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The origin of the Institute goes back to the Institut des Études balkaniques founded in Belgrade in 1934 as the only of the kind in the Balkans. The initiative came from King Alexander I Karadjordjević, while the Institute's scholarly profile was created by Ratko Parežanin and Svetozar Spanaćević. The Institute published *Revue internationale des Études balkaniques*, which assembled most prominent European experts on the Balkans in various disciplines. Its work was banned by the Nazi occupation authorities in 1941.

The Institute was not re-established until 1969, under its present-day name and under the auspices of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. It assembled a team of scholars to cover the Balkans from prehistory to the modern age and in a range of different fields of study, such as archaeology, ethnography, anthropology, history, culture, art, literature, law. This multidisciplinary approach remains its long-term orientation.

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REVIEWS

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European Borders in Serbian History

Abstract: This paper looks at the typology of borders which have traversed the Balkan lands for centuries. They have been diverse – geographical, political, economic, ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural. As a result of their length of duration, consequences and importance, they led to phenomena which can hardly be fully appreciated. Serbs lived along those borders, be they already existing or created over time. This research is focused on two borders. The o*ne* created by the division of the Roman Empire (395) and strengthened by the schism of Christianity (1054), and the *other*, completely different, created by the Ottoman conquest of the Balkan lands in the fifteenth century. Local Balkan borders, on the other hand, have never acquired a broader significance in the culture of this region.

Keywords: Roman Empire, Serbs, Ottoman Turks

When medievalists venture to take part in a conference devoted to more recent historical events, then they clearly are dealing with phenomena of long durée which passed through a medieval phase and continued into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and through to the present. Migrations are a big theme of European and Serbian history. Europe itself is the product of migrations. It is common knowledge today that there practically is no people that did not migrate to the area it now inhabits and no people that remained unchanged in the process. As a social phenomenon, migrations involve many aspects – a set of causes, changes brought about by the abandonment of a particular territory, transformations of the social community on the move itself, changes in the economic, political, cultural and geographical setting it comes to settle in. Some borders are given up, others are acquired, not without huge consequences, of course. Many phenomena are reflected there. From that aggregate of immensely important elements, I would like to single out the concept of "border", focusing on just one part of that broad complex.

It is well known that borders are diverse – geographical, political, ethnic, economic, cultural, linguistic etc. The list can hardly be exhausted. The memory of the Great Migration of 1690, when Serbs, fleeing from the threat of Ottoman reprisals, left the Balkans, i.e., crossed a major European border, inspired me to look back into the past in search of major borders that had an impact on the history of the Serbs. In order for the subject of this research to

be defined more clearly, it should be noted that only *one type* of borders will be discussed here, those that came into existence independently of the historical development of the Serbian people but powerfully influenced its course. Those are the previously existing or newly-created borders, however the "border" may be construed geographically – as a line of demarcation or a particular zone. The medieval notion of borders was very different from today's. In earlier medieval periods in particular, it usually referred to a belt of land, an area of separation, whenever it was possible.

This inquiry, in order for it to remain valid, has its chronological framework – it deals with the medieval period but, in view of Serbian history, the period is understood more broadly: it covers a good part of the sixteenth century as well. I would call attention to major European borders cut into the history of the Serbs. Some of them take us to Szentendre/Sentandreja, Hungary. I would like to remind of some known facts so as to be able to add some new ones.

The major borders in the area in which Serbian history unfolded were determined by its geography. Seacoasts – the Adriatic and the Aegean – and the Danube Valley (*Podunavlje*) constitute the undisputable frame of the Balkan areas in a part of which the Serbs were building their state. They themselves pushed across the Danube border of the Eastern Roman Empire while arriving.

The borders of the Serbian state changed over time. They expanded or shrank according to circumstances. But they never became "European", established enough and meaningful enough to a broader region to be able to change the picture of South-East Europe. This goes for the other Balkan peoples, too. For example, the Serbo-Bulgarian political border, very shifting in the pre-Ottoman period, left no lasting consequences. In the ninth century, it was in the area of Ras (present-day Novi Pazar), according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus.[1] Later, in the reign of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon in the tenth century, it moved far beyond that area and in subsequent periods the two states bordered one another in the Morava River Valley (*Pomoravlje*) or in eastern Serbia.[2] However dramatic changes to this border may have been in some periods, they did not change the overall situation to the point of being considered important on a European scale. It is noticeable that the political border between Serbia and Bulgaria as a rule did not coincide with the language barrier that separated the two peoples.[3] After all, both peoples grew to maturity in the same cultural orbit, Byzantine and Christian Orthodox.

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[1]   Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, Eng. transl. R. J. H. Jenkins (Washington D.C. 1967), 154.

[2]   *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. I, 152–162 (S. Ćirković); 453, 545, 575 (Belgrade 1981).

[3]   P. Ivić, *Srpski narod i njegov jezik* (Belgrade 1971), 18–24.

In contrast to this type of border stand major European demarcation lines in the Balkan Peninsula. Some of them very old. In the late Roman Empire, ever more frequent divisions changed the boundaries of administrative units. The turbulent events of the fourth century first led to the creation and then to the division of the Prefecture of Illyricum. More lasting than the rest was the division introduced shortly before the death of Emperor Theodosius (395). His eldest son Arcadius was given control of the eastern half of the Roman Empire, in which two dioceses, Dacia and Macedonia, formed the Prefecture of Illyricum, while the Diocese of Pannonia was incorporated into the western half of the Empire as part of its central prefecture.[4] The Roman Empire outlasted this division for some time although its unity was increasingly challenged by many internal difficulties further aggravated by the invasion of Germanic and other peoples. With time, the crack left behind by Emperor Theodosius took on the meaning of a rift. The fate of the eastern half of the Empire, tied to the imperial court in Constantinople, increasingly diverged from that of the western half. The fifth century marked a decisive moment in that process. The Western Roman Empire succumbed under the pressure of Germanic peoples, while the Eastern Roman Empire survived despite serious challenges it faced. Although Theodosius's border had lost all meaning by the early middle ages, especially with Slavic settlement, it became built into the European perception of the Balkan cultural area through Roman tradition. It can be found in all types of historical literature, in synthetic overviews of the past, in textbooks, in historical maps, in encyclopaedias, briefly, in all works the educated people of Europe relied on for building their understanding of their own history.[5] Looked at from afar, this border has been drawn quite vaguely along the line that starts roughly at Sirmium and runs through the central part of the former Yugoslavia to the Gulf of Kotor.[6]

The Byzantine Empire, which grew in the territory and tradition of the Eastern Roman Empire, inherited much from the previous period. The Serbian state, which gradually developed in its territory, thus found itself in an area invisibly divided into the eastern and western halves of the former Roman Empire.

[4]   E. Stein, *Geschichte des spätrömischen Reiches*, vol. I : *Vom römischen zum byzantinischen Staate (284–476)* (Vienna 1928), 353; E. Demouggeot, *De l'unité à la division de l'Empire romain (395–410)* (Paris 1951), 142ff; J. R. Palanque, "La préfecture du prétoire d'Illyricum au IVᵉ siècle", *Byzantion* 21 (1951), 5–14; V. Grumel, "L'Illyricum de la mort de Valentinien Iᵉʳ (375) à la mort de Stilicon (408)", *Revue des études byzantines* 9 (1951), 5–46; P. Lemerle, "Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans depuis la fin de l'époque romaine jusqu'au VIIIᵉ siècle", *Revue historique* 211 (1954), 265–273.

[5]   R. Folz et al., *De l'Antiquité au monde médiéval* (Paris 1971), 44–45; *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. I: *The Christian Roman Empire* (Cambridge 1975), with maps; G. Duby, *Atlas historique* (Larousse 1978), esp. 27–28.

[6]   K. Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, vol. I (Belgrade 1952), 27.

It developed in the western borderland of the Eastern Roman Empire and the eastern borderland of the Western Roman Empire. Belonging to the space of both, Serbia found itself at the dangerous crossroads of medieval civilizations.

It is not unimportant to note that Theodosius's dividing line did not coincide with the line separating the Hellenic and Latin worlds in the Balkans. The latter ran from the city of Lezha, Albania, on the Adriatic coast and across northern Macedonia towards Sofia, which remained in the Greek zone, and then across northern Bulgaria towards the Black Sea.[7] In other words, those are two different borders, however closely they may be defined, more of a transition zone than a clear-cut line. Although one should be seen as more important by its effects, the other, Theodosius's border, albeit initially temporary, became permanently entrenched in the European mindset. This is exactly where its importance lies. It emerges as a major subject of academic interest, because it imposes the principle of Roman divisions on the fundamentally different circumstances of later Balkan history.

Theodosius's border, however, is usually associated with the line of ecclesiastical demarcation (1054) between the western, Roman Catholic, and the eastern, Orthodox parts. This creates a historically erroneous impression that there was in the middle ages a fateful border between East and West stretching from Sirmium to the Gulf of Kotor. Facts, however, reveal a different picture. Demarcations in the middle ages ran along different lines.

In the early eleventh century the Byzantine Empire fought large-scale wars and re-established control over the Balkan Peninsula, including, among other areas, all Serbian lands and most of Dalmatia.[8] Emperor Basil II championed the unity of state and church interests and in 1024 offered the Pope to start negotiations about demarcation between the Byzantine and Latin Churches. Patriarch of Constantinople Eustathius proposed, through an embassy to Pope John XIX, that Constantinople retain under its jurisdiction all that there was within the Byzantine state borders, and that Rome get all of the West. The negotiations failed, mostly under the pressure of increasingly influential monastic communities in Italy and France.[9] What could not be achieved by mutual agree-

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[7]   K. Jireček, "Romani u gradovima Dalmacije tokom srednjega veka", *Zbornik Konstantina Jirečeka*, vol. II (Belgrade 1962), 16–17; V. Popović, in *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin* (Rome 1984), 208–209.

[8]   G. Ostrogorski, *Istorija Vizantije* (Belgrade 1959), 296 and map on pp. 288–289; J. Ferluga, *Vizantijska uprava u Dalmaciji* (Belgrade 1957), 93–95.

[9]   V. Grumel, *Les régestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. II (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1936), 245; V. Grumel, "Les préliminaires du schisme de Michel Cérulaire ou la question romaine avant 1054", *Revue des études byzantines* 10 (1962), 17–19; J. Kalić, "Crkvene prilike u srpskim zemljama do stvaranja Arhiepiskopije 1219. godine", in *Sava Nemanjić – Sv. Sava* (Belgrade 1979), 44–45.

ment ended in the schism of the Christian world in 1054, but under much more unfavourable circumstances for the Byzantine side, because the Empire was in a deep crisis. In the West, by contrast, the papacy was on the rise owing to, among other things, large-scale reforms within the Catholic Church. This rise reached its peak under Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085). He established a system of vassal states under papal suzerainty. One of them was Croatia.

If we look for the boundary marking this schism in the Balkans, we can observe, however, that in reality there was not *only one boundary*. There was in the middle ages an area under papal jurisdiction, i.e. under the administration of Roman Catholic bishops, in coastal cities (Split, Dubrovnik, Bar). The borders of their dioceses changed according to circumstances. On the other hand, there were territories covered by the Byzantine ecclesiastical organization with its bishoprics in Sirmium, Ras and Prizren on the Empire's western border.[10] The subsequently founded Serbian autocephalous Church (1219) fully negated any border that would have run from Sirmium to the Gulf of Kotor.

In other words, the division into the Roman Catholic and Orthodox worlds, and, in this case, cultural orbits, knows not of a single boundary line. Life in the middle ages followed a different course. There were large zones of mutual influence and interaction. The entire hinterland of the Adriatic Sea, all the way to the Sava River, Ras and Prizren, was open to influences coming in various ways. There is an abundance of evidence for the presence of diverse cultural traditions, occurring in succession and in combination. Here is a relatively recent example, not far from the medieval monastery of Sopoćani: a Byzantine-Serbian fortress of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was excavated as well as a late medieval settlement around it whose layout follows the coastal urban tradition (a regular pattern of stone houses, a piazza etc.), and whose inhabitants were Serbs, churches Orthodox and inscriptions Cyrillic.[11]

A quite different border was carved by the Ottomans. Another major civilizational border on Serbian soil. From 1371 on, it constantly changed and moved, with tremendous consequences. If looked at from the European perspective, the chronological boundaries of its genesis seem different from those widely accepted in historiography. The prevailing view in Serbian historiography is that the 1371 Battle of Maritsa was decisive in the Ottoman expansion into the Balkans. As far as the history of the Byzantine Empire and the directly affected regions is concerned, this is certainly true. But it was only the 1389 Bat-

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[10] I. Božić et al., *Istorija Jugoslavije* (Belgrade 1972), 42 (S. Ćirković),

[11] J. Kovačević i saradnici, "Istraživanje kompleksa Rasa 1971–1972", *Zbornik Istorijskog muzeja Srbije* 10 (1973), 3–15; M. Popović, "Nalazi novca kralja Radoslava na utvrdjenju Gradina u Rasu", *Novopazarski zbornik* 1 (1977), 37–54; V. Jovanović, D. Minić and S. Ercegović-Pavlović, "Nekropole srednjovekovnog Trgovišta", *Novopazarski zbornik* 14 (1990), 19–43, with earlier literature.

tle of Kosovo and, particularly, its consequences that caused serious larger-scale turbulences. As early as 1390 the Ottomans reached two "European" borders in the Balkans – they penetrated into the Danube Valley and the hinterland of the Adriatic coastal cities. They attacked Golubac,[12] engaged Hungarian forces, and caused alarm and fear in Dubrovnik. As early as 1390, and thereafter ever more frequently, the Dubrovnik government discussed the acceptance of refugees, accommodating them, whenever possible, in Pelješac and Ston.[13] The Ottoman problem ceased being only a Balkan and Byzantine one, it spilt over the boundaries of the Orthodox world. The West was directly threatened, and not only its economic interests in the Levant but also at the door to its own living space. It was only then that a serious anti-Ottoman policy began to take shape, with Hungary under Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437) as its leading figure. From 1411 he was also the elected Romano-German King, and from 1433 Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

The post-Kosovo situation in Serbia meant that the Ottomans had a free road towards the Danube. There was no one left to stop their advancement. This forced Hungary to make a radical political shift. A crusade against the Ottomans was mounted, the first fought on European soil and the last of that scale. In 1396 aristocratic armies from France, Burgundy, Germany, Italy, Poland and Hungary were routed at Nicopolis, on the right side of the Danube, in Bulgaria. Only seven years after the heavy losses sustained by the Serbian armies at Kosovo, European knights themselves were decimated on the Danube. Ottoman units broke through into Srem (Syrmia) and the Banat.[14] Europe abandoned the idea of crusading and for nearly half a century there was no such undertakings (1396–1443). Lonely and endangered, Hungary turned to Serbia in search of an ally. Under these changed circumstances, the Serbian ruler, Despot Stefan Lazarević, believed he saw a way out of the bondage into which, as he said himself, he had fallen after the Battle of Kosovo.[15] He swore allegiance as vassal to King Sigismund (in early 1404 at the latest) and began fighting against the Ottomans, as King Sigismund reported, not without appreciation.[16] This coincided with a period of internal crisis of the Ottoman state.

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[12] S. Ćirković, *Golubac u srednjem veku* (Požarevac 1968), 9–11.

[13] V. Ćorović, *Historija Bosne* (Belgrade 1940), 332–333; I. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku* (Belgrade 1952), 10.

[14] Cf. more recent S. Runciman, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Munich 1983), 1234–1241; Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski rodoslovi i letopisi* (Sremski Karlovci 1927), 113.

[15] Konstantin Filozof, "Život Stefana Lazarevića", ed. V. Jagić, *Glasnik Srpskog učenog društva* 42 (1875), 272.

[16] M. Dinić, "Pismo ugarskog kralja Zigmunda burgundskom vojvodi Filipu", *Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke* 13–14 (1956), 93–98.

The early fifteenth century saw the consolidation of a new border in the Balkans. This in fact was a wide belt made up of Hungary's vassal states which stretched from the Adriatic Sea to the Black Sea via Bosnia and Serbia.[17] In this borderland zone, both Hungary and Turkey defended their interests. A Eurasian border, but Serbian battlefields.

But Stefan Lazarević's frequent allying with Sigismund of Luxemburg had a deeper significance and considerable consequences. It was then that the border in the Danube Valley was opened for the first time. The war fought as early as the time of Stefan's father, Prince Lazar, and even more intensely after his death, died down. By concluding an agreement with King Sigismund, Despot Stefan made it possible for his subjects in Belgrade to move freely across Central Europe. Serbs enjoyed not only the freedom of movement in Hungary but also considerable economic privileges.[18] This new situation is known mostly from the history of Belgrade. It can only be understood if looked at as part of a broader development – rapprochement between the two neighbouring countries. Citizens of Belgrade now travelled to Hungary and other nearby lands not clandestinely but with their own identity documents ("a sealed letter"), as recorded by a contemporary.[19]

Even today, when we think of Serbian migrations towards Central Europe, we should take into account these movements as well, which were the result of the agreement reached by the two rulers. There is no doubt that they helped the two milieus get to know one another.

Serbian migrations had begun earlier, towards the end of the fourteenth century at the latest. The scale of that process remains unknown. Among more prominent émigrés were the sons of King Vukašin (Mrnjavčević), Dmitar and Andrejaš, who found refuge and service in Hungary.[20] If the number of such cases can no longer be determined, the implication is clear – Serbian society was dividing, some left, some stayed. Of course, peacetime migrations are very different from wartime ones, when they are a matter of life and death. The set of changes involved in the former includes all regulated forms of movement, of settlement even, frequently serving to meet the military needs of Hungary and Turkey. At any rate, the migrations that were taking place during the existence of the Serbian state (until 1459) were considerably different from those that would take place later, under Ottoman rule.

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[17] *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II (Belgrade 1982), 52 (S. Ćirković).

[18] J. Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd u srednjem veku* (Belgrade 1967), 85–87.

[19] Konstantin Filozof, "Život", 287–288.

[20] S. Ćirković, "Poklad kralja Vukašina", *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* XIV-1 (1979), 153–163.

In the reign of Despot Stefan Lazarević (until 1427), and partly of his successor, Djuradj Branković, Serbs had other incentives to move to Central Europe. It is well known that Despot Stefan had huge estates in Hungary, in the counties of Szatmar, Saros, Szabolcz, Bihar and Torontal, and also in southern Hungary. In his service there, there were also Serbs. Their number cannot be established because our sources are quite patchy. The estates undoubtedly were rich (mines, marketplaces etc.), which would have been attractive to people from Serbia. At any rate, the Despot's Hungarian policy was lastingly focused on maintaining strong ties with Hungary. Not at all by chance, Stefan Lazarević was the first Serbian ruler who had a residence outside Serbia, in Buda. It was situated in the very heart of the capital city, not far from the cathedral, in Italian Street (today 9, Orszaghaz utca). The beautiful building in the late-Gothic style, with sumptuous niches and a large reception hall on the upper floor, still stands, in a somewhat altered form.[21]

In other words, there were in the early fifteenth century favourable circumstances for individuals to leave for Hungary in various ways. Sources mention one hundred horsemen escorting Despot Stefan on one occasion.[22] People were leaving drawn by the prospect of serving on his estates, or by commercial interests, or for any other reason. Hungary was no longer an uncharted land. The Despot's era made Hungary more familiar to Serbia. Cultural interaction was productive. The excavated remains of the Despot's destroyed palace in Belgrade reveal Central European influences in many details, including late-Gothic stove tiles with Western-style heraldic symbols, with symbols of the Order of the Dragon, whose member the Despot himself was, objects crafted in the best Hungarian court workshops, luxury goods imported from Danubian markets. All of this is a telling sign of a period of open borders and the European tastes of Serbian customers.[23] The residence of the Metropolitan of Belgrade with its Gothic arches and decoration belongs to the same cultural orbit. The appearance of the medieval Orthodox cathedral, situated in the so-called Lower Town of Belgrade Fortress, will regrettably remain known only in general outline. It was blown up and completely destroyed by the Austrians in 1717.[24]

[21] J. Kalić, "Palata srpskih despota u Budimu", *Zograf* 6 (1975), 51–58.

[22] T. Ortvay, *Oklevelek Temesvármegye és Temesvárvarós története* (Pozsony 1896); S. Ćirković, *Istorija bosanske srednjovekovne drzave* (Belgrade 1964), 240; M. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević* (Belgrade 1978), 101.

[23] M. Bajalović-Hadži Pešić, "Ugarski pećnjaci u beogradskom srednjovekovnom dvoru", *Godišnjak grada Beograda* 23 (1976), 19–33; M. Bajalović-Hadži Pešić, *Srednjovekovnim Beogradu u pohode*, exhibition catalogue (Belgrade: Muzej grada Beograda, 1977), 50, 60; M. Bajalović-Hadži Pešić, *Keramika u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade 1981), 125–138 and passim.

[24] M. Popović, "Srednjovekovna crkva Uspenja Bogorodice u Beogradu", *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja u Beogradu* 9–10 (1979), 508.

A telling sign of the profound change in the notion of state borders in the early fifteenth century is the urban architecture of Belgrade. The city was defended by strong fortifications on the inland, east and south, sides, the usual direction of Ottoman attack. The tall double city walls with strong towers, the use of stone scarps on the exterior face of the walls, wide ditches encircling the fortress, all of that stood in contrast to the quite modest defences along the Sava and Danube rivers. The Serbian ruler defended Belgrade from the south and opened it towards the north. It was only later, when the Ottomans mastered the Danube, that Belgrade received stronger riverfront defences.[25] In Smede-revo, too, initially the greatest attention was paid to the defence of the overland approaches to the city.[26] A generation of builders clearly marked out the enemy border on their soil.

The border position of Serbia at the European demarcation lines entailed many dangers, especially in times of war. At the Byzantine instigation, in 1423 negotiations about the creation of an anti-Ottoman Christian alliance began in the West. The negotiation process was slowed down by the rivalry between Venice and King Sigismund in the Adriatic and Dalmatia. The lively diplomatic activity had much trouble overcoming the obstacles on the road to agreement. The negotiations continued into 1424 and 1425. Stefan Lazarević took part in them. And as the haggle over the exact terms of military cooperation was still underway (the number of soldiers and ships, timeframes, financing, the issue of a separate peace etc.), the Sultan attacked Serbia. His units penetrated the Da-nube basin in the area of Kruševac. Dubrovnik encouraged its citizens in Serbia to hold on amidst the calamity that befell the country.[27] Hungarian military aid was sent timely, but the enormous damage the attack caused could not be prevented.[28] The anti-Ottoman plans of the European powers were still at the negotiation stage. The negotiations continued into 1426, with little regard for what was going on in Serbia. In early 1427 the situation became critical. The tireless Despot Stefan, who made peace with the Ottomans whenever it was im-possible for him to wage a war, had no hope left. In January 1427 he anticipated the possibility of exile and death in a foreign land.[29]

After the death of Despot Stefan Lazarević (1427), the survival of the Serbian state depended even more on the important border that separated

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[25] M. Popović, *Beogradska tvrdjava* (Belgrade 1982), 65–101.

[26] J. Nešković, *Smederevski grad* (Smederevo 1975), 11–12.

[27] M. Dinić, "Srebrnik kraj Srebrenice", *Glas SKA* 161 (1934), 190–192.

[28] J. Gelcich and L. Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae Ragusinae cum regno Hungariae* (Budapest 1887), 309–310; S. Stanojević, *Pipo Spano. Prilog srpskoj istoriji počet-kom XV veka* (Belgrade 1901), 11.

[29] D. Anastasijević, "Srpski arhiv Lavre atonske", *Spomenik SKA* 56 (1922), 15.

Christian Europe from Islam. It traversed the Balkans and Serbia, never along a permanent line but rather along a transition zone of influence, variable over time. The events surrounding the attempts at reunion of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches in the fifteenth century offer some interesting data. The basic negotiations were conducted between Byzantium and the Pope, or the church council called at Basel in 1431. The endangered Byzantium hoped for Western military aid to fight the Ottomans and thus agreed to negotiations. Embassies were sent to Serbia for the purpose of negotiations (1433–1435).[30] An important role in this was played by Ivan Stojković, John of Ragusa, a distinguished Dubrovnik-born Dominican and professor at the University of Paris, one of the leaders of the Basel synodists.[31] Constantinople expected the Serbian Despot to have understanding for the whole effort, for the needs of the moment.[32] Despot Djuradj Branković received the embassies, those from Byzantium more warmly than the others, but eventually decided against participating in the reunion council in Italy.[33]

The negotiations on Christian reunion had from the outset been seen by the Ottomans as hostile, and with good reason. The Byzantine rationale was clear. Hungary also had its agenda. It was articulated by Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg himself in late 1436. He sought to change the venue of the council of prelates from Basel to Buda, arguing that it would ensure better control of the Hussite movement in Bohemia and of the Ottomans. It would, Emperor Sigismund signalled to the synodists in Basel, boost his prestige in the eyes of the Orthodox Christians in the Balkans, and so the Serbs, whose participation was indispensable in the military campaign against the Ottomans he personally intended to launch in the summer of 1437. Sigismund's proposal met with little response from Basel,[34] but Serbia was heavily affected by his military operations (1437). Directed against the Ottoman possessions in the Despotate, they led to Murat II's counterattack and the state of Despot Djuradj was finally forced into

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[30] J. Haller, *Concilium Basiliense. Studien und Dokumente zur Geschichte der Jahre 1431–1437*, vol. I (Basel 1896), 332–333; Bertrandon de la Brokijer, *Putovanje preko mora* (Belgrade 1950), 131.

[31] A. Krchnak, *De vita et operibus Ioannis de Ragusio* (Rome 1960), with earlier literature: Ioannis de Ragusio, *Tractatus de ecclesia*, ed. F. Šanjek (Zagreb 1983); cf. W. Brandmüller, *Papst und Konzil im Grossen Schisma* (Paderborn 1990).

[32] V. Laurent, *Les "Mémoires" du Grand Ecclésiastique de l'Eglise de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le Concile de Florence (1438–1439)* (Paris 1971), 122.

[33] Laurent, *Les "Mémoires"*, 164, 598.

[34] W. Altmann, *Regesta Imperii XI. Die Urkunden Keiser Sigmunds* (Innsbruck 1896), 389.

submission in 1437, 1438 and 1439.[35] The major European border reached the Danube, and Golubac and Smederevo became strongholds of the new power.

The Serbian state, restored somewhat later (1444), once again played the role of a transition zone, which separated the Roman Catholic world from the Ottomans. Only temporarily, of course, because the Ottomans were in the phase of expansion. Hungary tried a few times to reorganize its anti-Ottoman system of defence. An important role in it was assigned to the Serbian Despotate (1435),[36] and when the latter fell to the Ottomans (1459), a Banate of Belgrade was established to defend the border at its most vulnerable section.[37] The Ban of Belgrade was vested with distinctive powers and the duty to accept refugees from Serbia, admit them to military service and grant them smaller landholdings, often in the borderland zone. This, too, was a form of regulated settlement, usually of people from Ottoman-held areas. Moreover, more massive migrations of Serbs in wartime years became more typical.[38] All of that completely derailed the normal course of life in the wide borderland zone.

This look at the major civilizational borders in Serbian history would not be complete without understanding the real causes of human migrations. We sought to answer this question through two comparatively designed research projects: 1) the investigation of the Ras area in the pre-Ottoman period, and 2) the investigation of the Belgrade area (suburban settlements). These are smaller geographical units which make it possible to work on reconstructing the history of each settlement through historical, archaeological and anthropological research. Particular attention was paid to the toponym–church–cemetery relationship. The idyllic picture of Ottoman tolerance could not be found. It is contradicted by the following examples of the discovered phenomena.

