UDC 930.85(4–12) YU ISSN 0350–7653

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BALCANICA
XXXVII
ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BELGRADE
2007

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Nation-building under the Austro-Hungarian Sceptre
Croato-Serb Antagonism and Cooperation

In the nineteenth century many European nations became politically conscious of their "nationhood", which became one of the factors in the crumbling of the two great empires in Central-East Europe – the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire – at the beginning of the next century. Historians have termed this issue the Eastern Question, a question of filling up the vacuum created by the gradual erosion of Ottoman rule in Eastern Europe.[1] The Eastern Question involved not only a repositioning of the Balkan states (especially Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania) but also of Russia and the Habsburg Empire, leading to Great Power rivalries and resulting in the First World War.

The peoples of future Yugoslavia, most notably Croats and Serbs, matured as nations during this period. They strived for greater independence not only by resisting foreign rule but also by means of diplomacy and cooperation with nations who shared their aspirations either out of idealism or out of interest. The Great Powers, however, chiefly decided their fate. The year 1878 provides the most vivid example, when the borders of the South-Slav peoples shifted drastically two times in four months as a consequence of diverging interests of the Great Powers.[2]

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[1] See John Marriott, *The Eastern Question* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917); M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923* (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

[2] In March 1878, Russia, having defeated the Ottomans, attempted to resolve the Eastern Question to her advantage by the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano (3 March 1878). The agreement with the Ottomans provided Russia with overwhelming influence in the Balkans, including the much-desired outlet to the warm seas via a Greater Bulgaria, de facto a Russian protectorate that included the regions of Macedonia, Western Thrace, a portion of Albania, and a district of Serbia. Russia also awarded full recognition to Serbia, erstwhile an autonomous principality within the Ottoman Empire (reduced in the East by the Treaty of San Stefano to the advantage of Bulgaria) and Montenegro (almost tripled in size). In July 1878, the Congress of Berlin, attended by Germany,

Development of Serb national movement until 1914

Modern Serbian history[3] dates back to 1804, when the First Serbian Insurrection against the Ottomans began, born out of the desire for national emancipation.[4] This was the first national uprising against the Ottomans among the peoples of Southeast Europe, followed by the Greek Revolution of 1821. Moreover, amongst the conquered Slavs of future Yugoslavia, only Serbs succeeded in creating an independent state in 1878.[5] Montenegro, which had never been completely subjugated by the Ottomans, was also recognized then.[6] At the same time, these two states did not encompass all

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Austria-Hungary, Russia, Britain, France, Italy and Turkey, revised the Treaty of San Stefano, exploiting the fact that Russia, although victorious against the Ottomans, was exhausted by the war and at the verge of bankruptcy. Bulgaria, which to this day celebrates the day the Treaty of San Stefano was signed as its national day, was reduced, most of its extended territory having been restored to the Ottomans. The Congress of Berlin did recognize an independent Serbia and an independent Montenegro, within borders that suited the Great Powers, which were then impersonated by the Concert of Europe. It also granted Austria-Hungary the right to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina and to control the allegedly independent Montenegrin port of Bar [Treaty between Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Turkey, 13 July 1878, 153 CTS 171-191].

[3] The history of Serb statehood is very rich, with the first Serbian dynasty established in the eighth century. It is not recounted here for the reason of brevity. For more information, see *Histoire du Peuple Serbe*, ed. Dušan T. Bataković (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2005).

[4] The First Serbian Uprising has also been called a "Serbian national revolution". Brutally crushed by the Ottomans in 1813, it sparked the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815, which led to Serbia's semi-independence from the Ottomans in 1817, formalized in 1829 by the Peace of Adrianople and hatti-sherifs in 1829, 1830 and 1833. Pressured by Russia, the Sultan then granted Serbia the right to internal autonomy and its governor a hereditary title of a prince, but continued to oblige Serbia to pledge a fixed yearly tribute to the Porte. Prior to the uprisings, the rights of the vassal Serbia were regulated by various decrees. See Wayne Vucinich, ed., *The First Serbian Uprising 1804-1813* (Boulder, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); Leopold von Ranke, *History of Servia and the Servian Revolution* (London: Benn, 1848). Please also note that "the Serbian elite raised the issue of national rights and territorial autonomy as early as 1790, at the ecclesiastical-national diet held in Temesvar (present-day Romania) and attended by 75 representatives of the aristocracy, high clergy and officer corps." Dušan T. Bataković, "A Balkan-Style French Revolution? The 1804 Serbian Uprising in European Perspective", *Balcanica* XXXVI (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2006), 113-129.

[5] Treaty of Berlin, 13 July 1878, 153 CTS 171-191 (Article XXXIV).

[6] *Ibid*. (Article XXVI).

the territories where Serbs lived. Until 1912, more than a half of the Serb population lived under Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian rule.[7]

Despite the current revisionist claims by those favouring a non-Serb Montenegrin identity, it is a historical fact that the aspirations of the Montenegrins in the late nineteenth century mirrored those of Serbs as a whole – unification and independence of Serb-inhabited lands. The greatest Montenegrin poet Prince-bishop Petar Petrović Njegoš was a leading Serb national figure in the nineteenth century, instrumental in codifying the Kosovo myth as the central theme of the Serbian national movement.[8] The Petrović Njegoš dynasty, which ruled Montenegro, even made a brief attempt to assume the role of the Serb leader and unifier, but Montenegro's small size and weak economy eventually led to the recognition of the primacy of the Karadjordjević dynasty ruling out of Belgrade. Montenegrins had Serbian identity but they at once were proud of their state, especially in the area around Cetinje, the capital of the Kingdom of Montenegro. A sense of distinct statehood was strong enough to breed strong autonomist sentiments in a portion of Montenegro's population following the 1918 unification with Serbia and the imminent disappearance of a Montenegrin state.[9]

In the nineteenth century, the Serbian national identity had fully developed. The Serbs were aware of their long history and tradition, great medieval civilization and cultural unity, regardless of the fact that they lived under different imperial administrations. Three elements, interwoven with the legacy of the medieval Serb Nemanjić dynasty, were imperative in the forging of Serb national identity and its preservation during long periods

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[7] Slavenko Terzić, "The Right to Self-Determination and the Serbian Question" in *The Serbian Question in the Balkans: Geographical and Historical Aspects*, ed. Bratislav Atanacković (Belgrade: Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, 1995), 40. See also Dimitrije Djordjević, *Les revolutions nationals des peuples balkaniques* (Belgrade: Institut d'Histoire, 1965).

[8] See below.

[9] See John D. Treadway, *The Falcon and the Eagle, Montenegro and Austria-Hungary, 1908–1914* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1983), 16-18, 201, 210. The 1914 edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica describes Montenegrins as belonging to the "Serb race". Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Prince Kropotkin, C. Mijatovich and J. D. Bourchier, *A Short History of Russia and the Balkan States*; reproduced from the 11th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (London: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 1914), 121, 126. According to Stevan K. Pawlovitch, *A History of the Balkans 1804–1945* (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 108, Montenegrin "rulers considered themselves Serb, were generally supportive of a 'Serb' cause and willing to cooperate with Serbia, but nevertheless gave priority to their own territorial objectives".

of foreign domination – the Serbian Orthodox Church, the symbolism of Kosovo, and the Serbian language.

