the University of Zagreb (Croatia), Dr Ludmila Vasiljeva of the University of Lvov (Ukraine).¹⁶¹ The rest of the team are professors from the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić (established in 1988, as a branch of the University of Podgorica¹⁶²), predominantly from the Muslim background with the evident absence of the professors from Podgorica itself.¹⁶³

The new Montenegrin language and orthography were approved by the government in 2010, when the *Institute for Montenegrin Language and Literature* was founded in Podgorica, under the directorship of Dr Adnan Čirgić, a Montenegrin Muslim. The new language was introduced in Montenegrin schools in September 2011. Parallel with this, the Serbian language was downgraded as the language of the minority, but, following the census results of 2011 when 43% of the population declared Serbian as their mother tongue, the Serbian was returned into use, albeit

¹⁵⁹ *Pravopis crnogorskoga jezika i rječnik crnogorskoga jezika* – Ministarstvo prosvjete i nauke Crne Gore – Podgorica, 2009, 6 – *Syntax of Montenegrin Language and Dictionary of Montenegrin Language* – Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro – Podgorica, 2009, 6 – *Pravopis* in future use.

¹⁶⁰ Morrison, 2009, 210 – It is very difficult to determine where Dr Morrison's claim derives from, except that this is politically forced usage of the alphabet. There are no historical or any public or private documents on the territory of Montenegro written in Latinic script prior to the 1970s, when removal of Serbian cultural signatures gained momentum in Yugoslavia.

¹⁶¹ Dr Perović has since abandoned his post in Serbia and left for Montenegro, whilst Dr Vasiljeva belongs to the Uniate Church of Ukraine which has its most important seminary in Lvov.

¹⁶² Then, University of Titograd – The name of the capital was re-established in 1992

¹⁶³ *Pravopis*, 2009, 3

reluctantly.¹⁶⁴ From September 2011, all official documents issued by the Republic's authorities are written in the new orthography. Unsurprisingly, the linguists from Belgrade and Novi Sad, many of whom natives to Montenegro, were not amused. In the ensuing media war, the most commonly used argument by the Serbian side was that this was a deliberate step in the further disintegration of the Serbian national core, supported by the anti-Serbian regime in Podgorica.

On the other hand, what Belgrade saw as further humiliation and disgrace, Zagreb greeted with a great sense of pride. In August 2011, the Zagreb daily *Jutarnji List*, under the title *Croats introduced new letters to the Montenegrins*, carried the story of the participation of the Zagreb educated linguists in creating the new Montenegrin language.¹⁶⁵

6.11 Montenegrin nation-building

The invention of the new historical narrative, the creation of a separate language and foundation of the *Montenegrin Orthodox Church* were the first steps in creating a new Montenegrin nation. As in Macedonia, the next step will be to support these actions by creating the material heritage emphasizing the past as seen by the newly proscribed national narrative. Currently, the whole territory of Montenegro is covered by 22 museums.¹⁶⁶ Of these, the most important is the complex in Cetinje, which celebrates the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty and Montenegrin sovereignty. Even though the *Institute for the Protection of Monuments* has existed since 1948, the only Montenegrin University in Podgorica still does not have an Archaeology Department, which will be needed in order to “unearth” the hidden heritage of the Montenegrin nation. So far, all the research undertaken during the Yugoslav era was conducted mainly by joint teams from other Yugoslav educational centres and abroad. As the Doclean narrative further develops, it is reasonable to expect the foundation of an

¹⁶⁴ [http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf) – Accessed on 30/05/2012 – The official census of the Montenegrin Statistical Office, pdf form, published in July 2011; Interestingly, in 2003 census, Serbian language was spoken by 63.6% of overall population. This rapid decrease of the Serbian language speakers is explained by the discrimination against those who declare themselves Serbs, i.e. for any progress in professional life, one not only has to declare himself a Montenegrin, but also a Montenegrin speaker. Many young academics feel quite embarrassed by this situation and on several occasions, when participating in conferences, they would use the term “our language” instead of “Montenegrin.”

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.jutarnji.hr/crnogorski-pravopis--hrvati-crnogorcima-uveli-nova-slova--za-meko-s-i-z--i-time-ih-izbezumili/966697/> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

¹⁶⁶ Andrijašević and Rastoder, 2006, 248

Archaeology Department within the University in the near future, with the main objective of uncovering the Montenegrin Doclean past.

In the view of materialization of the new national narrative, the erection of public monuments and urbanization of towns that will carry out the message of the new national feelings is also to be expected. Since traditional Montenegro was not urbanized until the mid-20th century, those few representative buildings connected to the history of Montenegro that were all built in the four decades of rule of King Nikola, indicate more Nikola's concern with his own comfort rather than his wish to make a statement in creating national public monuments and national style in architecture. There are, however, some indications that this is to begin changing soon. The reconstruction of Yugoslavia after the Second World War paid particular attention to the underdeveloped areas. Parallel with the enforced industrialization, the Montenegrin towns were being re-built in the proscribed *social realism* style without national characteristics. Montenegro, together with Macedonia, was the focus of these programmes.¹⁶⁷ In order to emphasise its newly acquired independence and identity, the Montenegrin Ministry for Development and Economy with the financial support of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, published in 2007 a guideline for the construction of new housing, with “*an intention to demonstrate the beauty and value of Montenegro's traditional architecture and to show how traditions can be converted into modern life-style and language without losing their regional characteristics and identity.....The purpose is to encourage the municipalities, the architects and the homebuilders, to view the samples and ideas that have been specified in the handbook and to support common efforts to develop Montenegro in respect of her past.*”¹⁶⁸

As for public monuments, it appears that there is not an upsurge in erecting monuments in Montenegro yet. After the “Lovćen Vila”, erected in 1939, the only monuments erected in Montenegrin towns were modest memorials, most frequently in the shape of busts, dedicated to either some local Montenegrin artists or to the Second World War partisan heroes. The exception was a Monument to Ivan Crnojević, erected in 1983, celebrating the five hundredth anniversary of the foundation of

¹⁶⁷ Roberts, 2007, 393

¹⁶⁸ *Republika Crna Gora, Ministarstvo za ekonomski razvoj, Ministarstvo turizma i zaštite životne sredine*, commissioned by *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – Savremeni izraz tradicionalnih kuća u Crnoj Gori – Contemporary expression of traditional houses in Montenegro*, Podgorica, 2007, 5

Cetinje (Fig. 6.27). Following the transfer of the remains of King Nikola to the Court Church in Cetinje in 1989, there were no monuments to the old king until 2005, when a 4m tall equestrian bronze statue facing the Parliament was erected in Podgorica (Fig. 6.28), on the same spot that housed the Podgorica Assembly in 1918 that voted for the unification.¹⁶⁹ Placing the monument on the site that is now interpreted as “the beginning of the Serbian occupation of Montenegro” symbolically anticipated and celebrated the new independence. Explained as an attempt to commemorate the first Montenegrin Constitution, it ironically underplays the well-known fact about King Nikola’s scant enthusiasm for constitutionalism.¹⁷⁰ A similar bronze statue of King Nikola, 9m tall, was erected in the central town of Nikšić in May 2006, celebrating the V.E. Day in Europe (Fig. 6.29).



Fig. 6.27 – Monument to Ivan Crnojević, the founder of Cetinje, erected in 1983 on 500th anniversary of the town’s foundation. Work of the Kotor sculptor Ante Gržetić (1922-1995).

¹⁶⁹ Morisson, 2009, 194

¹⁷⁰ <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/aktuelno.289.html:177468-Prastaj-veliki-gospodaru> – Accessed on 30/05/2012



Fig. 6.28 – The monument to King Nikola, after design of Zadar sculptor Risto Radmilović (b. 1950), erected in 2005 in front of the Montenegrin Parliament



Fig. 6.29 – The monument to King Nikola in Nikšić, erected in 2006. The equestrian statue alone is 5m tall, whilst the total height is 9m.

When in January 2012 the *Serbian National Council of Montenegro* requested permission from the City Council of Cetinje to re-erect the monument to King Alexander (Fig. 6.30),¹⁷¹ which was demolished by the Italian fascists in 1941, the municipality refused permission stating that “as there are no monuments to many glorious members of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty, it would be impossible to erect a monument to a Karadjordjević.”¹⁷²



Fig. 6.30 – The monument to King Aleksandar in Cetinje, erected in 1937, was work of Ivan Meštrović. Destroyed in 1941 by the Italian Fascists.

This decision was very much in accordance with the Doclean narrative: all references to Serbia were to be minimised and, eventually, replaced by the official version of history of Montenegro based on the partial re-interpretation of one single source: *The Chronicle of the Priest of Doclea*. Since the Doclean narrative emphasizes the Catholic nature of St. John Vladimir, it is expected that the museums in coastal towns, together with their urban characteristics, will be further accentuated,

¹⁷¹ The SNC further argued that Alexander, King Nikola’s own grandson, was born in Cetinje and had a monument erected to him in 1937 after the assassination in Marseilles on request of the Municipality of Cetinje itself; the monument was made by the King’s favourite artist Ivan Meštrović. Its end is not known. Some believe that it was submerged in the sea, and some that it was melted. Ironically, King Aleksandar was the only Montenegrin/Serbian/Yugoslav ruler born in Cetinje.

¹⁷² <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/region/Cetinje-protiv-spomenika-unuku-kralja-Nikole.lt.html> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

because of their Catholic heritage. Although the *Serbian Orthodox Church* celebrates not only the Nemanjić kings, but also St. Peter of Cetinje and St. John Vladimir, it would be no surprise the *Montenegrin Orthodox Church* to replace of Nemanjić saint-kings with the Catholic saints of coastal towns in an attempt to give Montenegro a distinct Western characteristics behind the Orthodox façade. Similar steps are already taking place in Croatia, where a group of anonymous individuals petitioned for the re-establishment of the *Croatian Orthodox Church*, once in existence during the *Independent State of Croatia*, when was supported by the regime of Ante Pavelić.¹⁷³ There are some indications that the *Montenegrin Orthodox Church* supports this action, as announced in the Croatian media in 2010.¹⁷⁴ These early actions indicate that the notion of *Red Croatia* as a euphemism for Montenegro, originally invented by Ante Starčević with aim to annihilate or reduce the Serbian Orthodoxy west of the River Drina and north of Skadar, would continue the traditional rivalry between the two branches of Christianity.

For the proclamation of independence, the Montenegrin government received support from Muslim and Albanian political parties, but alienated the Montenegrin Serbs. The Muslim Slav community of Montenegro numbers around 12% of the overall population. Following the outcome of the wars of Yugoslav succession, there is an increased interest in Islamic culture and heritage. Seven out of 124 Montenegrin mosques were listed as heritage sites since the days of the Second Yugoslavia and are currently undergoing reconstruction. The plans for the construction of a new *Mešihat* (the top religious and administrative agency of the Muslim Community) and *Bosniak Cultural Centre* were revealed in January 2012.¹⁷⁵ According to the *Islamic Community of Montenegro* at the end of the 20th and beginning of 21st century, 42 new mosques were erected in Montenegro, celebrating the new “multicultural image” of Montenegro. In 2008 the first Madrassa opened in Podgorica.¹⁷⁶ *The Islamic Community of Montenegro* also advocates closer links with Turkey and Bosnian Muslims.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 230-231

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/rh-ce-postujuci-zakon-priznati-hrvatsku-pravoslavnu-crkvu-clanak-110667> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

¹⁷⁵ <http://fokuspress.com/archives/1624> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.monteislam.com/islamska-zajednica/islamska-zajednica-u-crnoj-gori> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

¹⁷⁷ Interestingly, the Montenegrin Muslims now refer to themselves as “Bosniak,” in accordance with the new Bosniak nation, despite the fact that many of them still carry the names of various Montenegrin tribes and know the dates of their conversion to Islam.

In March 2012, the government imposed a new Parliamentary Act which would sanction the unification of the two mutually exclusive Academies. Since the *Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts* disapproves the aims and methods of the *Doclean Academy*, it appears that the Act is aimed at ordering the former to accept the latter without the right to object.¹⁷⁸ By securing a unified Academy, Serbian objections would be finally silenced. Amidst all these political activities that mirror those in Macedonia – enforced change of national consciousness, attempts to oust the Serbian Orthodox Church and the renewed growth of the influence of Islam – Montenegro, just like Macedonia, faces the possibility to become a dysfunctional or divided state and may well be reduced once again to its inaccessible core and reverted to the tribal society.

¹⁷⁸ <http://montenegro-info.net/2012/03/01/novi-sastav-crnogorske-akademije-nauka-do-kraja-aprila/> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

1. Some final remarks

This study attempted to give a general overview about the changing nature of national narratives and national identities in the six Balkan countries. From the first national movement of the Serbs dating back to the first half of the 19th century to that of the Macedonians and Montenegrins which began in the second half of the 20th century, the focus was on the evolution and public display of the national narratives and national identities of Balkan nations. The representation of chronological developments of those narratives and identities through the key-heritage concepts was necessary as only through the comparison of nation-building processes was it possible to denote their mutual causality. Inevitably, this resulted in somewhat extended narrative on the historical background, but revealed in the process that conception and implementation of the nation-building processes in all observed states had been initiated from the political and ideological centres outside of their modern national cores. Furthermore, not only that the identification of the national myths and formulation of national narratives was influenced by the political and geo-strategic circumstances in the time of their conception (Serbs, Croats, Albanians, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina) but they were in some occasions produced directly by foreign intellectuals (Albanians, Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegrins).

This study also attempted to denote that development of national identities from the appearance of nationalism in the Balkans in the 19th century until the end of the 20th century was a political enterprise frequently undertaken by the external factors. As the geo-strategic interests in the Balkan changed, so did the national narratives. The results of these changes form the pathway for the future evolution of nationalism in the observed territory. In the early 21st century, there appears to prevail a growing mutual resentment rather than an honest attempt to reconcile the peoples and states – a direct consequence of the Wars of Yugoslav Succession in the last decade of the 20th century, so generously fuelled by external influence. As David Gibbs noted, “*external intervention was one of the principal causes of the conflict*” and “*helped to trigger both the break-up of Yugoslavia and further intensify the war.*”¹ This assertion resonated well with the overwhelming support that some new states and nations “born”

¹ While the wars of Yugoslav dissolution were most frequently interpreted entirely as a consequence of internal factors, the role of the external participation in Yugoslav disintegration was severely downplayed and should not be ignored. Gibbs, D. N. – *First Do No Harm – Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Nashville, 2009, 2

out of Yugoslav ruin received from the West. Furthermore, Western scholars that actively participated in formulating new national narratives knowingly helped the revision of traditional historiography, not in the name of truth or justice, but for the aims and objectives of their own governing political elites.

It is no coincidence that the upsurge of nationalism, followed by a decade of wars and political disturbances in Yugoslavia and Albania in the early 1990s, took place in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The fall of the Berlin Wall brought to a close the political balance established after the Second World War. As the societal model of the disintegrating Soviet Union withdrew to the East of Europe, its previous satellite states began the period of political transformations and adjustments to the advancing societal model arriving from the West of Europe in the same period. The re-unification of Germany directly influenced the reawakening of national feelings in all former communist states and the re-assertion of the question of self-determination. In most cases, the democracy re-introduced in the former communist states was based on the Western principle of a civil society.² However, while the majority of the former Warsaw Pact states began their transformation from the inherited state structure modelled on Soviet political and economic principles, the two states of the Western Balkans, Yugoslavia and Albania, posed immediate obstacles for the projected transition from communist to capitalist states.

Even though the formation of the nations in Central and Eastern Europe during the 19th century, based on the ethnic and linguistic principles of the Romantic and post-Romantic periods, significantly differed from the creation of West European nations, the introduction of the modern Western-style nation-state based on a civic society was relatively easy because those states consisted of predominantly homogeneous ethnic territories. These modern Western values served as a basis for the re-interpreted national narratives which sought to re-assert the “old democratic values” that existed in those states and societies prior to their subjugation to the Soviet Union. In their search for the new freedom, which would be achieved by inclusion into the European Union, national histories were re-modelled for new use. This was most obvious in the valuation of less desirable events of recent history, particularly that of the 20th century. The inconvenient notions of Fascism, Nazism and Communism, three main ideologies that plagued some of the societies of those “newly freed” European states were

² Ignatieff, 1993, 3

presented as understandable historical circumstances, although detrimental to the statehood. However, this was not an easy task in Yugoslavia or Albania for several societal anomalies existed within these two states.

Yugoslavia as a communist state presented a special case during the Cold War era. After the 1948 split with Stalin, the CPY led by Josip Broz Tito (Fig. 1.a.20) introduced a special economic model that enabled participation of the social market economy in the Western framework of international trade.³ Having a heterogeneous population with three dominant religions of Orthodox and Catholic Christianity and Suni Islam, with a different historical past as subjects of the former Habsburg and Ottoman empires, Yugoslav unity could be only maintained through rapid economic growth and the state imposed doctrine of “brotherhood and unity.” By the 1980s, Yugoslavia enjoyed the privilege of free flow of goods and people across its territory, as well as a relative growth of the standard of living and an increase in population. But economic progress was uneven in different parts of the country because of the various stages of economic development inherited from the past and varying degrees of infrastructural damage that occurred during the Second World War.

The federal state structure, over the decades up to 1990, devolved much of the political and economic power to federal units, leaving the only unifying factors the *Yugoslav People’s Army (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija – JNA)* and a common currency. This contributed to the growing divide between the richer northern and poorer southern parts of Yugoslavia. There were only six common ministries in Belgrade, none of which dealt with the economy. From its beginning, Communist Yugoslavia was orientated to reducing the Serbian influence in the federal government. This devolved political power had an impact on the economy, politics, education, religion and national reconciliation. The educational system was under the authorities of the republics and provincial governments, thus preventing the development of common school textbooks. Despite the official doctrine of *Brotherhood and Unity* between the Yugoslav ethnic groups, the interpretation of national histories was purged of all existing inter-ethnic tensions.⁴ This systemic weakness of the federal state, which did not undergo the process of national reconciliation after 1945, hid the grievances surviving the two world wars between the Yugoslav nations and ethnic groups, easily exploited when the disintegration of the state began. Even though religion was not

³ Lampe, J.R. – *Balkans into Southeastern Europe*, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2006, 178

⁴ Lampe, 2006, 189

officially banned, the mutual distrust of the three religious communities persevered throughout the existence of Yugoslavia.

Albania, on the other hand, after initial adherence to the Soviet Union and China, went into self-imposed isolation under the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha (Fig. 1.a.23), the regime's control over the state being even harsher than in the Soviet Union. The legal profession was simply abolished, the industrial production heavily centralised, financial transactions under the strict control of government, while private agriculture and possession of livestock were banned causing long lasting food shortages until the late 1980s.⁵ Even though ethnically homogeneous, Albania was predominantly Muslim, with only pockets of Orthodox and Catholic population in the far north and far south of the state. All religions were officially banned in 1967, thus imposing a rigorous atheism which enabled the state-controlled educational programmes to enforce loyalty to the state in order to achieve national unity against the foreign "Other."⁶ Its national narrative introduced after 1945 served the exclusive purpose of raising awareness of belonging to a uniquely Albanian nation and state, which could rely only on its own instinct for survival.

Therefore, neither of the two states was sufficiently prepared for the new upsurge of nationalism that occurred in Europe in the 1980s. The open Yugoslavia with its population disunited along religious, historical, economic and administrative lines could not withstand neither internal nor even stronger external forces that sought its disintegration. The closed Albania with its population living under the induced paranoid distrust of anything foreign was not prepared to easily embrace the new ideas of globalization, imposed by the Western advance to the former communist East.

In its haste to take control over the territories formerly controlled by now defunct Soviet Union, the West did not take into consideration the specificities of the two countries, condemning the region to two decades of catastrophic war, ethnic tensions and economic decline. Indeed, the dominant picture of the Balkans as the "alien Other" that was created in the late 19th and lasted throughout the entire 20th century, was particularly emphasized from the beginning of the break-up of Yugoslavia. The extremely complicated ethnic structure of the Western Balkans that were covered by

⁵ Lampe, 2006, 238-239

⁶ Lange, K. – *Innenpolitische Aspekte der albanischen Sicherheitspolitik*, Das Parlament, 1988, 34-38, quoted in Schwandner-Sievers, S. and Fischer, B.J. – *Albanian Identities, Myth and History*, London, 2002, 17

the territories of Yugoslavia and Albania was not thought through when new states were hastily recognized by the West. The Wilsonian principle of self-determination, as first defined after the First World War, was undermined by the interpretation that state borders, even those that did not exist as internationally recognized previously, were to take precedence over the wish of ethnic communities within those borders.⁷ In their enthusiasm for the free “New Europe” in the early 1990s, the “old” powers of Europe, France and the United Kingdom, allowed the newly unified Germany to re-assert political and economic dominance over the countries of the former Eastern Bloc and, subsequently, to support those West Balkan nations that traditionally sided with German political goals. As the collapse of the Soviet Union and wars outside Europe led by the US and NATO took precedence over the situation on the continent, the Balkan crisis was handled without understanding of the situation on the ground and with even less respect for historical inheritance.

Because the Serbs were the single largest ethnic group in Yugoslavia, with dominant positions in the JNA with its constitutional role to defend the federal state, Germany first, and later other West European countries and the United States, immediately established the image of “Red Serbia,” which was continually reinforced and emphasised by the media.⁸ The tendency to scapegoat Serbia and the Serbs in order to facilitate intervention continued unhindered throughout the 1990s and 2000s. This resulted in the external re-evaluation of the history of the entire region, which served the purpose of easing the tensions that existed between the former Second World War Allies and Germany. In condemning the Balkans and Serbia in particular for the failure of a quick transition, Western Europe, now in the form of the European Union, sought to whitewash its own political mistakes by transferring the guilt primarily to the Serbs and largely neglecting the roles of others. As a result, the beginning of the 21st century in the West Balkans, despite appearing to have brought peace and re-consolidation, in reality features a large Potemkin village, built to impress the political establishment in major European capitals and in the US.

⁷ Pellet, A. - *The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration Committee A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples*, Paris, 1992, 179-180.

⁸ Gibbs, 2009, 51

1.1 The future of Serbia – Punishment and de-Nazification

The change of regime in 2000 and the subsequent transitional period which witnessed the departure of Montenegro and Kosovo and Metohija, with further possibilities of the secession of Vojvodina and Raška county, prevented Serbia from making any attempt at nation-building in the near future. The post-Milošević pro-European governments so far had little influence on the decision-making process both in Serbia and in the region. Because of the Western requirement to disassociate from the Milošević period, any programme of nation-building has been discontinued. Admittedly, the symbols of the communist period were removed from public display in the early 1990s, but no replacements were installed. The 200th anniversary of the First Serbian Rebellion was celebrated on a small scale in 2004 and there was no appropriate media coverage. No significant new monuments were built since the 1980s, with the exception of several small ones commemorating the victims of the 1991-1999 wars. Similarly, the infrastructure and buildings destroyed in 1999 are still not rebuilt and economic hardship continues. The majority of museums, including the National Museum, have either closed to the public or work with limited resources since the 1990s. There are some attempts to begin urban reconstruction on the dilapidated 19th century architecture in Belgrade and a few other towns, but these did not pass beyond the planning process. The only building taking place at the moment is sporadic and *ad hoc* and some new Le Corbusier visiting Belgrade today would probably have a similar comment to that of his 1911 predecessor.

However, the most notable activity regarding Serbian nation-(re)building process is the continuation of the traditional conflict between the Serbian and Croat scholars that began in the 1920s. Overwhelmingly helped from abroad, it culminated in the last twenty-five years. Similar conflicts exist between the Serbian and Muslim historians and there is total absence of discourse with the Albanian colleagues. The emerging Montenegrin new history and the resurrection of the Bulgarian grievances in relation to Macedonia and southeast Serbia is likely to increase in the following decade.⁹ The Western revision of Serbian history of the 19th and 20th century was being firmly contested as the political enterprise in the light of the 1990s. Because the SANU was and still is largely marginalized from directing the course of national development, this work was taken over and paid for mostly by the governmental sector from

⁹ Pond, E. – *Endgame in the Balkans – Regime change, European style*, Washington, 2006, 49

Germany and the United States. However, the recently resumed works on the St.Sava Cathedral, and the beginning of the conservation of several mediaeval monasteries, destroyed during Kosovo and Metohija's secession, both financed by Russia, suggest potential new developments.

1.2 Clean Croatia

Because Croatia was never internationally condemned for its role in the wars of Yugoslav dissolution, the presentation of the revised Croat national historic narrative cleared from chauvinism and genocide committed during the Second World War led to a considerable academic effort both in Croatia and, more significantly, abroad. Warning that building a nation-state on the mythologized past and revisionism may be detrimental to democracy appear not to have concerned the political elites in European capitals when they approved Croatian membership to the European Union in July 2013. Eric Hobsbawm was particularly critical of this European and Croat practice of clearing the less desirable events from national history by means of *identity history*: “...*The identity history that has developed in the past 30-40 years is much nastier and largely amounts to identity mythology in which nationalism or ethnic is the most dangerous politically. In fact, we have had some of the worst political results being won by people who've taken over new countries as professional historians as in Georgia and Croatia where they have tried to impose a mythological view...*”¹⁰ Despite warnings, the West supported the Croat proclamation of independence and remained silent on the public outcry of Zagreb political elites which continued presenting the Croat part of responsibility for wars in Former Yugoslavia as a just cause which brought to the final liberation of the state from its enemies.

This public outcry of Croat elites enabled the rebranding of controversial individuals from Croat history as patriotic. Ante Starčević became again “the Father of the Nation” and in 1992 a state-medal bearing his name was established to honour those individuals who contribute to the development and sustainability of the Croat state-idea by maintaining Croat statehood and building a sovereign Croat state. In the same year, a new Institute for Social Sciences named after Ivo Pilar was established within the University of Zagreb. One of the many projects of the institute is to promote

¹⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, belonged to the generation of scholars that influenced thinking in the 20th century not only through scholarly research, but a lifelong experience. The criticism above echoes the pessimistic tones expressed in his last interview, given to Simon Schama for the BBC Radio 4: Archive on 4: A Life in History on 16 April 2012.