1) In the late fourteenth century, the Ottomans slowly but surely took the major places in the *Župa* (Region) of Ras and surrounding areas (the area of present-day Novi Pazar). They took Zvečan and Jeleč; there is a reference to them as holding Gluhavica (1398). The system of dual government was established – Serbian-Ottoman administration. The Ottoman boundary is blurry, but it is visible in everyday life. The prosperous village of Deževo in the fertile area along the Pnuća River (present-day Deževska Reka) had a church round which a cemetery grew in the fourteenth century (with burials of both sexes and all ages).

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[35] J. Kalić, "La Serbie et le Concile de Ferrare et de Florence", *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 21 (1989), 131–140.

[36] P. Rokai, "Poslednje godine balkanske politike kralja Zigmunda (1435–1437)", *Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta u Novom Sadu* XII-1 (1969), 89–108.

[37] J. Kalić-Mijušković, "Prilog istoriji Beogradske banovine", *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu* VIII-1 (1964), 535–540.

[38] *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II, 432ff (S. Ćirković).

The systematic excavation of the church has shown that it was destroyed before 1413, most likely towards the end of the fourteenth century. The demolished and burnt-down church was never restored. The cemetery remained in use and burials were also performed inside the destroyed church. In the mid-fifteenth century the cemetery also fell in disuse, exactly at the time of the first Ottoman cadastral survey (1455) of the border administrative unit governed by Isa Bey Isaković (İshakoğlu İsa Bey). The life of the Serbs in Deževo was brought to an end, there were no living left to lay their dead to rest round the church. That the reason was violent is shown by the Muslim settlement founded in the vicinity of the church. Remains of a material culture of Oriental origin with no models in the local production have been discovered. Moreover, luxury artefacts, imported from the East, testify to the prosperity of their users. They were Muslim settlers, not Islamized inhabitants of Deževo.[39] The abandonment of the Deževo churchyard can tell us nothing of the fate of the vanished villagers – were the Serbs driven out, did they move to other places, were they murdered? All of this took place in a settlement which has retained its name to this day. Continuity of village names has hitherto usually been interpreted as resulting from continuity of village life through centuries. The reasons for the survival of the toponym might be discovered by future research, which requires that all surrounding places be investigated as well.[40]

2) Another example of the same phenomenon comes from the village of Postenje, some six kilometres from Deževo, today on the edge of the urban area of Novi Pazar. The village is in the immediate vicinity of the church of St Peter, the medieval cathedral of the Orthodox Bishop of Raška. The first phase of Ottoman consolidation – the period, then, when this was a borderland zone – saw a wave of destruction in Postenje, too. There, on the left bank of the Pnuća River, was an Orthodox church. Its excavated remains (narthex and part of the naos) show that it, too, was demolished and burnt down.[41] It is known today as the "Latin church", although it unquestionably was a Serbian Orthodox church (as evidenced by the remains of medieval frescoes). Its present-day name dates from the Ottoman period, when this church, like some others in Serbia, was given over to Roman Catholics.

3) The face of the medieval settlement on the site of present-day Novi Pazar was also changed completely. If the history of Serbian churches is seen as an

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[39] J. Kalić and M. Popović, "Crkva u Deževu", *Starinar* 36 (1985), 115–147; anthropological analysis: S. Živanović, "Ostaci skeleta sa nekropole pored crkve u Deževu", *Starinar* 36 (1985), 151–160.

[40] J. Kalić, "Prilog metodologiji proučavanja srpskog srednjevekovnog društva", *Istorijski časopis* 35 (1988), 5–20.

[41] D. Aleksić-Premović, "Latinska crkva u Postenju", *Novopazarski zbornik* 9 (1985), 55–66.

indicator of change in the structure of settlements, the Ottoman period emerges as extremely unfavourable to Christian population. The church at the so-called Grain Market in present-day Novi Pazar was converted to a mosque as early as the fifteenth century, and the Altun-Alem mosque in the Jeleč *mahalle* seems to have been built on the foundations of an earlier building.[42] If the information about the churches in Novi Pazar provided by Ottoman and West-European travel writers is situated into the historical space, all indications are that only those beyond the central urban area survived, such as St Peter's or the one in Naprelje. Given that no active Christian church was allowed in the vicinity of mosques,[43] and mosques in Novi Pazar proliferated, reaching the number of twenty-three in the mid-seventeenth century,[44] it is clear that the Serb population was pushed to the fringes of the urban area.

This conclusion regarding the topographic picture of Novi Pazar in fact points to profound changes in the economic and social structure of the area – carried out, of course, over a longer period of time. This is confirmed, independently of the distribution of religious buildings, by the Ottoman tax registers of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They show that Serbs were mostly engaged in rural occupations, paid the taxes typical of the agrarian population, whereas the Muslim population is usually found categorized in groups engaged in trade and crafts.[45] The new city–suburban settlement–village relationship reflects the relationship of the conqueror to the conquered population. This can be seen in the agrarian area of the *Župa* of Ras. If the historical and archaeological evidence of the destruction of settlements (Deževo, Postenje etc.) is situated into the concrete geographical space, then it becomes clear that Serbs were driven out of the most fertile areas as early as the end of the fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth century. Their place was taken by settlers whose material culture did not have its roots in Serbian society (Deževo). There lie the causes of Serbian migrations from the borderlands with the Ottomans, and of those later, taking place over the centuries.

The investigations in the areas of Ras and Belgrade show two phases of the Ottoman border gradually cutting into the fabric of Serbian society. In Ras, serious changes began as early as the end of the fourteenth century, in Belgrade not until half a century later. The difference is not merely chronological, it is

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[42] Evlija Čelebi, *Putopis* (Sarajevo 1979), 265–266; A. Andrejević, "Altin-alem džamija u Novom Pazaru", *Novopazarski zbornik* 1 (1977), 124.

[43] K. Binswanger, *Untersuchungen zum Status der Nichtmuslime im Osmanischen Reich des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Munich 1977), 64ff.

[44] Evlija Čelebi, *Putopis*, 265.

[45] H. Čar Drnda, "Osnivanje Novog Pazara i njegov razvitak do kraja XVI stoleća", *Novopazarski zbornik* 8 (1984), 83–97.

fundamental. The area of Belgrade belonged to the sphere of European Otto-
man policy, Ras did not. Early geographical maps, especially those that can be
attributed to prominent Viennese cartographers and their associates, provide
abundant source material for the final phase of the phenomenon discussed here.
Serbian migrations were already visible to the great powers. The famous car-
tographers Georg Tannstetter (1482–1535), Cuspinian (1473–1529) and Ja-
cob Ziegler (1470–1548) of Bavaria considerably contributed to the drawing
of maps of the lands the Habsburgs had political interest in. Thus, a disciple of
Tannstetter's, Lazar, collected valuable material on Hungary in the early sixteen-
th century. His material was used for the oldest surviving map of Hungary (*Ta-
bula Hungariae*).[46] The analysis of its content shows that its makers, or those
who commissioned the map, had lost interest in conquered Serbia, but still kept
an eye on Belgrade. What was carefully recorded in the European fifteenth-cen-
tury maps of the Balkans[47] can no longer be found in those drawn in the sixteen-
th century.

   The geographical maps record the fate of the major border with the Ot-
tomans, the border that left the territory of the Serbian state but not the fate
of the Serbs. Instead of place names and hydrography in the areas south of the
Sava and Danube rivers, they more frequently show regional names – Rascia,
Rassen, Servia etc. Judging by Lazar's map (*c.* 1529), the number of Serbs who
had resettled in Hungary by his time was already so large that he used the name
of their land of origin – "Rasse" (Raška) – not only for Srem but also for Slavo-
nia. Such data are aggregate, of course. Shall we ever be able to establish exactly
when and under what circumstances those people arrived in the new areas? This
means that we do not really know how well trodden the path was along which
Patriarch Arsenije III (Čarnojević) led his people in 1690.

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[46] L. Imédi-Molnar, "The Earliest Known Maps of Hungary", *Imago mundi* 18 (1984), 53–
54; *Kodexek a középkori Magyarországon* (Budapest 1985), 170; K. Kuchar, "Lazarova mapa,
nejstarší mapovy obraz Slovenska", *Sbornik Československe společnosti zemepisne* 62 (1957);
L. Bendefy, "Wer war der Autor der ältesten Ungarnkarte?", *Mitteilungen der österreichischen
Geographischen Gesellscaft* 117 (1975), 424–426; J. Kalić, "Najstarija karta Ugarske (*Tabula
Hungariae*)", *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 24–25 (1986), 423–433.

[47] *Monumenta Cartographicae Jugoslaviae*, vol. II (Belgrade 1979), 27–29, 83–85ff.

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The Reception and Interpretation of St. Jerome's Description of Two of St Hilarion's Epidaurian Miracles in Dubrovnik-based Sources and Tradition[1]

> Hoc Epidaurus et omnis illa regio usque hodie praedicat,
> matresque docet liberos suos ad memoriam in posteros transmittendam.
> Jérôme, *Vie d'Hilarion*, 29, 4.

Abstract: The brief sojourn of St Hilarion to a setting not far from Epidaurus in Dalmatia in circa 365 CE was depicted by St Jerome in *Vita Sancti Hilarionis*, portraying the two notable miracles of the famous Palestinian anchorite – the slaying of the dragon Boas ravaging the area and the rescue of the city from the giant waves that threatened to devastate it. Both miracles have been interwoven into the later narratives of both medieval writers and the Renaissance chroniclers of Dubrovnik, especially Thomas the Archdeacon (of Split), Anonymous, Nicolò Ragnina and Serafino Razzi. The paper discourses these historians' interpretations (along with the accounts of later Dubrovnik chroniclers) of the glorious miracles of St Hilarion. In the Dubrovnik chronicles, the miracle of the dragon is correlated with the legend of the Theban king Cadmus, who was transformed into a serpent upon his arrival in the area, or with Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine whose most famous sanctuary was the homonymous town in the Peloponnese and whose symbol was a serpent or snake on a rod. In accordance with the local legend, the mentioned chroniclers unambiguously correlated the liberation of the city from beast with the ending of paganism and the baptising of the Dubrovnik populace. Furthermore, the paper discusses the elements related to the cult of St Hilarion in Dubrovnik and its vicinity, drawing attention to the lore preserved in oral tradition.

Keywords: St Jerome, the miracles of St Hilarion, saintly dragon-slayer, Epidaurus, Dubrovnik, Cadmus, Asclepius, written sources, the cult of St Hilarion.

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[1]   This article was written during my research stay in Paris at the end of 2009 for the publication *Les fouilles de Umm el-Amr* (*Bande Gaza*): *le Monastère*, ed. Rene Elter, which was to be published in the Brepols edition as part of the chapter on the cult of St Hilarion in Sicily, Dalmatia and Cyprus. However, due to the complicated geo-political situation in the Gaza Strip, it was not possible to complete the planned archaeological excavations of the remains of the St Hilarion Monastery, and thus the issuing of the article was postponed. At this point, the work is published in its original form, with minor changes in the text and literature.

The Life of St Hilarion penned by St Jerome is the third and last part of the trilogy dedicated to famous monks, which also consists of *The Life of St Paul* and *The Life of St Malchus*. In fact, Jerome wrote *The Life of St Hilarion* before the year 392 CE.[2] The *Vitae Patrum* embody merely a modest segment of the inscribed legacy of the famous exegete and translator of the Bible, with which he affirmed himself as the author of the first hagiographies in Latin. Jerome chose to depict aspects of monastic, primarily anchorite life, an ideal to which he personally aspired, via the lives of three exemplary ascetics – Paul, the founder of monastic life in Egypt, Malchus, a monk from Syria and lastly, Hilarion, the founder of the first monastic community in Palestine. It is believed that from thence he had interwoven the personal, direct experiences of monastic life in Palestine as well as his travels around the Mediterranean Sea, into the hagiography of St Hilarion from Gaza. In *The Life of St Hilarion*, of particular importance are the depictions of two notable miracles that took place not far from Epidaurus in Dalmatia: the slaying of a dragon and the rescue of the city from giant waves. Relying on Jerome's text, later Dubrovnik chroniclers also interlaced these occurrences into their narratives, charging them with new denotations in accordance with the ideological premises of the time in which these narratives were written, whereas the miracle with the dragon has been preserved in oral tradition.

St Hilarion was born at the beginning of the last decade of the 3rd century in Tabata, not far from Gaza, receiving an education in Alexandria by a grammarian. It was there that he became acquainted with Christianity and, enticed by the example of St Anthony, he departed for the Egyptian desert to asceticize together with the famed anchorite. However, the fifteen-year-old Hilarion was instigated by the great number of faithful who visited St Anthony daily and for this reason, he returned to Gaza. Relinquishing his inheritance, he retreated to a place between the swamp and the sea, not far from Mayuma, and dedicated himself to the strictest asceticism over a period of more than two decades. His fame and miracles attracted a substantial number of the faithfuls and monks to Gaza, and consequently, Hilarion established a monastery which thus set an example for other monastic communities in Palestine.[3] At the age of 63, Hilarion decided to withdraw from his monastery and once again visit the Egyptian desert and the sites where St Anthony had dwelled. As he could not be utterly alone in the desert, he left to Sicily, accompanied by a disciple in the hope that he would find

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[2]   The following critical edition of the Life of St Hilarion was used: Jérôme, *Vie d'Hilarion*, In idem, *Trois vies de moines (Paul, Malchus, Hilarion)*, texte critique par E. M. Morales, traduction par P. Leclerc, (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2007), 212–299.

[3]   On the remains of this monastery: E. René, A. Hassoune, "Le monastère de Saint-Hilarion à Umm-el-'Amr (bande de Gaza) (note d'information)," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 148/1 (2004), 359–382.

peace on the island. However, whilst there he was visited on by scores of sick and pious people, which is why he desired to retreat someplace where his fame did not precede him, where his name was unknown and where he could settle in peace.[4] Therefore, he decided to go to the region of Dalmatia, where he settled not far from Epidaurus. However, withdrawal from the world was not a choice to be sustained for a long time. Namely, at that time, the entire province was enduring the horror of a dragon of astonishing size named 'boas' by the local population, a beast which gobbled not only animals small and large but also farmers and shepherds working in the fields.[5] St Hilarion therefore ordered a bonfire to be laid out which, after the saint offered a prayer to Christ, the dragon mounted and, in plain sight of the whole population, it was burned to a crisp.[6] After such an impressive miracle, St Hilarion could no longer dedicate himself to ascetic life and he began to devise a new getaway. Nonetheless, it so happened that he once again rescued the city before his retreat from Dalmatia, this time from the giant waves which occurred after the death of Emperor Julian (361–363 CE).[7] Responding to the appeal of the denizens of Epidaurus to save them, St Hilarion drew three crosses in the sand and raised his hands in the direction of the waves that promptly ceded in front of him, slowly withdrawing following that.[8] The news of such an impressive miracle soon spread throughout the province, reaching its capital, Salona, where the memory lived even at the time of Jerome. However, as he could no longer live in isolation and devote himself to prayer, St Hilarion left Dalmatia and headed for Cyprus under the cover of night, hidden in a small boat.[9] He initially settled on an island not far from Paphos but then withdrew even further to an undisclosed location where he spent the last years of his life, deceasing in 371 CE. Ten months after the repose of St Hilarion, his disciple and follower Hesychius transferred the saint's body to his monastery in Mayuma near Gaza. The cult of St Hilarion soon flourished both in Gaza, where his body was interred, and in Cyprus, where his spirit was believed to reside. As regards Dubrovnik, the earliest data on the existence of the cult of St Hilarion in the city emerged in the 13th century. The memory of Hilarion's so-

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[4]   Jérôme, *Vie d'Hilarion*, 28, 1.

[5]   Ibid., 28, 3. (285)

[6]   Ibid., 28, 4. (285)

[7]   Ibid., 29, 1. (287). Jerome's statement indicates that it involved a chronicled strong earthquake followed by a tsunami, which happened on July 21, 365 CE. However, there is also the opinion that «le tsunami d'Épidaure n'a à être mis en rapport avec celui du 21 juillet 365; il est la conséquence d'une secousse locale qu'on peut au plus situer vers 363–365». F. Jacques, B. Bousquet, "Le raz de marée du 21 juillet 365. Du cataclysme local à la catastrophe cosmique," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Antiquité*, 96/1 (1984), 448.

[8]   Jérôme, *Vie d'Hilarion*, 29, 3. (287)

[9]   Ibid., 29, 7. (289)

journ to the vicinity of Epidaurus is preserved primarily in the church dedicated to him in Mlini, which is first mentioned in the Dubrovnik Statute from 1272, as well as in later chronicles of learned Dubrovnik humanists.

Although not lenghty – it is contained within Chapters 28 and 29 of *The Life of the Saint* – the depiction of the sojourn of St Hilarion to the Dalmatian coast points to a series of genre topos, among which the one related to the presence of a dragon in the narratives about the saint's life is unquestionably prominent. No less important is the issue of the origin of the beast – be it Biblical or mythological. It is not without significance that Jerome had situated this great miracle in Epidaurus, that is, in a province of Dalmatia familiar to him in terms of origin and his hermit life. This point is especially important when taken into account that Jerome had interwoven other autobiographical elements into the narrative of St Hilarion. In addition, he rendered a portrayal of Christianity in southern Dalmatia, which in the second half of the 4th century was still not significantly extant on this territory, since St Hilarion regarded the eastern Adriatic area as inhabited by barbarians.[10] Hence, it is not a surprise that later local narratives correlated St Hilarion's stay to these parts with the Christianization of the local populace.

Unlike biblical and apocryphal texts in which the snake or serpent dominates as a symbol of evil and fear of death or as a personification of the devil,[11] it is dragon figures that are largely represented in the lives of saints. The dragon in hagiographic writings, just like the snake, primarily personifies the devil or a demon, although its presence in these narratives often denotes mythological connotations.[12] According to Victor Saxer, hagiographic texts account for dragon occurrences in diverse ways. They serve to impart an epic dimension to a saint's life following the example of the deeds of ancient heroes, or as a pretext for a lesson on of monastic life, whereupon struggles with monsters are primarily of a spiritual nature. Therefore, dragons were introduced into these narratives as a form of literary creation, whilst the miracle with the dragon in *The Life of St Hilarion* by St Jerome is the first of its kind in Latin hagiography.[13] In point of fact, Jerome specified that the local population named the dragon 'boas' and further elucidated that the term arose from the fact that the dragon was of such an immense size that it could swallow bulls (Lat. *boves*) whole. Such a monster, albeit

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[10] Ibid., 28, 1.(285)

[11] T. Jovanović, "Motiv zmije u apokrifima". In *Guje i jakrepi: književnost, kultura*, eds. M. Detelić, L. Delić (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2012), 245–253.

[12] V. Saxer, "Le dragon dans la littérature hagiographique latine ancienne et médiévale." In *Drac: symbolique et mythologie du dragon entre Rhône et Alpes*, Cahier des Alpes-Maritimes VI (Nice: Art et culture des Alpes-Maritimes, 1990), 53–88.

[13] Ibid., 57–58.

a serpent which could ingest a deer or a bull, was described by Pliny the Elder. He claimed that according to Magestenos, such serpents inhabited India and that the truth of his statement was confirmed by the fact that in Italy there was a serpent named 'boa' whose stomach had once housed the body of a child (*HN* VIII, 14). In later local written sources, this monster was associated with the legend of the Theban king Cadmus and the 'ancestor' of the Illyrians who, upon his arrival to this area, was transformed into a serpent. It is also linked with the serpent of Asclepius, which in turn rendered to the miracle of St Hilarion a new, primarily mythological meaning. Daniele Farlatti, quoting Bommanus' lost work *Historia Dalmatiae*, finds the explication of the myth of Hilarion as a dragon slayer in the existence of a species of snake that the locals called "*kravosija*" (cowsucker).[14] Finally, in regards to the name of the dragon, it is not without significance that the term Boa can be found in Dalmatian toponymy. Namely, Boa or Boas is the name of a island near Trogir, today's Čiovo, which is mentioned by Pliny (*HN* III, 152 – *contra Tragurium Bova*) and Ammien Marcellin (Amm. Marc, XXII 3, 6 – *ininsulam Delmatiam Boas* and Amm. Marc, XXVIII 1, 23 – *ad Boas Delmatiae locum*), and which also can be seen on Tabula Peutingeriana and which was later on cited in the Ravenna Cosmography.[15]

Moreover, the miracles of St Hilarion in Dalmatia are mentioned by Sozomen (Hist. eccl. V, 10, 15) and following that by Cassiodorus (*Historia ecclesiatica tripertita* VI, 12, 1–4) without any additional elucidations. St Aldhelm (c. 639–709), the first Bishop of Sherborne, in his monumental work *De laudibus virginitatis* (*PL* 89, col. 127A–128A) paraphrased the text of St Jerome regarding the Dalmatia-based miracles of St Hilarion in more detail, mentioning that it was exemplary.[16] The extent to which Jerome's *Vitae Patrum* was popular during the Middle Ages is demonstrated by the abundance of transcripts in both the Latin and Greek languages.[17] In Croatia and Dalmatia *The Life of St Hilarion* was translated from Latin for the reason of local liturgical practice. However, the Glagolitic breviaries, written from the 14th century to the year 1561, contain a

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[14] D. Farlatti, *Illyrici sacri* VI (Venetiis: apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1800), 4. *Kravosija* or *kravosac* is a four-lined snake also known under the name the Aesculapian snake.

[15] Quoted according to: *Real encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, III/1 (1878), 572; about the name Boa/Bova also see D. Ivšić, *Predslavenski sloj u hrvatskoj toponimiji*, unpublished PhD thesis (Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Rijeci, 2013), 123–124.

[16] The following author also drew attention to this text, G. Praga, "*La leggenda di S. Ilarione a Epidauro in Adelmo scrittore anglosassone del secolo VII*," *Archivio Storico per la Dalmazia* 25 (1938), 83–91.

[17] M. D. McNeil, "The Latin Manuscript Tradition of the Vita Sancti Hilarionis." In *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum*, ed. W. A. Oldfather (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1943), 251–305; R. F. Strout, "The Greek Versions of Jerome's Vita Sancti Hilarionis." In *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum*, 306–448.

miniscule part of the text in relation to Jerome's original although they overlook the text describing the saint's stay to Dalmatia.[18] However, what is of interest is how the text regarding the miracles that St Hilarion accomplished during his sojourn in Epidaurus was integrated in the narrative historical sources of Dalmatia, more precisely those of the city of Dubrovnik, and the explanation why the cult of St Hilarion had failed to spread significantly in this province, even in the city itself (Dubrovnik) which was the successor of the former Epidaurus.

Our knowledge of ancient Epidaurus is exceptionally modest. Although it bears the same name as the more eminent Peloponnesian city of Epidaurus, it seems that it is not of Greek but rather, of Illyrian origin. After the collapse of the powerful state of the Illyrian Ardians in 167 BCE, a region of Konavle came under Roman rule. Epidaurus, a city enclosed by ramparts, was first mentioned in 47 BCE. It received the status of a colony most likely during Caesar Augustus, and the citizens of Epidaurus were registered in the *Tromentina tribus*.[19] In the second half of the 4th century, at which time St Hilarion arrived in the area, the populace of Dalmatia were still largely unbaptized.[20] It is not easy to determine the precise time when the episcopal see was established in Epidaurus, and even less so which saintly cults were cultivated. The Bishop 'Pitaurane' was first mentioned in 530 CE at the First Church Council in Salona, but the see ceased to exist at the beginning of the following century, when Epidaurus was devastated in the attacks by the Avars and the Slavs.[21]

The population fleeing Epidaurus settled upon the cliffs of Ragusa/Dubrovnik,[22] a city that became the successor of Epidaurus and its episcopal see. The parity between the two cities was recognized by an anonymous geographer of Ravenna who stated that "Epidaurus id est Ragusium" (Rav. Cosm. IV, 16, 10), which denotes the earliest mention of Ragusa or Dubrovnik in written sources.[23] In Dubrovnik-based sources, including the city Statute instituted in

[18] V. Badurina-Stipčević, "*Legenda o svetom Hilarionu opatu u hrvatsko glagoljskim brevijarima*", *Slovo* 52–53 (2004), 27–40.

[19] G. Novak, "Povijest Dubrovnika od najstarijih vremena do početka VII stoleća (do propasti Epidauruma)", *Anali Historijskog instituta u Dubrovniku* X–XI (1966), prilog, 1–69; N. Cambi, "Antički Epidaur", *Dubrovnik*, n.s., XVII/3 (2006), 185–216.

[20] For the history of Christianity in Dalmatia v. J. Zeiller, *Les origines chrétiennes dans la province romaine de Dalmatie* (Paris: H. Champion, 1906).

[21] Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques XV (1963), col. 601–602, s. v. "Épidaure" (R. Aubert).

[22] Ž. Peković, *Dubrovnik. Nastanak i razvoj srednjovjekovnoga grada – Dubrovnik. La fondation et le développement de la ville médiévale* (Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika Split, 1998).

[23] Reagarding relationship between the two cities v. L. Kunčević, "The Oldest Foundation Myth of Ragusa: the Epidaurian tradition," *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 10 (2004), 21–31.

1272, Epidaurus is named Ragusa vetus, Ragusa vecchia, vetusa civitas Ragusii, but also Civitas Vetus, Città Vechia. Similarly, the episcopal see of Ragusa was considered the legitimate successor of the former see in Epidaurus. When in 1022 Pope Benedict granted the pallium to Vitaly, he addressed him with "archbishop sancte Pitabritane sedis e ciuitate Labusei,"[24] which underlined a continuity of ecclesiastical jurisdiction between the two cities.

There is scant possibility of knowing whether and in what way the memory of St Hilarion was preserved in Epidaurus, but it can be assumed that a church dedicated to him was located in the immediate vicinity of this town – in Breno (today's Mlini),[25] existed before the 13th century. Namely, the 1272 Statute of Dubrovnik stipulated that meetings on disputes or lawsuits between the kingdom and the people of Zeta and those from Dubrovnik were to be held in Mlini, "prope ecclesiam sanct (sic) Hylacrioni."[26]

Also originating approximately from the same time as the Statute, from around 1266, is the mention of the miracle of St Hilarion's dragon in the opening chapter of the well-known history of the Salonitan or Split church, *Historia Salonitana*, by Thomas the Archdeacon. Dalmatia is depicted in this segment and within that description Thomas recalls, referring to the authority of the poet, "Secundum poetarum fabulas," that Cadmus had arrived in the province and been transformed into a snake at that very place.[27] The historian adds that Epidaurus is the city of Cadmus' and furthermore, that a not inconsiderable cave can be found there and also, that it was common belief in his time that a dragon had dwelled in the cave. Therefore, the inhabitants of that area were also called 'anguigene' or 'serpent-born.'[28] In the continuation of the text, the medieval chronicler cites that St Hilarion had slain a dragon in that area.[29] He further explains that Cadmus was the king of Greece from whence he was expelled, adding that when he arrived in Dalmatia he became the cruelest of pirates and started

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[24] *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, I, ed. M. Kostrenčić (Zagreb: Jugoslovenska akademija nauka i umjetnosti, 1967), N° 44, 61–62.

[25] The place Breno is mentioned for the first time in a document dated 1163–1178. *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, II, ed. T. Smičiklas (Zagreb: Jugoslovenska akademija nauka i umjetnosti, 1904), N° 95, 98–99.

[26] *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii, compositus anno MCCLXXII = Statut grada Dubrovnika, sastavljen godine 1272*, eds. A. Šoljić, Z. Šundrica, I. Veselić (Dubrovnik: Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku 2002), III, LIV.