The identification of the Serbian Orthodox Church with the Serbian nation is deeply rooted in national consciousness. The medieval rulers of the Serbs were closely identified with the Serbian Church and its struggle for autonomy. Following the Byzantine tradition, members of the Serb Nemanjić dynasty founded monasteries, some became monks and achieved sainthood, and in 1219 the pious St. Sava, son of Stefan Nemanja, became the first archbishop of an autocephalous Serbian church, freed from the jurisdiction of the Greek-led Archbishopric of Ohrid. The Church's independence was extinguished soon after 1459, when the Ottomans conquered Serbia. The Serbian (Christian Orthodox) Church, under the name of the Patriarchate of Peć, re-emerged a century later (1557), after an intervention by the influential Ottoman vizier of Serbian origin Sokollu Mehmed Pasha (Sokolović) who extended its jurisdiction, bringing almost the entire Serbian nation under its wing.[10] The church was essential to Serbian identity as the only surviving Serbian institution during the long period of foreign rule and thus a form of a surrogate Serb state. Christian Orthodoxy has been one of the main Serbian traits, though there has been an important Catholic Serb minority, mainly in Dalmatia.[11] In addition, many Christian Serbs converted to Islam under the Ottomans, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Oral folk traditions constituted another element nurturing Serbian national culture and a reassurance that the nation would rise against its oppressors. A national hero of epic songs, legendary Marko Kraljević, is "an embodiment of all that the Serbs wanted to believe of themselves – his heroism, his gentleness, his respect for the religious and social customs of his people, his 'machismo', even his cruelty, but above all his fierce opposition to the Turks and his intense national pride".[12] The real Marko Kraljević died fighting as an Ottoman vassal.

While Serb epic poetry also appealed to other Slav peoples of the Balkans, the Kosovo legends kept the spark of Serbian national conscious-

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[10] Naturally, Sokolović was Muslim, but three of the first four patriarchs of the re-established Serbian Orthodox Church – Patriarchate of Peć, in Kosovo and Metohia, came from his family (the first patriarch was his brother, the Serb Orthodox monk Makarije Sokolović). See Fred Singleton, *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 44; Djoko Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve* [History of the Serbian Orthodox Church] (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1991), vol. 1, 306, 318-319.

[11] See below.

[12] Singleton, *Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, 45.

ness alive for centuries, which burst into flame with Karadjordje's[13] revolt against the Ottoman Turks in 1804. Legends of the Battle of Kosovo (15/28 June 1389) dominated Serbian literature and art before the twentieth century. Historians observe that neither Serbs nor Turks won the battle, while both the Serbian ruler and the Ottoman Sultan were killed in its course. However, the Ottoman conquest of Serbia followed,[14] indicating that this battle represented a long-term loss for the Serbs. The Serbs have nonetheless celebrated the Battle of Kosovo as a symbol of their resistance to foreign occupation, of national unity and ultimate sacrifice for homeland (Serbdom) and Heavenly Kingdom.[15] Prior to Ottoman occupation, the Serbs had reached their zenith under Dušan the Great (1331–55), who was crowned "Emperor of the Serbs, Greeks and Bulgars".[16]

The most ardent collector of Serb oral tradition was Vuk Karadžić (1787–1864), reflecting the ideas of European early Romanticism. Notably, he was also the reformer and founder of the modern Serbian language, building on the work of other Serb linguists and philosophers, Sava Mrkalj (1783–1833), Luka Milovanov (1784–1828) and Dositej Obradović (1742–1811), the latter being a representative of European rationalism. Karadžić

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[13] Djordje Petrović known as Karadjordje was the leader of the First Serbian Insurrection and the founder of the Serb Karadjordjević dynasty. For more, see Zeljan E. Suster, *Historical Dictionary of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, European Historical Dictionaries No. 29 (Lanham, MD/London: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 154.

[14] Serbia lost independence only in 1459, but the Battle of Kosovo was perceived as crucial to the establishment of the 500 years of Ottoman domination over Serbia. It should be stressed that, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the capital city of the Serbian Kingdom and the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch were, respectively, Prizren and Peć, two cities in the modern-day territory of Kosovo and Metohia.

[15] The Battle of Kosovo took place on St. Vitus' Day (*Vidovdan*). The day of the Kosovo anniversary was chosen by the heir apparent to the Habsburg throne for a state visit to the occupied Sarajevo in 1914, when he was assassinated by a local Serb activist, Gavrilo Princip, marking the beginning of the First World War. June 28th was also chosen by the ruler of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as the day on which to promulgate the Vidovdan Constitution in 1921. Aware of this symbolism, Stalin chose this date to announce the expulsion of the Yugoslav Communist Party from the Cominforn in 1948. The anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo has been honoured by other nations as well. In June 1918, five months before the end of the First World War, the United States recognized it as a day of special commemoration in honour of Serbia and all other oppressed peoples fighting in the Great War. Prior to that, in 1916, a nationwide tribute to Serbia was arranged in Britain to celebrate the anniversary of Kosovo. For more information on these celebrations, see Thomas A. Emmert, "The Kosovo Legacy" in *Kosovo*, ed. Basil W.R. Jenkins (Alhambra, CA: The Kosovo Charity Fund, 1992), 55-57.

[16] Quoted in Frits W. Hondius, *The Yugoslav Community of Nations* (Hague: Mouton, 1968), 20.

solidified Serbian culture, spreading and popularizing national awakening. He also extended the definition of Serbdom to embrace all who spoke this language, which, according to him, was a Serbian national heritage.[17] This idea reappeared in the formation of the first Yugoslavia, but failed in practice because a common language was not sufficient to unite Serbs, Croats and Muslims in one nation. Moreover, the majority of Croats had strongly rejected Karadžić's linguistic theory of national identity, perceiving Karadžić as a Serb nationalist.

In 1844, an unofficial plan of Serbian foreign policy was forged, inspired by a leading Polish émigré in France Count Adam Jerzi Czartoryski and his Balkan agent Frantisek Zach who wrote the first draft of this document. Ilija Garašanin (1812–74), Serbian statesman and politician then serving as Minister of the Interior, personally endorsed Zach's somewhat revised plan in a then secret[18] document known as *Načertanije* ("Draft"). Like many of his contemporaries, Garašanin accepted that Serbia's national mission was to complete the task of national and social liberation initiated by the Serbian insurrections of 1804 and 1815. The frontiers of the state needed to be extended to encompass all areas where Serbs lived according to the most famous paragraph of *Načertanije*:

> The significance and the foundation of Serbian politics is that it not be limited to its present borders, but that it seeks to embrace all Serb peoples surrounding it.[19]

Following Karadžić's lead, Garašanin defined the Serb national boundaries as linguistic and cultural rather than exclusively ethnic or religious. However, the *Načertanije* also advocated historical borders, especially towards the South.

Načertanije was a national programme created after the famous national programmes in Europe demanding national liberation and union in nation-states, pursuant to similar processes in Germany or Italy. In fact, that

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[17] Mihailo Crnobrnja, *The Yugoslav Drama* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 37.

[18] The Serbian public was not aware of the existence of the document until 1888 and of its contents until the beginning of the twentieth century. See Radoš Ljušić, "Ilija Gapašanin o srpskoj državnosti" [Ilija Garašanin on Serb Statehood] in *Garašanin: susreti i vidjenja 2001* [Garašanin: meetings and perceptions 2001], eds. Zoran Konstantinović and Slobodan Pavićević (Kragujevac: Jefimija, 2002), 99.

[19] "Načertanije Ilije Garašanina", reprinted in Belgrade 1991, 15 (translation mine). English copy produced in Paul N. Hehn, "The Origins of Modern Pan-Serbism – the 1844 Nacertanije of Ilija Garasanin: An Analysis and Translation", *East European Quarterly* IX, No. 2 (Summer 1975).

same year the project of a Greater Greece – *Megali Idea* – was published.[20] Both the Serbian and Greek national programmes were based on the principle of inalienable historic right, in agreement with the national ideologies in Europe at the time. Serbian political parties followed this ideology within and without the princedoms, kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, which is comparable to the implementation of "internal" and "external" right to self-determination. The most influential Serbian party, the National Radical Party, in its 1881 programme thus declared the following two goals for future state organization: "internally people's prosperity and freedom, and externally state independence and freedom and unification of the remaining parts of Serbdom."[21]

Later historiography, mainly of Croat origin, has wrongly accused Garašanin of extreme Serb nationalism.[22] And yet, the reading of the original text suggests a different conclusion. The section titled "The Policy of Servia towards Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Northern Albania" states that "one of the main points which should be set forth is the principle of full freedom of religion established by law", and that "every effort should be made to protect the Bosnians and other Slavs and to render them every means of assistance". *Načertanije* further declares:

> It would be advisable to print a short and general history of Bosnia, in which the names of several men of the Mohammedan faith and their renowned deeds would be included. It is recommended that this history be written in the spirit of the Slavic people.