Croat history and national narrative as officially sanctioned by the state. Ever since, the Institute “Ivo Pilar” has developed a network of branches in all major Croat towns, followed by regular publications of the periodical “Pilar.”¹¹

The 1990 Croat constitution declared Latin as the only official script in Croatia and began withdrawing books in Cyrillic from public libraries. According to Antun Lešaja, the authorities have ordered the withdrawal, burning and shredding of nearly 2,8 million Cyrillic books during the 1990s.¹² At the same time, the words in the Croatian language that sounded too “Serbian” were replaced by neologisms, which was received with a certain level of amusement in both Serbia and abroad.¹³ However, the picture of democratic Croatia required some Constitutional readjustments to the European laws, which would give certain cultural rights to the remaining Serbs. In January of 2013, the Croatian government under pressure from the EU agreed to re-introduce the Cyrillic alphabet in Vukovar and some other towns in Croatia which still have a considerable Serbian population. However, this move was not received well among local Croats, who immediately began a campaign of violence against the use of Cyrillic in Croatia.¹⁴

The controversial Cardinal Alojz Stepinac was beatified by the Pope in 1998. This move, seen as an insult by the survivors of Jasenovac and other concentration camps in the NDH, was not well received by the Serbian Orthodox Church. The sanctification announced in 2014 was postponed and the meetings with the representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church initiated. Presently, there are no indications whether the process will be continued.

Other formal EU requirements regarding the position and the property of the Serbs remain mostly ignored and it appears that Croatia, after becoming an EU member, can finally enjoy the status of a purely Croat nation-state, free of Serbs.

¹¹ <http://www.pilar.hr/povijest/povijest-institutata> - Official web-site of the Institute for Social Sciences “Ivo Pilar” – Accessed on 15/06/2015

¹² Over a decade of research by the retired Professor Antun Lešaja (an ethnic Croat) was presented in a book titled *Bookocide – The Destruction of Books in Croatia in the 1990s* published in Zagreb in 2012. <http://www.jutarnji.hr/ante-lesaja--devedesetih-smo-unistili-2-8-milijuna--nepocudnih--knjiga/1040727/> - Accessed on 19/11/2013

¹³ Bellamy, 2003, 146

¹⁴ Various Croat NGOs and war veterans immediately publicly denounced the EU demands and wrote to the Pope asking for support. <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/planeta.300.html:463985-Hrvatska-NVO-pisale-papi-zbog-cirilice-u-Vukovaru> – Accessed on 20/11/2014 <http://www.vecernji.hr/neredi-u-vukovaru/branitelji-u-vukovaru-skinuli-tri-dvojezicne-ploce-624680> - Accessed on 20/11/2014

1.3 Towards “Natural Albania”

Following the Western intervention in Kosovo and Metohija which resulted in the self-proclaimed independence in 2008 and Albanian admittance to NATO in 2009, the Albanian nationalism appears to be ascending towards its main goal: the unification of all Albanians in one common state. With the support of those states that have interests in creating an enlarged Albania, the future will almost certainly see an increase of publications related to the historical development of Albanian national narrative and heritage studies, all along the lines of the main premises initiated in the late 1990s.¹⁵ The term “Natural Albania” referring to all territories inhabited by the ethnic Albanians was introduced by the Albanian historian Koço Danaj in November 2014. As such, it was seen as a euphemism for the term “Greater Albania” by all neighbouring countries, but not the West.¹⁶

With the support of the EU and the US, Kosovo and Metohija, as another Albanian state, unilaterally proclaimed independence on 17 February 2008. So far, nearly half of the world’s countries recognized this act. The independence gave an additional impetus to Albanian national and territorial claims. This trend was justified by the national narrative devised by the predominantly British, American and German scholars and accepted by the Albanian academics in the 1990s. The narrative was followed by a number of the newly erected monuments in Albania, Kosovo and Metohija and western Macedonia dedicated to the prominent personalities who influenced contemporary Albanian history.

In May 2012, marking the beginning of celebration of the centenary of the creation of an independent Albania, a common primary school textbook for Albania and Kosovo and Metohija was symbolically introduced in Prizren, the town in Kosovo and Metohija where the *Prizren League* was formed in 1878.¹⁷ The Prime Ministers of both Albanian states were present and stressed the “*undying ideal of all Albanians to unite...wherever they live.*”¹⁸

¹⁵ In view of remarks by William Walker (b.1935), the verification officer of the OSCE in Kosovo in autumn 1998 that “*it is natural for the Albanians of Albania and Albanians of Kosovo to aspire to live in the same country*” it is to be expected that academic support will follow these lines. Belgrade daily *Politika*, 16 November, 2010 – www.politika.co.rs – Accessed on the same day

¹⁶ The EU and US institutions so far remained silent to the open public calls for the creation of Greater Albania.

¹⁷ Prizren, situated at the south, is the second largest city in Kosovo and Metohija. Inauguration of the same school textbooks took place in the city where the Prizren League was formed in 1878.

¹⁸ <http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/?id=20.1735.82.05.2012&lng=Ser#id=20.1735.82.05.2012> – Accessed on 30/05/2012 – The official site of Ministry of Education of Kosovo* - This clear and open

The neighbouring countries, unsurprisingly, do not welcome these activities, particularly in Serbia and Macedonia, and to a lesser extent from Greece.¹⁹ Thus, all the activities related to the transformation of Albanian national myth should be observed as the activities leading to the creation of enlarged Albania, which is expected to happen in the foreseeable future.

1.4 Macedonian House of Cards

All efforts of the government in Skopje to assert the Macedonian nationhood, mostly expressed through the grandiose building programmes of re-modelling Skopje into a Neo-Classical city in the heart of the Balkans, were met with laughter among the intellectuals both abroad (not only among the neighbours) and within the republic.²⁰ Macedonian nation-building process is, therefore, based exclusively on narratives invented in the 20th century without the confirmation in real material evidence. Unlike the Albanian national re-assertion of the 1990s, which was strengthened by the language distinctiveness and the open Western support, the Macedonians face more threat than support from both their neighbours and the international community. Bulgaria is the main identity threat to the extent that identity is anchored in the language; Serbia is the main identity threat to the extent that identity is anchored in religion; Greece is the main identity threat to the extent of usage of the name of the nation, language and state and Albania is the main identity threat to its statehood.²¹ If the situation remains as it is now, the future might see two options for Macedonia: the country will either be divided between Albania and Bulgaria, along the 1941 line; or it will join the Serbian-Greek alliance, which might not want an independent state between them.²²

1.5 Bosnia and Herzegovina – An Impossible State?

The existence of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with predominantly Muslim and Croat population and Republika Srpska with the Serbian

message to its neighbours was not criticized by the EU and US who insist that the state borders in Europe should not change. Similar messages from the Albanian Prime Minister and other officials that were heard in the following years were also ignored by the western officials.

¹⁹ The Greek state found its solution to the Albanian minority and its potential territorial claims after the Second World War when the expulsion of the Albanian Cham community from Greece to Albania was executed under the pretext that the Chams collaborated with the German Nazis and Italian Fascists.

²⁰ Чаусидис, 2013, 53 – Čausidis refer to the Project Skopje 2014 as the combination of the Hollywood film-set for the “Pirates of the Caribbean” and “Disneyland” in the “Ben-Hur atmosphere.”

²¹ Isakovic, 2000, 220

²² Wiberg, 1993, quoted in Isakovic, 2000, 219

majority, reveals deep divisions in modern Bosnia and Herzegovina. The inability or unwillingness of the EU and US to help solving the inter-ethnic, inter-religious and economic problems stems directly from the ambiguous nature of their involvement in the region. The Serbian refusal to accept the imposed qualification that they were the only guilty party during the 1990s wars, prevents any serious attempt to participate in the life of the Federation. On the other hand, the Bosnian Muslims, supported by many Islamic countries, accuse the West of maintaining an essentially anti-Islamic attitude towards them.²³ The divided state institutions in the two entities show no signs of creating an atmosphere which would enable an open academic discourse that would eventually lead to reconciliation. This is most obvious in the way these institutions officially address the questions of common history and heritage which suffered significantly during the hostilities. After the war, both entities produced compilations of listed heritage, as well as the lists of endangered heritage in their territories. The language used in the official presentations of the highest academic and cultural institutions is very much in accordance with the adopted national narratives; the highest cultural institutions of the Federation interpret the Muslims and Croats as “victims of Serbian aggression and genocide,” whilst the corresponding institutions of Republika Srpska refer to the position of the Serbs as the Muslim-Croat attempt “to oust the Serbs from their ancestral homes.”²⁴ Interestingly enough, the Academy of Sciences and Arts in Sarajevo and its Banja Luka counterpart do not mention the events of the 1990s and do not contain any information of their historical institutional development except for the year when they were first established.²⁵

The internal divisions and neo-colonial foreign rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina, prevent any sincere return of peaceful co-existence. However, as all former Yugoslav countries were forced by the EU to mutually cooperate, despite the deep divisions within Bosnia and Herzegovina itself and disagreements between Serbia and Croatia, a small improvement appeared in 2009. Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina announced a project titled *A Bridge towards a Common Future*, calling for their joint application to enlist the *stećci* tombstones on the UNESCO Heritage

²³ Fath-Lihic, 2008, 164

²⁴ See, for examples the official web-sites of the Universities, Museums and Institutes for Protection of Monuments in both entities respectively.

²⁵ <http://www.anubih.ba> – The official web-site of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and <http://www.anurs.org> – The official web-site of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of the Republic of Srpska – Both accessed on 28/09/2012

List. The international community may seize this opportunity to explain this project as evidence of its “painstaking efforts to reconstruct multiculturalism.” However, the current existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, perceived as some sort of “small Yugoslavia,” only without the ideologies of the “Integral Yugoslavism” or “brotherhood and unity” will prove unsustainable in the long run, because neither side wants to compromise. Two decades after the war, “the peace and state system look more enforced than desired by the local sides and will probably last as long as sufficient foreign enforcement lasts. There is a great uncertainty what will happen afterwards.”²⁶ One thing is evident: von Kállay’s efforts to rule Bosnia and Herzegovina through the invention of new nations finally succeeded, albeit with more than a century of delay.

1.6 Montenegro Grande

The greatest problem for Montenegro is its ambiguous position in relation to Serbia. As around 264,000 native Montenegrins living in Serbia were not allowed to vote in the 2006 referendum, the independence was decided with approximately 50,000 votes in favour of separation. This left those who still regard themselves unequivocally Serbian, that is, nearly a third of the population of Montenegro according to the last census, deeply dissatisfied.²⁷ The government in Podgorica currently relies on financial support from the West and political approval from the Muslim and Albanian national parties. All these will disappear the moment the anti-Serbian narrative changes.

The pressure from the West resulted in Montenegro’s recognition of the unilaterally proclaimed independence of the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija in 2008. This political move loosened even more the traditional ties with Serbia. As the renewed calls for Albanian autonomy in Macedonia and Montenegro grow,²⁸ there is a certain discontent among the Orthodox population in Montenegro. In May 2012, the Prime Ministers of both Albanian states called for the unification of all Albanians, which was giving impetus to the growing discontent of nearly 30,500 Albanians demanding their rights.²⁹ The silence of the Montenegrin political elites

²⁶ Isakovic, 2000, 111

²⁷ Roberts, 2007, 475

²⁸ Recent protests of 10,000 Albanians in Skopje, demanding their rights for self-determination was widely supported by the Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija, Southern Serbia and Montenegro

²⁹ <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/poruka-sa-protesta-tuzima-zaustavite-asimilaciju-albanaca-clanak-53757> - Accessed on 30/05/2012

regarding the open call for Albanian separation and its loud anti-Serbianism indicate that there will be some dynamic and interesting times ahead.

2. Possible outcomes

Because the external factors which influenced the region resulted in significant damage to inter-ethnic and inter-religious relationships, the recent academic tendency to conclude any scholarly work related to the West Balkan nationalism and nation-building processes in optimistic tones, have no place in this study. The reason for that is that the *status quo* created in the early 2000s will eventually prove unsustainable over *la longue durée*. This argument draws directly from the above indicated current practice of nation-building that could be observed in the analysed Balkan states. Because the national narratives adopted by the new states and nations in the 1990s rely on the partial interpretation of the surviving historical evidence frequently imposed from outside the region, the applied methods of primordialistic-perennialist approach to the building of the new national identities could prove dangerous. Smith pointed out that the practice of imposing “retrospective nationalism onto communities and cultures, whose identities and loyalties are local, regional and religious, but barely national” may lead to some future intra-ethnic conflicts.³⁰ In other words, as the interests and hegemony of the modern Great Powers of Europe and the world change, so the direction of ethnic, national and religious affiliations of the fragmented West Balkan population will. Because geo-strategic interests of the dominant world powers are subject to little change, maintaining certain degrees of tense relationships in the region could prove advantageous. At present, none of the major world powers, despite their rhetoric, shows a willingness to support re-conciliation and re-consolidation in the region. This makes the possibility of inter-ethnic and inter-state violence highly likely to resume in the foreseeable future.

³⁰ Smith, 1999, 5

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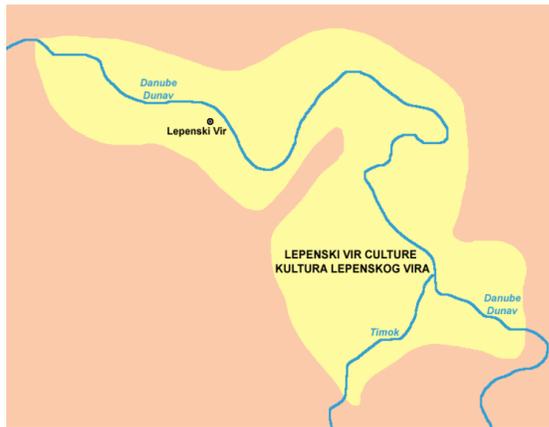
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1. Short history of West Balkans

The traditional assertion that the Balkans represent the cradle of European civilization is not just a myth coined during the birth of nationalism in the 19th century. The earliest European settled culture with clearly defined religious forms and use of prehistoric architecture for habitat developed between 6,400 and 5,400 BC during the late *Mesolithic* period. Known as the culture of *Lepenski Vir*, it was situated along the riverbanks of the Danube, in the vicinity of the Djerdap Gorge. (Map 1.a.1).¹ Numerous anthropomorphic monumental stone sculptures combining human and fish features, discovered either within or at the entrance of houses, represent one of the earliest form of prehistoric art in Europe (Fig. 1.a.1).



Map 1.a.1 – Lepenski Vir culture, the transition between the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, traditionally dated 6,400-5,500 BC



Fig. 1.a.1 – The earliest monumental sculpture of Lepenski Vir, dated cca. 6,400 BC

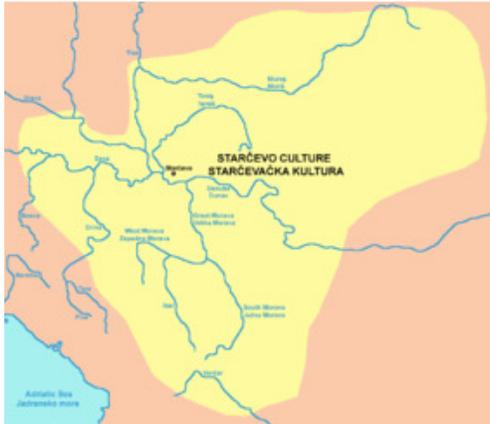
Around 5,400, when the *Lepenski Vir* culture was reaching its final phase, an early *Neolithic* culture of *Starčevo* developed between 5,700 and 4,500 BC.² *Starčevo* culture covered a much larger region that included parts of modern-day Serbia, Romania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria (Map 1.a.2). This culture was gradually replaced by a fully developed *Neolithic* culture of *Vinča*,³ which lasted

¹ Борић, Д. И Димитријевић, В. – *Апсолутна хронологија и стратиграфија Лепенског Вира*, Београд, *Старинар*, LVII, 2007, 9 – Borić, D. and Dimitrijević, V. – *Absolute Chronology and Stratigraphy of Lepenski Vir*, Belgrade, *Старинар*, LVII, 2007, 9

² Срејовић, Д. – *Културе млађег каменог доба на тлу Србије, Историја српског народа I*, Српска књижевна задруга, Београд, 1994, available at http://www.rastko.rs/arheologija/srejovic/dsrejovic-neolit_c.html - accessed on 03/11/2014

³ In Hungary it is known as *Turdaş* culture or *Turdaş-Vinča* culture. Vinča is a village in the vicinity of Belgrade and, according to late Prof. D. Sreјović, is the largest and best examined *Neolithic* settlement in Europe. See his posthumously published work *Искусства прошлости (Experiences of the Past)*, Belgrade, 2000 – a collection of essays on his lifelong work on pre-historic and Roman sites in Former Yugoslavia.

between 4,500 and 3,200 BC (Map 1.a.3). *Vinča* culture was characterized by a sophisticated architecture and ornamental artwork. At its zenith, around 3,800 BC, *Vinča* people built large wooden and clay houses with several rooms and inbuilt hearths. A number of discovered anthropomorphic votive clay figurines represent a diverse range of both male and female deities (Fig. 1.a.2).⁴



Map 1.a.2 – The area of *Starčevo* culture which developed between 5,700 and 4,500 BC.



Map 1.a.3 – Approximate area of *Vinča* culture that developed between 4,500 and 3,200 BC.

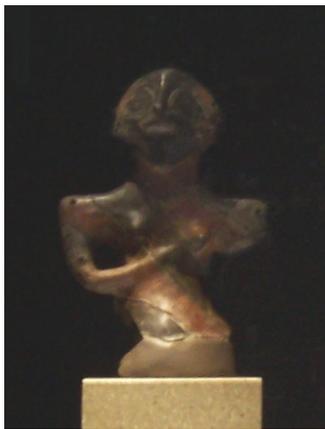


Fig. 1.a.2 – The *Lady of Vinča*, excavated in 1929 by M. Vasić, the discoverer of *Vinča* in 1908.

Archaeology so far adhered to the theory that the *Neolithic* cultures in the Balkans, especially from the 5th millennium BC which coincided with the appearance of *Vinča* culture, migrated from Anatolia and other Asia Minor areas.⁵ However, the evidence suggests that variations of *Neolithic* cultures with *Vinča* as its key-

⁴ Срејовић, Д. – *Културе млађег каменог доба на тлу Србије, Историја српског народа I*, Српска књижевна задруга, Београд, 1994, available at

http://www.rastko.rs/arheologija/srejovic/dsrejovic-neolit_c.html - accessed on 03/11/2014

⁵ Ibid

representative, which existed dispersed all over the Balkans, were actually a product of the mixing of populations from both Europe and Asia Minor. Nevertheless, the collapse of the *Vinča* culture and its variations coincided with the beginning of the Bronze Age, when various Indo-European people migrated to the Balkans and produced the early Aegean and Mediterranean civilizations. It is impossible to establish the scale of migrations that took place between 3,200 and 1,600 BC, but the evidence suggests that the Balkan hinterland was where cultures of the Aegean civilizations influenced migrants from the central Ukrainian plain.⁶

The Bronze Age in the Balkans witnessed the appearance of some of the first Indo-European tribes with historically recorded names: the Illyrians, Thracians, Dardanians and Greeks. It is mostly accepted that the expansion of Indo-Europeans between 1,600 and 1,200 BC was created by migratory waves which resulted in the destruction of the Mycenaean civilization in the Aegean around 1,200 BC and the beginning of the Greek civilization. Dorians, Achaeans and Ionians settled in the south of the peninsula and Asia Minor and began the development of Greek culture along the Aegean coast.

1.1 The Illyrians

The Illyrians and the Thracians⁷ which, following the Greek migration, settled in the north of the Balkans mixed with the remnants of the autochthonous population and among themselves. Neither of them succeeded in forming any lasting political entity until the 5th-4th centuries BC. As no Illyrian or Thracian languages have ever been recorded, everything that is known of these peoples comes from Ancient Greek sources and modern archaeological research. The earliest mention of the Illyrians was by a geographer *Periplus of Pseudo-Scylax* in the 4th century BC.⁸ However, he did not record either their origins or their customs. After him, several other ancient authors referred to the Illyrians as the “barbarian other,” but none of them could provide a

⁶ Срејовић, Д. – *Кад смо били средитте света, Искусства прошлости*, Београд, 2000 – available at <http://www.rastko.rs/arheologija/srejovic/dsrejovic-srediste.c.html> - Accessed on 04/11/2014 - Sreјović supports this theory through the analysis of graves discovered in the village of Vatin (near the present day Serbian-Romanian border), the *post-Vinča* Bronze Age culture that lasted until the invasion of the *Dorians* and appearance of the *Illyrians* in the Balkans. The remains contained the Mycenaean artefacts and some Mycenaean rituals.

⁷ The Thracians lived mainly in the Eastern Balkans, covering the territory of modern-day Bulgaria and Serbia, east of the Great Morava. Similar to the Illyrians, they formed several short-lasting kingdoms, but were eventually subdued by the Romans. They were gifted artisans and craftsmen. As the Eastern Balkans are excluded from this study, so is the Thracian timeline.

⁸ Wilkes, J. – *The Illyrians*, Oxford, 1995, 6.

satisfactory general explanation for the origins of the Illyrians. The archaeological and linguistic evidence uncovered during the 20th century showing significant regional differences in the production of various implements over the course of two millennia, imply that the population of the Western Balkans, known to Greek and Roman writers as the Illyrians, was anything but a homogenous ethnic group.⁹

The demarcation of Illyrian territory starts on the coast of central Albania, follows the line of the Shkumbini River¹⁰ and passes into what is now western Macedonia from the Ohrid and Prespa lakes going northwards parallel with the Vardar River to Skopje. From there it continues north and follows the Morava valley almost in a straight line to the vicinity of Belgrade on the Danube. All the land west of this line to the Adriatic coast are generally accepted to be inhabited by various Illyrian tribes, whilst its northern borders reach the valleys of the Sava and Drava, extending to Lake Balaton in Hungary, from where it curves south of the Julian Alps to meet the Adriatic in Istria. Finally, the Calabrian and Apulian districts are also included in the Illyrian ethnic map (Map 1.a.4).¹¹



Map 1.a.4 – Illyrian territory in the Balkans within boundaries marked red. Wilkes after Russu, 1969, reproduced from Wilkes, 1996, xx – Red demarcation lines done by the author.

⁹ Ibid, 38

¹⁰ This line, interestingly, corresponds to a linguistic boundary between the Northern (Ghegs) and the Southern (Tosks) dialects of the Albanian language

¹¹ Wilkes, 1995, 68

The archaeological evidence from such a vast territory, ranges from the period of the Early Bronze Age (1900/1800BC – 1600/1500BC) up to Roman times (2nd century BC – 7th century AD). As mentioned above, by the late 5th century BC, the first Illyrian kingdoms were formed on the edges of the Greek world, centred in and around early, proto-urban settlements enclosed by stone fortifications.¹² These began to develop at the southernmost territories of the Illyrian world bordering the Greeks, probably as a consequence of external threat, rather than a genuine evolution of the society towards more complex communal living.¹³ There were no such developments in the north.¹⁴ However, by far the largest quantity of material evidence for these early, “historical,” Illyrians was discovered in the north-west of the Illyrian world – in the northern Adriatic, Istrian peninsula, Slovenia and modern western Croatia.¹⁵

From the mid-3rd century BC there are Greek reports of a political order among the Illyrians. These were mainly centred on the southern Illyrian lands, organized in smaller kingdoms, as well as on the Kingdom of Epirus (330-231 BC), where a variation of Greek language was spoken and Greek deities celebrated. All epigraphic evidence that is even vaguely related to the Illyrians comes from this area and was written exclusively in the Greek alphabet. Greek writings and symbols on coins minted in the Illyrian lands and the Kingdom of Epirus, also suggest strong Greek influence on the bordering Illyrian lands from the 4th century BC.¹⁶ From the archaeological evidence it is difficult to establish the nature of the ethnic relationships between the southern Illyrians, especially the Epirotes, and the Greeks. *Thucydides* and *Strabo* considered the Epirotes to be barbarians. On the other hand, *Dyonisius of Halicarnassus* and *Pausanias* maintained them to be Greek. This difference of opinion survived to the present: modern Albanian scholars define the Epirotes as Illyrians; for their Greek counterparts, the Epirotes are unquestionably Greek.

Greek influence in the southern Illyrian lands was certainly significant. For around a century, between the 5th and 4th century BC, Illyrian kingdoms represented no threat to the rise of the Greek and Macedonian power. No Greek writer is known to have ever made any serious study of the Illyrians, and it is difficult to make any

¹² Ibid, 129

¹³ Ibid, 136

¹⁴ Ibid, 130

¹⁵ Ibid, 56

¹⁶ Ibid, 129

comparison with the much better recorded kingdom of Macedonia that rose to power from the 5th century.¹⁷

By the end of the reign of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC), the Illyrians bordering Macedonia and the coastal area of the Adriatic received some Hellenistic influence. They were both warring and allying themselves with the Macedonians until the clash with the rising Roman state began in the 3rd century BC. Eventually, the Romans conquered both the Macedonian Kingdom and the Illyrian Dalmatians ruled by King Gentius (181-168 BC) in 168 BC. The Illyrian lands were turned into Roman provinces, thus beginning a long process of Romanization. During the reign of the first Roman Emperor Augustus (27 BC-14 AD), the last Illyrian warfare took place in the Balkans in 8-9 AD. After that, the Illyrian name survived only as the name of the Roman province, albeit with changeable borders.

1.2 The Macedonians

The period between the settlement of the Greek tribes and the appearance of the first Greek states (1,200 BC – 800 BC) is usually referred to as the Greek Dark Ages. Dictated by geography, the Greeks lived in the small city-states, *polies*, self-governed and often ruled by a small aristocratic class. Following the war between the Illyrian and Thracian tribes in the 7th century BC, the vicinity of Aegae, near the coast of the Thermaic Gulf, was conquered by the Greeks who, according to the legend, fled from Argos in the Peloponnese and established in Aegae the first capital of the Kingdom of Macedon around 650 BC. *Herodotus* recorded this founding myth of the Macedonians as Greeks through the anecdote in which King Alexander I (498-454 BC), in order to compete in the Olympic Games, declared himself a Greek.¹⁸ Until the 4th century BC, the small kingdom occupied western parts of the modern-day Greek province of Macedonia and had little in common with the splendour of the Classical Greek world. When Philip II (359-336 BC) ascended to the throne (Fig. 1.a.3), Macedonia began a rapid expansion. Through a series of defeats of the Illyrians in the north and treaties with the neighbouring Epiros, Philip secured his northern borders. This enabled him to become involved in the politics of the central and southern Greek city-states and become a *hegemon* in the Greek world.

¹⁷ Ibid, 167

¹⁸ This anecdote recorded by Herodotus will become a main flash-point between the Greek scholars and the creators of modern Macedonian nation. See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 342-344.