[27] *Thomae Archidiaconi Spalatensis Historia Salonitanorum atque Spalatinorum Pontificum = Archdeacon Thomas of Split, History of the bishops of Salona and Split, History of the Bishops of Salona and Split*, eds. D. Karbić, M. Matijević Sokol and J. R. Sweeney (Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 2006), 6.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

"like a slithering serpent, to rage over the sea."[30] Apart from Epidaurus, the myth of Cadmus is also linked with other localities along the southeastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.[31] Furthemore, it is believed that the tribe of Enchelians who crowned him as their king had conquered the neighboring Illyrians.[32] In the new homeland, a son named Illyrios was born to Cadmus and Harmonia and according to legend, a snake was wound around the newborn at birth, imparting all its magical powers to him. According to another version of the myth, Cadmus and Harmonia were transformed into snakes at that exact place, in Epidaurus.[33] Thomas the Archdeacon, however, confined himself to a lapidary presentation of data in his writings. Only considerably later narative sources bring the pagan heritage of Epidaurus into a direct correlation with the miracle of St Hilarion.

The miraculous triumph of St Hilarion over the dragon acquired a new dimension in the interpretation of the earliest Dubrovnik historians and chroniclers. These writings were composed at the end of the 15th and in the 16th century, at the time when the Republic of Dubrovnik was experiencing its heyday. An anonymous author of the Dubrovnik annals,[34] Nicolò Ragnina (1495–1582)[35] and Serafino Razzi (1531–1606)[36] wrote extensively about St Hilarion and his Dalmatian miracles. Although principally following St Jerome's account, these authors date St Hilarion's stay in Dalmatia to the beginning of the 9th century, adding new specifics and linking it to the tradition of the city of Dubrovnik and its authorities – not to Epidaurus.

The earliest of these historiographical writings are *Annales Ragusini Anonymi* compiled at the end of the 15th century, a text predominantly written in the form of a vivid dialogue between St Hilarion and the Dubrovnik residents. His account was later followed by writers whose scripts revealed very slight differences. Thus Ragnina, who in the preface to his work stated that he had used

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[30] Ibid.

[31] About the myth of Cadmus in this part of the Adriatic v. I. Stević, Praevalis. *Obrazovanje kulturnog prostora kasnoantičke provincije* [Summary: Praevalis. The Making of Cultural Space of the Late Antique Province] (Podgorica: Društvo arheologa Crne Gore, 2014), 24, 51, 107–108.

[32] M. Šašel Kos, "Cadmus and Harmonia in Illyria," *Arheološki vestnik* 44 (1993), 113–136.

[33] G. Novak, "Questiones epidauritanae," *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 339 (1965), 115–116.

[34] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*. In *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, ed. S. Nodilo (Zagrabiae: Academia scientiarum et artium slavorum meridionalium, 1883), 1–163.

[35] *Annali di Ragusa del Magnifico ms. Nicolò di Ragnina*. In *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicolai de Ragnina*, 165–301. (= Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*)

[36] S. Razzi, *La storia di Ragusa scritta nuovamente in tre libri*, eds. L. Ferretti. G. Gelcich (Ragusa: Tipografia Serbo–Ragusea A. Pasaric, 1903).

the text "ex libro epistolarum Sancti Hieronimy"[37] in his narrative, also enters some particulars about the saint's life, mostly those referring to the period following his arrival in Dalmatia. Razzi, at the same time, was aware of Jerome's text albeit mistakenly attributing it to St Anthony.[38] In brief, according to the cited chroniclers, a dragon of astonishing size came from the Levant in the year 789 CE and settled in a cave near Epidaurus, which, as Ragnina specified, was a "citta vecchia."[39] The dragon inflicted terror on the area for 13 years, causing much harm to the inhabitants who, helpless before the beast, considered abandoning their homes.[40] In 802 CE, a hermit called Hilarion came from Sicily to Breno (today's Mlini) where he built a thatch-roofed hut. Witnessing the newcomer, dwellers of the nearby strongholds of Spilan and Gradac arrived to forewarn him of a horrific dragon that roved the coast slaying not only animals but also children, men and women, proposing that he depart with them to either Dubrovnik or to one of the strongholds. St Hilarion instructed them to have no fear of the dragon as he could rescue them from the beast but only on the condition that they keep the faith and commandments of Jesus Christ. Furthemore, they were to request the same of the Ragusans. After making sure the following day that the saint had not been killed by the dragon, the governors of Ragusa decided to direct a message to St Hilarion, aiming to summon him to the city.[41]

"Quali homeni, andati con molti homeni a cavallo, gionti sono alla abitation dello eremita, allo quale parlorono, dicendo, narassegli la sua condition, et nome, et la patria sua. Quale rispose, esser venuto da Levante, per esser per comandamento di Dio mandato, per liberarli dalla obsidione dello dragone, con condition se volete credere in Jesu Cristo ed alli sui comandamenti. Quali risposero: Noi semo cristiani, et etiam si governamo per i suoi precetti. Alli quali eremita diede la risposta: Ben vero tenite la fede a modo vostro; ma se volete **creder nella fede vera cristiana, et battizzarvi a modo romano**, farovvi liberare dalla obsidione dello dragone i farollo morire."[42]

The saint rejected the governors' summons to Ragusa, advising the envoys that he had journeyed from the Levant to liberate the Ragusans from the terror of the dragon by God's command, but on the condition that they put faith in Christ and his commandments. Although the denizens retorted that they were

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[37] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 168.

[38] Razzi, *La storia di Ragusa*, 28.

[39] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 188.

[40] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 11; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 188; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 24–25.

[41] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 12; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 189; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 25.

[42] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 190. The same scene in *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 12, Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 25.

Christians, the saint affirmed that they needed to accept the true Christian faith and not worship God according to their own customs. He also added that they were to be baptized according to the Roman rites, following which they would be free from the dragon. Having no other choice, the people of Dubrovnik sent ten 'homeni canuti' accompanied by about a thousand 'homeni armati' to St Hilarion who "cavo una sua croce da legno della sua casetta, et ordinò tutti li homeni ingenocchiar, facendoli far orationi Pater noster et Ave Maria, supplicando a Dio li conceda tale gratia: cridorono poi tre volte misericordia."[43] Thereafter, St Hilarion embarked on a boat accompanied by four men heading for Epidaurus. There, bearing a cross in his hand, he approached the cave where the beast dwelled. The dragon, as obedient as a lamb, appeared before St Hilarion, who tied a his belt around his neck and steered him towards the boat. Upon sailing back, the dragon swam alongside the boat. When they returned to the hut in front of which the congregation awaited, the saint ordered the dragon to climb up onto the bonfire. After the dragon was smoldered, St Hilarion gave a sermon to the gathered whereupon he explicated that the dragon was possessed by the devil, the one whom the inhabitants of Epidaurus had worshipped in the cave in ancient times.[44] He then pointed out the errors of the Dubrovnik residents who, even though Christians, put faith in sorcery and dreams, and therefore he proceeded to baptize them all. Subsequently, he continued his mission of Christianization in the Adriatic hinterland "per Bosnia, et Valachia, rivontadoli dalla setta grechesca nella fede cristiana."[45] St Hilarion's hut in front of which he had burned the dragon was converte into a church dedicated to the Mother of God, although later it changed patrons and was dedicated to St Hilarion. Chroniclers added that St Hilarion had erected another three churches in the name of the Holy Trinity in a place called Gravos, that is, in the Dubrovnik port of Gruž. These were the Church of St George, St Clement and the Church of the Mother of God, which was also subsequently dedicated to St Hilarion.[46]

At the same time when St Hilarion was residing in the interior, the sea had almost reached the mountains, deluging a large part of Dubrovnik. The saint returned immediately to the city upon an invitation from the inhabitants. Then, according to Anonymous and Ragnina, Hilarion made three crosses which he arranged on the shore, impeding the sea. Furthermore, it is maintained that one of the crosses can be found under the altar of the Church of St Hilarion in

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[43] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 190.

[44] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 13–14; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 189–191; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 26.

[45] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191.

[46] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 14; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 26.

Gruž.[47] Razzi's account differs to some extent from the preceding ones, as he had notated that the saint had formed the sign of the cross with three stones, arranged them on the shore and impeded the waves while kneeling in prayer. These three stones were placed under the altars of the churches St Hilarion had erected. Razzi complements his account by citing that the three-day processions organized by the Dubrovnik residents denoted a gesture of gratitude to the saint, during which followers strode barefoot.[48] St Hilarion left Dubrovnik after the second miracle, but in 813 CE a certain Sargio or Sergio, a disciple of St Hilarion of Albanian origin, arrived at the city, who subsequently became the chaplain of the St Vitus church.[49]

Renaissance chroniclers, as expected, correlated the miracles of St Hilarion with the city of Dubrovnik and not Epidaurus, making significant alterations to the actual chronology of Hilarion's visit to Dalmatia. The appearance of the dragon to these parts is dated to 789 CE, while it is believed that the saint arrived in 802 CE, despite the fact that both Nicolò Ragnina and Serafino Razzi were aware that these events had taken place in the 4th century. Moreover, in the prologue to his work, Ragnina mentions specifically that after the death of Julian the Apostate, Epidaurus and the entire area were endangered by a flood which took place in 363 CE.[50] In point of fact, it is on the basis of the miracles of St Hilarion that the antiquity of Ragusa, which originates from Epidaurus, was established. Moreover, in the text itself, at the end of the narrative about Hilarion, Ragnina adds that it is more likely that the floods had occurred in 373 CE, before the Goths destroyed Epidaurus.[51] Razzi also expresses doubts about the local chronology of events, noting that it was not Ragusa that was mentioned in the saint's biography but rather Epidaurus.[52] Nevertheless, despite what was said, the chroniclers acknowledged the chronology of events stated for the first time in *Annales Ragusini Anonymi* in their histories. They all concurred that the dragon had arrived to this area from the Levant. Moreover, the danger to Dubrovnik derived from the Levant at any rate. The historians dated the arrival of St Hilarion to the Epidaurus at the time of the incursions of Arab fleets into the Adriatic Sea, among which the raid from around 840 CE stands out, when Budva, Rose and Kotor's lower town were destroyed – this probably refers to Anonymous' mention of Saracen attacks that he dated to the year 740 CE – and especially the one from 866/67 CE when Dubrovnik was under siege for 15

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[47] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 14–15; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191–192.

[48] Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 27.

[49] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 15; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 192; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 27.

[50] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 168.

[51] Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191.

[52] Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 28–29.

months.[53] Closer to the time in which the Dubrovnik annals were compiled is undoubtedly the threat to the Republic of Dubrovnik from the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, from the middle of the 15th century (the treaties of 1442 and 1458) the residents of Dubrovnik were obliged to pay a haraç tax to the sultan.[54] Therefore, it cannot be said whether the backdrop of the 13-year-long terror of the dragon is a factual historical event or it is simply a literary topos. In any case, holding a sermon after the slaying of the dragon, St Hilarion distinctly declared that the beast was possessed by a devil, the one worshipped in the cave by the denizens of Epidaurus in ancient times.[55] Serafino Razzi is more specific than the two older authors, hence unequivocally linking the beast and Asclepius. To be precise, Razzi states that St Hilarion expounded in a sermon to the Ragusans that the people "ne i tempi antichi, in Epidauro adorauano un serpente di bronzo, da loro lo Dio Esculapio addimandato."[56] What everyone agreed on is that the prerequisite for deliverance from the beast was the acceptance of baptism according to the Roman rite, since the Dubrovnik residents, regardless of the fact that they had adopted Christianity, still believed in fortune tellers, sorcery and dreams.

It seems that a Slavic apostle's mission was incorporated into the narrative of St Hilarion, albeit indirectly. Specifically, Ragnina stated that Sergio, the disciple of St Hilarion alluded to previously, was in fact a disciple of St Cyril, a monk who had baptized all Bulgarians and Slavs into the Catholic faith. This statement is even more significant when it is taken into account that the texts of the Renaissance chroniclers maintain that St Hilarion departed for Bosnia and Wallachia after the miracle of the dragon, where he converted the populaces from the "Greek cult" to the Christian faith.

Dubrovnik-based writers included elements that refer to the then city administration and even its appearance in the depiction of the miracle of St Hilarion. The narrative mentions the city administrators, ten wise, i.e. reputable men (which practically corresponds to the number of members in the Small Council, of which there were eleven) along with some one thousand armed residents of Dubrovnik. The recollection of a contemporary disaster is perchance noted in the depiction of the rising sea miracle. The vivid representation of Pustjerna draws attention. This was a part of the city where there were straw

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[53] I. Goldstein, *Hrvatski rani srednji vijek*. (Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1995), 203–206.

[54] For more details in regards to the correlation between the Venetian Republic and the Ottoman Empire during the 15th century v. V. Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808. Prvi dio. Od osnutka do 1526.* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1980), 201–216, 226–236.

[55] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 13–14; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 189–191.

[56] Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 26.

houses, various osteria or restaurants, as well as a market with a variety of goods, and cattle, horses, bulls, cows, sheep, pigs and other animals for sale. According to chroniclers, the sea had flooded Pustjerna on one Saturday in the month of October (sic!).[57]

Lastly, relics or more precisely, contact or secondary relics associated with St Hilarion are correlated with the rescue of the city from the rising sea: a wooden cross he had made by hand, that is, three stones which he used to made the sign of the cross and which were kept under the altars of three churches in the port of Dubrovnik.[58] Although the authenticity of these relics is questionable, it is very likely that the churches had interred some relics at the end of the 15th and during the 16th century that were believed to originate from St Hilarion and furthermore, their citation is an indication of local worship. Unfortunately, none of these churches are mentioned by the learned Tuscan Philippus de Diversis in his description from the year 1440 of the city of Dubrovnik and its immediate surroundings.[59] Writing about the churches in Gruž, de Diversis primarily points out the Church of St Blaise, the patron saint of the city, and subsequently the St Martin, St Michael, and St Fosca Churches, adding that countless other churches were existent there, albeit failing to mention any that could be associated with St Hilarion.[60] Razzi, however, was aware of three shrines that were erected midway between Dubrovnik and Gruž. He claimed that in his time, at the end of the 16th century, it was possible to see one of the three old churches in a place called Bella Vista about a kilometer from Ragusa and that this place was even then called "ad tres basilicas," adding that "il complesso dalle tre chiese del sec. XIII e XIV [...] è oggi rappresentato dall'unica chiesa offiziata di S. Giorgio, al cui servizio è un ritiro di Bizocche."[61] At the beginning of the 19th century, Francesco Maria Appendini (1768–1837) stated that for centuries on St Hilarion's Day the Ragusans express their gratitude to the great saint. This took place in a small chapel near *Ragusa vecchia* and in three small churches located in the environs of Dubrovnik.[62] The three churches mentioned by the Appendines are undoubtedly the identical ones cited by the older Dubrovnik

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[57] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 14; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 27.

[58] *Annales Ragusini Anonymi*, 14; Ragnina, *Annali di Ragusa*, 191; Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 27.

[59] F. De Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, preface, transcription and translation from Latin Z. Janeković-Römer (Zagreb: Dom i svijet 2004).

[60] F. De Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, 46.

[61] Razzi, *Storia di Ragusa*, 26, nota 1. *Bizocche* were tertiaries, that is members of third orders. On their status in Dubrovnik v. V. Živković, Religioznost i umetnost u Kotoru XIV–XVI vek [Summary: Religiosity and art in Kotor (Cattaro) in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries] (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2010), 101–102.

[62] F. M. Appendini, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità. Storia e letteratura de'raguesi*, I (Ragusa: A. Martecchini, 1802), 68.

chroniclers. Nonetheless, there is no mention of crosses, i.e. the stones placed under the altars of the mentioned churches. It is possible that all traces of them had disappeared following the devastating earthquake of 1667.

The small chapel near *Ragusa vecchia* mentioned by Appendini is the Church of the Mother of God in Mlini, built on the site of the saint's hut in front of which he had scorched the dragon, a depiction noted by writers of annals. The chapel was later dedicated to St Hilarion – this is unquestionably the same church mentioned in the 1272 Dubrovnik Statute. In actual fact, this temple is not listed by de Diversis. The medieval church was ruined in the devastating 1667 earthquake, after which it was restored in the Baroque style. However, it was once more destroyed in the earthquakes of 1823 and 1824, following which it was rebuilt for the second time. It is known, however, that the church had held a miraculous icon of Mary, the Mother of God in the 17th century. Namely, the Marian Atlas of the German Jesuit Guilielmi Gumppenberg printed in 1657/8 mentions, among others, three miraculous icons of the Mother of God on the territory of the Republic of Dubrovnik. Two were located in the city of Dubrovnik, while the third 'antiquissima' image of the Virgin Mary who performed miracles and is venerated by all was sited in the church of St Hilarion in the Dubrovnik Parish (Imago B. V. miraculosa in Breno).[63] This information was dispatched to Gumppenberg from Ragusa. Therefore, the text about St Hilarion relies mostly on Dubrovnik chroniclers, primarily the account of Serafino Razzi. Namely, at the end of his testimony, Gumppenberg cites the sermon of St Hilarion in which he reveals that the beast burned at the stake is "idem ipse, quem olim ex Epidauro Achaiae Aesculapium."[64]

With the advancement of the Republic of Dubrovnik, the expansion of its territory and the wave of humanism, there were also attempts of numerous writers to correlate the early stages of Epidaurus with ancient myths. They thus enhanced the reputation of Dubrovnik, which according to them was the same city as Epidaurus after changing its name, though it was a town newer, larger and far more famous. For this reason, the narrative of Asclepius as the legendary founder of Epidaurus was increasingly mentioned. The cult of the Greek god of medicine was most likely conveyed to Dalmatia by Roman colonists.[65] Three gems with the likeness of Asclepius were found in Epidaurus, on two of which he was depicted together with Hygieia, though the remains of an inscription

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[63] P. Knezović, "Dubrovačka Gospina svetišta 17. stoleća prema *Atlas Marianus* W. Gumppenberga", *Anali Dubrovnik* 43 (2005), 75–92

[64] Ibid., 89.

[65] Novak, *Questiones epidauritanae*, 116–119.

or a temple dedicated to him were not discovered.[66] The people of Dubrovnik, however, were very fond of this legend and in official documents often emphasized their Epidaurian origin and the union between the cities. They sought to emphasize the antiquity of Epidaurus, that is, the city of Dubrovnik itself with inscriptions, legends, and even 15th and 16th century works of art. The Dubrovnik elite employed a fictitious tradition both in acquiring new estates and in the process of conserving the memory of the origins of the city and the nobility, whereupon archaic ancestries were seen as a covenant of singular rights and a sanction of intransience.[67] Once the Rector's Palace was constructed in Dubrovnik in the 15th century (before 1440), Asclepius was depicted on a pillar capital and an inscription in verse compiled by Dubrovnik notary Niccolò della Ciria from Cremona was positioned alongside it. The verses called attention to the fact that Dubrovnik was essentially the home town of Asclepius.[68]

The chroniclers of the Baroque period, however, paid little attention to the legends of St Hilarion. Upon his mention, they largely deferred to the authenticity of historical data, dating St Hilarion's visit to the 4th century in Dalmatia, not engaging in any additional interpretation of the dragon's demise. Thus Junius Restius (1669–1735), the most authoritative chronicler of Ragusa, confined himself to reciting Jerome's text in a terse form.[69]

The legend of Asclepius flourished once again at the beginning of the 19th century, an age of renewed interest in the past and the forming of new historical narratives. It was during this period that the scholar Francesco Maria Appendini identified the cave in which Asclepius' snake had lived, according to the local population.[70] The famous English archaeologist Arthur Evans also wrote

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[66] A. Evans, *Antiquarian reserches in Illyricum*, I–II (Westminster: Nichols & Sons, 1883), 17; B. Bijađija, "Roman religion and cults in Epidaurus," *Archaeologia Adriatica*, 6/1 (2012), 67–86.

[67] Z. Janeković Römer, "Stjecanje Konavala: Antička tradicija i mit u službi diplomacije". In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti*: zbornik radova, ed. V. Stipetić (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998), 31–45.

[68] Regarding this inscription and the historical context in which it originated v. S. Kokole, "Ciriaco d' Ancona v Dubrovniku: renesancna epigrafika, arheologija in obujanje antike v humanisticnem okolju mestne državice sredi petnajstega stoletja," *Arheoloski vestnik* 41 (1990), 663–697, especially 667–668.

[69] *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii ab origine urbis usque ad annum 1451, item Joannis Gundulae (1451–1484)*, ed. N. Nodilo (Zagrabiae: Ex Officina Societatis Typographicae, 1893), 15.

[70] "Poco lungi dalle rovine Epidauritane nel mezzo della Partenia, oggi pianura Canalitana apreso nel vasto lato Orientale dell'altissimo deserto sniescniza un'orrida spaziosa caverna, che l'immeroabile tradizione dei vicini abitanti spaccia per quella, in cui si annidava in serpente di Esculapio." Appendini ordered that a marble plaque be placed at the entrance to the cave with an inscription in 'Illyrian' which read: "hridni stan smaja eskulapskoga 1801." Appendini, *Notizie istorico-critiche sulle antichità*, 32–34.

about "Asclepius' Cave," stating the previously held belief that Cadmus and Harmonia had been transformed into snakes in situ, and that Asclepius had later appropriated the sanctuary for himself.[71] Along with the supposed Asclepius' Cave, Arthur Evans also noted the one in which St Hilarion's dragon dwelled, a cave named *Scipum*, concluding thus: "But how interesting is this personified triumph of Christianity over the Cadmean and Aesculapian serpent-worship of earlier Epidaurus! – how suggestive is this annexation of local mythology by the new religion."[72]

However, there is no substantiation of a potential worship of St Hilarion in Epidaurus itself. Although the writers of the Dubrovnik chronicles crafted a direct link between the sojourn of St Hilarion and the baptism of Ragusans, there was no trace of any church, chapel or altar within the city walls dedicated to him.[73] When the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus wrote about Dubrovnik in the 10th century, he revealed that the relics of St Pancratius were interred in the heart of the city in a church dedicated to St Stephen the First Martyr.[74] The relics of St Pancras were translated from Rome to Dubrovnik together with the relics of Saints Nereus, Achilleus, Domittila and Petronilla seemingly in the mid-8th century.[75] Furthermore, these holy relics were interred in the referenced church of St Stephen,[76] and their cults were cultivated in the inclusive area of the Dubrovnik commune. Thus, for instance, in the 13th century in the area of Astareja, i.e. the site of the Church of St Hilarion, there were as many as three churches dedicated to St Pancratius,[77] which speaks in favor of the fact that the Dubrovnik authorities cultivated cults within the city itself but not those in its immediate vicinity, as is the case with the cult of St Hilarion.

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[71] A. Evans, *Through Bosnia and the Herzegovina on foot during the insurrection, August and September 1875: with an historical review of Bosnia, and a glimpse at the Croats, Slavonians, and the ancient republic of Ragusa* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1876), 394.

[72] Ibid., 397. On the Šipun cave and its legends v. V. Božić, "Legende o špilji Šipun u Cavtatu", *Subterranea Croatica* IV/6, (2006), 41–46.

[73] L. Beritić, "Ubikacija nestalih gradjevinskih spomenika u Dubrovniku." *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 10/1 (1956), 50–79.

[74] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, English translation R. J. H. Jenkins (Washington D. C.: Dumbarton Oaks, Center for Byzantine Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, 1967), XXIX, 235–236.

[75] T. Živković, "The earliest cults of Saints in Ragusa," *Zbornik radova vizantološkog instituta* 44 (2007), 119–127.

[76] Z. Janeković Römer, "Štovanje Sv. Stjepana Prvomučenika u ranosrednjovjekovnom Dubrovniku: mučeništvo u temeljima grada, komune i (nad)biskupije", *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 57 (2019), 9–28.

[77] A. Marinković, "Territorial Expansion of the Ragusan Commune/Republic and the Churches of its Patron Saints," *Dubrovnik Annals* 13 (2009), 16–18.

Along with the venerations of Roman saints, the cults of saints from the East also emerged in Dubrovnik, which is very plausible considering the fact that Dubrovnik was under Byzantine rule at the time. Finally, from the end of the 10th century, the Ragusans began to venerate St Blaise, the Bishop of Savastia, whom the city of Dubrovnik still celebrates as its protector and patron.[78] However, in the pantheon of saints, protectors of the city and the Republic, there was no place for St Hilarion.

In point of fact, the cult of St Hilarion was fostered beyond the city ramparts, primarily in the Mlini church at the ostensible locality of the saint's hut, a location which had attained the distinctive perpetuation of a holy place. The Renaissance authors of the Dubrovnik annals displayed significant interest in the saint's brief stay in Dalmatia and his miracles. Relying on the text of St Jerome, they enhanced the narrative by adding components of the period in which they were penned relating to the city of Dubrovnik and its social organization, and even the depiction of some city districts. In the works of the first Dubrovnik chroniclers, St Hilarion became the conveyor of orthodox Christianity, a saint who had baptized the residents of Dubrovnik and freed them from a terrible beast which Epidaurians had worshiped in ancient times. Given that the chronicle of Asclepius as the legendary founder of Epidaurus was created in Dubrovnik during the Renaissance period, the learned Dominican Serafino Razzi likened the beast slain by Hilarion with Asclepius' snake. However, despite the importance attached to St Hilarion by Renaissance scholars, any depiction of an icon or another representation of the saint in Dubrovnik at that time is unknown or has not been preserved.[79] The writers of the next epoch replicated Jerome's text about St Hilarion into their works without any additional commentaries. Nevertheless, it was during this period that Hilarion became the main protagonist in the local patriotic literary works.

The renowned Dubrovnik writer, poet and playwright Junije Palmotić (1606–1657) not only depicts the miracle of St Hilarion and the dragon in stanzas in several places in his literary work *Pavlimir*, but also sets the drama dedicated to the legendary founder of the city at the time of the saint sojourn in the vicinity of Dubrovnik.[80] In this famous work, like in the local folk tradition, the saint is called Ilar.[81] At the beginning of the 19th century which was marked by a

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[78] J. Belamarić, "Sveti Vlaho i dubrovačka obitelj svetaca zaštitnika". In idem, *Studije iz srednjovekovne i renesansne umetnosti na Jadranu* (Split: Književni krug, 2001), 165–190

[79] V. Djurić, *Dubrovačka slikarska škola* [Résumé: L'école de peinture de Dubrovnik] (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1963).

[80] J. Palmotić, *Pavlimir* (Vinkovci: Riječ, 2000).

[81] For the local legends about St Hilarion, that is, St Ilar v. Lj. Marks, "History and Fiction in the Oral Legends of Konavle", *Narodna umjetnost* 35/1 (1998), 157–185; M. Bošković Stuli,

renewal of interest in history and glorious old times, chroniclers of Dubrovnik's past were once again interested in the ancient legends about Cadmus and Asclepius, and accordingly in the miracle of St Hilarion, all of which were correlated. At that time, the saint's feast was celebrated with a special reverence in three churches in the port of Dubrovnik and in the Mlini church.[82] In fact, the latter church remains the heart of the cult of St Hilarion,[83] who is also considered as a patron saint of Mlini. This locality, as well as the narrative of the dragon miracle, ultimately gained a significant place in the local oral tradition in which there is even now the conviction that the path upon which St Hilarion had dragged the dragon Boaz from his cave Šipun to Mlini can be glimpsed when the sea is tranquil.

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[82] Cf. supra. n. 62.