Garašanin was a pragmatic statesman who realized that "only through alliance with other neighbouring peoples can she [Serbia] solve her future problems".[23] While Garašnin certainly envisioned a Serb-led kingdom, at the same time this was to be a democratic South-Slav union. According to Slobodan Jovanović, Garašanin was one of the first statesmen to conceptualize the idea "Balkans to the Balkan peoples".[24]

In practice, union of free Serbs with the Serbs under foreign rule remained the Serbs' ultimate goal. Whether this union would be achieved independently or in union with other Slav peoples was yet to be determined. Garašanin was aware that the implementation of his political programme

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[20] Milan St. Protić, *Uspon i pad srpske ideje* [The Rise and Fall of the Serbian Idea] (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1994), 68.

[21] *Samouprava* (Self-government), no. 1, 8 January 1881 [translation mine].

[22] See, for instance, Mirko Valentić, "Koncepcija Garašaninovog 'Načertanija' (1844)", *Historijski pregled* VII (Zagreb, 1961).

[23] *Načertanije*, Appendix.

[24] Slobodan Jovanović, *Političke i pravne rasprave* I–III [Political and legal treatises] (1st ed. 1908; Belgrade: BIGZ, 1990), 352.

would not begin immediately but that it provided an important strategic vision.

Four years after the *Načertanije* was written, the Slavs (mainly Serbs) living in the Habsburg province of South Hungary (Voivodina)[25] allied themselves with Vienna not simply to counteract the Hungarian revolutionaries, but primarily to protect their rights from the Hungarian denial of Serb identity. Their struggle was aided by the Kingdom of Serbia in an action organized by Garašanin, as well as by Serbs from other parts of the Habsburg Empire. However, the Voivodina Serbs, to their disappointment, were not granted territorial autonomy by Vienna in return, but just another imperial patent reconfirming their previous privileges.[26]

The "Duchy of Serbia and Temes Banat" established on 18 November 1849 was not a separate federal unit as such but a separate administrative district with church and school autonomy. Under Hungarian pressure even this status was abolished on 27 December 1860, with Voivodina becoming fully incorporated into Hungary. In 1868, the Hungarian authorities renewed the church and school autonomy for Voivodina Serbs, but limited in scope, only to abolish it once again in 1912. The extensive limitation of privileges, beginning with the act of 1860, stimulated political organization of the Voivodina Serbs, who gradually became the leaders of Serb political action in the Habsburg Empire.

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[25] Voivodina (Voyvodina, Vojvodina) is the Serbian word for duchy. The province's original historic name is the Duchy of Serbia, shortened to Serbian Voivodina and then just Voivodina upon its incorporation into Serbia when the attribute "Serbian" was no longer necessary.

[26] The Serbs moved from southern Serbia (mainly Kosovo) to Voivodina in great numbers in 1690 to escape Ottoman retaliation, whose army they had fought together with the Austrians. The migration to Voivodina was initiated by an Invitational manifest (so-called *Leterae invitatorie*) issued by the Habsburg Emperor Leopold I to all Balkan Christians on 6 April 1690. Special privileges were granted to Serbs in Voivodina by Leopold I on 21 August 1690, 11 December 1690, 20 August 1691 and 4 March 1695, and reconfirmed by the decrees of 1698 and 1699, as well as with each change of the ruler (Joseph I on 7 August 1706, Charles VI on 10 April 1715 and Maria Theresa on 24 April 1743). These privileges, allowing for church and school autonomy (including free election of church patriarch and military ruler – duke), exemption from 10% tax imposed by the Catholic Church, and guarantees of personal and property rights, were limited in times of peace (under pressure from the Catholic Church and Hungarian authorities) and extended in times of crisis since the Voivodina Serbs rendered military services to the Austrian rulers. For more information, see Vasilije Dj. Krestić, *Gradja o Srbima u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji (1848–1914)* [Documents on Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia (1848–1914)] (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1995), 88-112.

Serbia liberated its Southern territory (Old Serbia and Slavic Macedonia)[27] from the Ottoman Turks in the First Balkan War (1912–13), but then fought a second Balkan war to determine her borders in relation to other Balkan states, primarily Bulgaria, which resulted in the Treaty of Bucharest of 10 August 1913.[28] During that period the Serbian government made no overt attempts to undermine Austro-Hungarian rule, aware that Serbia was not strong enough to fight the Empire on her own. However, the relations with Austria-Hungary became increasingly strained, especially after 1908 when the Dual Monarchy annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, whose relative majority population at that time was Serb.[29] Perceiving the Serbs as the greatest threat to the Empire's integrity[30] and an obstacle to its expansion to the East (*Drang nach Osten*), the Habsburgs used the assassination of the archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo as a pretext for the punitive war against Serbia.

According to Jovanović, in Serbia at the turn of the twentieth century "the strongest idea-force was nationalism", which he identifies as a positive force contributing to Serbia's state building:

> The people needed an independent state in order to liberate themselves from the Turks; the dynasty needed a strong state power for its security; the parties needed a constitutional and parliamentary state system in order to govern. Feeding itself on the components of nationalism, dynastism, partyism, the state idea grew stronger.[31]

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[27] Old Serbia is a geographic region that was the core of medieval Serbia, including Raška, Kosovo and Metohia, as well as the northwest of today's Slavic Macedonia, including the towns of Skoplje, Veles and Tetovo.

[28] Treaty of Bucharest, 10 August 1913, 218 CTS 322-337.

[29] See Dimitrije Djordjevic, "The Serbs as an Integrating and Disintegrating Factor", *Austrian History Yearbook* 3, No. 2 (1967), 48-82, 72-74.

[30] Samuel R. Williamson, Jr, *Austria-Hungary and the Origins of the First World War* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 103.

[31] Jovanović, *Vlada Aleksandra Obrenovića*, 374. Note: The Obrenović dynasty ruled in 1815–42 and 1858–1903, and the Karadjordjević dynasty in 1842–58 and 1903–45. The two rival dynasties were both native, Serb. Prince Miloš Obrenović organized the 1817 assassination of Karadjordje. An arbitrary ruler, Miloš was forced to abdicate in 1839. He was succeeded by two of his sons, Milan (who ruled only a few weeks) and Michael, who ruled for three years. In 1842 Karadjordje's son Alexander (1806–85) acceded to the throne, but was deposed in 1858, when the Obrenović dynasty was reinstalled and Prince Miloš came to the throne for the second time. Prince Michael Obrenović (1825–68), the youngest son of Miloš, engineered the total Ottoman withdrawal from Serbia in 1867. However, after his assassination in 1868, his first cousin Milan (1854–1901) was elected Prince of Serbia (King from 1882) and ruled until 1889 when he abdicated in favour of his son Alexander, the last ruler of the Obrenović dynasty (1881–1903).

As a result, the early twentieth century saw Serbia as a relatively modern and functional parliamentary monarchy. The 1903 Constitution (the revised 1888 one) reinaugurated a democratic regime, with strong guarantees for political and human rights, building upon the 1838 Constitution, which enforced a separation of executive and judicial powers, the 1869 Constitution, which strengthened the role of the National Assembly, and the 1888 Constitution, which granted the National Assembly complete control over the budget, establishing a parliamentary regime.[32] Public administration reform and a professional civil service were important building blocks of a modern Serb state, with many civil servants coming from the ranks of Austro-Hungarian Serbs. By the First World War, almost universal male suffrage had existed for at least a generation in Serbia (from the 1888 Constitution) and social rights equalled if not exceeded those of West-European states; working time was limited and workers enjoyed the right to strike.