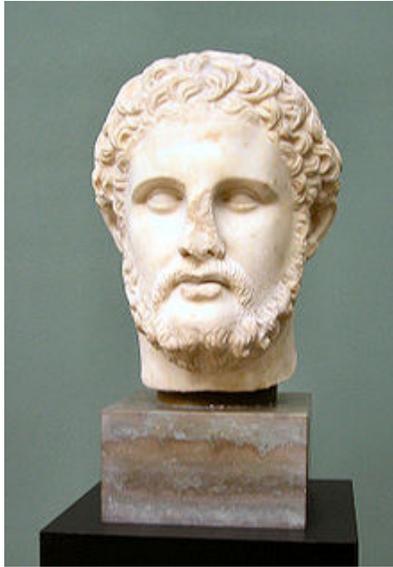


Fig. 1.a.3 – Philip II (359-336 BC)

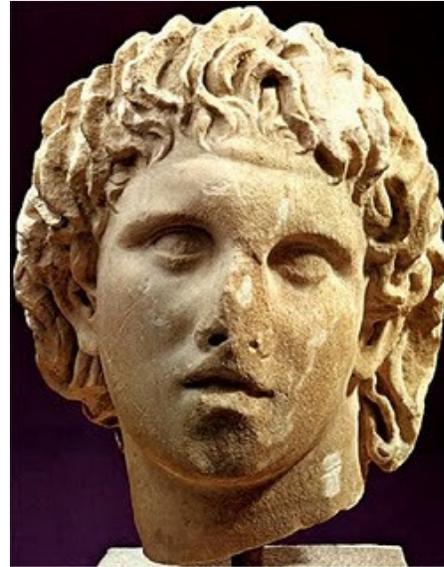


Fig. 1.a.4 – Alexander the Great (336-323 BC)

Philip's son Alexander the Great (336-323 BC) continued his father's expansionist policy and quickly conquered not only the rest of Greece, but also Persia and Egypt, creating and promoting in the process *Hellenism*, a fusion of Greek and Eastern cultures (Fig. 1.a.4). After Alexander's death in 323 BC, his vast empire quickly disintegrated, partitioned among his generals. Macedonia was first under the *Antipatrid* followed by the *Antigonid* dynasties which entered into a period of civil wars and instability. Despite being still a dominant power in the Balkans, Macedonia eventually declined. By the 2nd century BC Macedonian kings presented no significant opposition to the rising power of the Roman Republic. In 168 BC, the Battle of Pydna marked the end of the Macedonian kingdom and firmly established Rome as the masters of the southern Balkans.

1.3 Under the Roman rule

The Romans were naturally more interested in the rich Greek lands with its sailing and merchant network rather than the "barbaric" Illyrians and Thracians. However, securing the trade routes required subjugating the population of the Balkan hinterland. After the fall of Macedonia and Epirus in the 2nd century BC, the Romans began slow penetration in the Illyrian lands north of the Neretva River. Their first conquests were in Dalmatia, where they increased their influence by settling veterans along the coast and giving various privileges to the fortified coastal cities.¹⁹ By the

¹⁹ Fine, J.V.A – *The Early Mediaeval Balkans*, Ann Arbor, 1983 (re-print 1997), 12

time of Augustus, the Roman province of *Illyricum*, incorporating most of modern-day Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, bordering the Sava River in the north and Drina in the west, was established. The coastal city of Salona²⁰ served as the provincial capital. It survived, with significant modifications in size and borders, until the end of the Roman Empire.

The Central Balkans, important for exploiting its rich mines and timber transported along the network of newly built roads, were incorporated into *Moesia Superior*, a province named after the dominant Thraco-Illyrian tribe that lived there prior to the conquest.²¹ It consisted of much of modern-day Serbia, northern Macedonia and eastern Bulgaria, bordering the Sava and Danube in the north and Drina in the east. Its principal cities were Singidunum²² and Viminacium.²³ The Roman *limes* was for a long time stable on the right banks of the Sava and Danube rivers. From the late 1st century AD the Romans led incursions into the Dacian territories across the Danube, conquering much of the Pannonian plain which was, at the height of the Roman Empire, part of the Empire as the provinces of *Pannonia Superior* (which incorporated parts of Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia Proper, Slavonia and Bosnia) and *Pannonia Inferior* (which incorporated parts of Hungary, Slavonia and Serbia). Its principal towns were Siscia²⁴ and Sirmium,²⁵ respectively. As the Empire changed, so did the provincial borders and territories.

Between the 1st and 3rd centuries, Roman rule brought a period of stability and prosperity, which accelerated the process of Romanization. Army veterans were awarded land both on the coast and inland. Alongside the two principal roads *Via Militaris* and *Via Egnatia* and key strategic locations, Roman towns were built, sometimes on the foundations of older settlements, with typical Roman urban features – a perpendicular street grid, forum(s) surrounded by temples and other public buildings. Roman towns in the Western Balkans resembled those elsewhere in the

²⁰ Modern Solin in the Republic of Croatia.

²¹ The most important inland route in the northern and central Balkans was *Via Militaris* which ran alongside wide river valleys of Morava and Vardar.

²² Modern Belgrade.

²³ Modern Kostolac in the Republic of Serbia.

²⁴ Modern Sisak in the Republic of Croatia.

²⁵ Modern Sremska Mitrovica in Vojvodina, northern part of the Republic of Serbia.

Empire. The exceptions were, of course, larger towns which often had an amphitheatre and a circus, such was the case in Pola (Fig. 1.a.5),²⁶ Viminacium or Stobi.²⁷



Fig. 1.a.5 – Amphitheatre in Pula, built in 27 BC-68 AD.

The Roman rule relied on the cities and their control of the neighbourhood, but the degrees of Romanization varied, especially in areas where Greek language and culture remained dominant. Archaeological evidence suggests that there was a visible demarcation line dividing Greek and Roman influence. This line started near Kotor²⁸, ran towards Niš²⁹ and along the ridge of the Mount Balkan to the Black Sea. South of this line Greek remained in permanent use throughout Roman era and north belonged to the Latin influence. This line can be identified from the surviving inscriptions on stone tablets, milestones, public buildings and headstones.³⁰

When political upheaval began in the 3rd century, the whole Roman Empire was on the verge of collapse. The northern *limes*, because of its geography, was easy to invade. The Goths were particularly active in this period and much of the fighting of

²⁶ Modern Pula in Istria. The amphitheatre in Pula is one of the best preserved and largest in the world and the only in the Western Balkans that is still standing.

²⁷ Central Macedonia

²⁸ Montenegrin coastal town

²⁹ Naisus, the birthplace of Constantine the Great, south-east Serbia.

³⁰ Ćirković, S. – *The Serbs*, Oxford, 2004, 4

Roman armies against invaders and among themselves took place in the Western and Central Balkans, which devastated the state structure.³¹ The establishment of the *Tetrarchy* in 293 by Emperor Diocletian (244-311, ruled 284-306) stabilized the Empire and introduced a series of Warrior-Emperors originating from the Balkans.³² When the son of one of the tetrarchs, Constantine the Great (272-337, ruled 306-337), became sole Emperor of the whole Roman Empire, Christianity was finally recognized as the state religion. In 324 AD, Constantine decided to move the capital from Rome to the small, but strategically important old Greek town of Byzantium on the Bosphorus. Renamed Constantinople, the new capital quickly became one of the early Christian centres and as such a bitter rival of the old capital of Rome. The Council of Nicaea of 325 established a consensus on the nature of Christ and determined the key Christian doctrines, which lasted for the next several centuries. Constantine's successors were unable to preserve his achievements and after 363, the Empire became threatened again by internal power-struggles and incursions of new barbarian tribes across the Rhine and Danube borders. Several generals ruled as emperors until 395, when Emperor Theodosius I (347-395, ruled, 379-395) divided the Empire between his two sons, one ruling the east and other the west.

The Roman Empire was never reunited again, but the division line that was drawn through the Balkans, beginning at Sirmium in the north and following the Drina river south to Skadar, remained an important argument in all later quarrels between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, following the *Great Schism* split in 1054.³³ The northern border contracted to the banks of the Danube, causing later trope about dividing the civilization of Europe from that of the Orient.³⁴ The Western Empire fell in 476, whilst the Eastern, the Byzantine Empire, managed to survive for another millennium, although shrinking in size and population.

³¹ Fine, 1983, 13

³² The first four tetrarchs were born: Diocletian in Salona (Solin), Maximian in Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica), Galerius in Serdica (Sofija) or Felix Romuliana (Gamzigrad) and Constantius Chlorus somewhere in Dardania (most likely Niš).

³³ Fine, 1983, 15

³⁴ Samuel Huntingdon described these divisions as "civilisational fault lines" which persisted throughout history and became particularly dangerous in "those cleft countries held together during the Cold War." See, Huntingdon, S. – *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, London, 1997, p. 138.

1.4 The coming of the Slavs

The long established interpretation of the appearance of the Slavs in the Balkans in the 6th century is that they, pushed by the Avars, represented the second wave of the *Völkerwanderung*, whose raids had transformed the Roman world to the point of unrecognition and forever changed the ethnic structure of the northern Balkans.³⁵ Raiding barbarians, among which were the Slavs, were traditionally blamed for the decline of the Roman city and urban life during the disturbances of the 3rd to 5th centuries.³⁶ However, during that period, various non-Slavic invaders destroyed not only the state structure, but also the representative features of developed urban life and caused a significant decrease of population. This created a vacuum in the economic and administrative distribution of government. By the time of the first Slavic raids in the 6th century, the old Roman life had disappeared and could not contribute to the Romanization of the new settlers.

According to this theory, the classical urban culture was unable to survive two hundred years of constant warring and by the 5th century, ancient and previously numerous and prosperous cities contracted and re-grouped around a defensible acropolis, which was now dominated by the church. The urban nucleus was broken into smaller settlements, which featured modest dwellings, built from formerly finer buildings, often re-using various architectural elements. This particularly affected the interior of the Balkans, where some previously rich cities found themselves cut off from trade and cultural exchange. The coastal cities managed to survive mainly because they were connected to the less affected centres of the Empire through sea-connections.³⁷ The situation was worse in the rural areas. After mid-5th century, the *villa rustica* completely disappeared from the map of the Western Balkans. The last villa estate that survived up to the 5th century was discovered in the sheltered areas of Dalmatia and northeast Bosnia.³⁸ Thus, when the Slavs arrived, better protected coastal and well-fortified cities in the southern Balkans managed to survive and preserve the Roman/Greek life and civilization, whilst the interior was re-populated by the Slavic tribes which, according to the early Byzantine writers, lived without organized

³⁵ Curta, F. – *The Making of the Slavs – History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c.500-700*, Cambridge, 2001, 120

³⁶ Curta, 2001, 145

³⁷ Ibid, 120-142

³⁸ Ibid, 145

leadership or state structure.³⁹ In the depopulated areas, with broken road and trade networks, the surviving local Roman aristocracy was too small in numbers to be able to make Latin a universal language of communication.

1.5 The establishment of the first Slavic states in the Balkans, 6th-10th century

The established date for the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans is the 6th century, after the collapse of the Danube frontier of the Roman Empire. However, the early sources for these newcomers do not mention separate Slavic tribes or ethnic groups and use the common name *Sclaveni* (*Sclavenoi*, *Antae*) when describing the military encounters between the Roman armies and the new enemy. No less than twenty chroniclers mention *Sclaveni* in the period 500-690, but none refer to separate Slavic ethnic groups that are known today.⁴⁰ The most frequent explanation for this group identification is sought in the traditional practise of Roman historians to assign the common name to all barbarian groups that entered the Empire or because the authors themselves hardly knew the Balkan territory and rarely encountered the Slavs personally.⁴¹

After the initial reports on the Slavic immigration to the Balkans in the 6th and early 7th centuries, both Byzantine and Western historians became silent on the matter for another two to three hundred years. The quick collapse of Justinian's efforts to reconquer the former Roman Empire, including the whole of the Balkans, was the result of both internal power struggles and continuous wars with Persia, arch-enemy of the Roman Empire. The rapid spread of Islam during the 7th century quickly robbed Byzantium of its rich Egyptian and Eastern provinces. Forced to defend themselves, the Byzantines abandoned the northern border on the Danube. This enabled the second wave of immigration and settlement of an amorphous mass of the Slavs in the Balkans early in the 7th century. Finally, the conquest of the Eastern Balkans in 681 by the Turkic Bulgars posed an immediate threat to the capital Constantinople and the southern and more prosperous Balkan cities. Being more concerned with direct threats of better organized invaders, it is no surprise that most surviving Byzantine documents referring to the Balkans from the period of the 7th-10th centuries are focused on the establishment of the First Bulgarian Empire. The Bulgarian Balkan *khanate*

³⁹ Ibid, 115

⁴⁰ Curta, 2001, 73

⁴¹ Ibid, 36

incorporated into their state already settled Slavs and by the time of Bulgarian conversion the Orthodox Christianity in 864, they adopted the language of their Slavic subjects. The First Bulgarian Empire frequently changed borders, but by the 10th century, it governed much of the eastern Balkans – Scythia Minor, Thrace and Dacia, as well as parts of the western and southern Balkans – Moesia, Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly and obtained sea exits to the Adriatic and Aegean. The expansion of the Bulgars in the Balkans was challenged not only by the Byzantines, but also by the Eastern Frankish Empire which at that time controlled the Northern Balkans, Istria and parts of Dalmatia. The land in between was controlled by the small principalities which were for the first time in history ethnically termed as Croats and Serbs.

The first reasonably detailed account about the Croats was given by the 10th century Byzantine emperor and historian Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus who, in his *De Administrando Imperio* written in 948-952, described the migration of both the Croats and Serbs to Byzantine territories during the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610-642) as separate Slavic tribes who settled in the Balkans. The Croats are specifically mentioned in the chapters 29-31. Porphyrogenitus asserted that the territory of Croatia was divided into “11 županias” starting from the “*River Zentina (Cetina) and stretching along, on the side of the coast as far as frontiers of Istria...and at Tzentina (Cetina) and Chlebena (most probably Livno) becomes neighbour to the country of Serbia (Map 1.a.5).*”⁴² Porphyrogenitus also gave information about the original homeland of the Croats and the Serbs, where they seem to have been neighbours, as well.⁴³

The historic names of Croatia and Croats, however, appeared for the first time in one Late Mediaeval charter, a copy of an original dated to 852, confirming privileges to the Archbishopric of Split issued in Latin by the Prince Trpimir, *Dux Chroatorum iuvatus munere divino*, the ruler of Croatia and official vassal to the Frankish emperor.⁴⁴ The document, however, does not indicate the precise territory of Croatia. In the late 19th and early 20th century, Croat historians concluded that the original Croat settlement was in the territory of northern and central Dalmatia, stretching from the border of the Istrian Peninsula, through the hinterland of the mountain Velebit to the

⁴² *DAI, Volume I, 30* - The edition of *De Administrando Imperio* used here is a 2008 reprint of the Greek text edited by Gyula Moravcsik, in English translation of Romilly J.H. Jenkins, Harvard University Press, 1967, 147

⁴³ *Ibid*, 147

⁴⁴ Fine, J.V.A. – *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in The Balkans*, Ann Arbor, 2006, 28

River Vrbas⁴⁵ in the west, including parts of the Pannonian Plain and the Cetina River to the south.⁴⁶

This territory was first mentioned in the 799 *Annales Laurissenses* and *Annales Regni Francorum*, usually known as the *Einhardi annals* about the wars between the Frankish and Byzantine Empires. These documents, however, do not mention Croats as a separate people. Rather, in 817 Frankish chroniclers referred to the inhabitants of the region as “Romans, Slavs and Dalmatians” and there was no description of the land or people, assuming this was already known.⁴⁷



Map 1.a.5 – The territory where the Croats first settled, according to Porphyrogenitus. The generation of Croat historians from the late 19th and early 20th century differ little from the map presented here. However, some contemporary Croat and Western historians draw the borders of Trpimir’s land further east. See, for example, Tanner.

The first mention of the Serbs under that name also comes from Porphyrogenitus. The land they inhabited are described in chapters 29-34 as ranging from “*the province of Thessalonica, which from that time acquired this denomination*” (Map 1.a.6), through “*what is now Serbia and Pagania and the so-called country of Zachlumi and Terbounia and the country of Kanalites* (Map 1.a.7).”⁴⁸ Even the best translations of

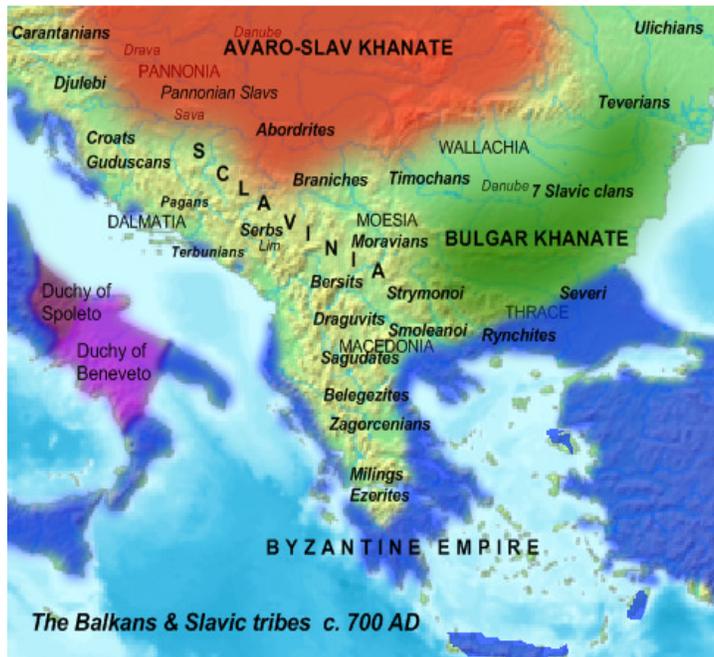
⁴⁵ Now in the Serbian entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁴⁶ Tanner, M. – *Croatia – A Nation Forged in War*, Yale University Press, 3rd Ed, 2010, 6

⁴⁷ Katičić, R. – *Uz početke hrvatskih početaka*, Split, 1993, 171

⁴⁸ *DAI, Volume I, 32*

the four surviving manuscripts, published between the 17th and 21st centuries of the *DAI* agree on the imprecision of the geographic terms used in the text, as archaeology has yet to examine many of Porphyrogenitus' claims.⁴⁹



Map 1.a.6 – Slavic tribes c.700, as described by Porphyrogenitus in *De Administrando Imperio*.



Map 1.a.7 – Serbs, Croats and Bulgars in time of Porphyrogenitus in *De Administrando Imperio* Porphyrogenitus, 10th century.

⁴⁹ Curta, 2006, 101

However, based on the etymological derivation of some modern *toponyms*, the territories of Zachlumi and Terbounia roughly correspond to what is now known as Herzegovina and south-western Bosnia and Krajina, whilst Serbia covered much of the modern day Bosnia and Herzegovina, western Serbia and the south-western parts of Kosovo and Metohija. If the *DAI* notion of the Serbian settlers around Thessaloniki is accepted, the Slavs that were related to the Serbs also inhabited parts of present-day Macedonia (Map 1.a.8).



Map 1.a.8 – The territory of the first Serbian tribes, without a state structure according to Porphyrogenitus. The generation of Serbian historians from the late 19th and early 20th century differ from the map presented here. However, some of the contemporary former Yugoslav and Western historians reject the idea that the Serbian tribes inhabited the territory west of the Drina River.

This vast territory of the Balkans is today divided between the modern states of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia and the disputed province of Kosovo, all of which have or used to have a significant percentage of a Serbian population on the eve of the wars of Yugoslav succession.

1.6 Early Middle Ages and Christianization of the Croats and Serbs

Between the 6th and 9th centuries, the first polities of the Croats and Serbs formed in the western Balkans, located between the increasingly active missionaries from both Rome and Constantinople.⁵⁰ At the end of the 8th century, the Franks began expansion into the northern Balkans and Dalmatia, which were nominally under Byzantine control, but in reality ruled by a number of smaller Slavic princes, *župans*, bordering on the First Bulgarian Empire. In the town of Nin, near Zadar, the Frankish chroniclers encountered the first known Croat *župan* Višeslav (c.800-810), whom they called a Christian.⁵¹ Frankish influence in north-west Balkans was challenged by the Pannonian *župan* Ljudevit Posavski, who rebelled against their rule in 819. Ljudevit Posavski attempted to create a larger state by uniting territories under his control with those of Dalmatian Croats, but his rebellion was crushed in 822 and, with the support of the Franks, the *župan* of Nin became the only semi-independent Slavic prince in the Balkans.⁵² Except for the well-fortified coastal Dalmatian towns which remained unaffected by the influx of Slavs who settled in the hinterland, the *župans* of Nin began a slow process of building a state.

During the 9th century, Frankish influence in Dalmatia vanished and the Byzantines, facing problems with expanding Bulgars in the Balkans and Arabs in the Mediterranean, allowed the local Slavs self-government. The Byzantine diplomatic masterstroke in retaining significant cultural and religious influence over the Slav population in the Balkans without much military power was evident in the imperial decision to convert the local Slavs to Christianity. This could be achieved only if the Holy Scriptures were preached in their own language. Constantinople's competition with Rome over church supremacy had grown from the division of the Roman Empire, with Rome insisting on exclusive usage of Latin during the liturgy. Constantinople had a more pragmatic attitude, enabling the usage of languages other than Latin and Greek, provided they acknowledged the supremacy of the Patriarch. Thus, in order to bring to their own sphere of influence to as many "barbarians" as possible, the Byzantines

⁵⁰ The *Avar Khanate* existed in this period in the Pannonian plain and included much of the Northern Balkans. The Franks warred against them during the 8th century and finally defeated them in the 790s. After the destruction of the Avars, the Franks warred against the Bulgars. The Byzantines used this period to recover most of the Southern Balkans – Greece, Albania and some important Adriatic ports.

⁵¹ Fine, 1983, 253

⁵² The territory of Ljudevit's state is difficult to determine, but it certainly included parts of the Pannonian plain that belongs to Croatia Proper. His capital was Sisak, ancient Siscia.

charged two Greek intellectuals from Thessaloniki, brothers Cyril (827/8-869) and Methodius (815/20-885), with the task of devising a Slavic alphabet and translating the Bible into a Slavic language. Combining Greek letters with some newly invented, Cyril and Methodius, who both understood a Slavic dialect spoken in Thessaloniki, invented the first Slavic script, *Glagolitic*, initially used among the Moravian Slavs and Bulgars. Their missions to Great Moravia and Pannonia marked the beginning of Slavic literacy (Fig. 1.a.6).⁵³ Their lasting legacy was felt most profoundly among the Slavs who adhered to Orthodox Christianity. The *Glagolitic* script survived longest in Dalmatia and the Adriatic islands, where the local Slavs kept it as their defence from the more powerful influence of Italian and Latin languages.

In the First Bulgarian Empire, *Glagolitic* was soon replaced by the *Cyrillic* script, devised in Ohrid by Clement (840-916) and Naum (c.830-910), disciples of Cyril and Methodius (Fig. 1.a.7). Naum was particularly engaged with the spread of Slavic literacy among the Bulgars who converted to the Orthodoxy in 864, during the reign of Tsar Boris (852-889). Boris embraced Slavic literacy to preserve the state independence.



Fig. 1.a.6 – The latest monument to Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, erected in 2010.



Fig. 1.a.7 – The latest monument to Clement and Naum in Skopje, erected in 2010

⁵³ Cyril and Methodius were proclaimed saints by both Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. All Slavic nations revere their work as the beginning of their national cultures.

From the perspective of the emerging independent Croat state, the strengthening of the principality, after weakening Frankish influence, could help the defence of the north, as the new threat of the Hungarian tribes appeared in the Pannonian plain in the 890s, following the vacuum created by the elimination of the Avar *khanate* several decades earlier. The definite conversion to Roman Catholicism of Croats occurred around 879, when the Croat prince from the *Trpimirović* dynasty (845-1091) in favour of Byzantium was killed.⁵⁴ However, threatened by Hungarians who overran much of Pannonia in the north and the Bulgarians in the east, the Croats forged an alliance with the Byzantines. They successfully fought the Bulgarians who were then ruled by Tsar Simeon (897-927) and in 925, prince Tomislav (910-928), was crowned the first king of Croatia (Fig. 1.a.8).⁵⁵

In the next two centuries, the Kingdom of Croatia developed and prospered under the *Trpimirović* dynasty, expanding to much of Dalmatia, north-west Bosnia and parts of southern Pannonia now known as Slavonia, between the rivers Sava and Drava. Throughout this period the question of usage of Slavic language during liturgy was subject of several church councils and competition between the Roman Catholic bishops of the coastal cities and Slavic bishops supported by Byzantium. The increasingly powerful Hungarian state and its conversion to Roman Catholicism influenced the Croat Kingdom, already inclining towards Rome. When the last Croat king died in battle in 1097, the Hungarians interfered on behalf of the Croatian queen, a Hungarian princess. After a short war, peace was concluded in 1102 with the major Croat nobles accepting a Hungarian king Koloman (1070-1116) as their rightful ruler. After this, Croatia ceased to be an independent state again until 1991.

Throughout this period, 9th-11th century, Serbian *župans* were either under Bulgarian or Byzantine suzerainty. After Tsar Simeon died in 927, his successor, facing many political and military threats from the Byzantines and Hungarians, had to recognize the independence of the first Serbian principality of *Raška* in 930.⁵⁶ The collapse of the First Bulgarian Empire and the disintegration of the Croatian Kingdom enabled the Serbian *župans* of the *Vlastimirović* dynasty (c.780-960) to assert their control over the central western Balkans. The territory of the first semi-independent Serbian state under Časlav Klonimirović (933-960) included most of Bosnia and

⁵⁴ In that year the Pope recognized the Croat *župan* Branimir as *Dux Croatorum*.

⁵⁵ Who crowned Tomislav and the borders of his state remain elusive. Fine, 1983, 262-265

⁵⁶ Fine, 1983, 159

Herzegovina, western Serbia, southern Dalmatia, Raška, northern Albania and Doclea. Doclea was a small province around modern-day Podgorica in Montenegro that, after Byzantium subdued Serbia following Časlav's death, asserted its semi-independence in the late 10th century. Most of Serbian lands returned under Byzantine rule, except for the principality of Doclea.

Similar to the rest of the south Adriatic coast, the conversion to Christianity among the Serbs came from two directions: The Serbs who converted at the earliest date (7th-9th centuries) were in all probability those who lived near Adriatic cities and would subsequently belong to the Latin liturgical tradition.⁵⁷ Surviving papal letters from the 10th century suggest that, except for the rulers of Croatia, the rulers of *Zachlunia* (Serbian land according to Porphyrogenitus) also belonged to the western rite.⁵⁸ The complete absence of historical documents makes it difficult to determine with any certainty what kind of conversion took place in the interior. Byzantine wars with the Bulgarians brought Orthodoxy deep into the Balkan hinterland and by 873, the Pope complained that the Serbs were wavering from Rome.⁵⁹ The conversion to Orthodoxy in the hinterland took place during the Byzantine-Bulgarian struggles for supremacy in the 9th-11th centuries.