[83] In addition to the church in Mlini in the Dubrovnik area, there is only one other locality that bears the name of this saint. A. Badurina, M. Tadić, "Hagiotopografija Istre i dubrovačkog područja", *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 12–13 (1988–1989), 59–63. The name of St Hilarion can be found in the hagiotopography of Konavle. A. Badurina, "Hagiotopografia Konavla". In *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti*, 253–260.

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Usurpations of and Designated Successions to the Throne in the Serbian Patriarchate
The Case of Patriarch Moses Rajović (1712–24)[1]

Abstract: In the medieval and early modern periods, the metropolitans and bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church were elected according to the procedure described in the *Archieratikon*, the bishop's liturgical book. The procedure prescribed that the archbishop should choose from among the three candidates nominated by the council of bishops of an autocephalous church. Then the elected bishop was confirmed by the ruler. The archiepiscopal (patriarchal) election procedure was not specifically described because the central role in the process in the middle ages was played by the ruler. In the Ottoman Empire, the central role in the election and confirmation of bishops was played by the sultan, but the ecclesiastical canons were not among his considerations. Sometimes persons unworthy of the office of patriarch, metropolitan or bishop were appointed, without the knowledge of or contrary to the will of the synod. In order to prevent the appointment of an unworthy person as head of the Serbian Church, some patriarchs sought to have their successor elected in their own lifetime and to ensure a smooth transfer of office in agreement with the synod. Based on known sources and unpublished Ottoman documents, this paper discusses the questions of the election of Serbian patriarchs, the usurpation of the patriarchal throne and the attitude of the Ottoman administration towards the clergy. It offers a number of fresh insights into events during the patriarchate of Moses Rajović (1712–24).

Keywords: Serbian Patriarchate, patriarch, Moses Rajović, Timothy, Arsenius Jovanović

After the death of the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary Leopold I (1657–1705), Serbian Patriarch Arsenius Crnojević (1674–1706) submitted a request to his son, Emperor Joseph I (1705–11), to confirm the privileges granted to the Serbian Orthodox Church and people in 1690–95. In the request submitted to the Imperial Court 1706, he proposed that a few more provisions be added to Leopold's privileges. One of these provisions was:

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That the archbishop and patriarch shall, *according to our old custom*, be able to ordain his successor as chosen by clergy and people even in his lifetime.[2]

In his extensive commentary on this petition of Patriarch Arsenius, the Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary, Count Leopold Karl von Kollonitsch, offered his advice on the proposal quoted above:

This has never been done before either by this royal court or by the Turks. In Constantinople itself no one can become a patriarch as long as the patriarch is alive and on the patriarchal throne; it is only when the latter dies or resigns from the throne or is deposed by the Turks – that another is appointed in his stead. Ergo, this can only be done if patriarch Arsenius wishes to resign his office or if the emperor, by his imperial power, divests him of the throne and appoint another in his stead. The Turkish emperor has been in the habit of doing this with the patriarchs of Constantinople. This is why the patriarch should by no means be allowed to ordain his successor in his lifetime. The patriarch should be informed instead that he has not yet been confirmed to office by the reigning ruler, that the latter can depose him at any time and appoint another in his stead – at his own discretion.[3]

Two years later, a national assembly of clerical and lay delegates convened at the Monastery of Krušedol on Fruška Gora to elect a new archbishop after the death of Patriarch Arsenius. When the royal commissary who presided over the Assembly, Ignatius Christoph Freiherr von Guarient und Räal, asked the attendees how they wanted the election to be done, they proposed that one of the three candidates be chosen by lot. They argued that it was an ancient custom which they had observed for some centuries.[4]

These two statements provide direct early-eighteenth-century evidence for the manner of electing the head of the Serbian Patriarchate in the Ottoman Empire. Custom required, then, that the election be made at a national assembly

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[2] "Ut Archiepiscopus et Patriarcha adhuc in vita successorem sui, quem clerus et populus elegit, de antiquitus jam usitato more nostro constituere possit." Quoted after R. Grujić, *Kako se postupalo sa srpskim molbama na dvoru ćesara avstrijskog poslednje godine života patrijarha Arsenija III Čarnojevića* (Novi Sad 1906), 20, 39, 58.

[3] Ibid.

[4] In his report on the assembly, Guarient described this arrangement as follows: "[…] Nachdeme nun Abends in erstgenannten Krussenthall angelanget, bin alsobald durch expresse, ex quolibet statu, an mich eigens deputirte, ob meiner glücklichen Dahinkunft höfflichst beneventiret worden, welche mir anbey in Namen der sammentlichen Nation gehorsamst hintergebracht, wie das Sie zwar wohin der Meinung gewesen, erstens drey zu der Erzbischöfflichen Wahl zu candidiren und andertens den Metropolitam, ihren Alten schon von etlichen Hundert Jahren hero, also gewöhnlichen Brauch nach (von welchem Sie zu desistiren gar nichts entschlossen waren) ut pote per Sortem zu erwählen […]". Quoted after S. Gavrilović, *Izvori o Srbima u Ugarskoj s kraja XVII i početkom XVIII veka*, vol. III (Belgrade 2003), 162–163.

in the deliberations of which participated, apart from metropolitans and bishops, the lower clergy and laity. The possibility cannot be ruled out that the lower clergy and laity participated in the nomination process as well, but their main role was to bear witness to the worthiness of the nominees for the highest ecclesiastical office. The central part of the election process was played by bishops, usually in the narthex of the *katholikon* of the Patriarchal Monastery of Peć and mostly according to the procedure for the metropolitan and episcopal election described by the bishop's liturgical book, the *Archieratikon*. Dimitrije Ruvarac established that in use in the Serbian Patriarchate in the last decades of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century had been a slightly modified version of the Russian *Archieratikon* of 1676, a compilation of texts from earlier Greek and Slavic manuscripts. Episcopal, metropolitan or patriarchal candidates were nominated by all bishops of the autocephalous church. Once the liturgical rites were performed, the bishops who were longest in office made their proposal first, and those most recently ordained, last. The absent metropolitans and bishops authorized some of their colleagues in attendance to speak and vote in their name. The three candidates who received most votes were shortlisted. The final decision in the election of bishops and metropolitans lay with the archbishop (patriarch). After a long and earnest prayer, he was to choose one of the three shortlisted candidates "as he pleases" (єдннаго ѿ ннхъ нзбереть єгоже хощеть).[5] The election of a patriarch was made by lot, as stated by the delegates to the Assembly of Krušedol. The elected candidate – bishop, metropolitan or patriarch – went to Istanbul to be formally confirmed in his new rank and it was only after that that the rite of laying on of hands and installation into ecclesiastical office could be performed.[6]

In the Ottoman Empire, however, the described election procedure could not always be honoured because of an unbridgeable ideological gap between the clergy and the ruling elite in their understanding of the church and its role in the state and society. Questions pertaining to the status of bishops in the Ottoman legal system have been thoroughly discussed over the last few decades and there now is a large body of relevant literature. We shall only sum up the main conclusions.[7]

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[5]   For a description of the election of the metropolitans and bishops of the Serbian Patriarchate in the late seventeenth century, see D. Ruvarac, "Prilozi za istoriju arhiepiskopa i episkopa u Mitropoliji Karlovačkoj", *Letopis Matice srpske* 204 (1900), 284–287.

[6]   N. Milaš, *Pravoslavno crkveno pravo* (Mostar 1902), 374–385.

[7]   R. Tričković, "Srpska crkva sredinom XVII veka", *Glas SANU* 320: Odeljenje istorijskih nauka 2 (1980), 61–164; H. İnalcık, "Ottoman Archival Materials on Millets", in B. Braude and B. Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society* I (New York – London 1982), 438–447; H. Inalcik, "The Appointment Procedure of a Guild Warden (Kethüda)", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlands* 76, Festschrift

Although the sharia guaranteed a limited freedom of religion, the Ortho-
dox autocephalous archbishoprics were integrated into the Ottoman legal system
as fiscal institutions. The concept of *patriarchate* (*patriklik*) in the discourse of
the sultan's Christian subjects and the discourse of the Ottoman administration
had different meanings as a result. To the former, it denoted an autocephalous
church, to the latter, a tax-farming unit (*mukâtaʿ*) and a source of state revenues
(*mâl-i mîrî*). These revenues were seen as taxes the clergy charged for rendering
religious services. In Ottoman discourse, every head of an autocephalous church
was called *patriarch* (*patrik*) and regarded as the holder of a lease (*mültezim*) on
the church taxes due from the territory under his jurisdiction. The Ottoman
authorities equated, then, an archbishop's administration of the church with tax
farming (*iltizâm*).[8] Metropolitans and bishops assisted him in tax collecting. The
head of the Serbian Church, whose title was *Archbishop of Peć and Patriarch of
the Serbs, Bulgarians, Western Maritime Lands and Northern Parts*, was referred
to by the Ottoman authorities as *patriarch of Peć* (*İpek patriği*). With time, this
Ottoman fiscal term found its way into historiography as a technical term. Be-
fore taking up his office, the patriarch regulated his status in Istanbul in a similar
manner to other lessees of state assets. His main obligation was to obtain a valid
decree of appointment (*berât*) for the issuance of which a tax, *pişkeş*, was paid,
and to pay regularly an annual lump sum to the state treasury (*kesîm, maktûʿ*).
From the establishment of the Patriarchate of Peć in the mid-1550s to 1690, the
annual lump sum was 100,000 *akçe*s, from 1691 to 1751, 70,000 *akçe*s, and from
1752 to 1766, it was 90,000 *akçe*s. The *pişkeş* was paid first before taking up of-
fice, and then upon the enthronement of every new sultan.

In early modern Europe it was not uncommon for the central author-
ity to humiliate the tolerated religious communities in formal contexts. In the
Ottoman Empire, as we have seen, the Orthodox hierarchs were treated as col-
lectors of state revenues, but their inferior social status was pointed up in other
ways too. In the official terminology of the Ottoman administration a number of
disrespectful expressions became commonly used, consistently occurring in the

Andreas Tietze (1986), 136–137; H. İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch
under the Ottomans", *Turcica* 21–22 (1991), 419–420; E. A. Zachariadou, *Δέκα τουρκικά
έγγραφα για την Μεγάλη Εκκλησία (1483–1567)* (Athens 1996); P. Konortas, *Οθωμανικές
θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο: Βεράτια για τους προκαθήμενους της Μεγάλης Εκκλησίας
(17ος-αρχές του 20ου αιώνα)* (Athens 1998); Ph. P. Kotzageorgis, "Socio-Economic Aspects of
a Tax: The Metropolitans' and Bishops' Pişkeş (Second Half of the Seventeenth Century)", in
M. Sariyannis et al., eds., *New Trends in Ottoman Studies. Papers presented at the 20th CIEPO
Symposium, Rethymno, 27 June – 1 July 2012* (Rethymno 2014), 207–222; T. Papademetriou,
*Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman
Centuries* (Oxford 2015); H. Çolak and E. Bayraktar Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ot-
toman Institution: A Study of Early Modern Patriarchal Berats* (Istanbul 2019).

8   İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch", 423.

documents issued to hierarchs until the mid-eighteenth century. For example, Christians were referred to as the *community of infidels* (*kefere tâ'ifesi*), Christianity, as a *hollow faith* (*âyîn-i bâtıl*), and the death of a church head was referred to with disparaging expressions, which were not used for Muslims (*mürd olmak, hâlik olmak*).[9] So it comes as no surprise to find that the central government was not at all concerned with protecting the canonical order of the church. Moreover, the state maintained poor communication with patriarchs. This goes both for the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âli*) and for the Office for Episcopal Tax-Farming (*Piskopos mukâta'sı kalemi*), a fiscal department that oversaw the appointments of hierarchs and payment of their financial obligations. In cases where hierarchs requested arbitration in their mutual disputes, the state did not notify the patriarch of the measures it undertook, but rather it was content to communicate with provincial administrators, usually viziers and kadis. A similar practice could be seen in the case of the appointment of metropolitans and bishops. Although the patriarchal *berât*s stated that the patriarch had the exclusive right to submit requests for the appointment of bishops, the Ottoman administration could start the procedure at the request of provincial administrators, sometimes even at the request of a candidate for ecclesiastical office. There is no need to stress that this practice undermined the authority of the patriarch and the synod, and opened the way to episcopal office for persons who were not canonically elected.

The exact sequence of Serbian patriarchs during Ottoman rule has not yet been established due to a lack of sources, which then means that we do not know the chronology of their periods in office and the manner in which each of them was elected. What is certain, however, is that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw several attempts to usurp or take over the patriarchal throne without synodal consent. One of the earliest cases was the well-known dispute between Archbishop Prochorus of Ohrid and Metropolitan Paul of Smederevo, which lasted from 1527/8 to 1541.[10] During this jurisdictional dispute, referred to by the church as the *time of troubles*, the Ottoman authorities successively confirmed Prochorus, Paul and their supporters in patriarchal and episcopal rank. Most of them obviously were not canonically elected. In the second half of the sixteenth century, a monk of the Serbian Athonite monastery of Hilandar wrote in the margin of a book: "Woe is me! Two patriarchs held the Serbian land!"[11] The meaning of this note has not been deciphered, but apparently it too refers to a dissension in the church. Aleksandar Fotić has established that the term

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[9]   Çolak and Bayraktar Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution*, 57.

[10]   P. Kostić, "Dokumenti o buni smederevskog episkopa Pavla protiv potčinjavanja Pećke patrijaršije arhijepiskopiji Ohridskoj", *Spomenik Srpske kraljevske akademije* 56 (1922), 32–39; Đ. Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, vol. I (Belgrade 2000), 298–301.

[11]   "Ꙋвы мнѣ и два патрїарха срьпскꙋю землю сьдрьжахꙋ." Quoted after Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. I (Belgrade 1902), 216, no. 699.

of Patriarch Gerasimus was interrupted by the appointment of Patriarch Sab-batius at least two times between 1575 and 1586.[12] Four appointments of two patriarchs within a span of eleven years could not have been the expression of the will of the national assembly of clerics and laymen, but rather the result of discord in the church and the central government's lack of interest in ensuring abidance to the canonical order of the church. Instead of resolving the existing problems, the central government confirmed the proposed candidates, collect-ing the *pişkeş* of 2,000 Venetian ducats each time. A note made on the cover of a manuscript from the library of the Monastery of Peć reads: "Let it be known when the throne of Peć was taken by Archbishop kyr Philip […] on the 15th day of the month of July."[13] The phrase "took the throne" (вьзе прѣстол) led Sima Ćirković to presume that it had been another forcible takeover.[14] Since Patriarch Philip is mentioned in just a few notes made in the 1590s, Ćirković's hypothesis can be neither proved nor disproved at present. It is reasonable to assume that the throne was usurped in the seventeenth century as well. A monk Habakkuk, whose identity remains uncertain, is referred to as a former patriarch of Peć (*sâbıka İpek patriği*) in six Ottoman documents dating from 1675.[15] He alleg-edly left behind a debt of about 9,000 Dutch lion thalers (*esedi guruş*) which Patriarch Arsenius was not willing to become liable for. It would follow that Habakkuk was at the head of the Serbian Church between Patriarch Maxim (1655–74) and Patriarch Arsenius Crnojević, but the Serbian sources not only do not mention a patriarch of that name, they are explicit that Arsenius replaced the ailing Maxim in 1674.[16] Frequent changes on the patriarchal throne were much more typical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In the sixteenth and seven-teenth centuries it was not uncommon for an archbishop of Constantinople to be appointed and ousted several times, sometimes staying on the throne for no more than a few months.[17]

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[12] A. Fotić, "Hudžeti mitropolita Andrije", *Balcanica* XXV–1 (1994), 123–136.

[13] "Да се знат кьдѣ вьзе прѣстол Пекꙋ архїепископ кꙋр Фїлип […] мѣсеца їꙋлїа ·еі· дьнь. Тогда бѣ видѣты црквам ва кꙋначное падѣнїе такоже дрѣвлие ѿ звѣронꙋментꙋтаго." Quoted after Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. IV (Sremski Karlovci 1923), 86, no. 6429.

[14] V. J. Đurić et al., *Pećka patrijaršija* (Belgrade 1990), 166, 349 (n. 11).

[15] H. G. Meyer, *Das osmanische Registerbuch der Beschwerden vom Jahre 1675*. vol. I (Vienna 1984), 61, 63, 201, 202; R. Tričković, "Patrijarh Arsenije III Crnojević: prva iskušenja (1675)", *Istorijski časopis* XLV–XLVI (1998–1999), 49–70.

[16] R. L. Veselinović, *Arsenije III Crnojević u istoriji i književnosti* (Belgrade 1949), 8–9; N. Šuletić, "Maksim", in Čedomir Popov, ed., *Srpski biografski rečnik*, vol. 5 (Novi Sad 2011), 763–764.

[17] D. Kiminas, *The Ecumenical Patriarchate. A History of Its Metropolitanates with Annotated Hierarch Catalogs* (Cabin John 2009), 30–48.

Problems surrounding the procedure of episcopal appointment in Istanbul and the religious indiscipline they encouraged were pointed to by Archbishop Prochorus of Ohrid in the first half of the sixteenth century. The synod held in Ohrid in 1529 condemned several practices which were contrary to the canons of the church. One of the condemned irregularities was the following:

> May he be damned who after the passing of a metropolitan or a bishop wants to take over his eparchy without [previous] examination and consent by the archbishop, without the decision of the synod and the knowledge of the kadi of Ohrid, as is written in the charter of the great emperor. For, earlier, wrongfully and unlawfully acted those who, having obtained *arze*s [petitions] from other kadis, went to the Porte [where they were appointed] by decision of the court and not by God's law and decision of the church.[18]

The main reason for such complaints undoubtedly was the fact that Prochorus did not have full control over the appointments of his suffragans at that point. Some of them submitted their request directly to the Ottoman authorities without a previous decision of the synod of the autocephalous church and were granted episcopal rank. To restore control over the appointments to the church, Prochorus made a request to the Porte that episcopal *berât*s be issued only at the requests sent to Istanbul by the kadi of Ohrid. This was a stipulation stated in his patriarchal *berât* ("charter of the great emperor"), but it apparently was not abided by. The problem that Prochorus faced would persist in the ecclesiastical jurisdictions of both Ohrid and Peć in the following centuries. Although the *berât*s issued to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century patriarchs regularly contained the stipulation that metropolitans and bishops should not be appointed without their written consent, it was frequently breached in practice.

The Serbian Church's lack of control over the process of episcopal appointment and deep distrust of the Ottoman administration were challenges to which it had to find an effective response. In a bid to prevent the accession of undesirable persons to the patriarchal throne, some patriarchs sought to designate their successor in their lifetime and to ensure a peaceful transfer of office in agreement with the synod of bishops. The example they could follow was none other than the founder and first archbishop of the Serbian Autocephalous Church. Before his second journey to Jerusalem, Archbishop Sava (Nemanjić) resigned archiepiscopal office in favour of his disciple Arsenius (I). This episode

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[18] "Тако же иже прѣставитъ се кои любо митрополитъ или епископъ, потом же кто въсхощетъ да въсприимтъ ону енорїю кромѣ хотѣнїа и испитанїа архїепископова и начрътанїа събора его, и кромѣ знанїа кадїе Ѡхридскога, іако пишетъ повела великаго цара не іакоже творадаху прѣжде зла и законопрѣступнаа дѣюще люди въземлюще арзы ѿ инѣхъ кадїи ѿходеще на Порту съ надворнымъ судомъ и законюмъ, а не по закону Божїю и судомъ цръковнымъ да будутъ и си такови у проклѣтїе." Quoted after Kostić, "Dokumenti o buni", 35–36.

from the history of the medieval church was described in the *Life of St Sava* written by the monk Domentianus in 1253/4 and in Sava's *Life* penned by the monk Theodosius later in the century. It was also depicted in the frescoes painted in the prothesis of the church of the Virgin Hodegetria at the Monastery of Peć in 1353.[19] There can be no doubt, then, that it was known to the Serbian clergy in the period of Ottoman rule. The authority of St Sava and the full-blown saintly cult of Archbishop Arsenius I, whose relics were enshrined in the Monastery of Peć, dispelled all doubts about the lawfulness of this practice, although it could be contested on the grounds of some canons of the church. The most explicit in that regard were Canon 76 of the Holy Apostles and Canon 23 of the Council of Antioch, which forbade bishops to appoint their successors in their lifetime. The logic of these canons was that episcopal authority is a gift of the Holy Spirit and that, therefore, it is no one's to give away to another as if it were one's own.[20]

The first transfer of patriarchal office in the Serbian Church under Ottoman rule is depicted in a fresco in the narthex of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St Nicholas (Banja) near Priboj. It shows Patriarch Macarius handing over the symbols of ecclesiastical authority to Metropolitan Anthony of Herzegovina, his nephew according to the donor inscription in the narthex of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Gračanica.[21] The *time of troubles* which probably ensued after Macarius's withdrawal seems to have come to an end under Patriarch John (1593–1613), who died suddenly during his visit to Constantinople. His

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[19] Domentijan, *Život Svetoga Save i Život Svetoga Simeona* (Belgrade 1988), 195; Teodosije, *Žitija* (Belgrade 1988), 234. See also the *Life* of Archbishop Arsenius (I) in Danilo Drugi, *Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskih. Službe* (Belgrade 1988), 153–179. For the fresco programme depicting scenes from the life of Archbishop Arsenius I in the prothesis of the church of the Virgin, see Đurić et al., *Pećka patrijaršija*, 166.

[20] Canon 76 of the Holy Apostles reads: "A bishop must not out of favour to a brother or a son, or any other relation, ordain whom he will ordain to the episcopal dignity; for it is not right to make heirs of the bishopric, giving the things of God to human affections. Neither is it fitting to subject the Church of God to heirs. But if anyone shall do so let the ordination be void, and the ordainer himself be punished with excommunication." Canon 23 of the Council of Antioch reads: "It shall not be lawful for a bishop, even at the close of life, to appoint another as successor to himself; and if any such thing should be done, the appointment shall be void. But the ecclesiastical law must be observed, that a bishop must not be appointed otherwise than by a synod and with the judgment of the bishops, who have the authority to promote the man who is worthy, after the falling asleep of him who has ceased from his labours." H. R. Percival, *The Seven ecumenical councils of the undivided church: their canons and dogmatic decrees, together with the canons of all the local synods which have received ecumenical acceptance* (Oxford – New York 1900), 119, 599.

[21] R. Grujić, "Freska patrijarha Makarija kako ustupa presto svome nasledniku Antoniju", *Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva* XII (1933), 273–277; M. Šakota, "O ktitorskoj kompoziciji u priprati crkve manastira Banje kod Priboja", *Saopštenja* XIII (1981), 47–56; S. Pejić, *Manastir Sveti Nikola Dabarski* (Belgrade 2009), 128–134.

successor, Paisius (1614–47), had his image painted in the church of St Demetrius at the Monastery of Peć. In the inscription next to John's figure, Paisus calls him "my lord" and dedicates the image to him "from the heart, with love", which suggests a close relationship between the two dignitaries.[22] Arsenius Crnojević and Patriarch Maxim may have had a similar relationship, but there are no surviving sources to support this assumption. What is certain is that Arsenius was a monk serving at the court of Patriarch Maxim, who resigned in his favour for ill health in 1674.[23] The best-documented cases of usurpation and relinquishment of the Serbian patriarchal throne come from the time of Patriarch Moses Rajović (1712–24). Moses was first forced to defend the throne in 1718, from an ambitious monk, Timothy, and he later relinquished it to his disciple Arsenius Jovanović (1724–39). We shall pay more attention to these events since they exemplify the problems the Serbian Church faced under Ottoman rule.

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In a letter of 1 September 1718,[24] Moses Rajović informed the Metropolitan of Karlovci (Carlowitz), Vincent Popović, that he had recently returned from Istanbul, where he had prevented, "at a great expense", Timothy, a monk of the Monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos, from taking the throne of the Serbian Patriarchate by force. We can learn from their further correspondence that the Ottoman authorities had issued a *berât* to Timothy, but Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah III (1716–26) petitioned the Porte to declare it void, of which he notified the Serbian patriarch on 13 July 1718.[25] At the church council attended by Patriarch Samuel of Alexandria, Patriarch Chrysantus of Jerusalem, many bishops and prominent laymen, the monk Timothy was accused of having repeatedly forming intrigues in churches and anathemized, and Patriarch Moses was called upon to start the struggle for restoring the canonical order in his archbishopric. According to Radoslav Grujić, who was the first to call attention to this incident, Timothy began to discharge his patriarchal duties with the support of the Ottoman authorities. Grujić pointed to the decree of appointment as abbot of the Monastery of St Elias issued to a certain hieromonk Philaretus. The document is undated and we do not know which particular monastery it

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[22] Đurić et al., *Pećka patrijaršija*, 285.

[23] R. L. Veselinović, *Arsenije III Crnojević u istoriji i književnosti*, 7–9; N. Šuletić, "Maksim, srpski patrijarh", 763–764.

[24] Serbian and Greek prelates dated their letters according to the Julian (Old Style) calendar, which in the eighteenth century was eleven days behind the Gregorian (New Style) calendar. For the sake of clarity, all dates in the text are given according to the Gregorian calendar. The original letter is dated 21 August 1718 Old Style.

[25] The letter is dated 2 July 1718 Old Style.

refers to, but the issuer titled himself *Timothy, by the grace of God archbishop of Peć and the First and New Justiniana* (Τιμόθεος, ἐλέῳ θεοῦ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Πεκίου καὶ πρώτης καὶ νέας Ἰουστινιανῆς).[26]

A few unpublished documents generated by the Ottoman fiscal administration add considerably to Grujić's findings about this incident. First and foremost, they provide an insight into the chronology of the events and the ways in which the Ottoman authorities responded to the complaints about infringements of the canonical order of the Serbian Church. The complaint that was the starting point of this unfortunate episode was lodged with the fiscal administration by the kadi of Skopje, Omer. On 24 Rebiülahır 1130 (27 March 1718), he drew up a petition claiming that the bishops, the priests and people are indignant at Patriarch Moses and want him replaced by Timothy, an "upright and honest man". Apart from the usual bureaucratic formulations referring to unspecified wrongdoings, this time the kadi cited a concrete one. He claimed that Patriarch Moses had violated the canons of the church by appointing a boy of about twelve years of age as a bishop.[27] The boy in question was Metropolitan Stephen, appointed by the Ottoman authorities as Metropolitan of Skopje instead of the late Bishop Constantine on 5 Safer 1129 (19 January 1717).[28] Without looking into the matter first, the authorities issued the order for Moses's removal from office on 25 Cemaziülahır 1130 (26 May 1718). Timothy was appointed as Patriarch of Peć and instructed to go to the *menzil* of Seyitgazi near Eskişehir, where he handed the *pişkeş* to the dervishes Osman and Suleyman, whereby the state met its obligation towards the *menzil*.[29] Upon his return to Istanbul, he was issued a *berât*, and it may be assumed that he was given an armed escort to ensure that he took over the symbols of patriarchal authority from Moses. Upon his return at the head of the church, Moses used new seals which again bore the year 1712 as the first year of his office.

The Ottoman documents reveal yet another hitherto unknown detail of Timothy's adventure. He did not work alone in realizing his plans, but collaborated closely with the monk Chrysantus, who had already had a bad reputation in ecclesiastical circles. Chrysantus was a monk from the Archbishopric of Ohrid, serving as Bishop of Debar in the early eighteenth century. Archbishop Diony-

[26] R. Grujić, "Pisma pećkih patrijaraha iz drugog i trećeg decenija XVIII veka", *Spomenik SKA* 51 (1913), 105–134; R. Grujić, "Pećki antipatrijarh Timotej 1718. god", *Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva* 13 (1934), 210–213. Timothy's decree is published in G. Arabatzoglou, *Φωτίειος Βιβλιοθήκη: ἤτοι ἐπίσημα καὶ ἰδιωτικὰ ἔγγραφα καὶ ἄλλα μνημεία σχετικά πρὸς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου: μετὰ γενικῶν καὶ εἰδικῶν προλεγομένων* I (Constantinople 1933), 165–166.