As observed by John Allcock, "measured by the standard of the existence of representative institutions alone, Serbia should be considered the most 'advanced' of all the South Slav lands".[33] This is not to say that Serbia lacked non-democratic elements. Notably, in 1903 a secret society largely composed of military officers murdered the autocratic King Alexander Obrenović and Queen Draga, considering the couple to be a political embarrassment to Serbia and an obstacle to her democratization. Still, the subsequent Serb ruler, King Peter I Karadjordjević, was a true constitutional monarch, who had in his youth translated John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty* into Serbian.[34] In the nineteenth century Serbia created a modern army and a civilian bureaucracy, making a unique achievement in what was to become Yugoslavia, that of building the framework for a modern state.[35]

Development of Croat national movement and Croato-Serb relations until 1914

As in the case of the Serbs, language and literature became the building blocks of Croat national consciousness in the nineteenth century. Ljudevit

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[32] See Jovanović, *Političke i pravne rasprave*, 20-35.

[33] John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 263.

[34] Grandson of Karadjordje Petrović, the leader of the First Serbian Insurrection against the Ottomans, King Peter I was a modest person and a patriot, Serb and European, having fought in the French army against the Germans and wounded in 1870, as well as taking part in the 1876 Serb uprising against the Ottomans in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[35] See John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History. Twice there was a country* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 46-55.

Gaj (1809–72) led this language reform, modifying the Latin alphabet to partially conform to the rule "one sound–one letter", established for the Cyrillic alphabet by Vuk Karadžić. Gaj also adopted the shtokavian dialect of the Serbian language as the Croat literary dialect.[36] His reform was an essential part of the so-called Illyrian movement, resisting the attempts from Budapest to Magyarize the Croats and entertaining the idea of a common "Illyrian" (that is, South Slav) state. Serbs, including Garašanin, mistrusted Ljudevit Gaj and therefore questioned the authenticity of the Illyrian movement, having discovered that Gaj also acted as a spy for the Viennese authorities.[37]

In contrast to Slovene and Serb nationalism, which mainly relate to people, Croat nationalism principally relates to territory, a policy which has over time become the root of competing claims between the two nations that inhabit present-day Croatia – the Croats and the Serbs:

> While Serbian nationalism was fashioned so as to appeal to the minds and hearts of all Serbian people, regardless of where they lived, Croatian nationalism, largely legalistic, was predicated on territorial claims, without taking account of who lived in these territories.[38]

Historically, "Croatia" has been an amorphous geographic concept, significantly changing in size and ownership of sovereignty. It existed as a small independent state in the Middle Ages,[39] but it was absorbed by the Hungarian Kingdom following the death of the last Croatian king in a battle against Hungarians in 1097. Croatia became one of many provinces, administratively linked with the province of Slavonia, most of which forms part of present-day Croatia. A third formerly Habsburg province which also forms part of present-day Croatia, but which, historically, has been more autonomous than the original province of Croatia or the province of Slavonia, is Dalmatia. Austrians ruled Dalmatia, while Hungary administered Croatia and Slavonia in the Empire. Finally, the fourth region incorporated

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[36] For more, see Suster, *Historical Dictionary of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, 118-119.

[37] See Vasilije Dj. Krestić, *Znameniti Srbi o Hrvatima* [Eminent Serbs on Croats] (Novi Sad: Prometej, 1999), 18-19.

[38] Žarko Bilbija, "The Serbs and Yugoslavia" in *The Serbs and their National Interest*, eds. Norma von Ragenfeld-Feldman and Dusan T. Batakovic (San Francisco: Serbian Unity Congress, 1997), 96-97. Note: Bosnia and Herzegovina is another territory of competing claims between Croats and Serbs but this important issue will not be discussed here due to the limited space.

[39] Medieval Croatia reached its peak in the reign of Tomislav (910–928), who proclaimed himself king in 924.

into today's Croatia is *Krajina* or the Military Frontier, ruled by the Austrians until 1881 when it was placed under Hungarian auspices.[40]

Dalmatia certainly enjoyed the largest degree of autonomy in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It entered the Habsburg monarchy much later than the other South-Slav provinces, as a result of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, when it was taken from Napoleonic France. Indeed, Dalmatia retained a distinctive character during most of its history, not unified with the other Austro-Hungarian provinces inhabited by South-Slavs until the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes more than a hundred years after the Habsburg conquest (1918). According to Allcock: "Although Croats had tended to include Dalmatia within their understanding of the historical 'Croat lands', these had long been Venetian possessions." Moreover, the Ragusan Republic (Dubrovnik) had retained relative independence until 1808. By the Treaty of Campo Formio (1797), Venice ceded Dalmatia to Austria and, following the intervening Napoleonic period, Austrian control was reasserted in 1815.[41]

In 1874 Dalmatia's population was mostly made up of Croats and Serbs, with a small Italian minority, which nevertheless had significant cultural influence.[42] The exact proportions of Serbs and Croats cannot be precisely determined. Historians at the time made estimates based on language and religion, and while language was considered to be one and the same, Serb Catholics were also a large group in Dalmatia.[43] Serbs lived mostly in the south of Dalmatia, in the Bay of Kotor (Cattaro) and in Dubrovnik. They were also to be found in the towns of Zadar and Šibenik and in the

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[40] The peninsula of Istria is sometimes studied as a separate, fifth region although most historians tend to group Istria with Dalmatia.

[41] Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 255.

[42] According to one historian, Rade Petrović, *Nacionalno pitanje u Dalmaciji u XIX stoljeću* [National question in Dalmatia in the 19th Century] (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, and Zagreb: Prosvjeta, 1982), 17-18, "89 percent of the population of Dalmatia spoke only Serbo-Croatian in 1874; about 8 percent spoke both Serbo-Croatian and Italian; 3 percent spoke only Italian", quoted in Nicholas J. Miller, *Between Nation and State* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 29. For more, see Vasilije Krestić, *History of the Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia 1848–1914*, transl. Margot and Boško Milosavljević (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1997).

[43] For more information on Roman Catholic Serbs, see Lazo M. Kostić, *Katolički Srbi* [Catholic Serbs] (Toronto: St. Sava Serb Cultural Club, 1963) and Ivan Stojanović, *Povjest Dubrovačke Republike* [The History of the Republic of Dubrovnik], orig. written in German by Ivan Hristijan v. Engel (Dubrovnik: Srpske Dubrovačke Štamparije A. Pasarića, 1903).

hinterland of northern Dalmatia.[44] The Serb presence in Dalmatia and its hinterland is centuries old. In addition to some older historical documents, living witnesses to Serb presence are the Serbian Orthodox monasteries of Krupa and Krka (both dated to the fourteenth century). A brief account of economic, cultural, scientific and political influence of the Dubrovnik Serbs is an illustrative example of the significant Serb presence in southern Dalmatia:

> For many centuries Dubrovnik traded with its Orthodox hinterland and received immigrants therefrom. The most renowned inhabitants of Dubrovnik, Ivan Gundulić, poet (1583–1638) and Rudjer Bošković, scientist and philosopher (1713–1787), famous in European circles, were of Serbian origin ... In 1890, the Serbian Party won the municipal election in Dubrovnik. They got votes of the Orthodox Serbs and of the Catholic Serbs as well. In Ston, on the Pelješac peninsula, St. Sava founded an eparchy in 1219.[45]

Three nations therefore claimed this region – Serbs, Croats and Italians. Yet it should be noted that prior to and under Habsburg rule, many Dalmatians identified themselves simply as Dalmatians or Slavs, rather than Serbs, Croats or Italians.[46]

Krajina[47] is the region established by Vienna in the 1520s as a military frontier zone between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, on empty land bordering the provinces of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia to the west and Bosnia-Herzegovina to the east. The people who came to inhabit this region, predominantly Serb,[48] fought for the Habsburgs against the Ottomans. In return, they enjoyed a large degree of autonomy that included independent schooling and an autonomous church. Slavo-Serbian (the lan-

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[44] Serbs began to settle in the coastal city of Rijeka only after the Second World War, following the expulsion of most of its Italian inhabitants by the Yugoslav Communist authorities.