Simultaneously, the *Bogomil Heresy* appeared for the first time in the 10th century Macedonia, then controlled by the First Bulgarian Empire and spread westwards throughout the Balkan hinterland. Most probably named after its founder, priest *Bogomil*, it was a dualistic teaching on the nature of God and as such in conflict with both Orthodox and Catholic Churches. It had most success among the illiterate peasants and away from well-established ecclesiastical and urban centres. When the First Bulgarian Empire collapsed in 1018, the Byzantines regained control over much of the Balkans re-introducing Byzantine Orthodoxy and persecuting the heretics.⁶⁰ The coastal Serbs remained Catholic until the Late Middle Ages. Thus, the first Serbian

⁵⁷ Glibetić, N. – *The Early Liturgical History of the Serbs* in *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata*, Terza Serie, Vol. 7, 2010, 92

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 93

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 97

⁶⁰ The majority of the heretics were removed from the places where the state had full control over the church matters. Later appearance of the heretics in Bosnia between 12th and 15th centuries is usually described as that of the descendants of the *Bogomils* who escaped persecution by running into the less accessible mountains of the Dinaric Alps and in Bosnia, where it was persecuted by the Catholic Church. At this point, it is safe to argue that the Christianization of the hostile Bosnian territory between 7th and 12th centuries was occasionally attempted by both Churches and never lasted long enough to fully establish one rite or the other among the population. See further this thesis.

principality to be recognized a kingdom, Doclea, was done so by Rome and most certainly belonged to the western rite.

Doclea, in its Slav version Duklja, was the name of the city whose ruins lie just outside the modern Macedonian capital Podgorica. In the ancient period the territory was inhabited by the Illyrian tribe *Docleatae*, although Porphyrogenitus claimed that the town itself was founded by the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who named it after himself. However, by Porphyrogenitus's time the town of Doclea was deserted whilst the surrounding territory was under the Byzantine rule.⁶¹ The proximity of the Adriatic where the influence of Rome was greatest enabled the local ruling family of *Vojislavljević* (1034-1186) to exploit the dispute between the Bulgars, Byzantines and *Normans* who appeared for the first time in the Balkans in the mid-11th century.

The Norman invasion of southern Albania and Greece coincided with the Great Schism of 1054 and the struggle over church jurisdiction in the Balkans. In this period the Albanians appear in written documents for the first time in history. The earliest reference to the Albanians and Albania came from the Book IV of the *Alexiad*, by the Byzantine princess Ana Comnena (1083-1153) at the end of the 11th century. Describing the events that took place in the area around Dyrrachion⁶² during the reign of her father Alexios I Comnenos (1056-1118), she stated that the city itself was divided between the Venetian allies of Alexios and *comiscortes* from Albania.⁶³

Meanwhile, the *Vojislavljević* princes counted on western support against Byzantine suzerainty and adhered to Catholic Christianity. The Papal epistle of 1077 is usually accepted as the year in which the Pope crowned Michael I a king.⁶⁴ Over the next century, the *Vojislavljević* kings fought against the Byzantines, Normans and themselves in order to expand their state on the surrounding Serbian lands of *Zahumlje* and *Raška*.⁶⁵ Michael I's grandsons Vukan and Marko were installed as *Grand Župans* of Raška and Zahumlje and when the main branch of the *Vojislavljević* dynasty died out in the mid-12th century, the junior branch stemming from Marko that ruled in Raška from 1112 took over supremacy in Serbian lands. In 1166, the Raškan *Grand Župan*

⁶¹ *DAI, Volume I: 35*

⁶² Modern Dürres, in Albania

⁶³ Comnena, Anna - *Alexiad*, Book IV:viii – Greek text translated by E.R.A Sewter, Penguin Books, London, 1st ed, 1969, re-print 2003, 153; See also, Curta, 2006, 274 – After her, very few authors mention Albania and most primary sources on Albania come from later Ottoman sources.

⁶⁴ Ćirković, 2004, 27

⁶⁵ Zahumlje is Slavic for Porphyrogenitus' Zachlumi/a (modern Herzegovina), whilst Raška became the exonym for the Serbian principality centred on the town of Ras, which was the capital of the province.

Stefan Nemanja (1113-1200, ruled 1166-1196) managed to unite Raška, Duklja, Zahumlje, southern Dalmatia and northern Albania. He was to become the founder of the *Nemanjić* dynasty (1166-1371), that would rule much of the western Balkans during the High Middle Ages. Stefan Nemanja (Fig. 1.a.9) himself was born in Doclea and was baptised a Catholic, but for political purposes he later converted to Orthodoxy, the faith in which he remained until the end of his life.⁶⁶



Fig. 1.a.8 – Equestrian monument to King Tomislav, by Robert Frangeš-Mihanović. Created in 1928-29, erected in 1947



Fig. 1.a.9 – Fresco portrait of Stefan Nemanja in King's Church of the Studenica Monastery, painted in the early 14th century

1.7 The High Middle Ages – The Serbian Empire and the Kingdom of Bosnia

Norman incursions during the 11th and 12th centuries weakened Byzantine influence in the Balkans, providing an opportunity for Bulgarian and Serbian states to assert their political independence. Bulgaria declared the establishment of the Second Bulgarian Empire in 1185, whilst Stefan Nemanja retained the title of the Grand Župan, spending much of his reign in uniting various Serbian principalities and fighting the Bogomil Heresy.⁶⁷ After successful persecution of the Bogomils, Nemanja abdicated in 1196 in favour of his second son, Stefan II. The surviving Bogomils

⁶⁶ The frequent changes in church jurisdiction and allegiance was the result not only of the politics of the ruling elites, but also of great poverty caused by wars. Except for the southern Balkans and well-fortified Adriatic cities, there are virtually no surviving edifices dating from 9th-10th centuries anywhere in the Western Balkans – See Ćirković, 2004, 17.

⁶⁷ In Serbian documents of the time they are referred to as *Babuni* – originating from the Mount Babuna in Macedonia.

withdrew into the Bosnian mountains where they were allowed to live by the Bosnian prince Kulin Ban (1163-1204, ruled 1180-1204).⁶⁸

During Kulin Ban's reign, the name of Bosnia as a political entity appeared for the first time in history, resulting not from Nemanja's persecution of the heretics, but from the first record of Byzantine – Hungarian rivalries over supremacy in the territory increased and the struggle for religious domination between the Catholic and Orthodox churches intensified (Map 1.a.9). Traditionally, scholars argued that the name derived from the river Bosnia which runs through the central part of the modern republic, although some local researchers argued after 1945 that the name Bosnia derived from the Illyrian tribe of *Bessi* or *Bossi* that inhabited the territory in the pre-Roman period.⁶⁹



Map 1.a.9 – The political map of the Balkans around 1184; state marked pink represents the Serbia of Stefan Nemanja, whilst green represents the most probable borders of the Bosnian Principality, ruled by Nemanja's relative Kulin-Ban.

⁶⁸ The establishment of the *Banate of Bosnia* took place sometime after death of Manuel I Comnenos (1118-1180, ruled 1143-1180), when *Ban* Kulin asserted his independence from Byzantium. The argument that Kulin Ban allowed the “heretics” to live in his state comes from the accusatory letter sent by Nemanja's son Vukan, Prince of Duklja to Pope Innocent III (1198-1216). However, Vukan did not describe these heretics and it is not clear whether they were really those who escaped Nemanja's persecution. See, Fine, J.V.A – *The Late Mediaeval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth century to the Ottoman Conquest*, Ann Arbor, 1994, 43

⁶⁹ Zirdum, A. – *Motivi pisanja i svrha Lastričeva povijesnog djela “Epitome Bosnensis Provinciae,”* Sarajevo, 1977, 79-86, quoted in Fath-Lihic, A. M. – *Nastajanje nacije – Između unutrašnjeg razdora i vanjskog pritiska – Bosanski Muslimani na putu od etničke svijesti do nacionalnog identiteta*, Sarajevo, 2008, 31-34 – This “Illyrian” reference to the origins of Bosnian name serves the purpose of modern nation-building process, which requires minimization of Serbian/Croat origins of the Bosnian Muslims. It gained impetus in the 1990s, when the need to insist on a separate ethnic identity from the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats became paramount. Also, Malcolm, 1994, 2-4.

After the annexation of the Croat Kingdom in 1102, the Hungarians showed on several occasions their interest in expanding south of the Sava River into Byzantine territories inhabited and ruled by local Slav princes – *bans*. After denouncing Byzantine suzerainty, Kulin Ban, who had close family ties with the senior branch of the Nemanjić family⁷⁰ which was already inclining towards Catholicism during the Third Crusade (1189-1192), prompted him to accept Hungarian supremacy and with it Roman Catholicism. This was a sensible political option as the Fourth Crusade of 1204 changed the political and religious situation dramatically. The establishment of the Latin Empire in Constantinople reduced Byzantine influence to Nicaea with various pockets of Orthodoxy in the Balkans and elsewhere. This prompted Stefan II to raise the territories consolidated by his father to the rank of kingdom.

Stefan the First-Crowned (1165-1228, ruled 1196-1228), as his name suggests, was crowned the first king of the Serbs in 1217 under the Catholic rite by his younger brother Sava (1174-1236), who became the first Archbishop of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church in 1219. In the same year, Sava produced the first Serbian Law Code, *Nomokanon*, a set of Civil and Canon Laws based on Roman Law, written in the Serbian redaction of Old Church Slavonic. The two brothers began establishing the Serbian Kingdom that incorporated both Catholic and Orthodox populations. Through erection of churches, monasteries and castles, which fused Byzantine and Latin traditions, they set the course for the cultural development and political expansion of their successors.

In the next two centuries, the Serbian Kingdom developed and prospered under the *Nemanjić* dynasty, which in 1346 became an Empire under Stefan Uroš IV Dušan (1308-1355, ruled 1331-1355). Dušan's state included much of the Balkans and some historians argue that he intended to replace the Byzantine Empire.⁷¹ On the same day he became an Emperor, the Serbian Archbishopric was raised to the rank of Patriarchate. In May 1349, in his capital Skopje, Dušan proclaimed a set of laws regulating life in the Empire, the *Dušan's Code (Zakonik)*. An extended version was issued in 1353 and the *Code* remained a form of mediaeval constitution until the Ottoman conquest in the 15th century. The Nemanjić dynasty died out with Dušan's son Stefan Uroš V in 1371 and immediately sparked internal struggles for power

⁷⁰ Kulin's sister was married to Stefan Nemanja's elder brother, Miroslav of Zahumlje and they had cordial relations during the struggles against the Byzantines.

⁷¹ Fine, 1994, 310

among the major aristocratic families. This coincided with the new threat coming to the Balkans from Asia: the Ottoman Turks. In the same year, 1371, the Serbian aristocrat Vukašin Mrnjavčević (1320-1371), a self-proclaimed king of the southern parts of the former Serbian Empire since 1365, fought a major battle against the Ottomans on the River Maritza in modern Bulgaria.⁷² After a heavy defeat, the remnants of the Byzantine Empire, Bulgaria and Vukašin's kingdom became vassals of the Ottoman Sultan. The Kingdom of Zeta, traditional principedom of the heir to the Nemanjić throne became the dukedom of the Balšić family (1362-1421).⁷³

During the Nemanjić rule of much of the central west Balkans, a small Bosnian *banate*⁷⁴ was under the suzerainty of Hungarian kings, who insisted on loyalty to the Catholic faith of Bosnian *Bans*. However, the evidence suggests that some form of confessional discrepancies existed throughout the 13th and 14th centuries, as several papal *legates* were dispatched to Bosnia to investigate the matter. These confessional discrepancies, most commonly described as the existence of the *Bosnian Church*, are not fully known due to scarcity of evidence. Therefore, the interpretation of the nature of the Bosnian Church is speculative, with theories ranging from arguments that Christianity in Bosnia differed from the official canons of both Catholic and Orthodox Churches to that it was a dualist *Bogomil* heresy that had survived persecution in Bulgaria and Serbia.⁷⁵

After Kulin Ban, several weaker *bans* ruled a small Bosnian state until the first part of the 14th century, when Ban Stefan II Kotromanić (1322-1353) began asserting his influence over territories bordering his dominions in central Bosnia. His father, Stefan I secured political support from the Nemanjić kings through marriage, but the main problem in the Bosnian *banate* at the time was the struggle for supremacy between the powerful Croatian Ban Mladen II Šubić (1270-1341) and Stefan II himself. Eventually, Stefan II prevailed, not through military superiority but through political skill. Since the beginning of the 14th century, Hungary was engulfed in

⁷² Vukašin's kingdom included southern Serbia, eastern Bulgaria and Macedonia.

⁷³ The Balšić family rose to power during the reign of Emperor Dušan in the early 14th century, although their origins remain unknown. Their dominion included most of Montenegro and northern Albania, with the towns of Scodra and Durres.

⁷⁴ The borders of the *banate* were changeable, but mostly included central and north-west Bosnia, around the town Visoko on the River Bosnia. Zahumlje and Travunija, originally mentioned by Porphyrogenitus, the southern parts of the modern republic, were within the Serbian state throughout the period.

⁷⁵ These theories represent key-arguments in nation-building movement of modern Bosniacs beginning from the late 20th century. See further this thesis.

dynastic wars in which powerful nobles sided with various pretenders to the throne, whilst Serbian kings, after experiencing similar problems, looked eagerly at the main prize in Constantinople. Nemanjić's engagement with the Byzantines enabled Stefan II to annex Zahumlje and eastern Bosnia which had a significant Serbian Orthodox population. At the same time, the Pope dispatched Franciscans to Bosnia to deal with the elusive heresy. The pressure from the Pope and the Hungarian king prompted Stefan II to declare himself a Roman Catholic. However, his nephew and heir, Ban Tvrtko I (1338-1391, ruled 1353-1391), whilst continuing his uncle's policy of strengthening the state, declared himself Serbian Orthodox and crowned himself King of Serbia and Bosnia at the grave of the first Serbian Archbishop Sava Nemanjić in 1377 (Fig. 1.a.10). The Bosnian kingdom under the *Kotromanić* dynasty lasted until the Ottoman conquest in 1463, but its prosperity and development were hindered by internal struggles among powerful nobles. Religious conversions ranging from Catholic to Orthodox to Bosnian Church further complicated issues, as did external interference from Hungary.



Fig. 1.a.10 – The monument to Tvrtko I Kotromanić in Tuzla (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Muslim-Croat entity of modern Bosnia and Herzegovina), by Adis Lukač, erected in 2012. The inscription omits Tvrtko's title as the King of Serbs and Serbia.

1.8 The Kosovo Battle and the Ottoman conquest

The Ottomans appeared in the Balkans in the 14th century, during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1292-1383, ruled 1347-1354), when they aided him in the Byzantine civil war. The Ottoman *Sultans* quickly took advantage of the situation in which disintegrating Byzantine, Bulgarian and Serbian states could not assert control over the powerful noble families, resulting in frequent civil wars and mutual political distrust. The Battle of Maritza established Ottoman ruler in the southern Balkans, whilst the northern parts of the former Serbian Empire remained under the rule of a few high nobles from Dušan's court. In the second part of the 14th century, the Ottomans conquered for the first time strategically important cities of Adrianople and Thessaloniki, which provided them with bases for further expansion. The transfer of the capital from Bursa to Adrianople in 1365 by Murad I (1326-1389, ruled 1362-1389) signalled the beginning of the Balkan conquest. By the late 14th century most of Bulgaria was conquered, with its capital Tarnovo taken in 1393. In 1396, the Second Bulgarian Empire ceased to exist.

After Maritza, the Ottomans waged several smaller wars against the Serbian armies, but the most important battle took place on the 28th June 1389 at Kosovo Polje, northwest of Priština, the modern-day capital of the Province of Kosovo.⁷⁶ The earliest records of the battle are unclear,⁷⁷ but what is known is that the armies were led by Prince Lazar (1329-1389, ruled 1373-1389) on the Serbian and Sultan Murad I on the Ottoman side. The position of the armies, their numbers and equipment on the battlefield became the subject of innumerable academic analyses. The most frequently accepted estimate is that the Serbs had between 12000-20000 men, whilst the Ottoman numbers were 27000-30000.⁷⁸ Academic consensus over the outcome of the battle is that it was a draw. Both sides suffered heavy losses: Serbia lost almost all of its manpower, whilst the Ottomans had to withdraw and regroup in the east. Serbia was left as a vassal state, but after "losing the flower of its nobility" it was unable to resist the Ottoman Turks effectively.⁷⁹ The Turks eventually won, because they had greater

⁷⁶ The battle itself and its consequences for the Serbian mediaeval state, evolved into a core memory of the Serbian nation and a leading emblem of Serbian national identity.

⁷⁷ One surviving letter from the Florentine Senate to Tvrtko I in Bosnia, dated October 1389, praises the death of Murad I in the battle.

⁷⁸ Fine, 2000, 410

⁷⁹ Mihaljčić, R. – *The Battle of Kosovo in History and in Popular Tradition*, Belgrade, 1989, 18

resources to continue the conquest, whilst the Serbs had been left with too few resources to defend their territory.

This battle marked a turning point in Serbian history, the “doomed battle” that condemned the Serbian state and the Serbs to slavery under Ottoman, Islamic and “alien” culture for the following four centuries. What made it so special in both Serbian and Turkish traditions was that both military leaders, Prince Lazar and Sultan Murad were killed in the battle. There are no clear records of how it happened. One of the earliest accounts, written c.1433 by Constantine the Philosopher, the chief librarian of Despot Stefan Lazarević (c. 1377-1427, ruled 1389-1427) suggests that the Sultan died by the hand of an infidel who was a Christian knight.⁸⁰ The name of the assassin was not given and later accounts that mention this episode are scarce. The name of Miloš Obilić⁸¹ entered the sources relating to the battle at the end of the 15th century through Byzantine authors.⁸² In the next two centuries, several surviving accounts from different authors, mainly Greek, Italian and German repeat the name in different spelling and place him in Prince Lazar’s service and of Serbian origin.

The Battle of Kosovo forced the Ottomans to slow their conquest, whilst Lazar’s state continued to exist as a *Despotate* for another seventy years. First ruled by his son Stefan and then by his grandson through the female line Đurađ Branković (1377-1456, ruled 1427-1456), the territory of the Serbian Despotate shrank to the south of the Danube River and around the Morava Valley. The capital was transferred to Belgrade, but when the Hungarians demanded the Belgrade Fortress in exchange for political and military support in 1427, a new capital Smederevo was built also on the Danube. When the last Balšić ruler of Zeta died without a male heir in 1421, Stefan inherited Zeta and briefly united it with the Serbian Despotate. By then, the Ottomans fully occupied most of the southern Balkans which prompted both Stefan and Đurađ to seek closer ties with Hungary. Even though they remained Orthodox, they began introducing some typically Catholic customs to Serbia: knightly tournaments and dress code. This trend continued among the native aristocracy of Serbia, Bosnia and Albania

⁸⁰ www.rastko.rs – Accessed on 28/03/2012 - Константин Филозоф, *Повест о словима (Сказаније о писменех)* - *Житије деспота Стефана Лазаревића*, Стара српска књижевност у 24 књиге, књига 11, adapted to contemporary Serbian language by Лазар Мирковић; редакција превода Гордана Јовановић; прир. Гордана Јовановић, Просвета - Српска књижевна задруга, Београд, 1989.

⁸¹ Serbian spelling

⁸² www.deremilitari.org – Accessed on 12 June 2010 – The official website of The Society for Medieval Military History – For the condensed version see the article *The Battle of Kosovo: Early Reports of Victory and Defeat* by Emmert, T.A. of University of Minnesota

until the last of the western Balkan states fell to the Ottomans in the 15th century. Creating closer ties with the Catholic Church in order to gain help against the Ottomans remained the prime objective. However, none of this was enough to attract more support from the West.

The last Serbian Despot was also the last King of Bosnia, Stefan Tomašević (reigned as a king 1461-1463, as a despot shortly in 1459). The conquest of Constantinople in 1453 left no doubts that the Ottomans would continue expansion in the Balkans. Both Branković despots and Kotromanić kings continued their pleas to the Pope and the West for support, but all was in vain. In order to generate a united front against the Ottomans, the two families created an alliance through the marriage of Stefan Tomašević and Marija Branković in 1459 in Smederevo, effectively uniting Bosnia and Serbia. However, this failed to generate a force strong enough to face the armies of Mehmed II (1432-1481, reigned 1451-1481). On their part, the Ottomans regarded this act of unification unacceptable and after a short war, Serbia was finally conquered in June 1459. Stefan Tomašević withdrew to Bosnia, where he succeeded his father, King Stefan Tomaš, in 1461. Two years later, the Ottomans conquered Bosnia and executed the young king.

Zahumlje and Travunija, as parts of the former Serbian Empire and Bosnian Kingdom, were governed by the dukes of the *Kosača* family (1331-1480). Bosnian kings, too weak to exercise their power over the great nobles and constantly dependent on the Hungarian crown, were for most of the 15th century nominally Catholic. The *Kosača* dukes, on the other hand, insisted on their Serbian Orthodoxy and in 1448 they adopted the German title of *Herzog* of Zahumlje and Coast. In 1449, Herzog Stefan Vukčić *Kosača* (1404-1466) styled himself Herzog of St.Sava, in honour of the first Serbian Archbishop Sava Nemanjić. When Bosnia was conquered in 1463, the *Kosača* dominions held for another generation. When finally conquered in 1482, the Ottomans created a province named after the *Kosača*'s aristocratic title – the territory which included the original lands of Porphyrogenitus's "Zachlumi and Terbounia" – Herzegovina (Map 1.a.10). This territory has remained known under this name ever since.



Map 1.a.10 – Lands of Stefan Vukčić Kosača in 1440 became Herzegovina after he took the title of Herzog in 1448

While the Ottomans were expanding to Serbia and Bosnia, Zeta was immersed in power struggles between the successors of the former Balšić dominions. The Republic of Venice had been present in the former Byzantine Adriatic coastal cities since the Crusades and persistently interfered in the politics of the eastern Adriatic. When the Balšić family declined in the first part of the 15th century, smaller territories of Upper Zeta were taken over by the Crnojević family (1326-1515), whilst in the south several Albanian noble families gained prominence. Of these, the Castriots, originating between the rivers Mati and Drin in northern Albania, quickly began expanding their rule, pushing north to Scodra and south to Tirana. In the chaotic political situation of the ruling class in Albania in the mid-15th century, switching allegiance between Venice and the Ottomans and conversions between Orthodoxy, Islam and Catholicism became proverbial, until the advancing Ottomans finally conquered southern and central Albania by 1421.⁸³ The north, being a rugged mountainous terrain, remained controlled by the Castriots, George Castrioti Skanderbeg (Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu, 1405-1468) becoming the most important figure. Successful campaigns against Serbia and Bosnia enabled Mehmed II to give full attention to subduing uncooperative Albanians and end Skanderbeg's defiance.

⁸³ Fine, 1994, 410

Skanderbeg died in 1468 and was succeeded by his son John, who could only delay the inevitable for another decade. By 1479 all of Albania was conquered. Some rebellions took place in the mountains, but without any significant success. Zeta finally fell in 1496. At the same time, the war with the Ottomans enabled Venice to gain full control over the major coastal cities in Zeta and northern Albania. When the Venetians took over the coastal towns, they supported the expulsion of the Orthodox priests and population. The native aristocracy, both Albanian and Serbian, after losing their land to the Ottomans, usually fled to Venice.

By the beginning of the 16th century, the Ottomans controlled much of the Balkans, with the exception of Adriatic coast which was heavily defended by the Venetians. The conquered states were incorporated into the Ottoman administrative system, forming *eyalets* or *pashaliks*, usually centred on important towns or arranged according to geography. The Ottomans immediately began resettling the population in order to avoid rebellions and exercise more effective government, simultaneously massing their troops on the Danube and Sava, prepared to launch new conquests further into Europe. Along with the resettlements the conversion of the local Christian population to Islam began.

1.9 Under the foreign rule

After the fall of Serbian Despotate in 1459, remaining members of the Branković family held territories north of the Danube, then part of the Hungarian Kingdom.⁸⁴ Belgrade, under Hungarian rule since 1427, remained Hungarian until 1521, when it became one of the main strategic points for Ottoman incursions north of the Danube. The Bosnian royal family died out with Stefan Tomašević. After the fall of Bosnia in 1463, some of the surviving nobility and clergy of the Kingdom of Bosnia sought refuge in Dalmatian towns or in the Military Frontier.⁸⁵ Simultaneously, a number of high nobles and gentry converted to Islam within a generation. The Ottoman Empire crushed the Hungarian Kingdom after the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and extended deep into present-day Hungary and Croatia. The only part of the former Hungarian Kingdom unaffected by the Ottoman conquest in the Balkans was Croatia Proper,

⁸⁴ Parts of modern-day Vojvodina

⁸⁵ The re-establishment of the Serbian Despotate by the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490) in 1471 in the territory roughly corresponding to the present-day Vojvodina indicates that the Balkan Slav population, the Serbs and Croats, were given estates close to the Ottoman borders to protect the Hungarian crown.

covering the vicinity of Zagreb. This territory, known as *Banska Hrvatska* or *Civil Croatia*, was taken over by the Habsburgs after the Sabor of Cetin in 1527 and was run by the Vienna appointed Ban.⁸⁶ This situation lasted for the next century and a half.

The *Military Frontier* (*Војна Граница*, *Vojna Granica*) was first established in 1522 by the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I as protection against the advancing Ottomans.⁸⁷ As the situation in the Pannonian plain began to change to the advantage of the Habsburgs in the later 17th century, the *Military Frontier* was expanded eastwards. At first, it consisted of two administrative districts, the *Croatian Military Frontier* and *Slavonian Military Frontier*, separated by a vertical line north of the Una-Sava confluence.⁸⁸ The first district included Croatia Proper and the mountainous areas of Lika, Kordun and Banija, areas between the Dinaric range and the Adriatic Sea, bordering the Venice Republic in southern Dalmatia, as well as the Varaždin District, bordering Slavonia. The second district incorporated the province of Slavonia in the Pannonian plain, stretching along the Sava to its confluence to the Danube near Belgrade (Map 1.a.11). Both parts of Military Frontier were directly controlled by Vienna.



Map 1.a.11 – The 19th century Austro-Hungarian map of the Military Frontier (marked red)

The situation south of the Sava and Danube (in what are now Bosnia and Herzegovina, central Serbia and Dalmatia) was no less complicated than in the territory of the Military Frontier. Until the 15th century, the Slavic noble families, both Catholic and Orthodox, were frequently intermarrying and changing their religious

⁸⁶ The title of Ban was an old Slavic title, from the pre-Royal periods in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina; since 1526 the Bans of Croatia Proper were from all ethnic backgrounds: Croat, Hungarian and occasionally Austrian.