[27] Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Piskoposluk Kalemi (D.PSK), 6/91.

[28] BOA, Kâmil Kepeci Defterleri (KK.d), 2542/1, 23.

[29] BOA, D.PSK 6/92, 6/93, 6/95.

sius (1709–14) and the synod of bishops deprived him of the episcopal dignity for disgraceful behaviour, but he was reinstated under Archbishop Philotheus of Ohrid (1714–18). Since Philotheus was also prone to scandalous behaviour, the already mentioned ecumenical patriarch, Jeremiah III, ensured that he was ousted at the synod held in the village of Mavrovo near Gostivar on 6 July 1718, and the synod held on 4 February 1719 deprived him of his episcopal dignity. In the synodal act issued on that occasion, one of Philotheus's transgressions was that he had surrounded himself with bad people. One of these mentioned by name was Chrysantus, who was accused of causing trouble in the Archbishopric of Peć, unlawfully ordaining deacons and priests.[30] It is only now that, owing to Ottoman documents, this piece of information can be placed in an appropriate context. Namely, having been deprived of his eparchy, Chrysantus allied with Timothy, at the proposal of whom the Ottoman authorities appointed him as Metropolitan of Skopje on 6 Şaban 1130 (5 July 1718).[31] Of course, no synodal decision could have preceded that appointment.

Patriarch Jeremiah III's intervention and the synodal condemnation of Timothy's actions should be looked at in a broader context, as an attempt to overcome the institutional crisis which was shaking the Archbishopric of Ohrid. There is no doubt that Ottoman administrative practice was one of the causes of the crisis. And yet, with the help of the ecumenical patriarch, Moses Rajović managed to prove Timothy's fraudulence to the authorities. Timothy's appointment was annulled on 21 Ramazan 1130 (18 August 1718) and Moses was reinstated without the obligation to pay for a new *berât*.[32] Timothy lost the *pişkeş* money, but otherwise suffered no consequences for his actions. On the contrary, on 18 Zilhicce 1130 (12 November 1718) he was appointed Metropolitan of Kastoria in the Archbishopric of Ohrid.[33] He died a few months later, and the vacant see was filled up by his close associate and former bishop of Skopje, Chrysantus, on 18 Cemaziülevvel 1131 (18 April 1719).[34]

The troubles Moses Rajović went through in 1718 left no deep trace in the tradition of the Serbian Church or in Ottoman administrative records. In the late summer of 1724, he informed the authorities that his ill health did not permit him to continue collecting state taxes and requested that Metropolitan Arsenius of Ras be appointed in his stead. The document appended at the end of this paper bears traces of all actions undertaken by the Ottoman administration

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[30] H. Gelzer, *Der Patriarchat von Achrida. Geschichte und Urkunden* (Leipzig 1902), 84; I. Snegarov, *Istoriia na Ohridskata arhiepiskopiia-patriiarshiia* I (Sofia 1932), 134–139, 205–207.

[31] BOA, KK.d 2542/1, 53.

[32] BOA, KK.d 2542/1, 55.

[33] BOA, KK.d 2542/1, 57.

[34] BOA, KK.d 2542/1, 69.

in the process of appointment of Arsenius Jovanović. Since it mostly consists of bureaucratic formulas, little can be learned about the actual circumstances and events surrounding this legal procedure. The request was written in formal language. Concrete events may be presumed from the note an Ottoman clerk wrote in the margin of the document (*der-kenâr*) with a view to precluding confusion in future appointments. The succinct note says that the incumbent patriarch Moses has been administering the Patriarchate of Peć in continuity since 1712 and that Timothy's appointment as patriarch has been annulled. Routinely, as always, above the text of the request a brief order in the name of the second *defterdar* was written that the proposed hierarch be issued a *berât* upon payment of the *pişkeş* to the treasury. Once again, the authorities did not require any proof that the candidate was elected in accordance with the rules of the church.

Since considerably more sources survive for the patriarchs Moses Rajović and Arsenius Jovanović than for any of their predecessors, their cases offer the opportunity to better understand the challenges threatening the spiritual unity of the Serbian Church and the ways in which the hierarchs responded to them. According to the inscription on the marble sarcophagus at the Monastery of Krušedol, Arsenius died in 1748 at the age of fifty-two. This would mean that he was born in 1696.[35] According to a short biography contained in a manuscript from the Monastery of Peć (*Peć 110*), he lived at the patriarchal court of Peć from his boyhood days, where he took monastic vows and was ordained a priest.[36] He became a protégé of Moses Rajović, if not before than after the latter became head of the Serbian Church in 1712, and was appointed as Metropolitan of Ras only two years later. At the proposal of Patriarch Moses, the Ottoman authorities issued him a *berât* on 13 Zilka'de 1126 (20 November 1714). He was only eighteen. Since the patriarchal charter of his metropolitan ordination was issued in 1720, it may be assumed that he did not take up episcopal office immediately upon receiving the *berât*. Sources also refer to him as archdeacon in September 1715.[37] In the charter, Moses noted warmly that he had been looking after him since he was a little boy.[38] Between 1719 and 1724 he sent him on various missions as his emissary and emphasized his infinite trust in him in his letters. Therefore, the contemporaries thought of Arsenius as the patriarch's right hand and natural successor. Having fallen gravely ill in mid-November 1723, Moses

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[35] Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. II (Belgrade 1903), 158, no. 2960.

[36] Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć, Ms. no. 110 (*Peć 110*). M. Milojević, "Obšti list Patrijaršije pećke", *Glasnik Srpskog učenog društva* XXXV (1872), 75–83.

[37] Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. II, 32, 36, nos. 2257, 2258, 2285; V. Ćorović, "Bosansko-hercegovačka pisma", *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* XX (1910), 510.

[38] I. Ruvarac, "Povelja patrijarha Mojseja dana raškom mitropolitu Arseniju Jovanoviću", *Spomenik SKA* 38 (1900), 122.

convened a synod of bishops, which was held at the Patriarchal Monastery of Peć in the Week of the Myrrh-bearers (30 April – 6 May 1724).[39] Moses announced his retirement. He no doubt arrived at an agreement with the bishops about his successor, proposing his protégé. According to *Peć 110*, he "handed power over to his disciple, Metropolitan Arsenius of Ras, of his own free will".[40] An election procedure as prescribed in the *Archieratikon* was nonetheless carried out in the narthex of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Peć. Arsenius's shortlisted rivals were Bishop Ioannicius of Niš and Metropolitan Meletius of Bosnia. He was issued a patriarchal *berât* on 15 Zilhicce 1136 (4 September 1724), and the ailing patriarch was able to withdraw from public life. Arsenius took filial care of him until his death. Moses Rajović died in Novi Pazar on 24 April 1730, and was buried by his disciple in the nearby church of Sts Peter and Paul.[41]

During the Austro-Turkish War of 1737–39, Arsenius Jovanović fled to the Habsburg Kingdom of Hungary, where Queen Maria Theresa (1740–80) confirmed him in the rank of patriarch. Since the consequences of the war made it impossible to convene a synod of the Serbian Church, the ecumenical patriarch appointed the *protosyncellus* Ioannis Karatzas as patriarch of Peć.[42] The new patriarch and his successors were neither in a position nor, as it seems, too willing to concern themselves with the continuity of ecclesiastical authority. During a few short terms of office, they mostly pursued their self-interest, and so the Patriarchate of Peć kept crumbling under the burden of financial obligations until its abolition by the Ottomans in 1766.

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As the described examples show, in the Ottoman Empire a person could be installed as patriarch without a canonically conducted election procedure, even without the knowledge of the synod of an autocephalous church. In the Habsburg Monarchy, on the other hand, such a scenario was impossible in the eighteenth century. Unlike the Porte, the Court in Vienna showed formal respect for the Serbian archbishop and bishops and used their services to strengthen its imperial authority. The most loyal of them could even become members of the Imperial Privy Council, as Archbishop Isaiah Djaković did in 1706.[43] The na-

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[39] Grujić, "Pisma pećkih patrijaraha", 105–134.

[40] *Peć 110*, 3; Milojević, "Obšti list", 77.

[41] *Peć 110*, 3; Milojević, "Obšti list", 78.

[42] D. Aleksijević, "Prilozi za istoriju srpske crkve", *Vesnik srpske crkve* (1909), 755; Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 357.

[43] S. Gavrilović, *Izvori o Srbima u Ugarskoj s kraja XVII i početkom XVIII veka*, vol. II (Belgrade 1990), 733–735; S. Gavrilović, "Isaija Đaković: Arhimandrit grgeteški, episkop jenopoljski i mitropolit krušedolski", *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju* 74 (2006), 18–19.

tional assemblies at which archbishops were elected were convened by the ruler
who formally presided over them through a commissary. The ruler sought to be
informed about potential candidates in advance and favoured the one he expec-
ted to have good communication with. Upon the closure of the assembly, the
commissary submitted a report to the ruler, and then the official confirmation of
the election ensued. When Serbian bishops requested that the ruler arbitrate in
their mutual disputes, the archbishop was always notified of the outcome. Ac-
cording to the president of the Illyrian Court Deputation, Count Johann Chris-
toph von Bartenstein, the rationale behind this policy of the imperial court was
that it did not want the metropolitan to have full control over the bishops or to
let the bishops become fully free from the metropolitan's authority.[44] If we add
to all this the fact that the Serbian clergy in the Kingdom of Hungary enjoyed
fiscal immunity, that the archbishop enjoyed the income from the landed estate
in Dalj (a village in present-day Croatia, near the confluence of the Drava and
Danube) and received a generous annual tithe from the state treasury, it becomes
clear that the Serbian Church in Hungary managed to secure an incomparably
better status than the one it had in the Ottoman Empire. Emperor Joseph I
and his successors recognized the potential importance of the Serbian clergy for
the strengthening of their authority in the Kingdom of Hungary. They chose to
disregard the advice of Leopold von Kollonitsch and Roman Catholic bishops,
and confirmed to the Serbs in Hungary the exclusive right to be the only other
religious community in the Monarchy, apart from Roman Catholics, permitted
to practise their faith in public (*exercitium religionis publicum*). Consequently, not
only did the threats Kollonitsch wanted to intimidate Arsenius Crnojević with
not materialize, but many *old customs* established in the Ottoman Empire lost
their raison d'être.

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[44] "It is also customary for almost all non-uniate bishops to submit their matters to the court
through the metropolitan who passes them on with his brief letter of request enclosed. But
they are not really required to do that and can turn to the court directly and without any
obstacles, as the bishops of Karansebes and Buda do today and as the late bishops of Bacska
and Temesvar used to do. Nor does the court hesitate to decide on the requests of bishops
directly by court decrees, both in the cases where they come here on their own, without the
metropolitan, and in the cases where the requests are addressed to the metropolitan first and
then sent by him with his own letter of request and recommendation. But the metropolitan
is usually notified of the highest decision because it is deemed useful neither to let the met-
ropolitan have full power [over the bishops], which he would gladly appropriate, nor to let
the bishops wrest themselves fully free from his authority which is defined in the privileges."
J. Ch. von Bartenstein, *Kurzer Bericht von der Beschaffenheit der zerstreuten zahlreichen il-
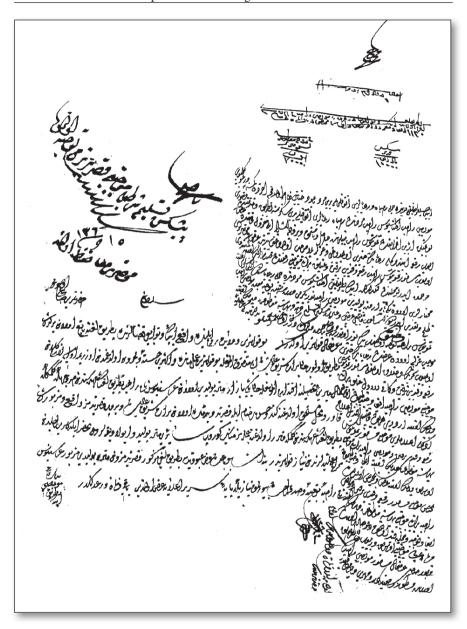lyrischen Nation in den Kais. Kgl. Erblanden* (Frankfurt and Leipzig 1802), 120.

Figure 1
Moses Rajović's request for the appointment of Metropolitan Arsenius (Jovanović)
of Ras as Patriarch of Peć (BOA, D.PSK, 8/58)

APPENDIX
REQUEST FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF ARSENIUS JOVANOVIĆ AS
PATRIARCH
(BOA, D.PSK, 8/58)
[TRANSLITERATION:]

Devletlü merhametlü sultânım hazretleri sağ olsun
'Arzuhâl-ı kulları oldur ki bu kulları vilâyet-i Rumeli'nde vâki' İpek ve tevâbi'i
kazâlarında patrikliğine tâbi' olan yerlerin / patrik olub hâlâ berât-ı şerîf-i 'âlişân ile
mutasarrıf olmakla bu kulları amelmânde ve ekserî hasta ve mecrûh olduğumdan
üzerime edâsı lâzım gelen / mâl-i mîrî tahsîline iktidârım olmamakla hâlâ Yenipazar mi-
trepolidi olan Arseniyos nâm râhib patrikliğin 'uhdesinden her vechile gelmekle / kâdir
ve mahall ve müstehakk olduğuna kendü ve hüsn-i rızâm ile kasr-i yed ve yedimde olan
berât-ı şerîf-i 'âlişân virüb kasr-i yedimiz vâki' ve mezbûrun / patrikliğin 'uhdesinden
gelmeğe kâdir olduğu amelemiz münâsib görüb sâ'ir bir mitrepolid ve ivladikalardan
mahzar eyledükleri ecilden / merâhim-i aliyyelerinden niyâz kullarındır yine işbu bâ'is-i
'arz-ı ubûdiyyet patrikliği mezkûr kasr-i yedimizden mitrepolidi mezbûr Arseniyos /
nâm râhibe tevcîh ve sadaka ihsân buyurılmak niyâzıyla pâye-i serîr-i âlâya 'arz olundu
bâkî fermân der-i adlindir.
Bende Moysey patrik-i İpek

Ber-mûceb-i defter-i Hazîne-i 'Âmire
Patriklik-i kefere-i vilâyet-i İpek ve tevâbi'uhû der-uhde-i Moysey râhib fî 21
Ramazan sene 1130 ibkâ ve mukarrer ve emr-i şerîf dâde bâ-telhîs ve bâ-fermân-i 'âlî
Pîşkeş-i kadîm 100.000 (akçe)
Fi sene ber-vech-i maktû' teslîm-i mîrî 70.000 (akçe)

MAHALLI
SAH

İpek patrikliği kadîmden cümle ruhbân ve re'âyâları ittifâklarıyla biri mürd yâhûd
hayâtını zâhir olmadıkça âhardan kimesneye virilügelmeyüb / Moysey râhib Atanasi-
yos râhib mürdinden ruhbân ü re'âyâları ittifâkıyla yedi sekiz sene patrik ve hidmetinde
kusûrı / yoğiken erbâb-ı ağrâzdan Timotiyos râhib beynlerinde hâsıl ve nâ-müstehakk
ve birkaç eşirrâ ile ma'zûl kâdîdan 'arz / alub ref' itdirmekle re'âyânın haberi olmaduğu
ve azil bilâ-mucib olduğu yedinde 'arz ve mahzarları / olub mesfûr Timotiyos râhib ref'
ve kaydı terkîn ve 'atîk berâtı mûcebince ref'inden zabt itmek üzre istid'âyı / merhamet
iderler mahallinden görüldükde İpek patrikliği Atanasiyos merdinden cümle re'âyâsının
iltimâsları üzre / muhtârları olan Yeni Bazar mitrepolidi Moysey râhibe yüz yiğirmi
dört senesinde tevcîh ba'dehu Moysey râhib / zülm ve ta'addî ider diyü Üskûb kâdîsı
'arz ve 'âdet-i pîşkeşi teslîm-i Hazîne ve be-her sene maktû'ı virmek üzre / Timotiyos
râhibe tevcîh olunub bin yüz otuz senesi berât virildiği derkenâr olınmuşdur yedlerinde
ki 'arzları / mûcib-i 'azli olan 'arzdan re'âyânın hayrı / olmayub tahrîk ve hilâf olmakla
mesfûr Timotiyos / ref' ve kaydı terkîn ve kemâ-fi'l-evvel 'atîk berâtı / mûcebince Moy-
sey râhibe ibkâ ve zabtiçün emr-i şerîf / virilmek üzre ordu-yı hümâyûn kâdîsı efendi
i'lâm / itmekle i'lâmları mûcebince mesfûr Timotiyos / ref' ve kaydı terkîn ve Moysey
râhibe berâtı mûcebince / beher sene maktû'ı virilmek üzre ibkâ ve zabtiçün / emr-i şerîf
virilmek üzre 'arz ve telhîs olındıkda / telhîs mûcebince mesfûr ref' ve kaydı terkîn ve
Moysey / râhibe berât mûcebince beher sene maktu'ı virilmek üzre / ibkâ ve tevcîh ve
mahalline kayd olınmak diyü sâdır olan / fermân-ı 'âlî mûcebince emr-i şerîf virilüb hâlâ

patriklik-i / mezbûr sâhib-i ʿarzuhâl mesfûr Moysey râhibin / üzerinde mestûr ve mu-
kayyeddir ve mühri dahî mutâbıkdır / ol bâbda emr ü fermân devletlü saʿâdetlü sultânım
hazretlerinindir.

  Fi 14. Zilhicce sene 1136
  (İmza)

  SAH

  **Peşkeşi teslîm şartıyla mûcebince kasr-i yedinden tevcîh olunmak buyurıldı
  Mahzar yerinde (?) hıfz olına
  15. Zilhicce sene [1]136.**

  [TRANSLATION:]

  Long live His Majesty, my prosperous and merciful Sultan!
  The petition of Your servant is as follows:
  *This servant of Yours is the patriarch of the places that belong to the patriarchate of
  Peć and local kadiliks in the region of Rumelia and an administrator (mutasarrif) with an
  exalted imperial berât. [It is said in his petition:] "Since I am not able to collect the tax due to
  the state treasury because I have grown weak and of ill health, I withdraw from office of my
  own free will, hand over the exalted imperial berât and assent to someone from among the able
  and suitable persons from the patriarchate taking over my office. Monk Arsenius, one of the
  patriarchate's men and the incumbent metropolitan of Novi Pazar, is a suitable, upright and
  worthy person in every respect. At the request of the other metropolitans and bishops, Your
  servant humbly requests for the highest grace and command of the most exalted throne to ap-
  point the said metropolitan Arsenius as patriarch because of my withdrawal from office. The
  command belongs to Your just judgement.*
  Your servant, Moses, patriarch of Peć
  At the place
  Correct
  According to the defter of the imperial treasury:
  *Patriarchate of the region of Peć and local places. Within the responsibility of the
  monk Moses. Appointed and confirmed by the imperial decree issued on the grounds of the
  petition and the order of 21 Ramazan 1130 (18 August 1718).*
  Correct
  Old pişkeş: 100,000 [akçes]
  Annual payment by lump sum to the state treasury: 70,000 [akçes]

  *Never since ancient times has the patriarchate of Peć been granted to anyone without
  the agreement reached – every time a patriarch dies or falls ill – by all monks and reaya. After
  the death of the monk Athanasius, the patriarch was the monk Moses, as agreed by the monks
  and reaya. As he had been holding his post for seven or eight years without fault, a malevolent
  man – monk Timothy – obtained from the former kadi a petition [which claimed] that there
  was in their midst an ignorant and worthless man and that wrongdoings were happening [in
  the patriarchate]. Since it was ordered that he be dismissed, [Moses] came with a petition
  [which claimed] that he had not mistreated the reaya and that there had been no reason for
  his dismissal. Monk Timothy was dismissed and struck off the register, and the grace was
  asked for that [Moses] hold [patriarchal office] on the basis of the old berât. Inspection of the
  records has established the following. That after the death of Athanasius all the reaya elected
  the metropolitan of Novi Pazar, the monk Moses, who was appointed in the year 1124 at*

their request. After that, on the basis of the petition of the kadi of Skopje, which states that the monk Moses has committed abuses and violence, the monk Timothy was appointed [as patriarch] with the proviso that he should pay the customary pişkeş to the state treasury and a lump sum every year. He was issued a berât in the year 1130, which was noted in writing. Since his petitions which led to the dismissal did not come from the reaya, but were false and untrue, the imperial order was issued that the said monk Timothy be removed from office and struck off the register, and that the monk Moses hold the office on the basis of the old berât as before. After his lordship the kadi of the imperial army was informed, the imperial order was issued which states that, in accordance with his decisions, the said Timothy shall be dismissed and struck off the register, and the monk Moses shall remain in office and pay the annual lump sum. Since there are both the petition and the telhis, in accordance with the proclaimed exalted order, the imperial decree was issued stating that, in accordance with the telhis, the said person was dismissed and struck off the register, and the monk Moses appointed, confirmed and registered in the appropriate place. The said patriarchate is now registered on the name of the petitioner, the said monk Moses. His seal is valid. Further commands belong to His Majesty, my prosperous and merciful Sultan.

14 Zilhicce 1136 (3 September 1724)
(Signature)
Correct
With the proviso that he should pay the pişkeş, it is ordered that he be appointed [to office] because of withdrawal [of the previous patriarch]
Let the mahzar be kept in place

15 Zilhicce 1136 (4 September 1724)

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Liberalism and Imperialism:
Croce and D'Annunzio in Serbian Culture 1903–1914

Abstract: This paper takes a comparative look at the missions and ideologies of the most influential periodicals in Serbian and Italian cultures in the years preceding the First World War, the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) and *La Critica*. It also describes the public roles and political ideas of the editor of *La Critica*, Benedetto Croce, and the editors of the *Glasnik*, Bogdan Popović, Pavle Popović and Jovan Skerlić. It looks at the interpretations of Croce's political ideas put forward in the *Glasnik*, recognizing a closeness between the liberal literary and political renewal programmes of Benedetto Croce, on the one hand, and Bogdan Popović, Pavle Popović and Jovan Skerlić, on the other. Finally, it points to the *Glasnik*'s repulsion towards the imperialist ideas of Gabriele D'Annunzio, Croce's main rival in the Italian culture of the period. But under the editorship of Jovan Skerlić, at the time when Serbia was subjected to Austria-Hungary's pressure and war threat, the *Glasnik* published D'Annunzio's short stories and advocated the ideals of activism, vitalism and heroism.

Keywords: *La Critica*, *Srpski književni glasnik*, Benedetto Croce, Bogdan Popović, Jovan Skerlić, liberalism, democracy, socialism, imperialism, activism, vitalism

The cultures of Serbia and Italy at the beginning of the twentieth century were marked by a number of journals which brought together diverse groups of intellectuals. In Serbia, the most influential and the most important was the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald). This journal and its editors, Bogdan Popović, Pavle Popović and Jovan Skerlić, articulated and gave direction to the main stream of Serbian culture. In Italy, the journal *La Critica* and its editor Benedetto Croce had a similar importance and mission.

We shall point to the similarities and differences between the two journals and their editors in the decade preceding the First World War and analyse the *Glasnik*'s attitude not only towards Croce's liberal legacy but also towards Italian imperialist ideas, especially those professed by Gabriele D'Annunzio, probably the most important ideological opponent of Benedetto Croce in the Italian culture of the period.

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I

The conventional conception of the West as influencing the East and, by extension, western journals influencing Balkan journals is superficial and essentially erroneous. Similarities between the *Glasnik* and *La Critica* are incontestable but, while the founders of the *Glasnik* can indeed be said to have followed the example of the Paris-based *Revue des deux mondes*,[1] there is virtually no evidence that Croce's *La Critica* exerted any influence on its editorial policy. The *Glasnik* and *La Critica*, much like other contemporary periodicals of a similar orientation emerging in different European capitals, were products of the same age and of a Europe-wide cultural climate.[2]

Namely, the main goals of those intellectuals and their journals were not strictly literary but rather metapolitical, ideological and renewal-oriented. What they wanted above all was to interpret and shape their respective national cultures in their own way. Despite all local peculiarities, they all formed part of an old European phenomenon, rooted in the enlightened eighteenth century. It was as early as then that intellectuals gathered in periodicals, salons, clubs or academies driven by the ambition to breathe new vigour not only into the culture but also in the political life of their countries with the help of reason and science.[3]

That we are in fact dealing here with national forms of a Europe-wide phenomenon is shown by the similarities between the *Srpski književni glasnik* and a few journals published in neighbouring capitals. Pavle Popović described the Sofia-based journal *Misal* (Thought) as "something of a Sofia's *Književni glasnik*".[4] The *Glasnik* was also frequently likened to the Zagreb-based *Savremenik* (Contemporary), the hub of Croatian modernism. Antun Gustav Matoš described the *Srpski književni glasnik* as "the Serbian *Savremenik*".[5] From 1904 in Belgrade and Sofia the editors of the *Glasnik*, *Misal* and *Savremenik* and their contributors played the most prominent role in the events that promoted the cultural unity of the South Slavs, thereby setting the stage for a political rapprochement. After the First World War there were even talks about merging the *Glasnik* and the *Savremenik* into one periodical.[6]

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[1] D. Vitošević, *Srpski književni glasnik 1910–1904* (Belgrade 1990), 125–126.

[2] Ž. Diga, *Kulturni život u Evropi na prelazu iz 19. u 20. vek* (Belgrade 2007), 83–85.

[3] U. Im Hof, *The Enlightenment* (Oxford UK and Cambridge USA 1994), 150–154.

[4] Viator, "Drugi kongres jugoslovenskih književnika i publicista", *Srpski književni glasnik* (hereafter *SKG*) XVII/5 (1906), 388.

[5] A. G. Matoš, "Jovan Skerlić", *Eseji i feljtoni* (Belgrade 1968), 91, 93.

[6] Arhiv Jugoslavije (Aj) [Archives of Yugoslavia], Fonds Jovan Jovanović Pižon (JJP), 80–33–30.32, Note of J. M. Jovanović.

There is also a similarity between the *Glasnik* and the Bucharest-based journal *Semănătorul* (Sower) edited by Nicolae Iorga and Mihael Sadoveanu.[7] The Budapest-based *Nyugut* (West) with its westernizing views, modernism and central place in national culture was also akin to the *Srpski književni glasnik*.[8]

The *Glasnik* was founded in 1901 by Bogdan Popović, Svetislav Simić, Slobodan Jovanović, Ljubomir Stojanović, Vojislav Veljković, Ljubomir Jovanović, Jaša Prodanović – Serbian liberals and democrats, members of different political parties and traditions, but all of them born in the 1860s and all harbouring political intentions which they had to conceal behind the guise of a literary journal because of press censorship. Their main goal was to put up resistance to King Alexander Obrenović's absolutist intentions by invoking the rule of law and the natural right of the individual to resist repressive government. They also programmatically rejected the hitherto prevailing Austro-Hungarian and German cultural and political models with a view to reorienting Serbian culture and public life in a systematic and consistent manner towards the French and British democratic and liberal models.[9]

After the overthrow of the Obrenović dynasty in 1903, the influence of the editors and literary critics of the *Glasnik* Bogdan Popović and Jovan Skerlić grew to such proportions that they were dubbed as "dictators in Serbian culture". What counted as "literature" at that time was anything that was cast in a literary form, including science and journalism. Acting as an interest group, the *Glasnik*'s fellowship "came to power" in 1903 – as one of them, Milan Grol, put it – taking up posts in major cultural institutions, government ministries and departments. Their liberal and democratic ideology became Serbia's official cultural model. Serbia's foreign policy also shifted away from the Central powers and towards the Entente powers.[10]

From the foundation of *La Critica* in 1903, Benedetto Croce, himself a member of the generation born in the 1860s (b. 1866), became established as a "dictator" in Italian culture in his capacity as "literary" critic.[11] The age differ-

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[7]   P. Palavestra, *Istorija moderne srpske književnosti: zlatno doba 1892–1918* (Belgrade 1995), 84–85.