[45] Jovan Ilić, "The Serbs in the Former SR Croatia" in *The Serbian Question in the Balkans*, 317.

[46] As late as 1860, a Dalmatian politician reported no more than seven pro-Slavic politicians in Dalmatia, further noting that several of these declared themselves as Slavo-Dalmatians, also considering Dalmatians to be a separate ethnic group. For more, see Josip Vrandečić, "Nacionalne ideologije u Dalmaciji u 19. stoljeću" [National ideologies in Dalmatia in the 19th century] in *Dijalog povjesničara-istoričara* [Dialogue of historians 4], eds. Dušan Gamser, Igor Graovac and Olivera Milosavljević (Zagreb: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, 2001).

[47] Military Border or Frontier in English; Militärgrenze in German.

[48] For one of the earliest autochthonous demographic accounts of Krajina, see Spiridon Jović, *Etnografska slika Slavonske vojne granice* [Ethnographic Picture of the Military Border in Slavonia] (1st ed. 1835; Belgrade: Čigoja štampa, 2004), esp. 43-48.

guage that pre-dates the current version of the Serbian language) was used as a language of instruction, and Serb Orthodox clergy oversaw schools in Krajina. It was the *Statuta Valachorum*,[49] a decree issued by Emperor Ferdinand II in 1630, that placed Krajina under the direct rule of Vienna, removing the jurisdiction of the Croatian Diet and effectively creating a separate region at the expense of the Croatia-Slavonia province. Internal organization of the Krajina was based on local autonomy, with courts for each of three captaincies, elected for year-long terms by the elders of each district. This civil government and courts were in charge of all civil penalties, with military courts limited to corporal punishment, and that only for the military. The Statute also elaborated military requirements: a minimum of six thousand soldiers was to gather within three hours of any alarm. The Krajina inhabitants were exempt from various land and protection taxes imposed on others.[50]

Upon the creation of Krajina, Croatian noblemen demanded that their levy power be extended to this area. In the eighteenth century, the Croatian representatives in the Hungarian Diet even demanded "the enactment of laws and regulations which would make life impossible for the Serbian people and for the Orthodox Church"[51] such as those preventing the organization of Serbian high schools, the building of Serb Orthodox churches, and so on. However, Vienna rejected these demands, needing the Krajina manpower to fight the Ottoman onslaught. In turn, the inhabitants of Krajina were extremely loyal to the Habsburgs, regarding them as the guarantors of their privileged status. According to Gunther Rothenberg:

> At the time when serfdom and subservience to feudal lords were still the general rule, [they] regarded themselves as free tenants of the emperor who were far superior to ordinary peasants.[52]

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[49] The legislation had the same name and purpose as the so-called Vlach law of 1467–8, under which the Ottomans granted privileges to Serbs in vassal Serbia. However the Austro-Hungarian law granted more extensive rights, at once creating an autonomous region and an effective military system defending their Empire. The integral text of the *Statuta Valachorum*, proclaimed on 5 October 1630, is reproduced in Latin, Serbian and English in Dinko Davidov, *Srpske priviliegije* [Serbian Privileges], (Novi Sad, Belgrade: Matica srpska, Institute for Balkan Studies, Svetovi, 1994), 145-147.

[50] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 10-11.

[51] Edmond Paris, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia. A Record of Racial and Religious Prosecutions and Massacres* (Chicago: American Institute for Balkan Affairs, 1961), 11.

[52] Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The Military Border in Croatia, 1740–1881* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 9.

However, the Austrians tended to overlook local derogations to privileges at a time of a low war danger. The Catholic Church used this to forcefully convert the residents of the Military Frontier:

> As long as the service of the Orthodox Grenzer were needed, their religion was respected; but when the need had passed the throne did nothing to restrain the efforts of the Catholic hierarchy, which, with the zealous collaboration of the military, attempted forcibly to convert the Orthodox or at least to coerce them to accept the Uniate rites.[53]

Despite the forced conversions, and the taxing demands of the Croat noblemen, the Serbs and the Croats generally lived peacefully in Krajina, where Serbs were a majority.[54] The Krajina Serbs also had good relations with other Habsburg provinces where Croats formed the majority – Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. Serious scholars have therefore refuted the postulated "age-old antagonisms" between Serbs and Croats.[55]

The Croats of *Croatia-Slavonia* enjoyed a limited political autonomy from the Habsburgs from their official incorporation into the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1102. However, many present-day Croat historians find the position of Croatia's subservience to Hungary in the Habsburg Empire (later Austria-Hungary) impossible to accept, because it testifies to the loss of Croatian statehood in the Middle Ages. Contrary to the established scholarly evidence, they tend to describe the Croat position within the Dual Monarchy as a voluntary sharing of power and a personal union between Croatia and Hungary: "In the early Middle-Ages Croatia entered into something of a commonwealth with Hungary."[56]

Some Croat historians go beyond this explanation and depict Croatia as one of the three states constituting the Habsburg Empire which, accord-

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[53] *Ibid*., 29. Please note that Grenzer is the German term for the Krajina inhabitants.

[54] See Drago Roksandić, *Srbi u Hrvatskoj* [Serbs in Croatia] (Zagreb: Vjesnik, 1991), 55-70.

[55] See, e.g., Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 30.

[56] Stephen Gazi, *A History of Croatia* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1993), ix. A document titled *Pacta Conventa,* not preserved but supposedly signed in 1102, was claimed by leading Croatian historians to be a contract stipulating personal union of Hungary and Croatia. However, even if its authenticity were accepted, it still would not represent anything more than a contract between the feudal ruler of Croatia, Hungarian King Koloman, and his Croatian vassals, i.e. it would not be perceived as an interstate agreement in the domain of international law. Marko Kostrenčić, s. v. "Pacta conventa", *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* (Zagreb, 1955), 404; Nada Kalić, "Pacta conventa ili tobožnji ugovor između plemstva dvanaestoro plemena i kralja Kolomana 1102. godine" [*Pacta conventa* or the alleged contract between twelve tribes and king Koloman of 1102], *Historijski pregled* 2 (1960).

ing to them, was only nominally a "Dual" monarchy.[57] Historical legalism based on the continuity of the Croat state[58] is characteristic of Croatian historiography,[59] and it follows in many aspects, and is a reaction to, similar Hungarian designs. Croatian historical legalism was rejected by the Hungarian and other historians such as Hondius who viewed it as "a complex and national malaise [of the Croats]."[60] Nevertheless it is important to emphasize the firm belief of most Croats in its factuality since nationhood tends to be based on belief rather than reality.[61] The belief in the idea that Croatian statehood had never been extinguished contributed to the emergence of modern Croat national consciousness in the nineteenth century, with a goal of reunification of the alleged Triune Kingdom of the Middle Ages (Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia).

An undisputable fact is that Habsburg rule was less oppressive than Ottoman, sharing Roman Catholic religion and cultural views with the Croats who retained the institutions of a parliament and a governor (*ban*), who was nevertheless chosen by Vienna or Budapest, which also had full control of the provinces' finances.[62] Nonetheless, according to Singleton, dominant Croat families did not display any strong national feelings, Croat or Hungarian:

> They were more concerned with the consolidation of their estates and with the expansion of their personal power. Two of the leading families, the Zrinski and the Frankopan, held land in both Croatia-

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[57] See, e.g., Milan Vladisavljević, *Hrvatska autonomija pod Austro-Ugarskom* [Croatian autonomy under Austria-Hungary] (Belgrade: Politika AD, 1939).