⁸⁷ Fine, 2006, 177. See *Chapter II – The Croats*, p. 129-135

⁸⁸ Banac, I. – *The National Question in Yugoslavia – Origins, History, Politics*, London, 1984, 4th Ed. 1994, 37

allegiances. It was not unusual for a Catholic baron to marry an Orthodox woman and vice versa.⁸⁹ It was also very common that one generation of the nobles adhered to Catholicism and the next to accept Orthodoxy.⁹⁰ This situation lasted for most of the period between the 12th and 15th centuries and was particularly obvious in the territories of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia. The Catholic influence of Italian-dominated coastal towns penetrated the hinterland through the river valleys of Cetina, Neretva or Morača,⁹¹ whilst the Orthodox influence through the Slavonic liturgy and Cyrillic script was reaching as far north as the Kvarner Islands and Istria.

From the 12th century, with occasional intervals of Hungarian and Ottoman rule, the Dalmatian coast and islands were ruled by the Venetian Republic. The exception was the Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) which managed to retain its independence as a separate state ran by an oligarchy of rich aristocrat-merchants (Map 1.a.12). However, Venetian domination in the eastern Adriatic lasted unbroken between 1420 and 1797. This helped to maintain a form of the corrupt Latin language in major coastal towns and its later evolution into a Dalmatian dialect of the Romance language group. By the 16th century, this language was replaced by Italian.



Map 1.a.12 – Republic of Ragusa before the loss of independence in 1808

⁸⁹ The Croat Count Mladen III Šubić (1315-1348) married the Serbian princess Jelena Nemanjić, the founder of the Orthodox Monastery of Krka in 1345.

⁹⁰ Stephen II Kotromanić (1322-1353) converted to Catholicism from Orthodoxy early in his reign, whilst his nephew Tvrtko I Kotromanić (1353-1391), the first King of Bosnia crowned himself according to the Orthodox rites in the monastery of Mileševo, one of the main Nemanjić endowments. It was already mentioned earlier that Stefan Nemanja (1166-1196), the Grand Župan of Serbia, was baptised in the Catholic Church.

⁹¹ Montenegro

Ottoman expansion ended with the defeat outside Vienna in 1683. The Holy Roman Empire led the counter-offensive to the south of the Danube, captured Belgrade in 1688 and forced the Ottomans as far south as Kosovo and Macedonia. The Serbian Christian population living under the Ottomans, encouraged by the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć,⁹² joined the Christian armies and participated in the war, but after the Treaty of Karlowitz (Карловци, Karlovci) in 1699, Belgrade was returned to Ottoman rule and the borders between the two empires were established on the south bank of the Sava and Danube rivers. The Treaty of Karlowitz enabled the extension of the buffer-zone of the Military Frontier between the Empires and divided the Serbian and Croat population between two zones of influence (Map 1.a.11). The extended Frontier included parts of the territories of present-day Vojvodina and Romania. The Muslim population was promptly expelled from the territories re-conquered by the Habsburgs. For a short period of two decades, the Austrians captured much of the Belgrade Pashalik, renaming it Kingdom of Serbia (in existence 1718-1739).

1.10 The Migrations

Territorial losses prompted the Ottomans to retaliate against the Serbian Christian population which actively participated in wars on the Austrian side. Following Austrian withdrawal north of the Danube after the Treaty of Karlowitz, Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević (1633-1706), fearing Ottoman retaliation, decided to migrate *en masse* to Austrian territory in 1690.⁹³ The event, known as the *First Great Migration*, was led by the Patriarch himself and included the Serbs mainly from Kosovo and Metohija, Macedonia and Raška. The third Austro-Turkish war in fifty years ended with the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. The Kingdom of Serbia returned to the Ottomans, becoming again the Belgrade Pashalik. The direct consequence of this was the *Second Great Migration* of 1740, led by the next Patriarch Arsenije IV Čarnojević. The result of these two great migrations was the changing ethnic and religious picture of the Kosovo and Metohija region in favour of the Muslim Albanians. The view of Serbian historiography is that 37,000 families crossed the Danube in 1690 alone.⁹⁴

⁹² The town of Peć (meaning: fireplace) in south Kosovo was the seat of the Serbian Patriarch between 1346 – 1463 and 1557-1766.

⁹³ Ćirković, 2004, 143

⁹⁴ <http://www.sanu.ac.rs/English/Arhivi/SremskiKarlovci.pdf> - The pdf archival materials of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) – Accessed 08/03/2012 – Equally valid point is that the ethnic picture north of the Danube changed in favour of the Serbs following the Migrations. However, after

The rest of the 18th century witnessed a military stalemate between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. Engaged in other geo-political events, strategic interests shifted from the Balkans. The local population remained subdued between two empires until the early 19th century, when Napoleon's European campaigns brought cataclysmic changes.

1.11 The National awakening in the 19th Balkans century and the birth of nationalism

The ideas of national awakening stemmed from the objectives of the French Revolution taking the form of political and cultural movements.⁹⁵ The Napoleonic wars spread revolutionary ideas of nationalism to the rest of Europe. Once firmly rooted in the European cultural capitals, they began affecting peoples and territories with no direct contact with France. In the Balkans, the early 19th century was marked by two great revolutions: the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813) and the Greek War of Independence (1821-1832). Both revolutions marked the beginning of the national states of Serbs and Greeks after nearly five centuries of Ottoman rule. By the early 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was in decline. Leading European Great Powers, Great Britain, France and Russia, were increasingly interested in the strategically important region of the Balkans, controlled by a weak Islamic state. It is not surprising that they interfered both politically and militarily and selectively supported the rebellious Serbs and Greeks in their efforts to liberate themselves.

The First Serbian Uprising led by Djordje Petrović Karadjordje (1752⁹⁶-1817), a pig merchant who had served in the Austrian *freikorps* units of the Military Frontier in the 1787-1791 rebellions and wars (Fig. 1.a.11) took place on the territory of Belgrade Pashalik. It lasted for nearly a decade, but failed to achieve an independent state. In 1815, the Second Serbian Uprising began under the leadership of Miloš Obrenović (1780-1860). After initial battles, the struggle continued diplomatically and in 1830 the Belgrade Pashalik was recognized as the Principality of Serbia,

the Habsburgs expelled the Ottomans following the Treaty of Karlowitz, a significant number of Muslim population was expelled south of the Danube, thus leaving large areas of Slavonija, Srem and Banat depopulated. The process of colonization of the Serbs and Croats escaping from the Ottomans, as well as the Hungarians and Germans from the north began. Additionally, large areas north of the Danube were marshlands and swamps during the Middle Ages, which made them scarcely populated until the new population began reclaiming them for cultivation.

⁹⁵ See discussion on nationalism, p.

⁹⁶ There is a controversy about Karadjordje's birth, but 1752 is most commonly used.

autonomous within the Ottoman Empire. Miloš Obrenović was recognized as its hereditary prince (Fig. 1.a.12). In 1832, the Kingdom of Greece, consisting only of the territory south of the line Arta – Volos was created under the patronage of Great Powers.



Fig. 1.a.11 - Karadjordje Petrović (1752-1817), leader of the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813).



Fig. 1.a.12 – Miloš Obrenović (1780-1860), leader of the Second Serbian Uprising (1815-1830).

For the next two generations, Balkan borders remained unchanged and saw the gradual political and cultural development of Serbs and Greeks expressed through the adoption of more advanced European nation-state models.⁹⁷ The northern Greeks and the Serbs from Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina attempted uprisings against the Ottomans during the 1850s and early 1860s, but these were all suppressed.

The 1848 revolution that engulfed much of Europe had a particularly significant impact on the Habsburg Empire. This new revolutionary and populist nationalism in the Habsburg Monarchy affected all its constituent people and imposed internal threats. The Hungarians, as the second largest ethnic group, were the greatest opponents to the nationalism of German speaking Austrians. Wedged between these two extremely strong nationalisms were various Slavs of the Empire. The Croats, traditionally part of the Hungarian Kingdom, were often in an unenviable position

⁹⁷ According to Prof. Victor Roudometoff, the development of the nationalism began with the Greek and Serbian national awakening in the early 19th century, continued with that of the Bulgars and Croats in the later 19th century and finally ended with that of the Albanians in the early 20th century. See further discussion.

whether to support Vienna or Budapest. To counterbalance both German and Hungarian attempts to secure Croat loyalty, the Croat national idea was presented in the form of the Illyrian cultural movement.⁹⁸ Since the Croats were less numerous than the Hungarians and Austrians, their political manoeuvring space was seriously limited. Thus, from the 1860s, a new national idea that could potentially generate massive political support was presented to the Southern Slavs of the Habsburg Empire. This was the idea of *Yugoslavism – South-Slavism* – the idea that counted on rallying the Croats and Serbs behind the common goal of achieving political and cultural freedoms from the Habsburg rule.

The 1875 uprising of the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the Ottomans, marked the beginning of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878). In a series of uprisings throughout the Ottoman Balkans in which the external influence of Great Powers had a major role, Serbia and Montenegro emerged as fully recognized and officially independent states. In reality, their borders were determined by the Great Powers during the Congress of Berlin in 1878 and they both depended economically and politically on Austro-Hungary. Additional political outcomes of the Eastern Crisis were the creation of an independent Bulgaria in 1878 and the occupation of the Vilayet of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the politically transformed Habsburg Austro-Hungary.

Cultural outcomes of the Great Eastern Crisis were the full acceptance of European ideas of nationalism amongst the major Balkan nations and the development of the national narratives and culture, which began to collide in the territories inhabited by ethnically mixed populations.⁹⁹ However, in the early 20th century, the change of dynasty in Serbia altered Serbian foreign policy. Its reliance on Austro-Hungary was replaced by that to Russia and France. Equally, the young Balkan states of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Romania had the same goal to finally expel the Ottoman Empire from the territories they considered traditionally theirs.

1.12 The creation of Albania and Yugoslavia

The Pig War of 1906 and Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 resulted in closure of borders with Serbia. Despite general dissatisfaction among Serbs and Croats within Austro-Hungary, which the Serbian Government expected to be helpful in a crisis situation, the imperial institutions were

⁹⁸ See discussion in the main part of this thesis.

⁹⁹ See discussion in the main part of this thesis.

far too strong for any thought of military action against such a powerful neighbour with Germany as its ally. When the Young Turks' policies entered the period of instability within the Ottoman Empire, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria were "explicitly encouraged [by the internal Ottoman instability]¹⁰⁰ to start a war against the Ottomans, which they did in 1912-1913."¹⁰¹

The First and the Second Balkan wars ended with Serbian, Montenegrin and Greek victory over the Ottomans and Bulgarians, which all enlarged their territories by partitioning Macedonia and incorporating in their new states much of their ethnic kindred. This alarmed Austro-Hungary which immediately sought to alleviate the outcomes of Balkan wars. However, Serbian competition with Bulgaria over the Slavic part of Macedonia which significantly increased after the *Ilinden Uprising* in Macedonia in 1903 resulted in Bulgarian discontent with the division of Macedonia and future choice of the allies in both World Wars.¹⁰² The creation of an independent Albania in 1913 was decided by the Great Powers during the London Peace Conference on insistence of Austro-Hungary whose major concern was to protect her interest rather than to allow Albanians to live in their own nation-state.¹⁰³ The Serbs were denied a sea exit, following the Austro-Hungarian objections. The 1913 *London Peace Conference* put into effect a temporary agreement between the Great Powers, but a satisfactory solution for the borders of the new states was not reached.

The new Albanian state received its full international recognition in July 1913 and was placed under the rule of a minor German princely House of Wied. The German dynasty lasted for less than six months, before Prince Wilhelm was forced into exile following the Muslim Uprising of 1914 that sought to oust the International Commission of Control and International Gendarmerie established to control the territory and the nascent institutions of the new state. The rebels perceived these foreign Christian institutions as oppressive towards the Muslim majority in the country.

Serbia and Montenegro, fully internationally recognized in 1878, gained territories from former Ottoman provinces in Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija and

¹⁰⁰ My square brackets

¹⁰¹ Kovačević, 1998, 16 quoted in Isaković, Z. – *Identity and Security in Former Yugoslavia*, Aldershot, 2000, 118

¹⁰² See *Chapter IV – The Macedonians*, p. 331-332

¹⁰³ The British Foreign Secretary at the time, Sir Edward Grey, remarked that "the primary aim was to preserve the agreement between the Great Powers themselves." Zavalani, 1969, 71, quoted in Isaković, 2000, 119

Raška. These territories were ethnically and religiously mixed following the centuries old Ottoman custom of mixing the population. The borders drawn during the London Peace Conference were again determined by the Great Powers. However, barely a year had passed before a new crisis erupted in the Balkans.

The Sarajevo Assassination led to the outbreak of the First World War.¹⁰⁴ The official visit to Sarajevo of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on Vidovdan, 28 June 1914, the national day of the Serbs, ended in the deaths of the Archduke and his wife by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian member of the Yugoslav-orientated *Young Bosnia (Mlada Bosna)*. The events surrounding the Sarajevo Assassination became a *mythologem* equally misused by both foreign and Balkan historians and politicians.¹⁰⁵ Historians still argue whether the assassination was organized by the Serbian or Yugoslav nationalists.¹⁰⁶ One thing is clear: the discontent of the Serbs and some Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Austrian government.

The two Austrian offensives on Serbia in 1914 and 1915 were repulsed to the disbelief of both the Entente and Central Powers, incurring great losses on both sides. Eventually, Serbian resources were exhausted and the Serbian Army, King, Government and civilians began a difficult retreat over the Albanian mountains in autumn 1915, after Bulgaria joined the Central Powers. Over 200,000 lives were lost in the severe winter conditions of the “Albanian Golgotha”, before the remnants of the army reached Corfu.¹⁰⁷ Serbian territory was occupied and partitioned between Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria.

Already in December 1914, the Serbian government led by the Prime Minister Nikola Pašić (1845-1926) announced its war aims in the form of the *Niš Declaration*, which called for the unification of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In April 1915, a *Yugoslav Committee* consisting of Serbian and Croatian intellectuals and politicians from Austro-Hungary was formed in order to promote unification with Serbia. In July 1917, the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian government in Corfu signed a

¹⁰⁴ See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 409 and p. 443-444.

¹⁰⁵ The most blatant political misuse of this event was given by the former US President Bill Clinton in his speech at the start of the bombing campaign of Serbia in 1999 which implied that the Serbs were guilty for the outbreak of the First World War and subsequent Second World War and the Holocaust. – <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3932> – Accessed 02/04/2012

¹⁰⁶ Malcolm, N. – *Bosnia, A Short History*, London, 1994, 156

¹⁰⁷ Bataković, D. – *The Balkan Piedmont Serbia and the Yugoslav Question*, originally published in *Dialog*, Paris, 1994, 25-73 available at <http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/batakovic> – Accessed on 03/04/2012

Declaration for the unification into a Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The *Corfu Declaration* laid down the foundation of a unified constitutional monarchy with equality of alphabets, languages, religions and calendars (Fig. 1.a.13).¹⁰⁸ During the war, the Committee, based in London, lobbied for the Yugoslav cause.¹⁰⁹ Later, in the communist period of Yugoslavia, the events surrounding the work of the Yugoslav Committee and the Corfu Declaration were interpreted as the beginning of the “brotherhood and unity” which the Serbian government “forgot” immediately after the First World War when it began the implementation of the “Greater Serbian” policies towards the non-Serbian population of the Triune Kingdom.



Fig. 1.a.13 – The signatories of the Corfu Declaration in 1917. The document was considered one of the foundation stones of Yugoslavia.

The Great War, however, generally stimulated the nationalist sentiments of the South Slavs who, for the first time in modern history, experienced the possibility of national self-expression. The Serbian nationalist sentiment was particularly affected as its image of Serbs as fundamentally democratic people who were forced to undertake yet another struggle against a much stronger tyrannical enemy, was wholeheartedly supported by the Entente. The parallels between the 14th century, when the Serbs were martyred in the Kosovo Battle and the “1915 Golgotha” were often

¹⁰⁸ Ćirković, S. – *The Serbs*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004, 259

¹⁰⁹ Mitrović, A. – *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918*, London, 2007, 142

drawn by the Western governments, intellectuals and the press. As for the Serbs themselves, both events became a recurring theme in 1941 and 1990s.¹¹⁰

The complex problems surrounding South Slav unification are still not adequately researched. As much as it was a common goal of the Christian South Slavs, based on the romantic ideas of unity of language and a shared destiny, it was equally strongly influenced by the Great Powers' political aims. The extent of their involvement in the region is best illustrated by the series of treaties and draft documents exchanged on the outset of war: The Entente Powers secured Italy's support in exchange for Trieste, Gorizia, Gradiška, the whole of Istria and of historic Dalmatia, with its capital Zadar (secret Treaty of London, April, 1915). Serbia and Montenegro were to be awarded the Adriatic coast south of Italian Dalmatia, including Split and Dubrovnik, whilst Croatia was to be demilitarized. In exchange for the territory of Dalmatia, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vojvodina and perhaps Slavonia, Serbia was expected to give up Vardar Macedonia, which was offered to Bulgaria.¹¹¹ Clearly, Serbia did not have much influence on these, despite declarations and support for the Yugoslav cause coming from sympathizers of the idea. Serbia's warlike rhetoric invoking the destruction of Austro-Hungary was an act of defiance which meant to boost the morale of both the army and civilian population. The idea of Greater Serbia or, indeed, Yugoslavia, could not be more than a hazy dream in 1915, when the kingdom was occupied and partitioned and its recovery uncertain.

The impact of the First World War on Serbia was disastrous. According to the official Versailles Peace Conference report, Serbia alone lost 1,247,000 people: 845,000 civilians and 402,000 soldiers. Within its old borders (before 1912) Serbia had 2,900,000 inhabitants, which means that it lost 43% of its overall population. In its extended borders after 1912, Serbia had around 4,400,000, which reduces the overall population losses to 28%.¹¹² The Serbian intellectual elite was also decimated.¹¹³ Versailles Peace Conference promoted rights to self-determination of the peoples who lived in the territories of defeated Central Powers. Thus, when the South Slavs of Austro-Hungary declared unification with Kingdoms of Serbia and

¹¹⁰ Cornwall in Mitrović, 2007, xii

¹¹¹ *Il documenti diplomatici italiani*, Quinta serie, vol.III, Rome, 1985 and *Il Patto di Londra*, Rome, 1934 and *Public Record Office, FO 371/2265/1814, British report from Niš*, 1915, all quoted in Mitrović, 2003, 49

¹¹² <http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/batakovic> - Bataković, D. – The Balkan Piedmont Serbia and the Yugoslav Question, originally published in *Dialog*, Paris, 1994, 25-73 – Accessed on 03/04/2012

¹¹³ See *Chapter I – The Serbs*, p. 84-85

Montenegro, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca - SHS) was born.

The new state was formally recognized as the South Slav state, founded on the principles of self-determination. However, the census conducted in 1921 after the losses during the war revealed that the new Kingdom included in its population almost 15% of non-Slavic origin (Chart 1.1):

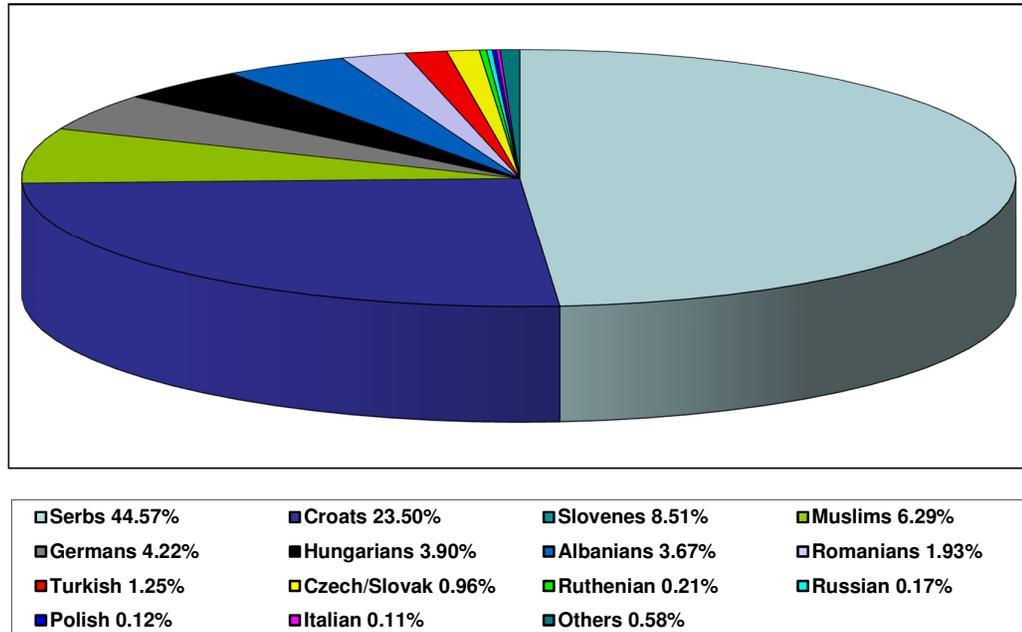


Chart 1: The ethnic structure of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1921 – based on Group of Authors – *Istorijski atlas* (1st Ed.) – Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva & Geokarta, Belgrade, 1997, 91

1.13 The Inter-war period 1920-1941 in Yugoslavia

In the chaos of First World War, diplomatic manoeuvres and propaganda, Croatian national aspirations were overlooked. With the exception of the period 1526-1699 most of the Croats had been under Central European influence since the Middle Ages. Social and religious development were influenced by the Habsburg Empire and, despite resentment towards the policies of Magyarization and Germanization, the Croats considered themselves a part of the European cultural domain. Both Slovenes and Croats fought in the Austrian armies during the war and, from that perspective, it is understandable why Croatian interests were not fully considered either by the Entente or by the Serbian Kingdom, especially when the outcome of the war became certain. However, a number of Croats, especially from Bosnia and Herzegovina, formed volunteer units and joined the Serbian army. The Yugoslav Committee, led by

the famous Croat sculptor Ivan Meštrović (Fig. 1.a.14), believed that the Yugoslav cause was the best possible option for the Croatian (and Slovene) national movements, as neither had an independent state of their own prior to the war.¹¹⁴ The Serbs supported the idea, welcoming all possible help from the Habsburg Slavs. For the Croats and Slovenes, therefore, joining Yugoslavia was favourable in practical terms, even though Serbia was much less economically developed and still retained traces of Ottoman culture. For the Serbs, Yugoslavia presented the opportunity to include all Serbs within the borders of one state. As far as the Entente was concerned, the legacy of the Great War was the victory of the right to national self-determination, as opposed to the principles of historic rights, promoted by the Central Powers.¹¹⁵ However, the mapping of the new state-borders was done for the benefit of the main Entente Powers. Smaller allies, among which was Serbia, had little influence over the general decision-making process.

Faced with a complicated ethnic structure and the economy of Serbia in ruins, problems between Belgrade and Zagreb occurred almost immediately after the war, threatening to dissolve Yugoslavia before it had a chance to survive as a unified country. The pre-war industry was slow to recover, the railway lines were not repaired until 1922, Austria's last-minute flooding of Serbian mines postponed the restoration of power, lightning and heating until 1920. Denied a place in the Allied commission for dividing up the Austro-Hungarian assets, the recovery of the Serbian economy was much slower in comparison with that of Croatia and Slovenia. The new state was even forbidden to nationalize the Austro-Hungarian companies in the former imperial territories. Not being exposed to the destruction of its infrastructure and economy, Croatian and Slovenian economic growth continued unhindered. Although roughly equal before the war, by 1926 Croatia's industrialization was four times that of Serbia.¹¹⁶

The crisis culminated in 1928, when the Montenegrin Serbian MP Puniša Račić shot Stjepan Radić (1871-1928), the leader of the *Croat Peasant Party* during the parliamentary debate (Fig. 1.a.15). King Aleksandar I Karadjordjević, in a vain attempt to preserve the unity of the state declared a royal dictatorship and, imposing his own

¹¹⁴ Djokić, D. – *(Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism* in Djokić, D. – *Yugoslavism – Histories of a Failed Idea – 1918-1992*, London, 2003, 18

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 53

¹¹⁶ Lampe, J.R. – *Yugoslavia As History: Twice There Was a Country* – Cambridge, 2nd Ed, 2000, 120

vision of unity in the proscribed cultural form termed *Integral Yugoslavism*, changed the name of the country from Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS) into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (the land of South Slavs). The whole territory of Yugoslavia was divided into nine districts (*banovinas*), named after the major rivers without any national prefix (Map 1.a.13).



Fig. 1.a.14 – Ivan Meštrović (1883-1962)



Fig. 1.a.15 – Stjepan Radić (1871-1928)



Map 1.a.13 – The division of Kingdom of Yugoslavia into nine *Banovinas* in 1929 did not correspond to ethnic or historical borders.

The dictatorship ended in 1934, when a group of Croatian and pro-Bulgarian fascists from Yugoslav Macedonia assassinated King Aleksandar I Karadjordjević (Fig. 1.a.16) in Marseilles. Aleksandar's heir, King Peter II was a minor, so his cousin, Prince Paul (1893-1976) became Regent (Fig. 1.a.17). Oxford educated, Paul favoured the British system of government, but its application to the Yugoslav case impossible. His years in power were marked by attempts to solve the growing problems between Croats and Serbs. However, his situation became ambivalent, when, except Greece, all countries neighbouring Yugoslavia on the eve of the Second World War allied to the Axis Powers, hoping to revise the borders drawn in Versailles.



Fig. 1.a.16 – King Aleksandar I Karadjordjević (1888-1934, reigned 1921-1934)



Fig. 1.a.17 – Prince Paul Karadjordjević (1893-1976, regent 1934-1941)

In August 1939, Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković (1893-1968) and the leader of the Croat Peasant Party, the most numerous Croat party in the Parliament, Vladko Maček (1879-1964) signed the *Agreement (Sporazum)* which created the *Banovina of Croatia (Banovina Hrvatska)* which would have special autonomy within Yugoslavia and incorporate as many ethnic Croats as possible in its territory (Map 1.a.14). This political attempt to solve the crisis came too late. The Second World War had already begun in Europe.



Map 1.a.14 – Banovina Croatia, created in 1939 within the Yugoslav Kingdom, aimed to include as many Croats as possible within its borders.

1.14 The Inter-war period 1920-1941 in Albania

After the Treaty of London and the creation of Albania in 1913, an International Commission of Control was created to draw up a constitution after investigation of local conditions. Vlorë temporarily became *de facto* the first capital of the new state. The Commission was advised by Ismail Qemali Bey of Vlorë (1844-1919), the first head of state of the independent Albania (Fig. 1.a.18). The international police and military supervision did not last, as the revolts of the Muslim Albanian peasants engulfed the young state in a series of clashes with the foreign police. After several years of disturbances and changes of government, Ahmet Muhtar Bey Zogu (1895-1961), emerged as a strong leader, winning power in 1925, first as a President 1925-1928, and then as a King 1928-1939 (Fig. 1.a.19).