[8]   M. Cindori, "Madjarske teme i *Srpski književni glasnik*", in *Sto godina "Srpskog književnog glasnika": Aksiološki aspekt tradicije u srpskoj književnoj periodici*, eds. S. Tutnjević and M. Nedić (Belgrade 2003), 358–359.

[9]   M. Ković, "Politička uloga Srpskog književnog glasnika", in *Sto godina "Srpskog književnog glasnika"*, 354–372.

[10]   Ibid. 372–377.

[11]   D. A. Trafton and M. Verdicchio, "Introduction", in *The Legacy of Benedetto Croce: Contemporary Critical Views*, eds. J. D'Amico, D. A. Trafton and M. Verdicchio (Toronto, Buffalo, London 1999), 3; H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890–1930* (New York 1977), 201.

ence between him and his associate Giovanni Gentile (b. 1875) was similar to the one between Bogdan Popović (b. 1864) and his disciple and successor at the *Glasnik*, Jovan Skerlić (b. 1877). Just as the *Glasnik*'s influence was at its peak until 1914, although it continued until 1941 after a break during the Great War, so *La Critica* reached maximum influence between 1903 and 1914, although it continued until 1943 without a break and thereafter was published at different intervals and had a different character. Gentile's path began to diverge from Croce's even before 1914 until they parted ways entirely.[12] Skerlić died in 1914 and so the *Glasnik* was restarted by Bogdan Popović and Slobodan Jovanović after the war.[13]

The editors of the *Glasnik* and *La Critica*, then, were generationally close to one another and entered public life at the same time. Their journals remained influential until the Second World War, but this influence was at its highest in the decade preceding the First World War. Some historians believe that the role of Benedetto Croce was decisive in the renewal that Italian culture underwent between the 1890s and 1914.[14] Serbian culture underwent a renewal in the same period, at first set off in the mid-1890s by the intellectuals gathered around the journals *Delo* (Creation), *Red* (Order) and *Srpski pregled* (Serbian Review), and then, from 1901, around the *Srpski književni glasnik*.[15] Croce became a philosopher and public figure of world stature; the work of Bogdan Popović, Jovan Skerlić, Slobodan Jovanović and others remained tied to national culture.

The editors of *La Critica* and the *Glasnik* programmatically championed liberal values. Almost simultaneously, at the time marked by courts-martial after the attempted assassination of Milan Obrenović in Serbia and the state of emergency in Italy, they stood up in defence of the freedom of the individual from state repression. They all called for patriotism, but also for liberty.[16] Croce, as a conservative liberal, was more akin to Bogdan Popović, Pavle Popović and Slobodan Jovanović than to the socialist and radical Jovan Skerlić. *La Critica* did not fight only the "Jesuits" or the belligerent followers of Gabriele D'Annunzio but also the "Voltaireans", and even the "Jacobins" and "democrats".[17] The *Glasnik*, es-

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[12] C. Sprigge, "Benedetto Croce: Man and Thinker", in B. Croce, *Philosophy, Poetry, History: An Anthology of Essays* (London, New York, Toronto 1966), xix.

[13] See Lj. Djordjević, *Bibliografija Srpskog književnog glasnika 1901–1914* (Belgrade 1982), 20–21; S. Vojinović, *Srpski književni glasnik 1920–1941: bibliografija Nove serije* (Belgrade 2005), 11–13.

[14] Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, 63.

[15] M. Ković, Preface to *Srbi 1903–1914: Istorija ideja*, ed. M. Ković (Belgrade 2015), 15–18.

[16] F. F. Rizi, *Benedetto Croce and Italian Fascism* (Toronto, Buffalo, London 2003), 19.

[17] Ibid, 22–23; Sprigge, "Benedetto Croce: Man and Thinker", xvii–xviii; D. Mack Smith, "Benedetto Croce: History and Politics", *Journal of Contemporary History* 8/1 (Jan. 1973), 41–43.

pecially under the editorship of Jovan Skerlić, was quite democratically oriented; the Popović brothers, Bogdan and Pavle, and Slobodan Jovanović, although opponents of the "Jacobins" and "parvenus", also championed democracy while battling against King Alexander's autocratic intentions but after his assassination in 1903 as well.[18] Croce criticized the "Masonic mentality" by which he meant a French combination of radicalism and Jacobinism with positivism;[19] according to some sources, Bogdan Popović, Pavle Popović, Slobodan Jovanović, Ljubomir Stojanović and others joined the Freemasons in 1909, at the time when Austria-Hungary's war threats prompted attempts to gain the support of France.[20] Another important similarity was Croce's endeavour to "de-provincialize" Italian culture through opening it to foreign influences and ideas.[21] The fact that Croce was powerfully influenced by Hegel and German philosophy was, however, a point of difference between him and the anti-German, pro-French and pro-British leanings of the *Glasnik*'s editors. What they had in common, on the other hand, was the belief that periodicals devoted to literary, scientific and social issues should be the main tool for achieving their goal of national renewal.

      Much like the *Glasnik*'s editors, Benedetto Croce entered the political battlefield in times of national crises. By his undoubtedly political temperament he was more akin to Jovan Skerlić and Slobodan Jovanović than to the Popović brothers. As staunch liberals, they all would be opponents of communism and fascism.[22] Unlike the *Glasnik*'s editors, however, Croce supported the Italian fascists for a brief while before becoming one of their fiercest opponents.[23]

II

Croce's essay "On a character of more recent Italian literature" which appeared in the *Srpski književni glasnik* in 1912 was translated by Boško Desnica, a Serbian lawyer, journalist and historian from Dalmatia.[24] Croce was a carefully-read au-

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[18] M. Ković, "La Révolution française et l'élite serbe (1889–1935)", in *La Serbie et la France, une alliance atypique: Relations politiques, économiques et culturelles 1870–1940*, ed. D. Bataković (Belgrade 2010), 187–204.

[19] Rizi, *Benedetto Croce and Italian Fascism*, 23.

[20] Z. D. Nenezić, *Masoni u Jugoslaviji (1764–1980). Pregled slobodnog zidarstva u Jugoslaviji: prilozi i gradja* (Belgrade 1984), 229–232; Vitošević, *Srpski književni glasnik*, 133–136.

[21] Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, 63.

[22] Ibid. 82–89, 202–229; R. Melillo, "Croce's *Taccuini di lavoro*", in *The Legacy of Benedetto Croce*, 231–238.

[23] Rizi, *Benedetto Croce and Italian Fascism*, 35–79; Mack Smith, "Benedetto Croce: History and Politics", 45–50.

[24] B. Kroče, "O jednom karakteru novije italijanske književnosti", *SKG* XXIX/4, 5 (1912), 291–300, 371–376.

thor in the Desnica family; after the Great War, his essays were also translated by the writer Vladan Desnica, Boško Desnica's nephew.[25] In a note below the 1912 translation, Boško Desnica states that the essay is being published with Croce's consent and that it is taken from his "Notes on the Italian literature of the second half of the 19th century" published in *La Critica*.[26]

This is, Croce wrote, a story of the "modern intellectual and literary life of Italy",[27] of the "state of mind" manifested in its literature, science and political ideas from 1865 to the most recent times. Croce set apart the poet Giuseppe Carducci as the most prominent figure in the first period, from about 1885, or between 1870 and 1890; in the second period, which included the most recent, Croce's times, the most prominent were Gabriele D'Annunzio, Antonio Fogazzaro and Giovanni Pascoli.[28]

In the first period, art was mostly veristic, philosophy positivist, historiography erudite, politics anti-clerical, liberal, democratic and patriotic.[29] The writers of the period were "ridiculous when they saw Spencer as a modern Aristotle and believed that Darwin was a philosopher".[30] In politics, one lived on "the still rich legacy of the Italian revolution, the legacy of Mazzini and Cavour, who agreed on the ideal of liberty and progress although they understood the ideal differently…"[31]

In their response to this, members of a new generation led by D'Annunzio, Fogazzaro and Pascoli were Catholics and aesthetes, admirers of force and preachers of imperialism.[32] Croce acknowledged D'Annunzio's literary gift, but called that kind of art "ineffable" and "ugly", a "stream of insincerity and emptiness", admiration for "force, imperialism and aristocratism":[33] He warned the readers of "evil and danger".[34] In an ironic tone, he described what he called their "programme of domination and destruction" as follows:

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[25] See B. Croce, *Eseji iz estetike*, transl. V. Desnica (Split 1938); B. Kroče, *Književna kritika kao filozofija*, ed. and trans. V. Desnica (Belgrade 1969). See also S. Šeatović Dimitrijević, "Kročeova estetika i Desničin mediteranizam", in *Split i Vladan Desnica 1918–1941: Umjetničko stvaralaštvo izmedju kulture i politike*, eds. D. Roksandić and I. Cvijović Javorina (Zagreb 2016), 145–156.

[26] Kroče, "O jednom karakteru", 291, 300.

[27] Ibid. 292.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid. 292–297.

[30] Ibid. 294.

[31] Ibid. 296.

[32] Ibid. 297–300, 371–376.

[33] Ibid. 297, 374, 375.

[34] Ibid. 376.

> Imperialism wants to lead Italy towards its grand goals, wants to squash the democratic beast, wants conquests, victories, bombardments, bloodsheds…[35]

Searching for the roots of this phenomenon, Croce wrote:

> If I were to trace these roots, I would begin by drawing attention to the international character of the phenomenon, which leads us to the general circumstances of Europe in the nineteenth century. Italy itself partly contributed to the creation of these general circumstances, and partly merely reflected them.[36]

Apart from the "general circumstances of Europe", Croce, once a socialist himself,[37] also detected a deep-seated antagonism of these writers to the rise of socialism:

> Those who set out to refute socialism, no longer at a particular moment in the life of a country but in general – let's put it as follows: in its idea – negate civilization, negate the very notion of morality on which civilization is founded. An impossible negation; a negation which cannot be expressed in words; and which has thus given rise to the ineffable ideals of force for force's sake, imperialism, aristocratism, which are so ugly that not even their preachers have the courage to defend with rigor.[38]

A liberal and preacher of the typical Victorian bourgeois ethic of "self-observation" and "character building", Benedetto Croce appealed to young people, warning them to beware of D'Annunzio and his companions:

> I think of young people, of those who are coming, and I point to evil and danger, and I am confident that they – the best of them, those who will prevail, not in number but in merit – will be able to steer clear of them, they will be able to keep away from evil through examining themselves, because there still is no better way to bring out truly deep and strong thoughts and to create a spirited and perfect art, to enable the continual improvement of oneself which constitutes the honesty of life.[39]

Unlike Croce, who rejected the positivism and Darwinism of the 1865–85 period, the members of the generation of the founders of the *Srpski književni glasnik* headed by Bogdan Popović were staunch positivists and Darwinists in their youth. Later on, they became powerfully influenced by the positivism of Hippolyte Taine and the ideas of Ernest Renan. Bogdan Popović remained a life-long admirer of Herbert Spencer. The only one who was not swayed by this

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[35] Ibid. 297.

[36] Ibid. 374.

[37] Sprigge, "Benedetto Croce: Man and Thinker", xv–xvii; Mack Smith, "Benedetto Croce: History and Politics", 41–42.

[38] Kroče, "O jednom karakteru", 375.

[39] Ibid. 376.

Darwinist fad was Slobodan Jovanović.[40] To this generation of Serbian intellectuals, however, French positivism, especially in its Tainean form, was a road to liberation from the dominant Viennese philological school and antiquarian learning.[41]

This is the reason why there was not a rebellion in Serbia against positivism and leanings towards German thought comparable to the one advocated by Benedetto Croce in Italy. Jovan Skerlić was the first to declare positivism outdated and, at the same time, he criticized "decadents", but in the name of democratic and socialist ideals. As with Croce, the target readership of Skerlić's programmatic texts after the Annexation crisis of 1908 were young generations.[42]

"Edmondo de Amicis", yet another of Croce's essays translated for the *Glasnik* (1913),[43] appeared under the editorship of Jovan Skerlić. It was an overview of De Amicis' political and literary views, from his patriotic and military beginnings during the Risorgimento to his eventual socialist commitment, when he joined the Italian Socialist Party. As Croce showed, De Amicis' socialism had a moralist literary origin and remained coloured by Italian patriotism.[44]

Croce also offered an evaluation of De Amicis' literary work, but there is no doubt that Skerlić was drawn primarily by the writer's political ideas.[45] Namely, they were quite compatible with his moralistically coloured patriotism, democratism and socialism. Skerlić's belief that these ideals could only be propagated bit by bit, through literature and education, changed in the time of trials after the Annexation crisis of 1908/9. His support to the liberation of Old Serbia and Macedonia in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 led to his finally parting ways with his old social democratic and Marxist friends.[46] In 1908 the *Glasnik* under his editorship published a text on D'Amicis and his patriotic, ethical literary socialism penned by Marko Car, another Serb from Dalmatia apart from Desnica touched by Italian culture.[47]

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[40] *Spomenica o stogodišnjici Prve muške gimnazije u Beogradu* (Belgrade 1939), 296–297, 308; Dr K. Milutinović, "Razvojni put Bogdana Popovića", *Portreti i eseji* (Novi Sad 1994), 164–176, 179; F. Grčević, *Književni kritičar i teoretičar Bogdan Popović* (Zagreb 1971), 11–12; S. Jovanović, "Bogdan Popović", vol. 11 of *Sabrana dela Slobodana Jovanovića* (Belgrade 1991), 721–722, 746–748; B. Milosavljević, *Slobodan Jovanović: Teorija* (Belgrade 2017), 210–229.

[41] R. Samardžić, "Ipolit Ten kod Srba", *Pisci srpske istorije*, vol. 2 (Belgrade 1981), 239–269; R. Samardžić, "Izmedju Rajića i Ruvarca", *Pisci srpske istorije*, vol. 1 (Belgrade 1974), 76; R. Samardžić, "Slobodan Jovanović: delo i pisac", *Pisci srpske istorije*, vol. 4 (Belgrade 1994), 149.

[42] M. Ković, "Jovan Skerlić", in *Srbi 1903–1914*, 543–549.

[43] B. Kroče, "Edmondo de Amicis", *SKG* XXX/12 (1913), 931–943 and XXXI/1, 52–65.

[44] Ibid. 931–941.

[45] Ibid. 52–65.

[46] Ković, "Jovan Skerlić", 551–565.

[47] M. Car, "Edmondo Deamićis (1846–1908)", *SKG* XX/7 (1908), 502–505.

III

The editors of the *Srpski književni glasnik* were consistent opponents of Gabriele D'Annunzio's imperialist ideas, those that Croce warned his readers against. Jovan Skerlić's programmatic texts in the *Glasnik* had, however, an activistic, vitalist vein akin to this colourful writer.

As early as 1900, Skerlić, in his review of the French historian Edouard Driault's *Political and Social Problems at the End of the 19th Century*, recognized the critical importance of imperialism and colonialism in the culture and politics of the period.[48] He wrote: "The most characteristic phenomenon at the end of the nineteenth century is this colonial expansion."[49] He readily admitted that Britain and France, followed by the USA and Russia, were ahead in that respect. Those were the countries whose cultures he would be the most favourably disposed to. Italy, however, also fought its way into Africa and "is pouncing on an already half-dead China".[50] He was particularly interested in ideological justifications of colonial wars: "Never on the Globe has sheer force been more brutal, the weak more disempowered, and large-scale crimes obscured up by grander words."[51]

Italian imperialism attracted the attention of the Serbian intellectuals who wrote about international relations and geopolitics. Already in the first issues of the *Glasnik* Slobodan Jovanović warned of the intention of Italian imperialism to penetrate into the Balkans from the Adriatic coast, thereby endangering the interests of Serbia.[52] As early as 1905 Milan Dj. Milojević wrote that Italy was working on creating Albania as a barrier against the spread of not only pan-Germanism but also pan-Slavism.[53] The same year, Jovan Jovanović Pižon, in his review of *An Eastern Confederation as a Solution to the Eastern Question*, the book of an Italian author hidden under the pseudonym "A Latin", also wrote about the Balkan ambitions of Italian imperialism.[54] This anonymous author

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[48] J. Skerlić. "Politički i socijalni problemi krajem XIX veka", Les problèmes politiques et sociaux à la fin du XIXᵉ siècle, par E. Driault, professeur agrégé au lycée d'Orleans, in *Feljtoni, skice i govori*, vol. 7 of *Sabrana dela Jovana Skerlića* (Belgrade 1964), 49–52.

[49] Ibid. 49.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid. 50.

[52] S. Jovanović, "Ravnoteža na Jadranskom moru od Šarla Lazoa", *SKG* III/1 (1901), 61–67.

[53] M. Dj. Milojević, "The Balkan Question. The present condition of the Balkans and of European responsibilities. By various writers. Edited by Luigi Villari, London 1905", *SKG* XV/2 (1905), 139.

[54] J. M. Jovanović, "Istočna konfederacija kao rešenje Istočnoga pitanja (Une confédération orientale comme solution de la Question d'Orient, par un Latin, Paris 1905)", *SKG* XIV/12 (1905), 952–955.

proposed the creation of a Balkan confederation with Italian as its official language and Italian governors ruling Albania and Macedonia. Pižon read this project as the pursuance of "nationalist interests":[55]

> He censures the Bulgarians for their aspiration for Samuel's empire, the Serbs for Dušan's, the Greeks for Alexander the Great's, and he himself speaks of the restoration of an eastern empire under the sceptre of Victor Emanuel II, he dreams of a rebirth of the Latin race pressed by the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon races from several sides.[56]

As early as 1901 the *Glasnik*'s editor Bogdan Popović published a text of Marie-Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé which likened D'Annunzio's imperialism to that of Rudyard Kipling and the ideas of the Russian Bolshevik Maxim Gorky.[57] This diplomat and writer, a contributor to the *Revue des deux mondes*, known for having acquainted France and the West in general with the work of Dostoyevsky, ideologically belonged, like Benedetto Croce, Slobodan Jovanović or Bogdan Popović, to a late stage of conservative liberalism born out of an encounter with socialism, radicalism and clericalism. In this text, he claimed that D'Annunzio, Kipling and Gorky:

> have a common father, Nietzsche, they all are imbued with romanticism, all are irresistibly drawn to the exotic and the unusual. The heroes of all three are bursting with a thirst for life, desirous of conquering the world with it. On the whole, they are some sort of imperialists whom nothing can sate, who irresistibly push for the triumph of individualism, force, passion and amorality.[58]

Reading D'Annunzio, De Vogüé, much like Croce, intuited what the dawning twentieth century would look like:

> The century that was proud of its bright light, and of its legacy to mankind to be brothers and together in everything, has lost its shine and dusk has set in. A flock of young hawks has fledged from the nest and is just flying about and flapping in the dusk. The dying century is uttering the serene words of its legacy, while the young hawks are cutting the air with their sharp little wings and causing a tempest. Do the hawks indeed have command of the mystery of life and is that mystery indeed in brutal force?[59]

While Croce's critique of D'Annunzio's literary work published in the *Glasnik* in 1912 matched the views of Jovan Skerlić, De Vogüé's 1901 image of "young hawks" matched the views of Bogdan Popović, Slobodan Jovanović and

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[55] Ibid. 955.

[56] Ibid. 954.

[57] -ks- [J. Maksimović], "O Maksimu Gorkom. Mišljenje E. M. de Vogie", *SKG* IV/3 (1901), 226–229.

[58] Ibid. 229.

[59] Ibid.

their friends. The liberals, democrats and socialists from the *Glasnik* rejected those ideas in the name of political morality and in principle opposition to political violence. Under the editorship of Bogdan Popović, the *Glasnik* was an expression of late nineteenth-century liberal culture and, occasionally, of a pessimistic fin de siècle. Activism, vitalism and pragmatism, which after 1905 were spreading across Europe in the form of the ideas of Nietzsche, Bergson, William James and other writers, would only become visible in the *Glasnik* under the editorship of Jovan Skerlić. It was in particular after the German and Austro-Hungarian war threat during the Annexation crisis of 1908/9, that Skerlić would turn the *Glasnik* into a vehicle of a vigorous, romantic national activism.

The *Glasnik* under Skerlić's editorship, between 1906 and 1914, published five of D'Annunzio's short stories.[60] They, however, hardly contained any of the author's typical political ideas. Moreover, important motifs in his "Boatman" were mutual care and solidarity. Only "San Laimo navigatore" was a cruel, passionate and adventurous account whose main character was, successively, a shark fisherman, a pirate, the ruler of a native people and, finally, a saint.

But Skerlić collected whatever he believed could support the ideas of activism, robustness and heroic endeavour. Even though his *Glasnik* published literary works of Nietzsche, D'Annunzio and Kipling, what was an essential difference between him and these writers was his belief in democracy, solidarity and political morality. Instead of invoking a "common father, Nietzsche", he invoked the "vitalist activism" of Jean-Marie Guyau. This French writer, an important influence on Nietzsche, preached compassion, solidarity, democracy and moral revival fostered by art and literature.[61]

The moralistic current in European literature, which emerged concurrently with activism, was much closer to the *Glasnik*'s heart. Its representatives, Anatole France, Herbert Wells, Leo Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov and other authors, were much more frequently translated for the *Glasnik* than D'Annunzio, Nietzsche or Kipling. Their views were in full agreement with the *Glasnik*'s Enlightenment-inspired rationalist liberalism. Authors of the age of activism were the need of the political moment.

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[60] Translations of D'Annunzio's stories published in the *Glasnik*: "Sveti Laimo Moreplovac", *SKG* XVII/2 and 3 (1906), 9–99 and 175–185; "Na rijeci", *SKG* XXV/8 and 9 (1910), 571–578 and 650–656; "Morski vidar", *SKG* XXIX/10 (1912), 727–736; "Brodar", *SKG* XXXII/4 (1914), 248–263; "Zvona", *SKG* XXXII/12 (1914), 890–894.

[61] J. Skerlić, "Gijo", *SKG* III/3 (1901), 210–220; M. Begić, *Jovan Skerlić: Čovek i delo* (Belgrade 1966), 63–64, 97–98, 113–115, 308–309.

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The most important Serbian and Italian journals of the 1903–1914 period, the *Srpski književni glasnik* and *La Critica* respectively, all differences highlighted here notwithstanding, had important points of similarity. Their roles in the cultures and societies of Italy and Serbia were very similar. The liberal revivalist "European" literary and political programme of *La Cultura*'s editor Benedetto Croce was basically analogous to the views of *Glasnik*'s editors Bogdan Popović and Jovan Skerlić. On the other hand, the *Glasnik* was clearly averse to the imperialist ideas of influential Gabriele D'Annunzio but, at the time of Austria-Hungary's belligerent pressures on Serbia, it published D'Annunzio's short stories and championed the ideals of activism, vitalism and heroism.

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A Late Offensive. Italian Cultural Action in Belgrade in the Last Phase of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1937–1941)

Abstract: After the signing of the so-called Ciano-Stojadinović Pact (March 1937), Italian-Yugoslav relations suddenly improved. The turnaround in bilateral relations between the two countries (destined, however, to remain ephemeral) was clearly visible in the field of cultural relations. This essay aims to show how, after 1937, the Italian authorities tried to promote Italian culture and language in a big style in the capital of the Kingdom, Belgrade, in an attempt to counteract the supremacy enjoyed up to then by the cultural action of other countries such as France, Germany, etc., in order to promote the Italian language and culture. The fascination with the Italian civilization was also meant to contribute to bringing Yugoslavia politically and ideologically closer to the Fascist regime. Despite the invested resources and the success of some major events (for example, the great exhibition of Italian portraits through the centuries) the results were disappointing, showing once again the structural limits of Fascist political and cultural action abroad.

Keywords: Italian cultural action, Yugoslavia, Fascism, Balkans, foreign policy

In this article, I shall attempt to elaborate some questions concerning Italian-Yugoslav cultural relations in the aftermath of the signing of the so-called Ciano-Stojadinović Pact, signed in Belgrade by the two politicians on 27th March 1937. I had the opportunity to discuss the Italian cultural penetration into Yugoslavia a few years ago, and starting from the results of that research, I will try to bring new analytical insights and thoughts about a seemingly secondary issue. However, the papers I have consulted, most of them unpublished, reveal how strongly the Fascist regime wanted to assert itself politically in Danubian-Balkan Europe. It should be stressed, firstly, that the pact signed in 1937 did not succeed in dispelling all the misunderstandings and suspicions that had fuelled bilateral relations between Italy and Yugoslavia in the previous years.[1]

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[1] As noted by Renzo De Felice, the signing of the pact with Yugoslavia came almost at the same time as the defeat suffered by Italian forces in the Battle of Guadalajara (8–23 March 1937) against the People's Republican Army and the International Brigades that had come to the aid of the Spanish Republic. Once again, Italy had shown its military weakness and, therefore, although not prejudicing the conclusion of the agreement, the news from Spain made Stojadinović more cautious about distancing himself too much from the allies of the Little Entente and Paris. In any case, Rome was always second to Berlin on the Yugoslav po-

The Karađorđević kingdom appeared to be a borderland but, at the same time, a point of contention with the Western powers and the formidable German ally that had become the dominant power in the region.[2] Once the political difficulties of the previous years had been overcome, Rome considered it a priority to try to establish a firm friendship with Belgrade, taking advantage of the sympathies that Prime Minister Milan Stojadinović seemed to show towards the neighbouring country and, above all, towards the Fascist regime.[3] Suffice it to say that from 1937 to 1941 high officials such as Galeazzo Ciano (twice; in total, the Fascist foreign minister met with Stojadinović five times), Dino Alfieri, Tullio Cianetti, Giuseppe Bottai and Ottavio Koch paid official visits to Yugoslavia.

Just like the political-diplomatic side, the conclusion of that agreement seemed to represent a decisive turning point between the two countries in terms of cultural relations[4], practically stagnant until then.[5] Exactly one year after the

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litical agenda. Cfr. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce. Lo Stato totalitario 1936–1940*, T. 2, (Torino: Einaudi Tascabili, 1996), 403–404.

[2]   Cfr. W. S. Grenzebach Jr., *Germany's Informal Empire in East-Central Europe. German Economic Policy toward Yugoslavia and Rumania 1933–1939*, (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlang Wiesbaden GMBH, 1988). On the ambiguous Italian-German relationship in South-eastern Europe, see J. Petersen, *Hitler e Mussolini. La difficile alleanza*, (Bari-Roma: Laterza, 1975), 392–394.

[3]   On the controversial figure of Milan Stojadinović, his political ambitions and alleged 'sympathies' towards the fascist and Nazi regimes, see D. Djokić, *'Leader' or 'Devil'? Milan Stojadinović Prime Minister of Yugoslavia (1935–39) and his Ideology*, in *In the Shadow of Hitler. Personalities of the Right in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Rebecca Hayness, Martin Rady, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 153–168. According to Stojadinović, the pact with Italy had achieved the objective of securing the precarious bilateral Italian-Yugoslav relations but, above all, from Belgrade's point of view, the new course of relations with its Western neighbour seemed to have definitively removed the danger represented by the Ustaša terrorists who, for a long time, had benefited from aid and support of all kinds from Italy. Cfr. M. Stojadinović, *Jugoslavia fra le due guerre*, (Bologna: Cappelli Editore, 1970), 172–175.