[58] See also Emilio Pallua, "A Survey of the Constitutional History of the Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slavonia", *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 24 (1990), 129-154.

[59] Croato-American historians Charles and Barbara Jelavich share the Croat viewpoint that Croatia and Hungary "remained as separate kingdoms united through the crown". Rather than having been conquered, Croats had, in this view, "elected the ruler of Hungary as their monarch" in 1102, and, by the same reasoning, in 1527 "after the defeat of Hungary by the Turks, Croatia elected the Habsburg emperor as her king". See Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920* (1st edition 1986; Seattle, London: University of Washington Press, 1993), 247.

[60] Hondius, *Yugoslav Community of Nations*, 20

[61] See Benedict R. OG. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Maria N. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[62] Charles Jelavich, "The Croatian Problem in the Habsburg Empire in the Nineteenth Century", *Austrian History Yearbook* 3, No. 2 (1967), 100.

> Slavonia region and Hungary and moved freely between their lands.[63]

However, an era of centralization and Magyarization ensuing in the late nineteenth century placed Croatia-Slavonia under the direct rule of Budapest:

> The railways were being constructed as an integral part of the Hungarian railway system. Also, Hungarian flags, emblems, coats of arms, and inscriptions were being erected everywhere.[64]

Croat nationalists from Croatia and Slavonia developed an increasing animosity towards the Hungarians, whom they then viewed as oppressors, while others remained loyal to Budapest.

It was not until the nineteenth century that the provinces of Croatia and Slavonia had a first governor of Croatian origin, Josip Jelačić, previously a mid-ranking Austrian military officer. Jelačić entertained a good relationship with the Habsburg Serbs. He referred to the "Croat and Serbian People" in his proclamations, and declared on 7 September 1848: "Religious differences make no barriers between brothers in social or public life. We proclaim full equality [between Croats and Serbs]."[65]

When the Hungarians began to demand greater rights from the Austrian Habsburgs, the Croats and the Serbs in the Empire, led by Ban Jelačić, fought fervently on the Austrian side. Croats, who were under Hungarian rule in the Empire, resisted Magyarization and hoped to obtain greater rights from the Austrian emperor. The Krajina Serbs supported the Croats not only because of Jelačić's fair treatment of Serbs and Croats, but also because the Hungarians had begun encroaching on the Austrian rule in Krajina. Finally, the Hungarians had directed their Magyarization policy not just against Croats but also against Serbs and other ethnic groups in the provinces under their rule. A key factor in forging a Croato-Serb military coalition against the Hungarians was the uprising of the Voivodina Serbs (then a part of Southern Hungary) against the Hungarian authorities during the 1848–49 revolution.[66] The Krajina Serbs demanded that Jelačić provide military aid for their brethren. The Serb Patriarch Josif Rajačić, who had consecrated Jelačić as a ban, seconded this demand.[67] Although the Croat-

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[63] Singleton, *Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, 55-56.

[64] Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919–1953* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 31.

[65] Branko Vincic, "History of Serbs in Croatia", *Krajina: Tragedy of a People* (Hamilton, ON: Canadian-Serbian Council, 1998), 41.

[66] See above.

[67] Rothenberg, *Military Border*, 151.

Serb army then delivered a serious blow to the Hungarian forces, they lost the battle. The Hungarian revolution was quelled by Russian troops who aided the Austrian crown, bound by the Holy Alliance.[68]

The good relations between the Serbs and the Croats in the Habsburg Empire were further strengthened in 1867, when the Croatian Diet declared that the Serbian and Croatian nations and their languages were equal.[69] However, this decision was not always respected. Notably the first Croat teachers' general assembly in 1871 concluded that teaching was to be in Croatian only.[70] Perhaps this change in attitude came as a result of the 1868 Croato-Hungarian agreement (*Nagodba*).[71] The agreement dealing with Croato-Hungarian relations was a consequence of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which had turned the Habsburg Monarchy into a Dual Monarchy, now placing the province of Croatia-Slavonia completely in the sphere of Hungary.

The Croato-Hungarian agreement delineated Croatian autonomy within Hungary with Croatian as the official language. Yet it stressed in the first article that Hungary and the provinces of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia formed "one and the same political community",[72] with Budapest retaining control over the choice of governor, finances and the most important port, Fiume (Rijeka). While Croats placed their hopes in this agreement, perceiving it as a document apt to strengthen their rights within the Empire, Hungarians considered it a first step in Croatia's transformation

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[68] Article II of the Holy Alliance Treaty, signed on 26 September 1815 by the sovereigns of Austria, Prussia and Russia, stipulated that "the sole principle of force, whether between the said Governments or between their Subjects, shall be that of doing each other reciprocal service, and of testifying by unalterable good will the mutual affection with which they ought to be animated, to consider themselves all as members of one and the same Christian nation." Edward Cecil Hertslet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty* (London, 1875) (accessed 10 February 2005); available from http://www.napoleonseries.org/reference/diplomatic/alliance.cfm

[69] *Saborski spisi sabora kraljevinah Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije od godine 1865–1867* [Parliamentary Acts of the Parliament of the Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia 1865–1857] (Zagreb, 1900), 308.

[70] Decision quoted in Vasilije Dj. Krestić, *Iz istorije Srba i srpsko-hrvatskih odnosa* [From the History of Serbs and Serb-Croat Relations] (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1994), 210-211.

[71] Integral text of the political compromise between Croatia and Hungary of 18 November 1868 reproduced in François Rodolphe, *Les Constitutions Modernes–Recueil des constitutions en vigeur dans les divers Etats d'Europe, d'Amérique et du monde civilisé* (Paris: Challamel, 1910), Vol. I, 505, and in Snezana Trifunovska, *Yugoslavia through Documents from its Creation to its Dissolution* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1994), 50-58.

[72] *Ibid*. (translation mine). Original text: "La Hongrie et la Croatie, Slavonie et Dalmatie forment une seule et même communauté politique…"

into an integral part of Hungary. Hungarian and other foreign historians, including those writing in that period,[73] constantly emphasized the limits to Croatia's autonomy within Hungary, while Croatian historians tended to exaggerate its scope.[74] Notably, just as Hungarians wanted to render Croats a Hungarian "political nation", Croats preferred to view the Serbs as 'political Croats', a view that Serbs fiercely rejected.[75] This issue formed the core of Croato-Serb antagonism, which developed as Croatian nationalism ripened in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Consequently, Croatia's frustrations regarding its position in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were not soothed with the *Nagodba*. Thirteen years later (1881), the Habsburgs dissolved the Krajina province under great pressure from Hungary, incorporating it into Croatia-Slavonia. From that point, after the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878 diminished the importance of Krajina's role in the defence of the Empire's eastern borders, the Serbs become an important factor in the Croato-Hungarian conflict:

> With the new lands, Croatia added 61 percent more territory and 663,000 more people, of which 55 percent were Serbs. This simple transfer of land and people from one jurisdiction to another upset the equilibrium of Croatian politics by inserting a non-Croatian element into what had been a largely Croatian land. By 1910, Orthodox Serbs made up approximately 25 percent of Croatia [-Slavonia-]'s population.[76]

While the majority of the Serbs living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire were peasants, some were also bankers and wealthy landowners. In 1897, Serbian farmers' collectives began to be formed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, providing small-scale aid in the form of seeds, feed, educational materials, and classes to Serbian peasants. Linking all the collectives was the Serbian Bank and the influential Serbian Economic Society with its newspaper, *Privrednik* (The Tradesman), seated in Zagreb. Started in 1888,

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[73] See, e.g., *Hungary of Today,* ed. Percy Alden (London: Fawside House, 1909), 394.