Fig. 1.a.18 – Ismail Qemali Bey (1844-1919), the first Albanian Head of State in 1913.



Fig. 1.a.19 – Ahmet Zogu I (1895-1961, King 1928-1939), the only King of Albania in modern period.

In the inter-war period, Mussolini's Fascist Italy had major interests in Albania and strongly supported Zogu's regime. In April 1939, Italy invaded Albania and turned it into its colony. During the Second World War Albania was enlarged by the annexation of Yugoslav territories in Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and Montenegro. When Italy capitulated in 1943, Germany took over in Albania, supported by the pro-Nazi Albanian military units, *Balli Kombetar*.

1.15 The Second World War and the Communist victory

Yugoslavia was not involved in hostilities until 1941, as it proclaimed neutrality immediately. However, after the fall of France, British withdrawal from Dunkirk, and Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria joining the Axis, Prince Paul, aware of the fragility of the situation, was forced to sign the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941. This decision infuriated the Serbian population and great demonstrations broke out in Belgrade two days later. A military coup removed Prince Paul and proclaimed young Peter II as king. The swift German response codenamed *Operation Punishment* (*Unternehmen Strafgericht*) led to the indiscriminate bombing of Belgrade and other major Serbian cities on 6th April, with disastrous consequences. The former Austrian provinces, except for the parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina with a predominant Serbian population, were spared the bombing.

Following the short April War, in which the Yugoslav Army was unable to provide any significant defence, Yugoslavia was partitioned. Northern Slovenia was annexed by the Third Reich as a historic province of the former Holy Roman Empire, whilst its east were occupied by the Fascist Italy, which also annexed all but three of the Adriatic islands, Montenegro, Dalmatia and the Bay of Kotor.¹¹⁷ The *Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH)*¹¹⁸ was proclaimed on 10 April and included the territories of Croatia Proper, Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srem¹¹⁹ and islands of Pag, Brač and Hvar. The Bačka region of northern Vojvodina and the northernmost part of Slovenia were given to Hungary, whilst the Banat region of Vojvodina was under German rule. Kosovo and Metohija were incorporated into the Italian colony of Albania, whilst Macedonia and South-East Serbia, were given to Bulgaria. Serbia, in its 1912 borders, was occupied by German forces (Map 1.a.15). The majority of non-Serb Army officers immediately defected to the newly formed national armies in Croatia or joined German forces. This assisted capture of Serbian officers and soldiers and their dispatch to German concentration camps.¹²⁰ The royal family and Government fled to London. In the ensuing four years of war, the shattered units of the Royal Army and the communist partisans fought the Germans and against each other, which proved to be a disaster equal to that of the First World War. Various military units based on ethnic and religious groups also fought on all warring sides throughout Yugoslavia. Finally, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) emerged as the winning force. Immediately after the war, the CPY imposed its version of war events and state government, blaming the former royal regime for causing the inter-ethnic conflicts and civil war by its undemocratic centralism.

According to Yugoslav official records following the 1948 census and UNRRA, Yugoslav wartime losses was then accepted as being 1,7 million.¹²¹ This figure became one of the most contested casualty numbers in history, as by the late 1990s, it was drastically reduced, mainly by Croat authors and those Western scholars advocating intervention in the 1990s Yugoslav wars.¹²² What remains undisputed, however, are

¹¹⁷ Modern Montenegro

¹¹⁸ Independent State of Croatia – Neovisna Država Hrvatska – NDH in the following text

¹¹⁹ Part of Vojvodina, bordering Belgrade on the left bank of the Danube

¹²⁰ Bjelajac, M. – *The Military and Yugoslav Unity* in Djokić, 2003, 214

¹²¹ Singleton, F. – *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, Cambridge 1985, 206

¹²² Depending on authors, revised numbers varied significantly, especially those that were related to the victims of Serbian ethnic background. Word *genocide* was replaced with word *crime* and was interpreted in the most obscure terms.

the material losses including nearly 50% of industrial assets, 80% of agricultural equipment and over 820,000 buildings.¹²³



Map 1.a.15 – Partition of Yugoslavia by the Axis in 1941.

At the end of the war the communist regime headed by Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), supported by both the Soviet Union and the Western Allies, was firmly established. Josip Broz Tito (Fig. 1.a.20) believed that a national balance was crucial to maintain Yugoslavia's integrity. On 29 November 1945 the monarchy was abolished. The Karadjordjević dynasty and supporters of the old regime were forbidden to return and were stripped of their citizenship. The new state became a federal republic, consisting of six republics and two autonomous provinces. As Serbia was still the largest in population and territory, it was sub-divided into three smaller units, following mainly the old pre-First World War delineation. Croatia's borders were slightly modified borders of the Cvetković-Maček *Sporazum* of 1939. The CPY's first post-war leadership was ethnically varied: Tito himself was half-Croat and half-Slovene. Others included Edvard Kardelj, Boris Kidrič, Boris Zihelr and Miha

¹²³ Singleton, 1985, 206

Marinko, who were Slovenes, Vladimir Bakarić a Croat, Milovan Djilas (Fig. 1.a.21), later dissident and a historian, a Montenegrin Serb and Aleksandar Ranković, a Serb (Fig. 1.a.22). Tito's personal friend Moša Pijade was the only Jew.

Tito's role in the history of all former Yugoslav nations became the subject of controversy during the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, but no fully acceptable academic assessment is yet available. He made no attempts to create a unified Yugoslav nation, wishing to disassociate himself from the *Integral Yugoslavism* of the former royal regime. Tito's decision to establish three new nations on the territory of Yugoslavia after 1945, remains unclear whether it was deliberately directed towards reducing Serbian influence or because of his genuine internationalism and pacifism.



Fig. 1.a.20 – Josip Broz Tito (1898-1980)



Fig. 1.a.21 – Milovan Djilas (1911-1995)



Fig. 1.a.22 - Aleksandar Ranković (1909-1983)

Party authority was achieved through the mechanism of democratic centralism manifested through the motto *brotherhood and unity (bratstvo i jedinstvo)*. Since the word “centralism” was too closely associated with the pre-war royal centralism, leaving Belgrade as the capital of the new federal state seemed a bad choice. Sarajevo, in ethnically neutral Bosnia and Herzegovina, was suggested to be the new capital by some Party members, but it lacked a sufficient infrastructure and communications. It was also argued that Belgrade should remain the capital as it was thought that Serbia had been sufficiently humiliated.¹²⁴

In Albania, after German withdrawal, the communists also won. They were led by Enver Hoxha (1908-1985), the first president of the republic (Fig. 1.a.23) created

¹²⁴ Rusinow, D. – *The Yugoslav Experiment, 1948-1974*, Berkeley, 1978, 18

after the monarchy was abolished in 1946. Initially, Albania adhered to Soviet-style communism. This lasted until 1967, when Albania went into self-imposed isolation from the rest of the world. During the isolation, which lasted until 1991, Albanian communist leadership promoted national awakening, similar in many aspects to the 19th century national awakenings of other European nations.¹²⁵



Fig. 1.a.23 – Enver Hoxha (1908-1985), the first Albanian President (1945-1985)

1.16 The National Question in Communist Yugoslavia

Immediately after the war, in 1945, the CPY announced the creation of two new nations in Yugoslavia: the Montenegrins and Macedonians living in the territories of the newly created federal republics. The CPY's rationale was that the Royal Yugoslavia was centralised state with Serbian predominance not only in the numbers of the Serbs, but also in territory. Thus, the proclamation of the new nations in the territories separate from Serbia Proper, aimed at reducing the potentially powerful Serbian influence in the federal government, as up to that moment, peoples living there were considered ethnic Serbs.

Following the break with Stalin in 1948, Tito adopted a softer version of communist dictatorship, placing Yugoslavia in the balanced position between the West and East. He adopted a new role of “leading oppressed and underprivileged nations”

¹²⁵ See further discussion.

through his Non-Aligned Movement initiative in 1961. In Yugoslavia itself, the concept of “brotherhood and unity” officially promoted from 1945, was slowly being replaced by the concept of “socialist patriotism.”¹²⁶ Persisting social inequality among the Yugoslav nations, it was thought, could be defeated and justice achieved for all only by socialist revolutionary struggle, not by any agreement between Serbian and other ethnic political elites. Expressing national and religious affinities was not forbidden, but it was strongly discouraged by the authorities. Tito’s definition of justice was understood as justice for the disadvantaged and underprivileged. In the Yugoslav case, a just society was one in which smaller nations were no longer underprivileged.¹²⁷ Already the creation of the Montenegrin and Macedonian nations in 1945 seriously reduced the power and territoriality of Serbian nationalism. Furthermore, after the initial reconstruction of the country and successful resistance to Stalin, Tito and Kardelj began work on the decentralization of the federal state, the reorganization of the Communist Party and of the federal government. After the dismissal of Aleksandar Ranković, the last Serb within the CPY top-echelons, the road was open for the future reduction of Serbian influence in a state where they still constituted a significant percentage. Ranković’s departure from power in 1966 marked a complete absence of Serbs in high-profile offices until the appearance of Slobodan Milošević in 1987.¹²⁸

The national question in Yugoslavia was re-opened in the 1960s. Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić (1921-2014) began an open polemic with the Slovene historian Dušan Pirjevac (1921-1977) about nationalism, centralism and autonomy within Yugoslavia. In 1968 Ćosić openly criticised Tito’s policies of decreasing Serbian participation in the decision-making process on behalf of the minorities, which the Yugoslav political elite interpreted as the promotion of equality, especially in Kosovo and Metohija. As the leading communist nomenclature in Belgrade did not include many Serbs, Ćosić (Fig. 1.a.24) was easily publicly condemned as a Serbian nationalist and proclaimed a dissident.¹²⁹

In order to preserve their own privileges, the Yugoslav political elite enabled slow devolution of the federal state. Facing the strong Croat national movement which

¹²⁶ Jović, D. – *Yugoslavism and Yugoslav Communism: From Tito to Kardelj* in Djokić, 2003, 166-167

¹²⁷ Ibid, 159-160

¹²⁸ Ibid, 173

¹²⁹ Ćosić’s views were noticed by the SANU, which had been politically inactive since the end of the war.

occurred in the spring of 1971¹³⁰ and threatened by the Serbian response, the CPY top leadership had to rely on support from the minorities and young Yugoslav nations. Thus, in 1971 the new nation of Muslims was created.¹³¹ Until the 1971 census, the Slav Muslim population living predominantly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Raška-Sanjak in Serbia were regarded either as the Serbs or Croats who converted to Islam during the Ottoman period. Proclaiming the new nation was directed against the growing discontent of the Serbs and Croats within the federation. Following a long debate, a new federal constitution was adopted in 1974. It was particularly unfavourable to the Serbs, as it elevated the status of the Provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo¹³² to that of quasi-republics, whilst the territory of the former Serbian Principality was called “Inner Serbia”. Serbia was supposed to be in control of all of its territory but was refused authority to make decisions in Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija. On the other hand, the representatives of the provinces had full rights to participate in decision-making processes for the whole Republic.¹³³



Fig. 1.a.24 – Dobrica Ćosić (1922-2014), writer and later the President of “rump” Yugoslavia.



Fig. 1.a.25 – Slobodan Milošević (1941-2006) was the last leader of the Serbian Communist Party, before the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

The problematic 1974 Constitution also allowed for the possibility of self-determination, including secession for Yugoslav constituent peoples and republics, but

¹³⁰ Termed *Croatian Spring – Hrvatsko proljeće*, the movement began questioning the Croat position within Yugoslavia, causing some terrorist acts against the federal Yugoslav state both at home and abroad.

¹³¹ See *Chapter V – The Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, p. 427-428

¹³² The name Metohija was duly removed from the official name of the Province

¹³³ Isakovic, 2000, 125

only if other republics agreed. Self-determination was not based on ethnic, but administrative principles, which again affected the Serbs, as they were split into six Yugoslav sub-states.

1.17 The Break-Up of Yugoslavia

There is no consensus yet for the starting date of the official break-up of the Second Yugoslavia. Most Slovene and Croat authors argue that the break-up started with the publication of the *Memorandum* of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) in 1986 or with the famous speech given on the site of the Kosovo Battle on 28 June 1989 by the new leader of the Serbian communists, Slobodan Milošević (1941-2006) who had assumed power in the same year. Milošević (Fig. 1.a.25) sensed the change in the popular perception of the Serbian position within Yugoslavia and adopted a quasi-national posture. In March 1989 he won support for the repeal of clauses in the 1974 Constitution restricting Serbian sovereignty over Vojvodina and Kosovo. These provinces were restored to the jurisdiction of the Serbian republic. Milošević, however, failed to take into account the international factors which were willing to weaken and eventually partition Yugoslavia.¹³⁴

The changes that swept over Europe and the Soviet Union in the same period were inapplicable in Yugoslavia because of its mixed ethnic structure. When Slovenia and Croatia after their first multi-party elections proclaimed independence in 1991, it was not difficult to present to the international community the events in Yugoslavia as manifestation of Serbian chauvinism. Because the foreign policy of Yugoslavia had not been conducted by Serbs since 1945 and the key-ambassadorial positions were all in Croat or Slovene hands in the last three decades before the break-up, the position of Serbs within Yugoslavia was unknown abroad. In the ensuing media war Slovenian and Croatian claims to secede were supported by a newly united Germany and were granted in 1991 without much questioning. The traditional allies of Serbia in two world wars turned against Serbia. France, Great Britain and the United States joined a general condemnation of Serbia for their own reasons, whilst Russia was engulfed in the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The ensuing civil wars claimed over 100,000

¹³⁴ Gibbs, 2009, 2-25 – Gibbs argued that the unwillingness of the principal Western states to ease Yugoslav economic debt and separate economic treaties with individual republics highly contributed to the separatist movements in Yugoslavia itself.

lives¹³⁵ on the territory of former Yugoslavia with devastating consequences. A further two million were displaced from their homes, of which Serbia had the greatest number of nearly 700,000.¹³⁶

When hostilities broke out in Slovenia and Croatia in 1991, followed by the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) and Kosovo and Metohija (1999), as well as by the NATO attack on Serbia and Montenegro (1999), the leading Western Powers seized upon these events as a means to present to the world a new policy of international interventionism that did not need approval from the Security Council of the United Nations.¹³⁷ Using the world media, the West without inquiry singled out Serbia for war guilt and put it under strict sanctions, which lasted for the next decade. The wars of Yugoslav succession ended in 2001, with the Albanian failed uprising in the Macedonian Republic.

Six new states were formed on the ruins of Yugoslavia: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and disputed Province of Kosovo, recognized mainly by the West. They were recognized by the principle of ethnic self-determination, but in their communist borders.¹³⁸ The national self-determination was respected in all cases, except Serbian. The wars brought major physical devastation in those Yugoslav territories formerly ruled by the Ottomans. Forced displacement of population left vast territories without prospects, depopulated and ready for foreign rule. Slovenia and Croatia joined the European Union in 2004 and 2013 respectively, but their economic output is not on the level of developed European countries. The rest of former Yugoslav republics have the status of Candidates for joining the EU, but the dates of when this might take place are highly speculative. In the meantime, external pressure requires reconciliation between the

¹³⁵ This number is still subject to dispute. During the war, the reported number of victims passed 250,000. Various organizations and research institutions quote different numbers. The one used here is that of Dr Adam Roberts, President of the British Academy and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for International Studies at Oxford University. The quoted number was published in *Lives and Statistics: Are 90% of War victims Civilians? – Survival*, Vol.2, June-July 2010, taken from <http://ccw.modhist.ox.ac.uk/publications/Survival%20vol%2052%20no%203%20-%20Adam%20Roberts%20on%20lives%20%20statistics%20-%20non-printable.pdf> – Accessed on 16/04/2012

¹³⁶ <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Drustvo/Srbija-zemlja-sa-najvecim-brojem-izbeglica-u-Evropi.lt.html> – Accessed on 20/06/2013

¹³⁷ Gibbs, D. – *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Nashville, 2009, 2

¹³⁸ See Pellet, A. – *The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration Committee A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples*, Paris, 1992

South Slavs. This process is, however, hindered by the unequal treatment of the Yugoslav successor states and mutual resentment.

The West, as a major hegemon in the Balkans today, also requires reconciliation between the Serbs and Albanians. Albania, which began opening to the rest of the world in 1991, has undergone a series of political and economic changes. Endorsed by the West and Turkey, Albania strongly supports the national aspirations of its compatriots in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The mutual resentment between Albania and Serbia is very real and very present, but there are also some indications that Greece and Macedonia, which are also mutually distrustful of each other, possess similar ethnic and religious tensions with Albania. The economic crisis and general poverty of the region as a whole witness major emigration of all Balkan peoples, leaving this part of Europe with serious demographic problems (Map 1.a.16).



Map 1.a.16 – Western Balkans today

2. Nationalism as a binding force of a Society

“To this very day ethnicity strikes many Westerners as being peculiarly related to *all those crazy little people and languages out there*, to the unwashed (and unwanted) of the world, to phenomena that are really not fully civilized and that are more trouble than they are worth.”¹ Despite a substantial reservoir of Western knowledge about Southeast Europe, public debate about national policies adopted in the Balkans is “full of false dichotomies, flawed analogies, gross historical exaggerations and well-worn shibboleths with little foundation in historical reality.”² The national question in the Balkans became an explosive issue in the foreign policies of major European powers and coincided with the creation of the first “independent” Balkan states, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria in the 19th century, giving the Balkans a notorious nickname as “the powder keg of Europe”. The first attempts to understand the fragile and insecure political situation in the Balkans and its subsequent ethnic conflicts coincided with the period when the first theories of nationalism were discussed among European academic circles, themselves influenced by their own nationalist movements. The imperfection of these early theories, and a total absence of an academic tradition within the Balkans, added to the confusion in both the European scholarly approach and the development of any objective indigenous academic ideas.

As the phenomenon of industrial society developed in the course of the 19th century in the rich countries of Western Europe, nationalism became a binding force of such societies. Spreading eastwards, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, and especially after the revolutionary 1848, the ideas of nationalism tempted the emerging intelligentsia of the industrially underdeveloped European countries to seek the formation their own nation-states, modelled on the developed west of the Continent. The ideas of nationalism slowly penetrated the Balkans, where they acquired potentially lethal influence. This was a direct consequence of the underdeveloped societal structures of the Balkan Peninsula which, until the 19th century divided between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, had only a few decades of the 19th century to move from residual feudalism straight into the modern age. Lack of state continuity in all of the Balkan states and a much slower rate of

¹ Fishman, J. – *Language, Ethnicity and Racism in Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective*, Clevedon, 1989, 14-15, quoted in Greenberg, R. D. – *Language and Identity in the Balkans*, Oxford, 2004, 1. My Italics.

² Donia, R. and Fine, J.V.A. – *Bosnia and Herzegovina – A Tradition Betrayed*, New York, 1994, 3

industrial development clashed with the swiftness of European progress, finding *en route* a fertile ground for the flourishing of nationalism in its most dangerous forms.

2.1 Theories of Nationalism

The very idea of nationalism was born during the Enlightenment period of the 18th century, with works of great European philosophers of the period: Kant, Herder, Rousseau and Fichte only to be surpassed by 19th century thinkers and historians such as Marx, Engels, Renner and Michelet, Renan, von Treitschke or Lord Acton.³ Based on the works of these intellectuals, nationalism developed into a separate subject of academic inquiry only after the First World War. With the end of the Second World War, the studies of nationalism became diversified with the penetration of the ideas of various disciplines, namely sociology, the political sciences and international relations.⁴ As the end of the 20th century approached, the ideas of feminism, gender and cultural studies added to the classical academic debate, polarised between two major schools of thought marked as “primordialism” and “modernism.” In this way, the general aspects of studies of nationalism were further complicated by the multiplication of the research areas and instead of creating a universal theoretical base for subsequent new analysis, they just added to overall confusion. The evidence for this confusion is obvious in the plethora of both academic and non-academic publications circulating over the past few decades. Similarly, the rise of the information society in the past three decades, with its powerful tools of mass media, contributed to the polarisation of academic opinions and distorted images of the areas that traditionally had an endemic problem with ethnic conflicts. The Balkans became one of the focal points for the modern studies of nationalism in Europe.⁵ By this time, the Balkan states were undergoing yet another socio-political change, again at a slower pace, because of the turbulent

³ Özkirimli, U. – *Theories of Nationalism – A Critical Introduction*, London, 2000, 8

⁴ Özkirimli, 2000, 9

⁵ Quite often, non-academic publications are written in the form of academic works and contain a number of sources. However, the authors themselves frequently do not have sufficient academic backgrounds, or if they have, their research is based almost exclusively on secondary sources. This is particularly evident in the works of the journalists-turned-historians, such as the American Robert D. Kaplan, whose book *Balkan Ghosts* had a strong influence on American policy towards the Balkans in the 1990s. The American scholar of Bulgarian origin, Maria Todorova, successfully demolished Kaplan’s theories, but this heated academic debate never reached the wider public and remained within academic circles. As the wars of Yugoslav succession unravelled, a number of books produced in the similar manner became part of the compulsory read of the younger academics who frequently mistake them as a genuine work of scholarship.

transition from Communism to Democracy. This should be understood not in the sense that the Balkans are lagging behind other European nations because of their inability to develop, but rather because all of the new aspects studied nowadays tend to act as retarding forces for the real progress of the Balkan societies. This means that the newly defined theories of nationalism in the West cannot be implemented into the Balkan societies prior to passing the period of adjustment, as those societies had a series of interruptions of “natural” developments of nationalism. As such, the scholarly inquiries could not fully develop the academic definitions of nationalism applicable to the Balkans, therefore remaining interlocked in the traditional debates of nationalism that were transformed in the West after the political changes in the 1990s.

Balkan nationalism(s) against their historical settings were the most common methods in shaping national consciousness and legitimizing the nation-states. They developed primarily as national narratives with underlined parochialism with little knowledge of the history of their neighbours in the same period.⁶ The dramatic changes during the 1990s led to new lines in scholarly inquiry on the nature of Balkan nationalism(s), particularly when addressing the ethnic and national claims of various Balkan states, regardless of the ethnic origins of the authors. This inquiry was revised and replaced by an alleged multi-layered approach that included not only the traditional historicist understanding of nationalism, but also cultural, religious, political, ideological, sociological, economic, customary and psychological approaches when addressing the problems of the development of nationalism and national identity in the Balkans. While the inclusion of all these aspects in the theoretical studies of nationalism is generally welcome and considered to be moving the boundaries of research forwards, their application to the Western Balkans is still very much marred by the traditional misconceptions of the West towards the Balkans as a whole. This resulted from the inappropriate application of theories which, as the wars in former Yugoslavia intensified, allowed the academic language and terminology to frequently descend into open chauvinism by the authors’ willing adoption of the traditional bias against the side chosen to condemn.⁷ Many of the

⁶ Todorova, 1997, 183

⁷ See, for example, works of M.A.Hoare, N. Malcolm, S. Ramet, A. Bellamy, E. Gordy, L. Cohen et al. and a number of their students and followers. For the ultimately biased media coverage, see works of A. Little, M. Dobbs, M. Ignatieff, M. Tanner, E. Vullamy and a number of leading Western daily newspapers during the war. A typical prejudiced view of Western authors reads as: “...sensational,

new theories of nationalism were formulated during the wars in the 1990s in Yugoslavia, thus losing objectivity and a sense of historical perspective. The incorporation of these new Western views on nationalism in the Balkans into academic works and social practice should be approached very carefully, as the process of national consolidation of the various new Balkan nations is not yet complete. With the unwillingness of the West and states and ethnic groups that participated in the 1990s wars to hold a reconciliation process by providing an equal opportunity for an open public debate, the old dilemmas and debates will remain until a consensus on the nature of nationalism in the West Balkans is reached and accepted by the competing Balkan nationalisms. As this is not the case, it is reasonable to believe that most of the future analysis will be marred by the unsolved questions from the past. Bearing this in mind, the present analysis opted for the less revolutionary approach in discussing the phenomenon of nationalism in the Balkans, by adopting the theories and definitions that stood the test of time and became a classical literature in the studies of nationalism, irrespective of the authors' adherence to one school of thought or another.

2.2 The Great Divide

Classical theories of nationalism and corresponding analysis of the various manifestations of nationalism are generally divided into three main schools of thought: primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism. Each school emphasizes some aspects of nation-creation, but there is no general theory that would encompass all debatable arguments for the appearance and rise of nationalism. Furthermore, there is no single theory that would be applicable to every nation or state in the world, and certainly not one that would be valid for the case of Balkan nationalism(s).

The studies of nationalism were marked by the great debate between those academics in favour of primordialism, who regard national identity as “natural” and inborn within the individual, determined in time and space since time immemorial

paranoid manipulation of history and myth had a significant impact on many segments of society – the young, the elderly, the semi-skilled and less educated, and the rural sector – groups which together composed the bulk of Serbia's population..., so that they were brimming with xenophobia, contempt and hatred for neighbouring countries.” Cohen, L. – *Serpent in the Bosom: The Rise and Fall of Slobodan Milošević*, Boulder, Colorado, 2002, 105. Also, see Gordy, E. – *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives*, Pennsylvania, 1999, 6-20. Ramet and a number of her students and followers strongly support such views.

and those that consider national identity as a modern creation, formed by the conscious actions of a given state through the mechanisms of education and public events. This “great divide” in academic debate enabled the emergence of ethno-symbolism, which tried to incorporate arguments of both schools into a wider picture of the studies of nationalism.

However, the analysis of Balkan nationalism(s) requires a careful approach which would include all applicable arguments from each school, because the complexity of the Balkan situation cannot be seen exclusively from just one perspective. Before undertaking any such analysis, it is useful to give a brief overview of the main interpretations of nationalism studies with the conclusion that they can generally satisfy the theoretical background of the nationalism studies in the Balkans.⁸

2.2.1 Primordialism

It is generally accepted that the primordialistic approach to nationalism studies was based on the works of Clifford Geertz and Edward Shils, who first used the term “primordialism” in 1957 in order to describe the family attachments that an individual experiences not as a consequence of one’s upbringing, but as a blood tie.⁹ Based on this, the primordialistic account of nationalism is strongly related to the debate on ethnicity. The main premise of primordialism is that attachment to a group is “given” or “natural” that it exists before time and as such is ineffable, overpowering and unquestionable. Essentially, it puts into focus feelings and affections nurtured by an individual for the group.¹⁰ Another common denominator of primordialism is the “givenness” of the ethnic and national ties. They are embedded in the bloodline and as such transmitted unchanged from one generation to another since time immemorial. Following the longevity of the blood ties, the ethnic and nationalistic narrative contains several repetitive themes which serve as the driving force for national self-realisation:

- The antiquity of the particular nation – the purpose of such a narrative is legitimising the existence of that nation in a given territory and in given historical circumstances.