[4]   At this point, a clarification seems necessary. Compared to the scarce activities carried out in Belgrade and other regions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Italian cultural and educational presence in Croatia and, above all, in Dalmatia was a completely different matter, mainly due to the existence of a strong Italian ethnic community. In many Dalmatian localities, starting with the main cities (Split, Šibenik, Trogir, etc.) there was a ramified network of Italian schools, as well as newspapers, bookshops, theatres, etc. The works of Italian writers and intellectuals were the result of the presence of Italian culture and education. The works of Italian writers and intellectuals enjoyed considerable fame and were widely circulated throughout the Dalmatian territory. See, in the case of Split, L. Monzali, *Antonio Tacconi e la comunità italiana di Spalato*, (Venezia: Società Dalmata di Storia Patria – Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, 2007), 187–310.

[5]   On the meaning and political scope of the Italo-Yugoslavian Pact, see M. Bucarelli, *Mussolini e la Jugoslavia (1922–1939)*, (Bari: Edizioni B.A. Graphis, 2006), si veda in par-

signing of the Pact, Belgrade hosted one of the most important art exhibitions ever organised by the Fascist regime outside Italy: "The Italian Portrait over the Centuries". On the express wishes of Galeazzo Ciano, it was organised by Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata (the influential president of Confindustria and the Venice Biennale) and curated by Professor Nino Barbantini, a distinguished art historian who had already masterminded an important exhibition dedicated to Titian (1935).[6] From 28th March to 30th April 1938, thousands of Yugoslavian visitors, arriving from places far away from the capital, admired some of the greatest masterpieces of Italian art in the halls of the Prince Paul Museum: works by Titian, Raphael, Filippo Lippi, Lorenzo Lotto, Giorgione, and others, brought in from some of the most prestigious museums in Italy, such as the Bargello, the Pinacoteca di Brera, the National Museum of Naples, etc.[7] A prestigious catalogue was prepared for the occasion and sold out before the end of the exhibition; even today, it seems that this publication is still sought after by art collectors and art exhibition catalogue archives.[8] No expense was spared, and all the objections of the directors of the museums selected to lend the selected works, some of a priceless artistic value, were overcome without difficulty. From the point of view of the regime, this was an exhibition with an extraordinary political purpose: to demonstrate to the new eastern "friends" the organisational strength of Fascist Italy, which had been touted in the regime's propaganda as the direct successor and jealous guardian of the great Italian cultural tradition.[9] We know that, during the course of the exhibition, other eastern European capitals (Bucharest and Warsaw, for example) requested in vain to host the event. On the contrary, the works were hastily packed up again the day after the exhibition closed and sent back to Italy to be returned to their original museums just

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ticolare il VI capitolo alle 327–384. On the Yugoslavian-Italian cultural relations up to 1937, see my paper, "La politica culturale italiana nei Balcani da Mussolini a Hitler. 1922–1933", *Romània Orientale*, XVII (2004), 101–122; e S. Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale. Diplomazia culturale e propaganda 1918–1943*, (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2005), in particolare le 140–148 e 258–272.

[6] See G. Damerini, "Barbantini, Nino", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 6, 1964, available online all'indirizzo: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nino-barbantini_(Dizionario-Biografico).

[7] See A. Basciani, *The Ciano-Stojadinović Agreement and the Turning Point in the Italian Cultural Policy in Yugoslavia (1937–1941)*, In *Italy's Balkan Strategies 19th & 20th Century*, ed. Vojislav G. Pavlović, 203–209. (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, 2014).

[8] N. Barbantini, *La mostra del ritratto italiano nei secoli: organizzata dal ministero italiano della Cultura Popolare d'intesa con ministero degli affari esteri e con quello dell'educazione nazionale. Belgrado Museo del Principe Paolo*, (Venezia: Officine Grafiche Ferrari, 1938).

[9] Ibid.

in time for Hitler's decisive visit to Rome, Naples and Florence between 3rd and 8th May 1938.

As mentioned above, before this grand exhibition event, the Italian cultural presence in Belgrade was minimal. As a report drawn up in March 1934 by the local Italian Legation in the Yugoslavian capital tells us, Italy could count on very few initiatives. One of them was the operation of a "little school" (as it was called in the report) run by a priest, Don Ravera, who twice or three times a week tried to bring together children from Italian families living in the capital and give them lessons in the Catechism, singing, Italian grammar and little else. It was an institution with a loose organisation and limited reach, which was perhaps also the reason that it was tolerated by the Yugoslavian authorities who had, to avoid any misunderstanding, placed that "little school" under the careful observation of the local police forces.[10]

At this point, it is interesting to try and see what developments took place in Italian-Yugoslavian cultural relations in the years following the grand art exhibition until the spring of 1941 when, as is well known, Italy attacked its neighbouring country from behind and with which, at least formally, it was on good terms, contributing to the collapse of the Yugoslav military apparatus and the disintegration of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The first immediate consequence was the organisation of a number of trips to Italy for students, parliamentarians and specific professional categories (engineers, architects, journalists and even, as we shall see, labourers). Facilitated financially by the Italian state with discounted transport and accommodation, these trips to the great cities of art but also some of the symbolic places of Fascist Italy (the recent urban settlements in the Agro pontino, the new industrial complexes, famous resorts, etc.) were evidently intended to impress the guests with the regime's achievements.[11] In reality, the Italian project was even more ambitious. A few days before a 10-day tour through Italy by 100 Yugoslav workers between 11th and 21st September 1938, a meeting took place in Bled, Slovenia, between Tullio Cianetti, Under-Secretary of State for Corporations (secretary of the National Confederation of Italian Fascist Trade Unions since 1934) and Yugoslav Prime Minister Stojadinović. Cianetti communicated the content of that visit in a report that may have been intended for Mussolini himself. According to Cianetti, the trip to Italy by that

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[10]　Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero Affari Esteri – Roma (d'ora innanzi ASDMAE), Fondo Archivio Scuole 1929–1935 (d'ora innanzi AS 1929–35), Busta 820, relazione inviata dalla Legazione d'Italia a Belgrado a Roma il 12 marzo 1934.

[11]　Cfr. A. Basciani, *The Ciano-Stojadinović Agreement … cit.*, 208–210. On 24th June 1938, Mussolini received a delegation of 20 university students, members of Prime Minister Milan Stojadinović's party, the Yugoslav Radical Union, at Palazzo Venezia. Archivio Centrale dello Stato (d'ora innanzi ACS), Fondo Ministero della Cultura Popolare (d'ora innanzi MinCulPop), Iugoslavia, Busta 144, appunto con firma indecifrabile e senza data.

large contingent of workers could represent the beginning of a profound collaboration. The Yugoslav Prime Minister had not failed to express his admiration for Mussolini and the Fascist system. In the document, the Umbrian fascist leader did not downplay the strength that Germany had acquired in Yugoslavia, but according to the leader of the fascist trade unions, the German social and economic organisation was in contradiction with

> [...] the tendencies of the new Yugoslavia as expressed by Stojadinovich [sic!] German social organisation is in fact based entirely on company unity. In a country like Yugoslavia, which, for twenty years, has been painstakingly trying to build national unity in all fields, adopting the German system [...] would mean deepening and multiplying the natural tendencies towards disintegration [...] The Italian trade union system, on the other hand, based on the national organisation of categories, if adopted in Yugoslavia, would be the best way to create [...] solidarity on a national basis [...] Stojadinovich [sic!] is a man who has already understood all this.[12]

However, Cianetti ignored or at least pretended to ignore the fact that, by that time Germany, had been Yugoslavia's main economic partner while, following the sanctions imposed by the League of Nations after the aggression against Ethiopia, the percentage of Italian-Yugoslav trade had dramatically dropped and in the years to come Italy would not manage to regain its lost positions.[13]

The organised trips, however, were more of a pure propaganda tool. It was necessary for Italian culture and language to gain ground in Belgrade's cultural and scientific life. Over the years, Italy had accumulated a huge disadvantage, and now it was necessary to try and catch up with foreign cultural traditions much more deeply rooted than the Italian one, such as the French, German or English, which had been part of the educational, intellectual and academic horizon of Serbian society for many decades.[14] The unquestionable success of

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[12] Ibid., Busta 145, Relazione del viaggio in Jugoslavia di Tullio Cianetti del 30 agosto 1938.

[13] Cfr. A. Basciani, *L'illusione della modernità. Il Sud-est dell'Europa tra le due guerre mondiali*, (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016), 326–327. In fact, in an undated and unsigned document found among the files of the Ministry of Culture, it was stated in no uncertain terms that '[...] in order to make the friendship with Yugoslavia effective, it would be necessary for the programme of commercial expansion to be carried out rapidly [...] a programme which should be done with a broad outlook and scope [...]'. ACS, Fondo MinCulPop, Busta 144. In his memoirs, Stojadinović writes that one of the reasons that led him to the rapprochement with Italy was precisely the attempt to revive trade between the two countries, which, in the Serbian politician's opinion, was particularly damaging to Yugoslav interests and goods. Cfr. M. Stojadinović, *Jugoslavia fra le due guerre*, 162–164.

[14] For example, the English cultural background of Prince Regent Paul (Pavle) was well known, and Prime Minister Milan Stojadinović, the main protagonist of the policy of rapprochement with Italy, an economist by education, had spent several years studying in England and Germany.

the great exhibition had aroused great expectations and, already by the end of 1938, the Italian Legation in Belgrade, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had begun to think about setting up a new art exhibition in 1939, mainly dedicated to modern Italian painting and sculpture, which, once it left Belgrade, would also be hosted in Sofia and Bucharest. In reality, the project was shelved shortly before the end of 1939, with the main reason apparently being the high costs of organising the event. The Italian minister in Belgrade, Mario Indelli, seemed relieved by the decision taken in Rome; according to the diplomat, if an exhibition of Italian art had to be organised in Yugoslavia, it would have been politically more appropriate to hold it in Zagreb. In fact, the Italian Minister was informed that in the Croatian capital there was "[...] great disappointment at not having taken part in the last major Italian cultural events in Yugoslavia [...] and where, among other things, the economic conditions, as well as the environment and culture, would be immensely more favourable".[15] After the project was shelved, however, the Italian desire to consolidate the Italian cultural presence in the Yugoslavian capital did not diminish. In the preceding months, steps had already been taken to increase the circulation of Italian books, music and films through the donation to cultural institutions, schools and universities of many recently published volumes ranging from fiction to historiography. As can be imagined, the most welcome but also most difficult gift to obtain was the complete collection of the prestigious Treccani Encyclopaedia.[16]

In any case, strengthening cultural ties with Yugoslavia and, even more so, with the intellectual circles of Belgrade had become a matter of necessity that had to involve also some of the most prominent Italian Slavists: we will see later that some scholars played very important roles, such as Giovanni Maver (of Dalmatian origin), and eminent Slavists, such as Enrico Damiani.[17] In January 1938, the Royal Legation of Belgrade took action in this regard. In a dispatch sent by Minister Indelli, it urged the authorities in the country, first and fore-

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[15] ACS, Fondo MinCulPop, Iugoslavia, Busta 143, Dispaccio del 28 dicembre 1938 inviato a Roma dalla Legazione d'Italia a Belgrado.

[16] On 13th June 1938, the General Directorate of Propaganda at the Ministry of Popular Culture (MinCulPop) informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Italian Legation in Belgrade of the decision taken by the Ministry of Education to donate to the National Library in Belgrade the National Edition of the Works of Galileo Galilei, after a well-known local astronomer, Professor Djordje Nikolić, had requested to consult it. ASDMAE, AS 1929–35.

[17] On 2nd March 1939, Enrico Damiani, at the invitation of the director of the Italian Seminar at the University of Belgrade, Professor Skerl, held a literary conference at the university in the Yugoslavian capital, which was given great prominence, at least on the Italian side. ASC, Fondo MinCulPop, Iugoslavia Busta 145, Dispaccio del ministro Indelli, inviato da Belgrado a Roma il 15 febbraio 1939.

most the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to take steps to ensure that Italian scholars would establish contact with the Balkan Institute in Belgrade (which in turn had called for collaboration with Italian scientific and cultural institutions), which was seen as a very serious and prestigious institution. According to Indelli,

> [...] the new relations between Italy and Yugoslavia and the part that Italy plays in the activity and developments, not only political but also economic and cultural, in the Balkans should lead us to establish relations with the Balkan Institute and allow our authors to contribute to its publications [...].[18]

The cooperation between Italian and Yugoslav academics was taken up some time later directly by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, which on 20th July 1938 sent a message to the Ministry of National Education, the Academy of Italy, the Institute for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and, of course, the Italian Legation in Belgrade to improve coordination of the Italian participation in the 3rd International Congress of Slavic Philology planned in Belgrade for October 1939. The message made it clear that the inspirer was Mussolini himself and that Italian participation in the event was of the utmost importance.

> [...] also for practical reasons [...] in order to try to intensify as much as possible the cultural ties between Italy and Yugoslavia as well as to demonstrate the Slavic knowledge that had become so well established [...] in our scholarly circles [...] it is considered appropriate that our representatives should in any case be relatively numerous [...].

It would be a good idea, the note continued, to send to Belgrade not only tenured professors of Slavic philology but also lecturers in Slavic subjects, glottologists dealing with Slavic languages, history and philosophy teachers specialising in Slavic history and philosophy.[19]

Meanwhile, in November 1938, the first Italian language courses for foreigners ever organised in the Yugoslavian capital began at the *Casa degli Italiani* in Belgrade. The operation and development of these courses would later be entrusted to the local committee of the Dante Alighieri Society, which was set up – not without some difficulty – only in the spring of 1939.[20] According to a report of 18th January 1939, after a timid start, the number of enrolments exceeded 300, with most of the students being "[...] clerks, state officials, students, professionals, tradesmen and even soldiers". The initiative was supported by government funds, as the registration fee was kept extremely low for political

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[18] Ibid., Busta 142, Telespresso del 18 gennaio 1938.

[19] Ibid., Busta 145 doc. senza data.

[20] Ibid., Busta 144, Comunicazione ufficiale inviata dalla Presidenza della Società Dante Alighieri al MinCulPop il 12 aprile 1939.

reasons. It was a start that, in order to be successful, would need a whole series of collateral support activities, such as the organisation of film and music festivals.[21] Indeed, in the following weeks and months, there was no lack of Italian cultural events. On 22nd January 1939, at the same time as Ciano's new official visit to Yugoslavia (to which the local press gave exceptional prominence)[22], a large Italian book fair opened in Belgrade with about 3,000 titles and a special section dedicated to books by Yugoslav authors translated into Italian. During the same month, an Italian tourist-book office opened for the public in one of the main streets of the Yugoslavian capital. On 5th April, a real Italian bookshop opened at 16 Prestotolonasledik Trg, through an agreement with the Popović bookshop, then considered the most important in the city. The bookshop was to become a sort of "[...] permanent exhibition of Italian books [...] to foster, with a prudent and timely propaganda action, every possibility concerning the dissemination of our culture and our most representative book production".[23]

As already mentioned, in June 1939, after a few vicissitudes, the Belgrade Committee of the "Dante Alighieri Society" was finally set up and Corrado Sofia, the correspondent of the "Stefani" from the Yugoslavian capital, was appointed President.[24] The following July, a cultural trip to Italy was organised for the students from Belgrade who had shown themselves the most diligent in learning the language.

In short, relations between the two countries seemed to be going through an extraordinarily good phase – but obviously not so good as to allow the signing of a cultural agreement[25] – and from this point of view, the most significant event in the sphere of cultural relations was the decision to proceed with the opening, in September 1939, of the Italian Institute of Culture, the inauguration of which cancelled a glaring anomaly produced by the fraught bilateral relations of previous years, given that for years similar institutes had been fully operative

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[21] Ibid., Busta 144, Telespresso of 18 January 1939 sent by the Legation of Italy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MinCulPop.

[22] See B. Simić, "La visita del Conte Ciano in Jugoslavia nel gennaio 1939", In *Un mestiere paziente. Gli allievi pisani per Daniele Menozzi*, eds. Andrea Mariuzzo, Elena Mazzini, Francesco Mores, Ilaria Pavan, (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2017), 235–246.

[23] ACS, Fondo MinculPop, Iugoslavia Busta 145, Report of 10 May 1939 by Dante Benedetti on the first month of the Italian bookshop in Belgrade.

[24] Ibid., Busta 144, Telespresso della Legazione d'Italia a Belgrado al MAE del 2 giugno 1939.

[25] Although the Yugoslav authorities did not openly refuse, they ensured that the negotiations aimed at concluding a cultural agreement never reached a conclusive stage. According to Minister Indelli, this was more of a reflection of Yugoslavia's desire to prevent the establishment of political propaganda centres in the country, which were difficult for the Yugoslav state to control, rather than a concrete aversion to Italy. ACS, Fondo MinCulPop, Busta 144, Dispaccio inviato da Belgrado a Roma il 1° aprile 1938.

in all the other capitals of South-Eastern Europe. It should also be pointed out that Stojadinović's fall in early February 1939 (practically days after Galeazzo Ciano's second and seemingly triumphant visit to Belgrade) put a damper on any further moves to intensify political relations between Italy and Yugoslavia.[26] However, at least in appearance, the forms of bilateral friendship seemed to have been safeguarded, and therefore, cultural relations between Rome and Belgrade continued to benefit from new opportunities for contact and exchange. On 14th February 1940, in the presence of the Minister of National Education, Giuseppe Bottai, and Ottaviano Koch, representing the Ministry of Popular Culture, the Italian Institute of Culture in Belgrade was officially inaugurated; one of the most distinguished Italian Slavists, Prof. Giovanni Maver,[27] was its first director. These few years that still separated Italy and Yugoslavia from the war brought many cultural activities, some of which we will discuss later in more detail. What I want to highlight for the moment is that all these demonstrations were marked by an overriding political necessity. For the MinCulPop, cultural expansion went hand in hand with propaganda dissemination: Fascist Italy, its strength and its achievements were to be constantly glorified in newspaper articles, radio programmes and the information bulletins of cultural societies, contrasting with and possibly surpassing more deeply rooted cultural traditions, such as those of France or Germany.

To this end, from 1940 onwards, MinCulPop tried to promote the distribution of Luce newsreels translated into Serbo-Croatian, which were to be shown not only in Belgrade but also in some of the Kingdom's other main cities. The Belgrade public, which had previously shown very little interest in the Italian propaganda articles that Rome had tried to put in the local press,[28] did not

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[26] Prince Regent Paul's move took Ciano completely by surprise. In his diary, he wrote of the enthusiastic welcome he had received in Belgrade from the population and of a generic, long conversation with Prince Regent Paul, who had offered lavished with praise on his prime minister. Considering that Yugoslavia was now effectively lost, his main political reaction was to accelerate plans to conquer Albania without taking into account the Yugoslav position. Vedi G. Ciano, *Diario 1937–1943*, (Milano: BUR – Storia, 1999), 242 e 249. Si veda anche G. Bruno Guerri, *Galeazzo Ciano. Una vita 1903–1944*, (Milano: Bompiani, 1979), 372–373.

[27] Born in Korčula in Dalmatia on 18th February 1891, Giovanni Maver, a philologist by vocation, is considered the father of Italian Slavistics. His studies in Polish literature are of great importance, while his studies on Serbo-Croatian literature contributed to placing it within a precise European literary context. In 1952 Maver founded the journal *Ricerche slavistiche*. For a profile of the scholar see E. Sgambati, "Maver, Giovanni", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 72, 2008.

[28] "[...] even friendly periodicals have little enthusiasm for the articles, which are not always of a particularly topical nature [...]. ACS, MinCulPop, Busta 143, confidential sent on 21st December 1938 by the Italian Legation in Belgrade to the MinCulPop. Available online: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-maver_(Dizionario-Biografico)/

seem to react with much enthusiasm either towards these newsreels or, more generally, towards Italian cinema. Moreover, the dissemination of such openly Axis-linked film material could only cause concern to the Yugoslav authorities, a country desperately trying to remain neutral between the warring sides. So much so that a dispatch from the Italian Legation sent to the Ministry of Culture on 4th December 1940 states:

> [...] the Belgrade police have summoned the owners and directors of cinemas over the last few days and have informed them that all scenes of war or politics likely to provoke reactions must be avoided, even when such scenes had been previously authorised by the censors [...] in these conditions the cinema management was forced to withdraw the weekly Luce newsreels.[29]

A few days later, the director of the General Directorate of Propaganda of the MinCulPop, Ottaviano Koch, at the urgent invitation of the Legation, had to urge the immediate suspension of the Luce newsreels because "[...] they often arouse contrary responses from the public."[30]

What we are dealing with here seems to have been a cultural action that was at times bold but short-lived, unsystematic and not carefully planned; it aimed at chasing and trying to limit the actions of other countries and, above all, it had to go hand in hand with parallel political action. In this way, one of the basic principles of any cultural action in a foreign country was lost sight of, namely, helping the popularisation of the Italian language and culture outside the official circuits directly managed by the Italian State through the organisation of non-episodic cultural events and, above all, through well-thought-out collaborations with academic institutions and local intellectuals. For Italy, on the other hand, it was always a matter of chasing other countries' initiatives and trying to emphasize the differences with the cumbersome German ally. In a document sent to Ciano the day after his visit to Yugoslavia on 26–28th March 1938, the Minister of Popular Culture Dino Alfieri wrote that Italian cultural-diplomatic action would ultimately result in "[...] that Italian-German collaboration could not, in the end, create in the Yugoslavs the conviction of a German predominance in Axis policy".[31] In October 1938, the Italian Legation had to apply to the Foreign Ministry for authorisation to organise Italian language courses at the 'Casa d'Italia', since other foreign organisations had already organised language courses for the Belgrade public. The same applies to donations of books, cinema and musical events, development of tourist exchanges, etc. Moreover, the start of an initiative often coincided with the abrupt interruption of a previous

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[29] Ibid., Busta 146, Dispatch of 4 December 1938 sent by the Italian Legation to the MinCulPop.

[30] Ibid..

[31] Ibid., Busta 144. Undated document.

one, no matter how well it had worked. Funds were never sufficient, and the choices made penalised all those institutions that were not immediately traceable to official state or fascist party bodies. For example, in December 1938, the Italian Legation decided to suspend the funding it had previously granted to the People's Library operating within the "Dom Kulture" in Belgrade, which in the second half of 1937 had shown willingness to open a designated "Italian Room" on its premises. The sum allocated up to that point was entirely devolved to the Casa degli Italiani which, as we have seen, was responsible for setting up the first Italian language courses for foreigners in the city.[32] It is worth pointing out that the previous operation had been carried out precisely in consideration of the abundant and qualified intellectual and student attendance boasted by that Belgrade cultural institution. During the first half of 1939, an attempt was made to increase the number of scholarships for Yugoslav students, especially "[…] in view of the large number of scholarships granted by the French government to Yugoslav students". In other cases, it was discovered that valuable economic resources were being wasted in activities that were not always very clear. For example, on 7th May 1940, the Director-General of Propaganda, Koch himself, wrote to the Italian Legation in Belgrade to obtain clarification on the people who were involved in the "Ital-Jug" magazine, which was financed by public money and also had close associates in the entourage of Minister Alfieri, because "[…] recently, doubts have been raised about the aims of the magazine, which, in reality, are mainly inspired by the private family interests of a small group of businessmen".[33] But beyond these problems, in some ways typical of Italian cultural action abroad (at least in South-Eastern Europe), in the specific case of Yugoslavia, there was another negative factor. The building of a strong cultural presence, in preparation for a penetration that would have made Italian culture and language privileged instruments in the manoeuvre aimed at making Yugoslavia an ally or, even better, a subsidiary of Fascist Italy, passed mainly through the close relations between the regime and the person who, until February 1939, seemed to be the strongman of the country's politics: Milan Stojadinović. After the latter's sudden political demise, which had blindsided the Italians, the prospects of the Italian presence slowly began to decline. In this regard, I find interesting a long letter sent from Belgrade on 8th June 1939 by the local envoy of the Stefani Agency to its president. The author of the letter, Corrado Sofia, a journalist and member of the local committee of the Dante Alighieri Society, noted how both a football match between the Italian and Yugoslavian national teams (which was also marred by clashes) and Prince Paul's visit to Rome sometime earlier had – certainly not incidentally – been under-reported in the media

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[32] Ibid., MinCulPop note for the minister of 16th December 1938.

[33] Ibid., note of 10th May 1940 by Octavian Koch.

of the capital in particular and of the country in general. According to the journalist, this was due, on the one hand, to the surprise, not yet fully processed, of the Belgrade political circles at the Italian occupation of Albania,[34] which had evidently contributed to altering the already fragile Balkan equilibrium, but even more so, the fall of Stojadinović, which had weakened the Italian positions in favour of the West and, above all, the British.[35] Moreover, it is worth emphasising that, as early as the beginning of the spring of 1940, Mussolini was already contemplating a definitive attack on Yugoslavia. The Fascist leader had once again allowed the Ustaša leader Ante Pavelić to resume work on the plan to stage an insurrection in Croatia and ordered Ciano to speak to Hitler about the need to put an end to the existence of Yugoslavia, which he described as a typical anti-Italian "[...] Versailles creation".[36]

At this point, it is interesting to try to understand the cultural activities undertaken by the Italian Institute of Culture in Belgrade after its grand opening in a ceremony attended by Giuseppe Bottai, Minister of National Education.[37] On 30th March 1940, Giovanni Maver gave an account of what had been achieved in those first months in a report to the Ministry of Culture. In the meantime, the Institute in Belgrade had been joined by another in Zagreb, and a third in Ljubljana was soon to be opened. In total, about 1,400 people regularly attended Italian language courses. Maver's report, however, made it clear that these satisfactory results could only be consolidated and improved by an even broader action of disseminating Italian books, promoting

> [...] and checking translations from Italian into Serbo-Croatian [... maintaining] the closest contacts with the press [... awarding] the most willing students with encouragement prizes, that is to say, carrying out, as Maver concluded, "[...] an activity which, although partly outside the more direct and immediate

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[34] Apparently, the Yugoslav reaction to the Italian occupation of Albania was calm and unreserved acceptance of what had happened. Prime Minister Svetovar Cincar-Marković stressed that the Yugoslav attitude was clear proof of the friendship between Belgrade and the governments in Rome and Berlin and demanded a public declaration by Germany of the German interest in maintaining a strong and united Yugoslavia. Cfr. J. B. Hoptner, *Yugoslavia in Crisis 1934–1941*, (New York – London: Columbia University Press, 1962), 143–144.

[35] ACS – MinCulPop, Busta 146. Letter sent by Corrado Sofia to the Stefani presidency on 8th June 1939.

[36] Cfr. L. Monzali, *Il sogno dell'egemonia. L'Italia la questione jugoslava e l'Europa centrale*, (Firenze: Le Lettere, 2010), 83.

[37] In his Diary, Bottai left very few notes of his trip to Yugoslavia, which took him not only to Belgrade but also to Zagreb. However, the Fascist hierarch derived the idea that, in general, the Yugoslav political circles assigned to Italy "[...] an 'intermediate' function in the conflict, in the sense of dialectic mediation between opposing principles rather than any kind of compromise [...]". See G. Bottai, *Diario. 1935–1944*, (Milano: BUR – Storia, 2011), 176–177.

obligations of the Institutes, assumes, in the current conditions, an equally great importance".[38]

The increase of resources requested by Professor Maver represented only part of the problem. In reality, as an undated report (presumably drawn up between mid-1939 and the first months of 1940) clearly showed, the greatest obstacles to the popularisation of the Italian language and culture in Belgrade and, more generally, in Yugoslavia lay in other factors which we can summarise as follows: 1) the preponderant economic power of Germany "determined to carry out, as it did at any cost, a well-organised action of economic propaganda in order to monopolise the Yugoslav market" 2) the fierce resistance of France, which tried to defend its positions in parliamentary, university and army circles etc. at any cost 3) England, which boasted a rock-solid relationship with the circles of the Court and in particular with Prince Paul.