[74] See, e.g., Gazi, *History of Croatia*, ix.

[75] See Tihomir Cipek, "Oblikovanje hrvatskoga nacionalnog identiteta. Primordijalni identitetski kod u ranoj hrvatskoj političkoj misli" [Shaping of Croatian national identity. Primordial identity code in early Croatian political thought] in *Dijalog povjesničara-istoričara*; Mirjana Gross and Agneza Szabo, *Prema hrvatskome gradjanskom društvu. Društveni razvoj u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina 19. stoljeća* (Zagreb, 1992), 129-157.

[76] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 18. Importantly, Serbs constituted absolute majority in more than a dozen towns and a relative majority in many more. See "Popis žitelja od 31. prosinca 1910. u Kraljevinama Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji" [Census of 31 December 1910 in the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia] in *Publikacije Kr. zemaljskog statističkog ureda u Zagrebu* LXIII (Zagreb, 1914), 50-51.

it was devoted to economic education and general advancement of Serbs who dominated Croatia's economy until 1914.[77]

The *Matica Srpska*, Serbian scholarly and cultural organization, was founded in Budapest in 1826, but subsequently transferred to Novi Sad (Voivodina), the hub of Serb publishing activities. However, while promoting Serb interests, the Serb banks, cultural institutions and party organizations, according to Miller, also "served to segregate Serbs from their neighbours and inculcate an insular sense of community".[78]

Anxious about the termination of Krajina in 1881, the Serbs received reassurances from Emperor Francis Joseph that "all measures have been taken to place [the inhabitants of Krajina] on equal status with all other inhabitants of [Habsburg] lands of the Hungarian crown".[79] In return for the preservation of their previous privileges, the Serbs opted for loyalty to the Hungarian governor of Croatia-Slavonia, Count Charles Khuen-Hédérvary (1882–1903). Khuen-Hédérvary began a divide-and-rule policy in the region by granting greater privileges to the Serbs. In directly placing the Hungarian government rather than the Croatian Diet in the service of Serbian interests, Khuen-Hédérvary drew Serbs into the Hungarian, rather than Croatian, administrative context. In 1887 and 1888, the Parliament passed two laws, one legalizing the use of the Serbian language and Cyrillic alphabet, and the other assuring the existence of Serbian Orthodox schools in the districts where Serbs were a majority.[80] Many Serbs were dissatisfied with the scope of these laws, which they believed to be less generous than the privileges granted to Serbs in 1868, emphasizing religious and cultural rather than national rights.[81] The 1887/8 legislation was imprecise and it did not apply to the entire territory of the Serb-inhabited provinces. For instance, the 1887 "Law regulating the activities of the Eastern Greek Church and the use of Cyrillic" stipulated that the Cyrillic alphabet could be used in court proceedings "there where Serbs live in greater numbers".[82]

Count Khuen-Hédérvary's actions generated a strong Croatian opposition. He was portrayed as a tyrant in Croatian historiography, although

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[77] All these organizations were founded by members of the Serbian Independent Party.

[78] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 24.

[79] Document quoted in Rothenberg, *Military Border*, 192.

[80] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 37.

[81] See Žarko Miladinović, *Tumač povlastica, zakona, uredaba i drugih naredjenja srpske narodne crkvene avtonomije u Ugarskoj, Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji* [Interpretation of privileges, laws, decrees and other orders of the Serb national church autonomy in Hungary, Croatia and Slavonia] (Novi Sad, 1897), 100-101.

[82] Article 3, Law regulating the activities of the Eastern Greek Church and the use of Cyrillic, passed on 14 May 1887, produced in Krestić, *Gradja*, 89.

"during the entire twenty years of his rule exactly one man was shot".[83] The Croatian nationalism that developed very timidly in resistance to Hungarian rule, aiming at the unification of Croatia, Slavonia, the Military Frontier (Krajina), Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina into a single state according to a national programme drafted by Janko Drašković in 1832,[84] was rapidly enhanced by Khuen-Hedervary's actions – and directed against the Serbs who agreed to the ban's concessions hopeful to preserve their own culture represented by the Christian Orthodox faith and Cyrillic alphabet. According to Miller:

> Serbs' behaviour in Croatia was rooted in their fear of losing their collective identity. They were conscious of their history and proud that they had maintained their identity through centuries of Ottoman and Habsburg administration. ... [They] could do nothing but accept Khuen-Hedervary's patronage, given the attitude of the most popular Croatian political parties and their leaders.[85]

Croatian politics became one of resisting the granting of any recognition to Serbian institutions and cultural peculiarity without previous acceptance by Serbs of the concept that the only "political nation" in Croatia was the Croatian.[86] This politics was emanated by the extreme nationalist Ante Starčević (1823–96) and the Croatian Party of Rights.

Starčević, like many other Croat intellectuals, believed that Croatian statehood had never been extinguished, that the "Croatian state" had merely been ruled by foreigners. According to him, this state encompassed all the Illyrian provinces of the Roman Empire, and was inhabited exclusively by Croats. Starčević not only denied any claim to Serbian nationhood, but even argued that members of the medieval Serbian Nemanjić dynasty had been the "purest-blooded Croats".[87]

Starčević turned fiercely anti-Serb after failing to obtain professorship at the University of Belgrade and from then on regarded Serbs as a political preference, an inferior race amidst the Croats that either was to abandon its national consciousness and become Croat or to be exterminated. Not only did Starčević launch the slogan "The Serbs are a breed fit only for the slaughter house",[88] but he also claimed Slovenes as ethnic Croats. He aspired towards a Greater Croatia that would encompass Slovenia, the

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[83] Hondius, *Yugoslav Community of Nations*, 71.

[84] See Gazi, *History of Croatia*, 179.

[85] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 42.

[86] *Ibid.*

[87] Dennison Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment 1948–1974* (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1977), 13.

[88] Paris, *Genocide*, 11.

provinces of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Krajina, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. In brief, Starčević was "the progenitor of extreme Croatian nationalism, which sought to suppress and perhaps even to exterminate all those who had a different national consciousness".[89] Despite overwhelming historical evidence to the contrary, however, modern Croat historians have identified Starčević as one of Croatian most eminent liberals, enlightened by the ideals of the French Revolution and committed to democracy and the rule of law.[90]

Another ideology that emanated from Croatian resistance to Magyarization was the Croat version of Yugoslavism, which foresaw union of South Slavs into one, highly federalized, region based on the alleged historical rights. The goal was not independence but autonomy in the form of a separate federal unit dominated by Croats. The champion of this ideology was Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer, who had also briefly contemplated unification of the South-Slav lands of the Dual Monarchy with Serbia in the mid-1860s.

Serb politics in the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century was divided between those supporting cooperation with the Croats (the Independents), and those who supported some cooperation but insisted on forming an entity separate from the Croats in the future and joining with the Kingdom of Serbia (the Radicals).

The Independent Serbian Party (later the Serbian National Independent Party) was founded in August 1881 as the first Serbian opposition party in Croatia, demanding Serbian church and school autonomy, budgetary support for Serbian institutions in Croatia, equality of the Cyrillic with the Latin alphabet, the right to fly the Serbian flag, and a revision of the agreement with Hungary.[91] The party's leader, Svetozar Pribićević, was the most active and influential Serb politician in Croatia from late 1902. Born in Kostajnica in Krajina, he was brought up in such a way as "to have deep devotion toward the Serbian national idea and fully uncritical love towards Serbia, Montenegro and Russia".[92] His party advocated a broader version of Serbdom seeing Serbs as part of a larger, Serbo-Croatian nation.

A more vocal party, the *Serbian National Radical Party*, came into force in 1887. It was not active in the entire province of Croatia-Slavonia, which then included Krajina, but based its political activity on the privileges

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[89] Djilas, *Contested Country*, 106-107.