⁸ Later discussion will point to the challenging arguments against these classical theories in favour of normative history revisionism.

⁹ Özkirimli, 2000, 65

¹⁰ Ibid, 73

- The golden age of the particular nation – the purpose is usually to set the political course of the present in order to achieve what was once possessed, but now lost.
- The superiority of national culture – the purpose is to show the exclusivity and greatness of the particular nation.
- The period of decline of the particular nation – the punishment for choosing the wrong course in achieving national objectives.
- The theme of the national hero – serves the purpose for the awakening of the particular nation after the period of decline and decadence.¹¹

However, it would be wrong to assume that the complete principles of primordialism are based solely on feelings that an individual develops through the ties of kinship endorsed by upbringing. Primordialists amongst themselves create a much wider sphere of theoretical research which varies from the naturalistic and socio-biological approaches to the cultural approach which has much in common with some modernistic views. The naturalistic approach is by some academics seen as extreme primordialism, because of its predeterministic attitude towards members of the nation and negation of the ethnic groups as separate entities.¹² In the words of Anthony Smith, “nations are like natural organisms, subject to the laws of nature, forgotten and silent, perhaps, but continuing to exist beneath the debris of history until the moment of their rebirth.”¹³ However, this approach fails to explain the composition of modern nations, particularly the aspect of the historic exogamy of various ethnic groups from which these nations were moulded. The socio-biological approach, championed by Van den Berghe, arose as a special theory within a theory in the past three decades with the advancement of genetics and examines the kin selection in intra-group relations, as well as inter-group relations with neighbouring groups.¹⁴ According to this approach, the myths of common descent, shared by the members of the nation, correspond to the real biological lineage through the common ancestry. This aspect of primordialism is particularly useful when examining the similarities of border groups that compete for the control of the common territory. However, as is the case with the Balkan ethnic groups, it fails to explain the same

¹¹ Based on Özkirimli's explanation of Kedourie, 2000, 67

¹² Özkirimli, 2000, 66

¹³ Smith, A. – *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Oxford, 1999, 4

¹⁴ Van den Berghe, P. L. – *Race and ethnicity: a sociobiological perspective*, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 1, Issue 4, 401-11, 1978, and *Does Race Matter?*, Nations and Nationalism, Vol. 1, Issue 3, 357–368, November 1995, quoted in Smith, 1999, 4

myths shared by different ethnic groups¹⁵. The third aspect of primordialism, the cultural approach, emphasizes the significance of the individual's beliefs and perceptions.¹⁶ This approach put the “givens” of the human existence – territory, congruities of blood, speech, custom, religion, but fails to explain the emotional impact that the nation exerts over its members.¹⁷

2.2.2 Perennialism

Perennialism is a modified version of primordialism and even though it acknowledges the main postulates of the later, it maintains the significant difference which is that “the nations exist throughout recorded history, but are not part of the natural order.”¹⁸ For the perennialists, nations can be continuous, existing through centuries, or recurrent, emerging and dissolving under the various historic circumstances. Smith criticizes perennialism as particularly dangerous when trying to impose “the retrospective nationalism onto communities and cultures, whose identities and loyalties are local, regional and religious, but barely national.”¹⁹ It also fails to explain the phenomenon of “recent nations”, designed and created by nationalists or pragmatic politicians from the time of the Napoleonic wars onwards.

2.2.3 Modernism

As a response to the claim of the antiquity of nations, in the 1960s a new approach was conceived, turning the basics of primordialism upside-down. The main premise of modernism asserted the model of the modernity of nations and nationalism, formed as a legacy of the French Revolution. For the main champions of modernism, Eric Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner, “the nation is not only recent, it is also novel, and a product of modernization.”²⁰ Together with the emergence of capitalism, industrial society and secularisation in the aftermath of the Napoleonic

¹⁵ The common myth shared by both the Serbs and the Albanians is that of the construction of the Skadar/Scodra fortress on the lake of the same name. Serbian epic poetry tells a story of a sacrifice of the youngest brother of the aristocratic family of Mrnjavčević (historic rulers of northern Macedonian lands in the 14th century), who let his own breastfeeding wife to be built alive into the walls of the fortress. The same myth is remembered by the Albanians – a relief of a young breastfeeding woman is carved into the walls of the city's fortress. This example totally negates socio-biological approaches.

¹⁶ Özkirimli, 2000, 74

¹⁷ Smith, 1999, 5

¹⁸ Levi, M. A. – *Political Power in the Ancient World*, Oxford, 1965, no page reference, quoted in Smith, 1999, 5

¹⁹ Smith, 1999, 5

²⁰ Ibid, 6

wars, new state bureaucracies orchestrated the theme of the sovereignty of the nation through organized state institutions, education and economy. “It was then that the ideal of the sovereignty of the people was fused with the drive to cultural homogeneity, to forge self-determining nations of co-cultural citizens.”²¹ Planned public celebrations of the established national holidays and the introduction of national symbols served the purpose of strengthening the national feelings and boosting national pride.²² Unlike primordialistic approaches which are generally more compact in explaining the origins of nationalism and nations, modernists encompass a wide field of different accounts, ranging from economic and political to social and cultural. The number of scholars regarded as modernists is vast, since this approach dominated the past few decades and each scholar emphasized one set of factors at the expense of the others.²³

2.2.3.1 Economic aspect of modernism

Economic, or more precisely, socio-economic modernism was devised by the neo-Marxist academics, such as Tom Nairn and Michael Hechter in the mid-1970s.²⁴ Based on Marxist ideas of capitalistic and social development of the 19th century, the appearance of nationalism was viewed strictly in Eurocentric terms, spreading from the faster developing countries of Western Europe towards the east of the continent.²⁵ The so-called “core” or “historic” nations developed nationalism first, whilst the “peripheral” or “historyless”²⁶ nations absorbed the nationalistic ideas as a way of self-preservation from the oppressive regimes of the 19th century imperial powers. The Marxist scholars believe that nationalism appeared as a response to the “uneven development” (Nairn) of industrial society and disparities in regional resources or as a consequence of “internal colonialism” (Hechter) in which the dominant ethnic group of one society exploits the submissive one. For the most part, Marxist scholars perpetuated the idea of the historic and non-historic nations, first expressed by Marx and Engels in discussing the 1848 revolutions. This idea based solely on the Marx-Engels analysis of the economic development at the time,

²¹ Ibid, 6

²² Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. – *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983, 6

²³ Özkirimli, 2000, 86

²⁴ Smith, 1999, 6

²⁵ Nairn, T. – *The Break-Up of Britain*, Verso, 1981, no page reference, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 90

²⁶ Özkirimli’s term

supported the idea of the creation of nation-states only for great and historic nations, whilst the small ones, “the residual fragments of people” were not worthy of such an award. The Southern Slavs particularly were harshly dismissed as “peoples which have never had a history of their own...and who are not viable and will never be able to achieve any kind of independence.”²⁷ This was also a view endorsed by the highly influential Mazzini in the 19th century.

2.2.3.2 Political aspect of modernism

For scholars who adhere to the political approach, nationalism is viewed as a form of politics and consequently, the appearance of national movements is a political construct. Even though not a theorist himself, John Breuille referred to nationalism as “political movements seeking or exercising state power, justifying and using nationalist arguments.”²⁸ Nationalist political doctrine is based on three widely used themes:

- There exists a nation with an explicit and peculiar character.
- The interests and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values.
- The nation must have some form of independence, a minimum of which is nominal political sovereignty.²⁹

According to the postulates of this approach, nationalism is, first and foremost, a political movement used by the competing state elites in order to generate and achieve power and prestige. Used as a powerful political tool, ethnic differences become instrumentalised in the hands of those political groups. Viewed in this way, ethnicity is explained in a diametrically opposed manner from that of primordialism, because the “instrumental” nature of ethnicity is reduced to a mere political construction, without any reference to the “givenness” of the ethnic ties.³⁰ In a fierce debate that followed, many scholars pointed out the neglect of national culture. The consequential reply was that the political elites use various aspects of cultural forms as a resource for the political struggle. Furthermore, depending on the circumstances, those elites may choose the level of usage of ethnic and national identity –

²⁷ Özkirimli, 2000, 28

²⁸ Breuille, J. – *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester, 1993, no page reference, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 104

²⁹ Based on Özkirimli’s explanation of Breuille, 2000,105

³⁰ Özkirimli, 2000, 109

downplaying or exaggerating ethnic differences in order to gain political prestige. Used in this way, the formation of national identity becomes a reversible process, changeable in historically linear time.³¹

It is precisely the concept of the “linear time” that inspired Benedict Anderson to formulate the term “the imagined community” – a nation created through the spread of the instruments of the modern state: literacy and mass-media in vernacular languages.³² Smith particularly criticized the idea of imagined communities, arguing that the very idea “fails to explain how various nationalisms influence emotionally and why they become the power for the feeling of nationhood and mass self-sacrifice.”³³ Anderson’s allegory of the development of a human being and one’s psychology from babyhood to adulthood, followed by the process of imitative learning and education through the repetition of predetermined historic narrative is perhaps the closest answer to such criticisms. However, this allegory underlines a difference between the nation and an individual; whilst an individual has the beginning and the end, the nations have no manifestly identifiable births and their deaths, if they should happen, are never natural.³⁴ Even though Anderson admitted the lack of a strict date for the birth of a nation, some academics, such as Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm, championed the view according to which the majority of the contemporary nations were “born” in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. This theory is probably the most comprehensive modernistic approach, because it is based on a socio-cultural approach.

2.2.3.3 Socio-cultural approach

Gellner proposed a model according to which “modernization eroded traditional societies and cultures, uprooting masses of people and proletarianizing them into the anonymous city. Here, cultural homogeneity is provided by state run, standardized and public education system. Uneven development [of urban and rural societies] created conflicts over resources between the old inhabitants of the city and newly urbanized ex-peasants.”³⁵ For Hobsbawm, nationalism is the product of the

³¹ Brass, P. – *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Sage, 1991, no page reference, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 110

³² Anderson, B. – *Imagined Communities*, London, 1995, 44; Smith, 1999, 8

³³ Smith, 1999, 8

³⁴ Anderson, 1995, 204

³⁵ Smith, 1999, 8

industrial revolution and as such an engineered process of the “invention of tradition.”³⁶ This invention can appear either as the adaptation of old traditions for novel purposes, which are more or less used by every society, or as a complete fictional construction, in times of rapid socio-political change, when the necessity for creating a more compact national community becomes paramount.³⁷ For these purposes, the invention consists of three phases: massive public education, the organization of public ceremonies and the mass production of public monuments.³⁸ Organized in this way, the nations become a product of the recent past, with the rise of a modern territorial state. In his words, “nations do not make states and nationalism, but the other way around”, which reflects D’Azeglio’s attitude towards the creation of the Italian state in the mid 19th century.³⁹ Any such national culture has a vertical line of construction, starting from above, maintained and nurtured through the controlled programmes of state elites. In Gellner’s terms, such national cultures can be considered either as “wild” or as “garden” cultures. The first reproduce themselves from generation to generation without any planned design, state supervision or special nutrition, whilst the latter, even though originating from the former, are a conscious implementation by the literate strata of state elites.⁴⁰ Comparing the culture of the state elites of the pre-industrial age, in which only the privileged could impose their literacy upon the totality, with the culture of the industrial era, which endorses literacy of the society as a whole, Gellner underlines the argument that such a culture needs state support, particularly a political one.⁴¹ However, Gellner recognizes the imperfection of such support:

“...This tendency among developing societies of overrating formal paper qualifications, undoubtedly has harmful side effects (Diploma Disease). We live in a world in which we can no longer respect informal, intimate transmissions of skills, for the social structures within which such transmissions could occur are dissolving. Hence, the only kind of knowledge we can respect is that authenticated by

³⁶ Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983, 1

³⁷ Ibid, 270

³⁸ Ibid, 270-271

³⁹ Hobsbawm, E. – *Nations and Nationalism since 1789, Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, 1990, no page reference, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 118

⁴⁰ Gellner, E. – *Nations and Nationalism – New Perspectives on the Past*, Oxford, 1983, 50

⁴¹ Gellner, 1983, 51

*reasonably impartial centres of learning, which issue certificates on the basis of honest, impartially administered examinations...*⁴²

The risks of such educational indoctrination is a powerful tool in maintaining national interests, as expressed by the governing elites, particularly in mobilizing the intelligentsia for the purpose of spreading national culture, and through it, the seductive ideas of territorial pretensions.⁴³ Where neighbouring cultures are prone to coercion, the weaker one is either going to bow down, or if there is a chance for resistance, it will fight for all available populations and “space-state”⁴⁴ in a nationalist or ethnic conflict.⁴⁵

Once a conflict occurs, no modernist theory gives a satisfactory explanation to question: Why, then, so many people are ready to die for their country, nation and ethnic kinsmen, if the national identity and nationalism are artificially imposed by the state over the members of a society? The modernist approach here becomes a theory based on consequences, rather than on causes.

2.2.4 Ethno-Symbolism

Ethno-symbolism is commonly linked to the works of Anthony Smith, who tried to reconcile the idea of long traditions of certain cultures and modernistic views which insist on novelty of the nations and national feelings.⁴⁶ Focusing on ethnic ties, myths and symbols predating the modern nation state, the ethno-symbolist argued that modern nations cannot be understood without taking into account their ethnic forebears and that the difference between the two is a matter of degree, rather than level.⁴⁷ The power of nationalism is in the degree of the engagement of ethnic heritage and the ways in which a popular living past has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern national intelligentsias.⁴⁸ In the process of rediscovery and reinterpretation, everyday politics and interests are turned into cultural wars, which often serve as a façade for the competing claims to territory,

⁴² Ibid, 29

⁴³ Smith, A. – *National Identity*, London, 1991, 119

⁴⁴ Gellner's term

⁴⁵ Gellner, 1983, 51

⁴⁶ Smith, 1999, 9

⁴⁷ Özkirimli, 2000, 169

⁴⁸ Smith, 1999, 9

patrimony and resources.⁴⁹ History and culture provide powerful motives both for the conflicts and solidarity, forged by the elites' strategies.⁵⁰

For ethno-symbolists, the formation of nations is to be analysed over *la longue durée*, that is, over a period of time that spans through many centuries, but not in the manner proposed by the primordialists, who consider nationalist feelings as “given” and “inborn”. The ethno-symbolists support the idea of the longevity of ethnicity, but the feelings that are generated through the membership are manipulated by the intelligentsia.⁵¹ The nationalist narrative explaining the national past, present and future, according to the ethno-symbolist uses three themes for national self-realization:

- Recurrence – History of earlier epochs is to be read in the light of the national present.
- Continuity – Points out the commencement date of the nations and explores ethnic elements that are handed down through generations: names, symbols, languages, customs, territories and rituals of national identity.
- Reappropriation – National intelligentsias are seen as political archaeologists who aim to return to the past and to recover its pristine ethos and to reconstruct a modern nation in the image of the past *ethnie*.⁵²

The term “ethnie” Smith uses in its French version in order to describe communities of human population which are seen both by themselves and the outsider groups as possessing specific attributes, such as: myths of common ancestry, shared historic memories, common culture, association with a homeland and solidarity among its members.⁵³ Inevitably, after establishing the term “ethnie”, Smith suggested the formulation of clear and acceptable definitions of the terms “nation”, “nationalism” and, consequently, “nation-state.”⁵⁴ Smith’s own proposed definitions of *nation* as “a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members”⁵⁵ and *nationalism* as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining identity, unity and autonomy of

⁴⁹ Smith, 1999, 10

⁵⁰ Ibid, 10; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983, 7

⁵¹ Özkirimli, 2000, 170

⁵² Based on Smith, 1999, p.10

⁵³ Smith, 1999, 13

⁵⁴ Smith, 1991, 14

⁵⁵ Smith, 1999, 11

a social group some of whose members deem it to constitute an actual or potential nation,”⁵⁶ were much appreciated, even among his critics. Furthermore, Smith argued that nations are deeply rooted in *ethnies*, but concurred with the idea that *ethnies* are largely subjective social entities, albeit to a limited extent; if the nation is wholly subjective, this could lead to any social group being described as a nation.⁵⁷ Ethno-symbolism expressed by Smith, describes the “core doctrine” of nationalism, as “a must”: the nation is viewed as a source of all political power and social and cultural influence and that every human being has to be a loyal member of a certain nation, in order to achieve freedom and self-realization.⁵⁸

However, nationalism is not uniform as such, and two types can be distinguished: the territorial and ethnic (Western) and ethnic-genealogical (Eastern).⁵⁹ These two types are mostly endorsed by John Plamenatz, a native to the Balkans, who distinguished between “high cultured nationalisms of 19th century Western Europe and those with poor cultural resources like the Slavs and Africans, whose nationalism is imitative and competitive.”⁶⁰ This attitude is further advanced by Seton-Watson’s influential typology of nationalism distinguishing “old, continuous nations” from the “new ones of the Serbs, Croats, Rumanians...”⁶¹

Observed in this way, the basic postulates of ethno-symbolism mutually conflict, because the theory cannot sustain the identical approach for analysis of each individual nation formation. The relationship between modern nations and the cultural heritage they inherit from the pre-modern period is highly disputable, whilst the longevity of the process of formation of national consciousness is misleading. The modernists expressed the fiercest criticism of the use of myths and symbols, because they are often invented by the nationalists themselves.⁶² Conversely, the nationalists ignore those myths that oppose their aspirations. Accordingly, the mere existence or longevity of myths is not a guarantee that the national ideas, identities and aspirations are going to succeed in the pursuit of the realization of the dream of their national state. Moreover, a number of nationalist movements managed to form

⁵⁶ Smith, 1991, 18

⁵⁷ Bellamy, 2003, 9

⁵⁸ Smith, 1991, 74

⁵⁹ Özkirimli, 2000, 181

⁶⁰ Smith, 1999, 35

⁶¹ Ibid, 37

⁶² Breuilly, J. – *Approaches to Nationalism* in Balakrishnam, G. – *Mapping the Nation*, London, 1996, 146 – 174, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 187

national states without having a rich heritage and history to use as a basis for state-building.⁶³

2.3 Addressing National Identity in the Balkans

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, general theories described above offer a reasonably satisfactory explanation of the problematic issues of Balkan national identities. However, since the distinction between the West Balkan nations is a relatively novel phenomenon, their application required minimal refinements in order to avoid a currently prevailing view that all the people inhabiting the area were from the distinct ethnic groups since at least the Early Middle Ages. This generalization was derived from the scholarly approaches to the study of nationalism formulated during the 1990s which, through the attempt to incorporate as many aspects of modern social and anthropological theories as possible, actually deliberately obfuscated the *political intent* hidden behind *normative historiography*. The *political intent* based on traditional misconceptions is obvious when carefully examining the studies written between the 1980s and the present, both by foreign and Balkan scholars. Particularly disturbing in the analyses and commentaries about the Western Balkans published at this period is the portrayal of the Balkans as Oriental societies prone to violence because of their cultural characteristics.⁶⁴ The arguments presented by (mostly Western) authors depict the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans as a part of the wider *civilizational* conflict (Islam versus Orthodox versus Catholic). A number of authors used their academic and media privileges to promote and justify the interventionist policies of their governments towards Balkan problems, by reducing the conflicts to simplistic explanations (Bad versus Good, Civilized versus Barbaric, Communist versus Democratic).⁶⁵ By doing so, they have conceptualized the notion of the Balkan “Otherness” from the rest of Europe.⁶⁶ At the same time, authors of Balkan origin, working predominantly at the Western universities, contributed to the polarization of the *political intent* by allowing their own national

⁶³ In the European area, Slovenia comes to mind, as a state that achieved political independence for the first time in its history only in 1991

⁶⁴Roudometof, V. – *Nationalism, Globalization and Orthodoxy – The Social Origins of Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans*, Greenwood, Connecticut, 2001, 2

⁶⁵ See works of R. Kaplan (*Balkan Ghosts*, 1992), G.F. Kennan (*Introduction in The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment*, 1993) or S. P. Huntington (*The Clash of Civilizations*, 1993) who pioneered the Western revisionism on the Balkan historiography.

⁶⁶ Roudometof, 2001, 2

belonging to take precedence over the academic objectivity. Much quoted Croat historian in the West, Ivo Banac (b.1947) in his widely popularised *The National Question in Yugoslavia – Origins, History, Politics*, published in 1984, asserted that he “made every effort to present a truthful – if not necessarily detached – picture of events.”⁶⁷ By simple juxtaposition of the personalities and events from different historical periods as contemporaries, as applied by Banac, a distorted picture of the national question in Yugoslavia became a norm in all subsequent analyses of the ethnic conflicts that took place in the 1990s.

Furthermore, a number of studies published in recent years were heavily influenced by media reports and various political agendas hidden behind the national, cultural and socio-economic issues. Similarly, during the 1990s, academic exchange became minimal due to the wars in Former Yugoslavia, while the greatest part of intellectual debate in each country involved in the conflict was employed as war propaganda. Scholars from the West, with little or no knowledge of the languages of the region, sought to explain the ethnic conflicts in terms of the re-assertion of traditional national, cultural and territorial claims and conflicts, based on the premises of the *civilizational* clash by deliberate misrepresentation of historical facts.⁶⁸ Although the conceptual and historical inaccuracies have been pointed out by a number of scholars (most notably, Maria Todorova in her *Imagining the Balkans*, published in 1997) such biased views are remarkably persistent in policy making and historical discourse.⁶⁹

To analyse the construction of new nations in the Western Balkans through the current perspective of *normative historiography*, some scholars proposed the application of the already mentioned multi-layered approach to the study of contemporary interpretations of national and cultural identities in the Balkans by arguing that the classical theories discussed above failed to offer a satisfactory account of the creation of national identities in the Balkans.⁷⁰ Alex Bellamy, for example, argued in favour of those Croat historians who asserted that the national identity of the Croats existed in the pre-nationalist period as the awareness of a

⁶⁷ Banac, I. - *The National Question in Yugoslavia – Origins, History, Politics*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1984, 13

⁶⁸ Pettifer, J. and Vickers, M. openly support the creation of Greater Albania in their *The Albanian Question – Reshaping the Balkans*, London, 2009, 262

⁶⁹ Roudometof, 2001, 2

⁷⁰ Bellamy, A. J. – *The Formation of Croatian National Identity – A Centuries Old Dream?*, Manchester, 2003, 7

distinct state-tradition among the Croats, despite the fact that there had been no Croat nation-state for nearly a thousand years.⁷¹ In order to bridge this gap, he proposed a new theory of development of nationalism labelled “continuity-in-discontinuity”⁷² which “represents an attempt to find a third way between primordialism and modernism,” denying that continuity and discontinuity are mutually exclusive concepts. Viewing Balkan ethnic communities from this perspective, the dominant theme of nation-building is constantly changing, whereas historical continuities depend on socio-political circumstances.⁷³ Hence, the context in which implementation takes place cannot be understood without broader social, political and strategic intersection. According to this approach, national identity is formed as a summary of various identities which each individual member of the ethnic community might decide to change at a fairly rapid pace.

This approach of “continuity-in-discontinuity,” as a recent formulation, originates from scholars examining the problems of nationalism from the point of view of the social sciences. Despite this approach sounding simplistic, this fully embraces the current revisionism of the *normative historiography* that depicts the problem of Balkan nation-building by the arguments behind interventionism. The “continuity-in-discontinuity” theory aims to justify the modern invention that the belief of national belonging among the newly constructed nations on a massive scale, dates back to the time when those nations actually did not exist. Since Balkan societies have a long record of historical “continuity-in-discontinuity” in terms of unstable and frequently changeable borders of state-traditions that incorporated various *geographical*⁷⁴ regions at various periods of time, the use of the theory itself still has no full confirmation in practice. On the other hand, the lack of clarity of this newly developed theoretical approach serves as a good basis for the West Balkan intelligentsia belonging to the new nations in their effort to strengthen the national consciousness and national identity of their young nations. Applied in this way, the idea of changeability fully conforms to the Western perception of the Balkan “Otherness,” as it could be understood as a permanent characteristic of the region as

⁷¹ Bellamy’s sources for this assertion are, amongst the most prominent modern Croat historians, journalists Misha Glenny and Marcus Tanner, who placed the beginning of the Croat-Serb dichotomy as early as the 1830s. See Bellamy, 2003, 171

⁷² James, P. – *Nation Formation: Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*, London, 1997, no page reference, quoted in Bellamy, 2003, 25

⁷³ Bellamy, 2003, 25-26

⁷⁴ As opposed to ethnic regions.

a whole. Furthermore, the theory leaves the space for some future change of borders, identities and cultures in the West Balkans.

Unlike the theory of “continuity-in-discontinuity” which is prone to logical and terminological manipulations, Gordana Uzelac and Atsuko Ichijo proposed the adoption of the meeting points of primordialist, ethno-symbolist and modernist theories, arguing that national identity in the Balkans is created through the interaction of three levels of socio-political abstraction.⁷⁵ In itself, this is a sensible approach, as it attempts to include the widest possible range of theories that could be detected in the evolution of national narratives of the observed West Balkan nations and ethnic groups. However, as theoretical narratives usually require the confirmation in the material evidence, this study endorses the inclusion of the “processualist approach” which emphasizes that analysis and comparisons of social structures have to be executed using the same methodological principles and relying on the objectivism of material interpretation of evidence. A modern authority on the archaeology and history of the Balkans, and especially the early Slavs, Florin Curta championed the processualism through the thorough examination of the material remains that marked the development of Balkan societies, carefully avoiding succumbing to any misconceptions devised by the new theories of nationalism. According to him, culture is not shared, but participated in.”⁷⁶ In this manner, the material heritage of the region, now subject to fierce nationalist debates aiming to draw clear demarcation lines among themselves, remained outside manipulation.

2.4 Key terms and definitions

As discussed earlier, the multitude of definitions of nationalism and related terms proposed by various scholars reflect the academic thinking of the time when they were first introduced. But what, in its essence, is nationalism? Smith argued that the current trend of defining nationalism as exclusively negative and intellectually incoherent, due to the inconsistencies of deployed doctrines aiming to define the nature of nationalism suffers major logical deficiencies.⁷⁷ By recognizing that nationalism divides the world into nations, each autonomous, free and secure and with its own characteristics and destiny, Smith devised a working definition of

⁷⁵ Uzelac, G. and Ichijo, A. – *When Is the Nation?*, London, 2005, 212-217

⁷⁶ Curta, F. – *The Making of the Slavs – History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c.500-700*, Cambridge, 2001, 28

⁷⁷ Smith, A. – *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, Oxford, 1995, 148-153

nationalism as an “*ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute a nation.*”⁷⁸ This definition is considered to be generally applicable in its original form to all Balkan nationalism(s), irrespectively of the period of their first appearance. Having neutral meaning, it avoids current scholarly misrepresentations which strive to ascertain that the early 19th century nationalism, when its main role was positive and emancipatory, is in its essence the same as the late 20th century nationalism, which is predominantly the product of the conscious political manipulation.

The vivid academic debate about the essence of nationalism and associated terms such as: Nation, State, Nation-State, National Identity, Ethnicity, Citizenship, Cultural Identity, Collective Memory, National Heritage, Civic and Minority Rights did not provide the all-inclusive theoretical basis that could be uniformly applied to all Balkan peoples and states. Rather, they all shed some light on certain aspects of the Balkan variant of nation-building. For the purpose of this work, it is necessary to give the definitions of the above mentioned terms that would incorporate the Balkan specificities into the general theories. Most scholars, regardless to which theory of nationalism they adhere, agree that there are two types of nationalism: the Western and the Eastern. Western nationalism is seen as civic orientated with a strong emphasis on citizenship, human rights, democratic values, and the territorial nature of the state. Eastern nationalism is regarded as collectivistic with a strong emphasis on ethnicity, cultural uniqueness, nationhood and kinship.⁷⁹ The spatial link between the two types contributes to the popularization of the stereotypes about the “Other,” and all nationalisms that are peripheral to the Western one are labelled as “tribal” or ethnic unrest which confirm their cultural superiority and inferiority.⁸⁰ As shown earlier, debate on the nature of nationalism, especially its Balkan versions, is still ongoing, but there appears to be a general consensus that nationalism is a modern phenomenon. Hobsbawm’s idea of the novelty of the nation perfectly fits the Balkan case: the earliest Balkan states were created in the aftermath of the French Revolution and nation-building very much coincided with the modernization that took place after the Ottoman departure in the mid-to-late 19th century. Since the

⁷⁸ Ibid, 150

⁷⁹ Roudometof, 2001, 3

⁸⁰ Ibid, 3

modernization of the Balkans meant accepting without questioning the then ruling European principles, the Balkan nationalism(s) can be viewed as imported goods. In other words, the nationalism in the Balkans as a movement is not only a novel product of modernization, but was imposed on the Balkan peoples before they had time to understand the European system of values.

This last statement may serve as an overture to my small contribution to the general discussion on the theories of nationalism. “Imposing” nationalism on states and societies so far had the connotation of introducing ideas of nationalism from politically more advanced societies and their intellectual centres, which were often foreign. When comparing the chronology of the West Balkan nationalisms, it becomes clearly visible that all the nations that appeared in the former Yugoslavia and Albania had their nationalisms developed outside of their core-territories. In case of Serbia, main bearers of national ideas in the first half of the 19th century, even though ethnic Serbs, lived in the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy, outside of the nascent Serbian state. Only after their arrival to the Serbian Principality could these ideas gain strength and become the guiding principles for the Serbian nation-building programme. In Croatia, the Illyrian movement represented the more inclusive ideas of South Slav nationalism and only after the *Nagodba* could ideas of a more distinct Croat nationalism have developed. Ante Starčević, born in the Lika region of the Military Frontier and educated in Hungary, introduced the Croat nationalism to Croatia Proper in the 1870s. Early Albanian nationalism was developing in the US through the work of Albanian Christian emigres and European scholars at the turn of the 20th century. Similarly, notions of distinct Macedonian national ideas that first appeared during the Second World War in Yugoslavia were legally sanctioned by Tito’s regime in Belgrade in 1945. The Bosnian Muslims had their nationalism imposed first by Vienna during von Kállay’s tenure of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the late 19th century and then by Belgrade in 1971. Finally, the definition of the Montenegrin nationalism originated during the exile of King Nikola in France and then re-asserted itself in the early 2000s, generously helped from abroad.⁸¹ Bearing all this in mind, it can be argued that the West Balkan nationalisms developed “from the periphery” of national territories. This is not unexpected, because the peripheries were experiencing more ethnic and religious mixing, where it was of great

⁸¹ See the general chronology of development of national ideas in this work.

importance to preserve national/ethnic consciousness at any cost. Unlike in the West, where national ideas were emanating from the national capitals and important centres of learning, in the West Balkans, the process was reverse: nationalism was growing from outside towards the centre. Consequently, the West Balkan type of nationalism may be labelled as a product of modernism and more precisely of the peripheral type. Accordingly, the nations that developed their grand narratives based on the peripheral nationalism will eventually suffer changes of those narratives, subject to the historical territorial realignments.

Even though Smith's definition of a nation⁸² is clear and encompasses what the nation *should be*, it fails to grasp the problem of the Balkan peoples, because the *historic territory* of most of the Balkan nations changed in time as various states (particularly non-nation-states) and governments ruled the territory. Thus, the proposed definition for the purpose of this work presents a slightly modified version of Smith's definition: "*Nation is a named human population sharing the same common myths and memories, linked in linear time by the sequence of historic events that created the sense of belonging for each individual of the said population.*" It must be noted here that the above definition contains the phrase "linear time", which was used by Anderson for defining the concept of "the imagined community". Since various Balkan peoples did not obtain their states before the 19th and 20th centuries, during which the shifting borders and exchange of population happened on a dramatic scale, the formation of the state and even more, the nation-state, had to be created by the elites. The first core states created by the Greeks, the Serbs and the Bulgars did not incorporate all the members of each nation. However, with the creation of the independent Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, it was possible to *construct an ideal* of the national community and national unity which would be the platform for the future unification of all members of a nation. For most of the Balkan peoples, the idea of the nation and the sense of belonging to a nation were thus created from above, through the state mediums of literacy (education), mass media and public ceremonies.

Introducing the European state models in the post-Ottoman Balkans was a historical inevitability. However, the low literacy rates of the majority of the population meant that understanding the concept of state in a sense promoted by the

⁸² Smith, 1991, 14

French Enlightenment⁸³ was going to be not only difficult, but to a certain extent impossible. The Western idea of a nation-state was based on the notion of *citizenship*, which represented the approved, universalistic dimension of nationality and its key ingredient was literacy and education, as expressed by Gellner.⁸⁴ Literacy served as the means through which individual members of a state could become aware and relate to their fellow citizens. As the illiteracy rates in the early 19th century Balkans were over 90%⁸⁵ the only way that the individuals could relate to the state was through their kin and their religion. Thus, the citizen-state based on egalitarian distribution of rights and duties, civic and increasingly secular, could not be implemented without the swift conversion of the peasantry into the working class. Since a working class is closely linked to industrialization, it is obvious that Balkan states had to find a model which would be understandable and acceptable for its population. The only way that the newly formed Balkan states could maintain their existence was to become nation-states, that is, to create a state that belonged to a designated nation. The concept of a Nation-State was maintained throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries and its Balkan variant should be understood as a “*state created by means of bureaucratic incorporation from the top, but deeply rooted in the traditional patriarchal bonds between its subjects.*” To strengthen loyalty to the state, it was necessary to create and promote the sense of national identity. Smith defined the *national identity* as a sense of “sameness” – the members of a particular group speak the same language and are alike in just those respects in which they differ from non-members outside the group.⁸⁶ The key-role of the national identity is to create and maintain a distinct and unique national character. If it lacks one, it must be endowed with one.⁸⁷

The first stage in the creation of national identity and the building of national consciousness was the formulation of “grand narratives” of national history aiming to legitimise particular political aims in the contemporary context. Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian “grand narratives” were developed in the course of the early to mid-19th century, when their purpose was to *agitate for liberation from centuries of foreign rule*. The subsequent nation building was not the cause, but was primarily the effect

⁸³ Isakovic, Z. – *Identity and Security in Former Yugoslavia*, Aldershot, 2000, 4

⁸⁴ Roudometof, 2001, 3

⁸⁵ Dogo, M. and Franzinetti, G. – *Disrupting and Reshaping – Early Stages of Nation-Building in the Balkans*, Ravenna, 2002, 25

⁸⁶ Smith, 1991, 75

⁸⁷ Rousseau, J.J. – *Project Corse*, 1915, II, 319, quoted in Smith, 1991, 75

of the political disorder in the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁸ These “grand narratives” in their formative periods served two purposes: the first was to *distinguish the local population from the foreign rulers* and the second to *imbue a sense of national identity, which was often vague, because most illiterate peasants, still bound by feudal ties, could express their nationality only through their religion.*⁸⁹

Because the political elites of the period were emerging under the tutorship of the main universities of Central Europe and Russia, the creation of “grand narratives” was more the echo of their contemporary academic thinking applied to Balkan conditions, than the independent achievement of native intellectuals. Since this elite was in its nascent phase, it lacked power to mobilize ethnic populations over the entire ethnic territories, so “grand narratives” of the period do not reveal any particular preparation or conscious determination for exclusive nation-state building.⁹⁰ Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia were allowed to form their states on the territory of the crumbling Ottoman Empire and actively participated in the creation of their nation-states. On the other hand, the Croatian and Albanian “grand narratives” formulated in the last quarter of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, when the concept of nationalism and national revival significantly changed from its early 19th century nascent phase, relied more on mobilization of the wider populations to *achieve political powers and freedoms* that were until then denied by the ruling Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. Initially, neither Croat nor Albanian nationalism(s) strove for full national liberation and creation of their nation-states. Later national liberations came as a consequence of the changed geo-political situation in Europe, rather than the triumph of national will and active participation in liberation from foreign rule. In this sense, the “grand narratives” formulated in the later part of the 19th and during the 20th century served the purpose of creating national identity exclusively for the political reasons of governing elites rather than full mobilization of the entire population.

The concepts of *ethnicity* and *ethnic identity* predate the concept of nation. Smith has successfully argued⁹¹ that nation creation is strongly linked to *ethnies* (as defined above), pre-nation groups that were connected by genealogical descent, vernacular codes and historical nativism. Modern scholars tried to define ethnicity in

⁸⁸ Dogo and Franzinetti, 2002, 16

⁸⁹ Mazower, 2000, 46

⁹⁰ Dogo and Franzinetti, 2002, 20

⁹¹ Smith, 1999, 11

terms of: language, culture and customs, territory and political organization.⁹² However, the ethnic determinism of the Balkan populations was hindered in two ways; firstly, the Ottoman conquest destroyed the material basis of their civilizations, wiped out their old aristocracies and middle classes and even in some cases obliterated their traditional frontiers.⁹³ This meant that by the time of the Ottoman departure, the sense of ethnic belonging was blurred and distinguished only by religion. A perfect illustration of this is written by the prominent English journalist H.N. Brailsford in the early 20th century. In 1905, talking to the illiterate boys from the Ohrid area about the ruins of the castle overlooking the lake he inquired who built the castle. “*The Free Men,*” was the answer. “*And who were they?*” “*Our Grandfathers.*” “*Yes, but were they Serbs or Bulgarians or Greeks or Turks?*” “*They weren’t Turks, they were Christians.*”⁹⁴ Secondly, the pre-Ottoman ethnic affiliations of the Balkan populations were those of loyalty to the mediaeval kingdoms and the then ethnic rhetoric and self-representation. As our knowledge of the early Slavs is scarce it is impossible to say much about their sense of identity, except that it was strongly rooted in local or regional communities.⁹⁵ Since there is no internationally accepted academic consensus about the role of ethnicity in the mediaeval period, for the purpose of this work, the term ethnicity should be read as: “*a link between the individual members of a group expressed through the religious and cultural affiliations towards the historical and ancestral concepts measured by the strength of solidarity among them.*” This definition derives from Smith’s definition of *ethnie*,⁹⁶ but omits his notion of historical memories and ancestral/founding myths as a unifying factor. The reason for this is that, as it will be discussed later, various Balkan populations of *different* religious and language affiliations *share* the same myths and historic memories. What is self-defining is the strength of solidarity that those populations employ in their collective belief in those myths and memories. The strength of solidarity also directs the development and usage of myths and memories and, even though these “myths only do not have to be true, they do not have to be

⁹² Pohl, W. – *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*, Brill, 1998, 20

⁹³ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und National Staat*, 1922, 15, quoted in Cobban, A. - *The Nation State and National Self-Determination*, London, 1969, 29

⁹⁴ Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its Races and their Future*, 1906, quoted in Mazower, 2000, 51

⁹⁵ Pohl, 1998, *Introduction*, ix

⁹⁶ Smith, 1995, 57

old”⁹⁷ the measure of solidarity defines their longevity. Thus, the 19th and early 20th century creation of the grand narratives served to mobilize ethnic affiliations first to build ethnic and then national identities.

Used in contemporary context, grand narratives of the 19th century would seem terribly dated, if they were not reinterpreted for modern political aims, which are mainly orientated towards breaking with the practises and ideologies established during the communist period. With the contemporary creation of new nations of the Macedonians, the Montenegrins and the Bosniaks, the 19th century methods of nation-building are redeployed, aiming to prove the antiquity of these new nations. However, this time the process runs at a much faster pace, as the literacy levels are high and the state institutions, such as schools, universities and mass media are easily accessible to the population. Consequently, Balkan national identities derive from embedding grand narratives in the individual perceptions of ethnic pride. In other words, ethnicity cannot exist without the awareness of it,⁹⁸ but also, it cannot thrive without being constantly reminded of it by the state.

This new awareness, propagated and imposed by the political elites and mobilized on a large scale, surpassing both the demography and the geography of the West Balkan area, shows signs of academic confusion, if not a total absence of balance. The evidence of that can be found in the constant rewriting of education syllabuses that occurred in the late 20th century, containing quite opposing arguments of the origins of the Balkan nations. The general characteristic of each of these narratives emphasizes the antiquity of a particular nation and uses the methods of the primordialistic approach when discussing its own history of statehood, whilst at the same time neighbouring narratives are interpreted in modernistic terms, that is as novel, “historyless” and lacking in continuity. This argument is very much in line with Todorova’s conclusion that the national identities in the Balkans were built with a certain degree of parochial ignorance towards the wider political and geo-strategic context of the region as a whole.⁹⁹ The tendency to draw a visible demarcation line between neighbouring nationalities, or to make them opaque and fluid, in accordance with the political programmes of the governing elites, is a postmodernistic approach

⁹⁷ Wickham, C. – *The Inheritance of Rome – A History of Europe, 400-800*, London, 2009, 99

⁹⁸ Fine, J. V.A. – *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2006, 25

⁹⁹ Todorova, 1997, 181

which can be labelled as “*banal nationalism*.”¹⁰⁰ However, *banal nationalism*, when applied to the Balkan mentality, becomes enormously amplified, particularly towards neighbours who share the same geographic area. At the same time, aspects of *banal nationalism*, when expressed outside the Balkans, do not achieve such a high emotional context.

This curious manner of expressing national identity, so similar amongst all Balkan ethnic groups, has deep roots in the popular mentality. Awareness that the existence and development of national and state continuity was seriously disrupted in the course of history creates on a sub-conscious level a form of collective inferiority complex when compared with the majority of great European nations. Here we find a reminiscence on Anderson’s allegory that ethnic communities develop in the same manner in which a baby’s psychology develops into an adult form,¹⁰¹ with the exception that in the Balkans we deal with the communities whose “childhoods” and natural developments were so seriously affected, that by the time they reached adulthood, they took the form of divided personalities. Thus, as with individuals, hiding an inferiority complex is usually masked by aggressive attitudes towards their closest contacts; in the case of the Balkan states, this aggressiveness is expressed through general mistrust and a dismissive attitude towards the culture of the neighbouring countries. This means that the first level of building national identity using the tools of “grand historic narratives” is as much the psychological as a political response of Balkan governing elites transmitted to the members of the wider communities.¹⁰²

The second stage of the creation of national identity in the Balkans is implementation of the grand narratives into the public culture. As with the history of the Balkan states, this aspect also lacks continuity and has been disrupted, particularly in the course of the 20th century. Insisting on a uniqueness of the character of the national culture by the relevant intellectuals and governing elites, the interpretations of the grand narratives in a nationally favourable manner, become

¹⁰⁰ Billig, quoted in Özkirimli, 2000, 203

¹⁰¹ Anderson, 1995, 204

¹⁰² This idea of the “inferiority complex” among the Balkan peoples should be understood as a consequence of the broken “natural development” of the Balkan nation-states which, unlike the nation-states in the West, did not have long periods of peace and economic development that would enable the evolution of the intellectual maturity of their native elites. By no means should it be understood in the same terms as expressed by those Western scholars who agitated for the punishment and destruction of certain Balkan nations in the 1990s. See footnotes 11, 12 and 133 of Chapter I and footnotes 6, 8, 66 and 69 of this chapter.

more intelligible for the majority of people through repetition and simplifying the academic language to that of mass media and popular culture. The emphasis on national culture and a separate, unique identity from those of the neighbours is expressed through the names and symbols of the most important national cultural institutions, such as national museums and galleries, designed to have on permanent display important national treasures. At the same time, the erection of monuments visually depicting adopted national symbols, or the use of the pre-national heritage, most notably of the prehistoric and antique archaeological sites, increases the sense of belonging to the particular area.¹⁰³ But here we encounter a major problem. When examining the existing sources for the Balkan populations from the 7th to the 18th centuries, one of the most striking facts is a constant change of labels denoting peoples and places.¹⁰⁴ Foreign authors, who wrote about the Balkans in the earlier periods, brought to the process even more confusion, because they themselves could not distinguish between various Slavic ethnicities due to the “sameness”¹⁰⁵ of the language. Thus, the language became the first serious flaw in creating national identity because it proved to be neither an objective, nor immutable factor. The same problem occurred with the question of ancestry, because the blood ties and genetic modes are close, which makes them insufficient in determining the group identity.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, religion became a sole supporting pillar in creating national identities in the Western Balkans. The Albanians, the only non-Slavic group discussed here, are excluded from the territorial claims based on language issues, but rely on religious difference from their Slavic and Greek neighbours. Where religious differentiation was insufficient, finding a link with the ancient cultures that once inhabited the Balkan area become an essential tool in building the national identity.

The third stage of creating a national identity is the perception of the ideas and interpretations of grand narratives in accordance with the contemporary political requirements. Presently, the possibility of entering the European Union after the

¹⁰³ Of this, the most striking are attempts to prove the ancient origins of the modern Macedonian nation through its links with the kingdom of ancient Macedonians, or non-existing Slavic roots of the Croats through their claim to be of Iranian origin, or that of the Albanian attempts to prove that the vernacular architecture of Albania influenced the Ottoman conquerors during the Middle Ages.

¹⁰⁴ Fine, 2006, 3

¹⁰⁵ This term is to be used with caution, because all contemporary efforts to split the ex-Yugoslav lexicographic area fiercely negate mutual intelligibility of the Slavic languages. Slovenian and Bulgarian are exempt because the reform of the Slovenian and Bulgarian orthographies happened under specific circumstances in the 16th and 19th centuries respectively, which enabled further differentiation from the rest of the South-Slavic languages.

¹⁰⁶ Greenberg, 2008, 8

imposed transition period brought into the focus the notions of *citizenship* and *civic and minority rights*. In its modern meaning, the definition of *citizenship* relies on the current Western idea of civic nationalism which maintains that the nation of a state should be composed of its citizens – regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, language and ethnicity – based on their equality and rights and duties.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, the *civic and minority rights*, as regulated by the legislation of the European Union are strongly defined in supra-national terms, aiming to achieve the highest possible level of civic and social inclusion of its many nations and ethnic groups.¹⁰⁸ In the aftermath of the transitional 1990s, all post-Yugoslav states in the Western Balkans and in Albania include in their Constitutions the reference to these definitions.¹⁰⁹ However, the ethnic cleansing that took place during the wars of Yugoslav succession and formation of the new states under the supervision of the European Union still did not incite the return of displaced populations. Therefore, the notion of citizenship and civic and minority rights, as promoted by the legislation has little or no value in the newly created West Balkan states. In Albania, there is a tension between the Albanians and Greeks in the Albanian part of northern Epirus, because of the refusal of the Albanian state to recognize the existence of the Greek and other, mostly Serbian, Vlach, Macedonian and Roma ethnic groups outside of the designated “minority zones.”¹¹⁰

Even though there is a declarative support of the European Union for the integrative processes in the West Balkans and the introduction of civic rights and citizenship in its Western sense, the majority of the newly created nations form the basis of their states on the revised principles of ethnic nationalism, which reduces or openly denies the rights of neighbouring nations to live inside the borders of their new national borders.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Igtantieff, 1993, 3

¹⁰⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/minorities/index_en.htm - The official web-site of the European Commission – Accessed on 14/04/2013

¹⁰⁹ See current Constitutions of all observed states

¹¹⁰ Pettifer, J. – *The Greek minority in Albania in the Aftermath of Communism*, British MOD, Defence Academy, 2001, no page reference

¹¹¹ This is particularly noticed in the Republic of Croatia which reduced the participation of its Serbian population to around 4% and in the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo, which in the territory under the Albanian government in Priština has barely 2% of the Serbs and other ethnic groups left. See *Chapter III – The Albanians*, p. 240

2.5 The tradition of inventing traditions

Various Balkan peoples re-discovered themselves in different periods over the past two centuries. With the formation of first (semi)independent states the process of historical claims to territory started immediately.¹¹² This resulted from the formation of grand narratives during the development of nation-states. Apart from the state educational systems that actively participate in maintaining those postulates, Hobsbawm identified two other ways of nation-building.¹¹³ One was the introduction of public ceremonies and another, the erection of public monuments. However, with the current delineation of the “old” and “new” nations in the Western Balkans supported by the revisionist *normative historiography*, a relatively new phenomenon of appropriation of the historical cultural heritage by the latest Balkan nations took place on an unprecedented scale. Lacking the historical memories, as defined by Smith,¹¹⁴ and fully a developed cultural and national heritage, the adoption of the monuments of the past which survived in their new national territories, became a crucial factor in building new cultural and national identities. This method of nation-building is defined as *historical re-appropriation*. In its essence, *the historical re-appropriation* includes *the acquisition of the inherited material evidence from the past by adding a prefix of the national name and interpretation in exclusively national terms*.¹¹⁵ The most startling examples of historical re-appropriation are the renaming the mediaeval cathedrals and churches in Dalmatia, built by the Italians, as Croatian, or renaming monasteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo as Albanian. Similarly, linking the modern Macedonian state to the Ancient Kingdom of Macedon and the current Bosnian Muslim nation as direct descendants of the Mediaeval Bosnian Christians, considered as being ethnically different from the Croats and Serbs, represent one aspect of historical re-appropriation. Acquiring the past by designating a national name to the heritage discovered within the borders of the nation-state serves the purpose of strengthening national self-confidence, legitimizing the possession of the territory, as well as the future expansion of the nation-state. Heritage itself has the primary role of imprinting the national interpretation of the evidence into an organized system of constructed memories

¹¹² Smith, 1995, 65

¹¹³ Hobsbawm E. and Ranger, T., 1983, 271

¹¹⁴ Smith, 1999, 57-89

¹¹⁵ My definition

capable of self-replication with each new generation. The notion of the inherited material evidence from the past is commonly called the cultural heritage. Since cultural heritage encompasses a much wider scope of material remains, the definition in which it will be used in this work is given in the Article I of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention 1972.¹¹⁶

2.5.1 Constructing the memories in the Balkans

Two categories of memories can be identified in the Balkans. The first category consists of traditional beliefs which can be traced to the pre-nationalism period before 1789, which marks the beginning of the constructed memories. Most of these memories were included in an extraordinary rich folklore and survived as customs and traditional literature. This type of traditional memories were recorded either in the pre-nationalism period or immediately afterwards, when the construction of national myths was a widespread European phenomenon. Due to the unequal distribution of the recording processes in the Balkans, modern revisionists from within and outside the Balkans unjustifiably argue that those first compilers of the national memories were doing that in order to reinforce national aspirations of their own ethnic groups.¹¹⁷ These accusations are false for several reasons:

- i) firstly, the first compilers of the national myths in the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution, were following contemporary European academic and literary movements;
- ii) secondly, their work did not have the nationalist overtones which became prevalent towards the end of the 19th century;
- iii) thirdly, their work cannot be considered as a form of “*banal nationalism*” as described by Billig¹¹⁸, since most of the Balkan nation-states did not exist at that time, and finally,
- iv) ascribing nationalist tendencies to (in the modern understanding of the concept of nationalism) by modern authors is in itself an example of “*banal nationalism*” as it serves their own modern political programmes.

The second category of memories consists of those constructed in the latter part of the 19th and throughout the 20th centuries. These memories can certainly be

¹¹⁶ See *Introduction*, p.9

¹¹⁷ See discussion on normative historiography

¹¹⁸ See p.82 , above.

labeled as “banal nationalism”, as their commencement can be dated, their authors are usually known and their development is well recorded. This type of constructed memories coincides with the changing structure of nationalism due to modernization.

2.5.2 The modernization of the Western Balkans and its impact on the current nation-building

The modernization of the Balkans is a slow, uneven and still a very much ongoing process whose beginning coincided with the start of the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire. Definitions of the modernization are numerous and varied and the consensus of its commencement date has not yet been reached. Discussing the whole concept of modernization would go beyond the scope of this study. For present purposes the concept of modernization in the Balkans is defined as follows:

- i) the modern period began with the transformations of the predominantly agricultural into urban and semi-industrial societies; this was possible only after the economically weakened late Ottoman Empire allowed the European Great Powers to assert control over the economy of the region.
- ii) the self-assertion of the national elites through the formation of domestic bureaucracies and the development of state institutions;
- iii) the introduction of compulsory primary education, aimed at the eradication of illiteracy.

Clearly, all this was possible only with the introduction of the European state-concepts in the course of the 19th century. The modernization followed the encroachment of the European Powers upon the Balkans. Strategically more important areas were exposed to the swift and more radical changes. The pace of change was best expressed through the quick demolition of the Ottoman casaba and the adoption of the urbanization – building of cities and towns according to European models. Even though there was a natural desire for the improvement of peoples’ lives through modernization, quite frequently the European novelties were ruthlessly imposed by the state elites, as part of their duties towards the Great Powers, rather than by the natural evolution of the cultural characteristics.

In the 19th century, the formation of the Balkan nations and nation-states took place under the eye of the Great Powers of Europe. Despite the modern rhetoric that includes the current concepts of democracy and civic society, the process of

formation of new Balkan nations now, as much as it was the case over 150 years ago, is taking place under the selective principles of nation-building. Like then, this is happening under the scrutiny of the European Union and the United States. By allowing the *political intent* to take precedence over the real *academic knowledge* that aims to *understand the past*, the modern Great Powers of the West are sowing the seeds for future conflicts in the Balkans.