[90] See Pavo Barišić, "Ante Starčević (1823–1896)" in *Liberalna misao u Hrvatskoj* [Liberal Idea in Croatia], eds. Andrea Feldman, Vladimir Stipetić and Franjo Zenko (Zagreb: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, 2000), 105-120.

[91] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 38.

[92] *Ibid*., 47.

granted to Serbs by the earlier Habsburg monarchs. The party goal was to extend the Serbian church and school autonomy to the political realm, building a basis for Serb territorial autonomy. According to the Radicals' Autonomy Programme of 1897, Serbs should seek "the right of autonomy not only in the church/school and property/financial [fields] but also in the political arena".[93] The Radicals based their claims on the set of privileges granted by Habsburg Emperor Leopold I in 1690, refusing the changes introduced by the subsequent Croato-Hungarian agreement. According to Miller, the *Serbian Radical Party*, led by Jaša Tomić, "represented a tried and true version of Serbianness: that the Serbian community was [Christian] Orthodox, isolated, threatened with assimilation, and needful of vigilance".[94] This vigilance developed in response to Magyarization and the Croats' increasing denial of Serbian identity

In September 1902, *Srbobran* (Serb-Defender), newspaper published by the *Independent Serbian Party*, reprinted an article titled "Serbs and Croats" from *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald), the leading literary journal in the Kingdom of Serbia. This article by a young Serb student from Bosnia argued that the Serbs, having a stronger culture, would eventually culturally absorb the Croats. It caused a great uproar among the Croats, who protested in Zagreb, looting and destroying many Serbian banks and businesses.[95] The extent of the violence shocked the Serbs across the Empire.[96]

Three years after this incident, however, a small group of enlightened Serbs and Croats formed an official political coalition, realizing that Magyarization threatened them both and that the Viennese authorities did not support a further federalization of the Empire. Thus, at the turn of the century, a policy of Croato-Serb cooperation prevailed, born out of the 1897 unification of the Croat and Serb youth organizations into the United Croatian and Serbian Youth. The youth leaders later formed parties that entered into a Serbo-Croatian government coalition, reflecting Pribićević's belief that "the Serbo-Croatian conflict cannot be considered a national question, because Serbs and Croats are not two different nations but parts of one and the same nation".[97]

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[93] Quoted in Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 40.

[94] *Ibid*., 51.

[95] *Ibid*., 52-54.

[96] See correspondence of Serb notables describing the 1902 riots, reproduced in Krestić, *Gradja*, 333-337.

[97] Svetozar Pribićević, "Misao vodilja Srba i Hrvata" [Guiding Idea of Serbs and Croats] in Jovan Banjanin et al., *Narodna misao* (Zagreb: Dionička tiskara, 1897), 50.

One of the goals of the Croato-Serb coalition was unification of Dalmatia with Croatia-Slavonia, with the purpose of strengthening the struggle against the Austro-Hungarian dominance. Concerned about the previous nationalist Croatian policy, the Serbs joined the Coalition under one important condition, contained in the Zadar Resolution:

> Concerning the demands of our Croat brothers for the reincorporation of Dalmatia into Croatia and Slavonia … the Serbian parties are prepared to [support this] if the Croatian side … bindingly recognizes the equality of the Serbian nation with the Croatian.[98]

On 14 November 1905, the parliamentary club of the Croatian Party and the club of the Serbian National Party signed a declaration in the Dalmatian parliament to that effect, stating that "the Croats and Serbs are one people, equal to one another". The two parliamentary clubs further agreed to interchangeably use Serbian and Croatian language and flags, to allow for Serbian culture and history to be aptly represented in education and for judicial use of Cyrillic script when cases are filed in that script.[99] This agreement was a cornerstone of a coalition that was announced a month later, becoming a significant factor in Croatia-Slavonia after the elections of May 1906.

In 1909 Ban Rauch of Croatia-Slavonia attempted to dismantle the Croato-Serbian political coalition by trying fifty-three Serbs (mostly supporters of the Serbian Independent Party) for high treason, for encouraging Serbian nationalism aiming to destroy the Empire. It was evident that this trial was purely political, and Rauch failed to dismantle the Coalition. At the same time the trial demonstrated the existence of a strong Serbian national consciousness in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, even if it could not prove its subversive nature.

Aleksa Djilas explains how the Croatian-Serbian Coalition successfully joined the Croatian and the Serbian interests:

> The Yugoslavism of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition was made possible by its emphasis on liberal-democratic political institutions and on the universal right of nations to self-determination. Arguments for political legitimacy had moved away from the irreconcilable Croatian and Serbian national ideologies based on historical

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[98] *Stenograficki zapisnici sabora Kraljevine Hrvatske, Slavonije i Dalmacije (1901–1906)* [Minutes of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia] (Zagreb: Tisak kraljevske zemaljske tiskare, 1903), v. 5, pt. 2, 966, quoted in Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 83.

[99] Minutes of the meeting in Zadar held on 14 November 1905, printed as a document "Sporazum sa Hrvatima" [Agreement with the Croats] by the Serb Dubrovnik printing house, kept in the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Dr F. Nikić Fund, no. 14.528; reproduced in Krestić, *Gradja*, 422-424.

> memories. The Coalition opposed the participation of clergy in political affairs and held that religious beliefs and values were the private concern of the individual. This separation of the churches from politics helped to remove an important obstacle to Croatian and Serbian cooperation and unity.[100]

Nevertheless, the Serbian Radicals rapidly abandoned the Coalition, claiming that Serbian interests could not be forwarded in conjunction with the interests of the Croats in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and that Serbs should strive for autonomy from both the Habsburgs and the Croats.

Even the Serbian Independents had important disagreements with the Croatian political parties. One of these involved a strong opposition to the annexation of Bosnia. Although the Independents considered that Bosnia should become part of the Kingdom of Serbia, they were only able to protest against the Austro-Hungarian annexation indirectly, objecting that it "was carried out against the precedent of the Berlin agreement ... [and that] the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina were not consulted".[101]

Although party politics and parliamentary action significantly matured in the nineteenth-century provinces of Croatia-Slavonia and Dalmatia, Allcock concludes that, "as in Slovenia, the political class … was extremely small". The difference was that some Croat nobility survived, and that "Croats had not been marginalized within the urban middle strata to the same extent as had the Slovenes".[102] Yet, the electorate amounted to less than two percent of the population, 50–60% of which were state officials. The new electoral law of 1910 increased the number of eligible voters to only eight percent.[103] Seton-Watson also observed a lack of democracy in Croatia of that period (Croatia-Slavonia province): Public voting and tax qualification which was extremely high for so poor a country, made 'freedom of election' in Croatia a mere farce.[104]

The Austro-Hungarian Croats and Serbs entered the twentieth century with their respective national consciousness fully awakened, but with different and evermore opposing national goals. A comprehensive but highly uncritical *Croatian History*, originally published in five volumes between 1899 and 1911, thus speaks about the Croatian struggle for nationhood and "reunification of Croatian lands", ignoring Serbian interests and even their

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[100] Djilas, *Contested Country*, 34-35.

[101] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 124.

[102] Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 255.

[103] Charles Jelavich, "The Croatian Problem in the Habsburg Empire in the Nineteenth Century", *Austrian History Yearbook* 3, No. 2 (1967), 99.

[104] R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question* (London, 1911), 104-105.

presence,[105] while Serbs fail to understand the Croat attachment to what they perceive to be their "historical state rights". The ensuing world wars and civil wars brought the Croato-Serb conflict to the fore, with both the first and the second Yugoslavia failing to accommodate the two nations' opposing aspirations.[106]

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UDC 94:(=163.41/.42)
316.347:323.17](=163.41/.42)

[105] Vjekoslav Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata* [Croatian History] I–V, 2nd ed. (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1975).

[106] For more, see Ana S. Trbovich, *A Legal Geography of Yugoslavia's Disintegration* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).