The months between the end of 1940 and the beginning of 1941 saw a constant increase in pressure from Germany (by then definitively established as the dominant power in the Balkan Peninsula) for Yugoslavia to move away from its neutral position and join the alliance with the Axis. Finally, on 25th March 1941, the Yugoslav government decided to bow down and sign the country's accession to the Tripartite Pact. The now clear preponderance of the Axis powers had inevitable repercussions in the constant increase of the German, but also Italian, cultural presence throughout the Kingdom. Particularly striking was the increase in the number of Italian professorships and teaching positions, not only in universities but also in high schools and the main secondary schools. One month before Belgrade's accession to the Tripartite Pact, on 19th February 1941, a dispatch sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Culture highlighted that "at the beginning of the present school year this Ministry has obtained, following appropriate approaches to the Yugoslav government, the introduction of compulsory Italian classes in about 70 real grammar schools (of a technical and classical nature) and optional classes in about 90 establishments of the same type [...]". From secondary schools, the operation spread to universities, where new Italian departments were being opened, and they, like the schools, needed the necessary Italian libraries, the opening of which, however, was delayed by the usual lack of funds.[39] Another dispatch, dated a few days earlier, again from the Foreign Office but this time addressed to the Belgrade Legation, underlined with satisfaction the increase in the number of secondary schools that taught Italian. In short, the gradual slide of Yugoslavia into the political orbit of the Axis had clear repercussions on the contextual increase in the Italian

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[38] ACS, MinCulPop, Busta 144. Memo sent by Giovanni Maver to the Director-General of Propaganda, Ottaviano Koch, on 30th March 1940.

[39] ACS, Fondo MinCulPop. Iugoslavia Busta 144.

cultural and linguistic presence in the Kingdom and even in its capital, where, on the other hand, until 1937, the Italian presence had been secondary at best.

There is no doubt that this was an artificial growth, overbearing and vigorous as it was. Lacking solid foundations, rather than fostering love for the Italian culture among the Yugoslav and Belgrade elites or motivating them to accept the fascist educational models, it found its reason for existence in the attempt made by the Yugoslav government to please a momentarily powerful neighbour, at times threatening and fickle, and whose good graces seemed important in trying to gain time and room for manoeuvre – in a truly complicated context – vis-à-vis Germany, the major partner in the Tripartite Pact and, as has been said many times, the real dominant power in the Balkan region. In a dispatch sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 9th September 1940, the new Italian Minister in Belgrade, Mameli, pointed out that, although he could boast of some progress in the teaching of Italian in Yugoslav schools, the Italian language still lagged behind German, which was mandatory in 138 state secondary schools compared to only 11 where Italian was compulsory. Despite Mameli's reassurances, this difference could not be attributed solely to a shortage of Italian teaching staff, nor could it be remedied solely by obliging "[...] Professor Maver and all the teachers in the Italian schools [...] to return to Yugoslavia as soon as possible.[40]

In short, in Belgrade and many other parts of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Italian presence seemed in some ways artificial, and the pro-Western coup d'état of 27th March 1941 by General Simović, which removed Prince Paul and his government from power and proclaimed King Peter II Karađorđević of age, revealed the precariousness of the Italian presence. A report drawn up in Rome on 23rd April recounted how, on that same 27th March, a crowd of 7,000 people gathered in Terazije in front of the Italian Bookshop and immediately

> [...] began to manifest their animosity towards Italy and Germany, whistling, throwing invectives and hurling large stones at the windows of the store. At 8 a.m., the first of the vandalistic raids by the crowd took place, raids which were repeated at short intervals and led to the destruction of books and decorative art objects on display in the hall on the ground floor [...] even the troops assigned to a fictitious security service took an active part in the raids [...] On the 30th, the Royal Minister ordered the management of the Office to leave by the special train made available to Italians living in Belgrade[...]. [41]

Very shortly, the war and the destruction of the Yugoslav state as it had appeared after the First World War put a definitive end to that experience. The rebirth of the Italian cultural presence in Belgrade in a very different guise and

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[40] Ibid., Despatch of 9th September 1940.

[41] Ibid., Busta 145. Report sent by the head of the Italian Office in Belgrade, Dante Benedetti, to the MinculPop.

with different objectives would come in another era and completely different political systems in both Italy and Yugoslavia.

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Le fascisme roumain dans un contexte centre-européen :
historiographie et problématiques

Résumé : Pour le fascisme roumain comme pour la plupart des autres champs historiographiques, 1989 représenta une césure importante à plusieurs titres. Dans la production domestique, c'est la fin du national-communisme qui dédouanait le fascisme de la Garde de fer de ses origines autochtones et l'attribuait à l'influence étrangère, italienne et allemande. Dans la production occidentale, l'amplification d'une réflexion sur les traits d'un fascisme générique font du cas roumain un exemple important et finissent par influencer la production locale, qui se remarque par une sorte de rattrapage théorique rapide et une production abondante.

Mots clés : fascisme, Roumanie, historiographie, entre-deux-guerres

L'historiographie du fascisme roumain de part et d'autre de 1989 : du peuple allergique au fascisme au principal fascisme centre-européen ?

La question du fascisme roumain parvient à une maturité historiographique qui exige un examen attentif et synthétique, pour au moins deux raisons. Des raisons négatives d'abord, à commencer par la pauvreté relative de la bibliographie occidentale scientifique, compensée par sa qualité. Récemment, les publications d'Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine en France dans des recueils généraux sur le fascisme[1] ou sur l'Europe centrale[2] ont bénéficié de deux leviers novateurs : les jeunesses fascistes de personnalités célèbres du paysage intellectuel occidental comme Cioran et Eliade, ainsi que la participation de la Roumanie à la persécution des Juifs dans ses provinces orientales pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Avec cet exemple nous abordons les raisons positives, c'est-à-dire le foisonnement de publications roumaines après 1989, souvent polari-

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[1]   A. Laignel-Lavastine, « Fascisme et communisme en Roumanie : enjeux et usages d'une comparaison », *Stalinisme e— t nazisme, histoire et mémoire comparées*, dans Henry Rousso, (Paris : Hachette, 1999), 201–245.

[2]   A. Laignel-Lavastine, « Le XXe siècle roumain, ou la modernité problématique », *Histoire des idées politiques de l'Europe centrale*, dans Chantal Delsol et Michel Maslowski, (Paris : PUF, coll. Politique d'aujourd'hui), 563–587.

sées idéologiquement. Il ne faut néanmoins pas survaloriser la rupture de 1989, d'une part parce que les principales publications et interprétations avaient vu le jour dans la littérature de l'émigration et au sein de la sphère scientifique occidentale et – partiellement – orientale avant cette date, d'autre part parce qu'il n'y a pas eu de « rush » initial vers les archives est-européennes[3], mais plutôt des affrontements idéologico-politiques qui sont en voie d'apaisement et de solution scientifique depuis une dizaine d'années. Pour rester au niveau des thèses universitaires, les livres fondamentaux et pas encore remplacés sont apparus avant – ou en – 1989 : il s'agit, pour les Croix Fléchées, de la thèse de Margit Szölösi-Janze, *Die Pfeilkreuzlerbewegung in Ungarn : historischer Kontext, Entwicklung und Herrschaft*, parue en 1989 à Munich[4] et pour la Légion roumaine, la thèse d'Arnim Heinen, *Die Legion « Erzengel Michael » in Rumänien : soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation, ein Beitrag zum Problem des internationalen Faschismus*, parue également à Munich, en 1986, et traduite en roumain seulement en 1999[5], ce qui était significatif du peu d'empressement d'envisager le passé fasciste de la Roumanie. On peut y ajouter, pour le mouvement roumain, la thèse de l'Espagnol Francisco Veiga, traduite dès 1993[6] et moins convaincante que le travail de Heinen. Enfin, si l'on souhaite ne pas exclure les ouvrages marxistes, on peut se référer encore utilement à l'ouvrage de 1966 de Lackó Miklós, y compris dans sa traduction anglaise de 1969[7], beaucoup moins à Ion Spălăţelu et Mihai Fătu[8] – nationaux-communistes qui dédouanent le peuple roumain d'une origine locale et d'une implantation massive du fascisme –, mais pas non plus à Radu Ioanid, marxiste non-nationaliste qui publie aux États-Unis et qui reprend sans sourciller la définition du fascisme de Dimitrov, le secrétaire général du Komintern, qui en fait la pointe avancée du capital financier[9]. En fait, certains travaux comme ceux de Heinen et de Szölösi-Janze,

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[3]   Voir, pour le cas roumain, A. Laignel-Lavastine, « Fascisme et communisme… », 221 et suivantes.

[4]   Margit Szölösi-Janze, *Die Pfeilkreuzlerbewegung in Ungarn : historischer Kontext, Entwicklung und Herrschaft*, Munich : Oldenburg, 1989, 499.

[5]   D'Arnim Heinen, Die Legion « Erzengel Michael » in Rumänien : soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation, ein Beitrag zum Problem des internationalen Faschismus, Muinich : Oldenburg 1986, 546.

[6]   F. Veiga, and M. Ştefănesc. *Istoria Gărzii de Fier: 1919–1941 : mistica ultranaţionalismului*, (Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1995).

[7]   M. Lacko, *Arrow-cross men, national socialists, 1935–1944,* (Budapest : Akademiai Kiado, 1969).

[8]   P. Eidelberg, « Garda De Fier : Organizatie Teroristă De TIP Fascist. By Mihai Fatuand Ion Spălătelu. Bucharest : Editura Politică, 1971. 430 pp. Lei 8.25, paper. », *Slavic Review*, 34(1) (1975), 179–180.

[9]   I. Radu, *The sword of the archangel : fascist ideology in Romania.* (Boulder : East European Monographs, 1990), traduit en roumain en 1994, référence aux 9–11 de l'édition roumaine revue et complétée. Voir T. Sandu, « Le renouvellement de l'histoire politique roumaine de

vérifient pleinement les pronostics de 1978 du spécialiste israélien des fascismes centre-européens Béla Vagó, selon lequel la mobilisation de la documentation occidentale pouvait aboutir à des études complètes et pertinentes.[10]

1989 apparaît donc davantage comme l'épuisement d'un cycle scientifique inauguré à la fin des années cinquante et au début des années soixante par l'intégration des fascismes centre-européens aux questionnements sur les fascismes majeurs allemand et italien. A mi-parcours, en 1978, Béla Vagó faisait le point sur les insuffisances interprétatives et heuristiques, et je renvoie à son article pour un propos d'étape critique envers les acquis jusqu'au milieu des années soixante-dix. Relevons toutefois les principales caractéristiques de cette production universitaire. Les intervenants des volumes précédant celui dirigé par Walter Laqueur et qui comporte la mise au point de Béla Vagó ne sont pas spécialistes des fascismes centre-européens, car de tels universitaires n'existaient pas. Ce fait comporte des inconvénients évidents – y compris des erreurs factuelles –, mais aussi quelques avantages : par exemple, les trois articles d'Eugen Weber sur la Légion de l'Archange Michel[11] ou les chapitres d'Ernst Nolte sur le sujet[12] bénéficient d'une insertion dans les débats historiques d'ensemble sur les droites, dont les auteurs possèdent une vue globale et parviennent à dégager les spécificités roumaines et plus généralement centre-européennes – une modernisation limitée et menée par des allogènes ; la nécessité pour les fascistes de toucher les masses rurales traditionnelles avec une idéologie et selon des techniques empreintes d'activisme social, de religion et de fidélité monarchique très différentes de celles employées à l'ouest ; l'esprit de sacrifice de la jeunesse face à la puissance des forces traditionnelles résistant à la prise de pouvoir, etc. Mais les inconvénients liés à ce regard trop distancié sont multiples. Il prend pour argent comptant les sources fascistes, seules disponibles, lorsqu'il s'agit de souligner leur radicalisme idéologique et leur pureté religieuse, qu'Eugen Weber oppose à l'opportunisme « balkanique » environnant et aux provocations

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l'entre-deux-guerres », dans Traian Sandu (direction), *Illusions de puissance, puissance de l'illusion, historiographies et histoire de l'Europe centrale dans les relations internationales entre les deux guerres*, (L'Harmattan, coll. Cahiers de la Nouvelle Europe, 2005).

[10] B. Vagó, « Fascism in Eastern Europe », *Fascism, a Reader's Guide, Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography*, dans Walter Laqueur, (Berkeley and Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1978) 229–253.

[11] E. Weber, « Romania », *Varieties of Fascism*, (New Jersey : Princeton, 1964); E. Weber et H. Rogger, « Romania », *The European Right. A Historical Profile*, (Berkeley et Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1966); E. Weber, « The Men of the Archangel », International Fascism, 1920–1945, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1, 1966.

[12] E. Nolte, *Les Mouvements fascistes, l'Europe de 1919 à 1945*, (Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1969), 235–251.

d'un régime brutal dans une comparaison fascinée.[13] Il ignore ce faisant les attitudes de fuite devant les responsabilités de Codreanu, son velléitarisme politique face au pouvoir, ses arrangements avec la morale lorsqu'il s'agissait d'actions commises par les siens, et surtout la complaisance du régime jusqu'aux violences légionnaires d'avril 1936 (voire jusqu'à la rencontre Carol-Codreanu de février 1937), ainsi que l'élaboration d'une religion politique et d'un monarchisme *sui generis* qui infirment les prétendus respect de Codreanu à l'égard des institutions traditionnelles qu'étaient l'Église et la monarchie.[14] Son charisme, réel, ne laisse pas de place au rappel de sa médiocrité en tant qu'idéologue et qu'orateur, les deux n'étant d'ailleurs pas antinomiques. Les mêmes louanges et reproches peuvent être adressés à Istvan Deák dans le même volume : s'il prend pleinement la mesure de l'abîme séparant le régime conservateur puissant de Horthy et le fascisme populiste et sanglant de Szálasi, de l'innocuité de la tentative médiane de Gömbös, de l'appel à une religion pré-chrétienne « touranienne », il tombe, à la suite de l'ouvrage classique de Macartney[15], dans le travers de la fascination et de la disculpation de l'individu Szálasi, considéré comme un illuminé vertueux, social et jusqu'au-boutiste, dont les excès n'étaient que les conséquences d'une logique trop aboutie.[16] Deák avoue ne pas comprendre les écrits idéologiques de Szálasi, où il explicite la théorie national-socialiste comme la réalisation concrète de l'esprit de la nation organique.[17] La position disculpant Szálasi des crimes de 1944 a été paradoxalement reprise par le spécialiste juif Jenö Lévai lors d'un colloque à Jérusalem en 1969.[18] Ces insuffisances initiales, mais aussi ces premiers acquis, firent l'objet de développements et de corrections dans les publications ultérieures.

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[13] Voir notamment les 83–84 de sa « Roumanie » dans le volume co-dirigé avec Hans Rogger, dans la traduction roumaine avec une étude introductive de A. Mihu, « Sociologia mişcării legionare », (Cluj, ed. Dacia, 1995), 127.

[14] Voir pour tous ces aspects notre article, « Le conflit entre fascisme et monarchisme en Roumanie : données structurelles et déroulement », dans F. Taubert, *La Périphérie du fascisme, spécification d'un modèle fasciste au sein de sociétés agraires ; le cas de l'Europe centrale entre les deux guerres*, édité par Catherine Horel, Traian Sandu et Fritz Taubert, (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2006), 91–109, 187.

[15] C. A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth. A History of Modern Hungary, 1929–1945*, 2 vols., (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 1956).

[16] J'ai utilisé l'édition roumaine du recueil de Weber et Rogger, Bucarest, ed. Minerva, 1995, 298. Voir aussi 299, des propos que Weber aurait pu, mutatis mutandis, appliquer à Codreanu : « Il n'a été ni un grand orateur, ni un bon organisateur, mais sa sincérité et son honnêteté incontestables ont provoqué l'admiration des foules, peut-être parce que de telles qualités étaient rares dans la Hongrie de l'époque. »

[17] Ibid., 301.

[18] Analysé dans B. Vagó, « Fascism in Eastern Europe », 245–246.

Un des apports du recueil *European Fascism*[19] de 1968 concernait surtout la Hongrie. Il porte sur l'approche du pouvoir par les formations fascistes, grâce à deux leviers imparfaits : le premier, ce sont des partis concurrents et potentiellement alliés à la fois au sein d'une droite hypertrophiée, diversifiée et en voie de radicalisation rapide ; l'autre c'est l'armée, notamment ses cadres les plus jeunes, à la recherche d'une représentation politique radicale au sein des masses, en échange de leur bienveillance face à la prise du pouvoir. Ces hypothèses interprétatives s'appuyaient en partie sur la publication de *The Confidential Papers of Admiral Horthy* directement en anglais, comme si le régime kadarien souhaitait, en 1965, rompre avec l'interprétation qui prévalait jusque-là du régime horthyste assimilé au fascisme, car ces documents insistent sur la diversité des droites et l'opposition entre conservateurs et fascistes. Le livre de Lackó Miklós confirma le tournant l'année suivante, en concédant à Szálasi un impact sur les masses, mais seulement sur le sous-prolétariat – un reliquat interprétatif marxiste. L'intervention sur la Roumanie de Zevedei Barbu[20] amorce également une critique de Weber, en rappelant la complaisance du régime à l'égard des légionnaires jusqu'à une date avancée, afin de ramener leur phraséologie martyrologique à sa réalité de provocation enfin réprimée et de prétention totalitaire vivant toute contradiction comme une agression. Bref, tout en rappelant d'éventuelles collusions, ce volume introduisit une distinction entre droites, y compris de la part d'historiens venus des pays de l'est les plus avancés.

Le recueil de Sugar de 1971 est le seul en Occident à traiter uniquement des fascismes centre-européens. Mettant en parallèle interventions est-européennes et occidentales, l'occasion est offerte d'une étude historiographique comparative, à la notable exception de la Roumanie. La production hongroise, représentée par György Ránki, confirme son évolution, mais aussi ses limites. La Roumanie est représentée par deux occidentaux. Emanuel Turczynski dresse un tableau socio-culturel sur la longue durée du divorce entre société paysanne et super-structure étatique gérée par et au bénéfice d'allogènes, tandis que le sentiment national se construisait contre eux, fondé sur l'identité ethnico-religieuse.[21] Stephen Fischer-Galați s'attache davantage au mouvement légionnaire, en insistant à juste titre sur son caractère autochtone et populiste, mais aussi violent et hooligan ; néanmoins, son insinuation d'une collusion idéologique après le pacte électoral entre le démocrate Maniu et Codreanu lors

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[19] J. Erös, « Hungary », *European Fascism*, ed. S. J. Woolf, 111–145. (Londres : Weidenfeld et Nicholson, 1968).

[20] Ibid., 146–166.

[21] E. Turczynski, « The Background of Romanian Fascism », Peter Sugar, *Native fascism in the Successor States, 1918–1945*, Santa Barbara, Calif., ABC-Clio, 1971, 101–110.

des élections de décembre 1937 – qui virent la percée du mouvement – laissent fortement à désirer.[22]

Avec le livre classique de Nicholas Nagy-Talavera, nous tenons une comparaison qui synthétise les acquis précédents, mais qui reprend les clichés de Weber sur l'intransigeance des légionnaires, sur leur esprit de sacrifice et sur l'absence d'antisémitisme racial, seul le ressort social expliquant la férocité du sentiment roumain, contrairement aux fascistes hongrois ; on peut aussi s'étonner de voir attribuer l'appellation de fascistes – parfois atténuée du qualificatif de « proto » – aux conservateurs autoritaires comme Horthy et Carol.[23]

Nous avons dit l'importance de l'étude de Béla Vagó, premier véritable universitaire spécialiste de la question en position de critiquer les travaux précédents. Relevons ici seulement les perspectives de recherche qu'il propose à l'historiographie occidentale scientifique dans ses conclusions. Il situe les principales lacunes dans les domaines idéologique et social ; il souhaitait l'analyse du contexte intellectuel, notamment littéraire, qui avait favorisé l'émergence de ces mouvements ; les relations avec les institutions religieuses étaient aussi importantes et mal documentées ; enfin, la politique antisémite des deux principaux mouvements restait obscure. Toutes ces pistes ont été déblayées dans les années suivantes.

Le nouveau cycle ouvert en 1989 se manifeste d'abord par une instrumentation tous azimuts de la question nationale. Cela vaut autant pour les nationalistes, y compris anciens ou néo-fascistes, qui luttent désormais à découvert dans tous les sens du terme – puisqu'ils ne cachent plus leurs options par crainte de la répression, mais ne bénéficient plus non plus de l'indifférence occidentale liée à la guerre froide – que pour les anti-fascistes – qui régressent parfois aux bonnes vieilles accusations de fascisme à l'encontre de tout ce qui ressemble à de l'ultra-conservatisme ou qui reprennent les fausses allégations de cinquième colonne hitlériste, ce que les fascistes avant 1939 ne sont précisément pas.[24]

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[22] S. Fischer-Galați, « Fascism in Romania », Sugar, Sugar, *Native fascism in the Successor States*, 112–121. Sur le pacte électoral de non-agression Maniu-Codreanu-Gheorghe Brătianu, voir « Le conflit entre fascisme et monarchisme en Roumanie : données structurelles et déroulement ». In Catherine Horel, Traian Sandu et Fritz Taubert, eds. *La Périphérie du fascisme, spécification d'un modèle fasciste au sein de sociétés agraires. Le cas de l'Europe centrale entre les deux guerres*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2006, 91–109.

[23] Pour une synthèse commode de son livre – N. Nagy-Talavera, Green Shirts and others, A History of Fascism in Hungary and Romania, (Stanford : Hoover Institution Press, 1970) ; N. Nagy-Talavera, « La naissance du fascisme en Hongrie et en Roumanie, inséparable de l'antisémitisme », Les Conséquences des traités de paix de 1919–1920 en Europe centrale et sud-orientale, Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg du 24–26 mai 1984, (l'Association des Publications près les Universités de Strasbourg, 1987), 393–400.

[24] Voir notre survol critique, « Le renouvellement de l'histoire politique roumaine de l'entre-deux-guerres .» In Sandu, Traian, direction (2005). *Illusions de puissance, puissance de l'illu-*

La littérature serbe plus ou moins scientifique sur les Oustachis a également connu un boom marqué au moment des guerres yougoslaves de la première moitié des années 1990, après des années de relative discrétion au nom de la co-habitation yougoslave. La fin de la guerre froide a aussi eu des conséquences sur la production concernant l'austrofascisme, mais la liberté dont jouit la production historique en Autriche et l'ouverture des archives en font un cas atypique dans notre espace, du moins sur le plan méthodologique : il s'agit davantage de tabous historiographiques liés à la mémoire qu'à une contrainte idéologique institutionnelle, ce qui la rapproche du cas allemand.[25]

Il semble que les publications de mémoires d'anciens fascistes aient été beaucoup plus prolifiques chez les Roumains que chez les Hongrois ou chez d'autres congénères centre-européens en raison des circonstances de leur élimination du pouvoir dès janvier 1941 : cela a permis aux chefs légionnaires de ne pas se trouver directement impliqués dans la défaite du Reich et de ses satellites, malgré la création d'un gouvernement Sima à Vienne après le 23 août 1944 et le renversement d'alliances de la Roumanie. Ils ont ainsi pu éviter la demande d'extradition de leur pays d'origine, contrairement aux Croix Flé-chées ou à certains Oustachis – même si ces derniers ont pu compter sur des appuis importants auprès de dignitaires catholiques pour s'échapper. Donc le débat a été particulièrement vif en Roumanie, les légionnaires bénéficiant de cette non-implication dans les atrocités massives de la guerre, ainsi que de leur lutte dans la résistance anti-communiste, y compris sous forme de parachu-tages américains lors de la guerre froide. Leur légitimation se lit par exemple dans la composition du conseil scientifique de l'Institut national pour l'Étude du Totalitarisme où on trouve, aux côtés de scientifiques de haut vol comme Armin Heinen et du meilleur spécialiste de l'histoire politique roumaine de l'entre-deux-guerres, Ioan Scurtu, le nom de Şerban Milcoveanu, un médecin de haut niveau et publiciste très prolixe, ancien légionnaire proche de Codreanu et qui n'a jamais renié ses convictions, ainsi que nous avons pu nous en rendre compte en l'interviewant le 21 juillet 2004. Une telle situation paraît impossible en Hongrie après les atrocités commises durant le gouvernement Szálasi et les procès de 1946, à la fois par empêchement biologique consécutif à l'élimina-tion des principaux chefs et pour des raisons politiques, le principal parti d'ex-

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sion, historiographies et histoire de l'Europe centrale dans les relations internationales entre les deux guerres. Paris : L'Harmattan, coll. Cahiers de la Nouvelle Europe, 2005, 77–83.

[25] Voir la mise au point historiographique au début de l'étude de P. Pasteur, « Austrofas-cisme » ou régime autoritaire corporatiste chrétien ? », *La Périphérie du fascisme*, eds. *Cathe-rine Horel, Traian Sandu et Fritz Taubert La Périphérie du fascisme, spécification d'un modèle fasciste au sein de sociétés agraires. Le cas de l'Europe centrale entre les deux guerres*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2005, 119–122.

trême-droite ne revendiquant pas l'héritage, contrairement à certains partis roumains, plus ambigus.

Toutefois, à partir du *milieu des années quatre-vingt-dix*, les transitions politiques et la fin de la première phase des guerres yougoslaves ont permis une certaine détente historiographique et un début de dépolitisation des histoires nationales, sous la pression également des exigences des intégrations occidentales. On peut suivre l'évolution vers un souci de probité scientifique et d'extension à des domaines jusque-là ignorés des champs de recherche.

Les séries documentaires sont une bouffée d'air scientifique dans une littérature saturée d'idéologie. Avant d'aborder les diverses approches thématiques du problème, signalons certaines publications de documents qui répondent aux normes scientifiques. Un sort particulier doit être réservé aux documents autrichiens pour les raisons déjà exposées. Malgré le sérieux qui préside à leur publication, signalons néanmoins que le titre de la série – *Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes*[26] – reste imprégné de la théorie de la victimisation de l'Autriche et de la déresponsabilisation de l'opinion dans la marche vers l'Anschluss. C'est d'ailleurs un des rares traits que partage l'historiographie autrichienne avec celle des pays du bloc soviétique. En effet, même si nous sommes loin des confusions marxistes perdurant jusque dans les années soixante-dix entre fascisme et régime conservateur musclé de Dollfuss et de Schuschnigg[27] ou de Tiso en Slovaquie[28], à l'origine des dénominations de clérico-fascisme et/ou d'austro-fascisme dans le cas autrichien, une approche s'impose des nuances des droites et de leurs éventuelles passerelles.

Il ne semble pas que nos collègues hongrois aient entrepris de publication systématique sur le sujet : l'occultation de la problématique et le succès des partis d'extrême droite après 1989 ont été moindres qu'en Roumanie, où la nécessité s'en est fait sentir. Dès 1996 apparaît le premier volume édité par l'Institut national pour l'étude du totalitarisme[29], qui regroupe dans une

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[26] Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes, ed. *Kampf um Österreich : Die Vaterländische Front und ihr Widerstand gegen den Anschluss 1933–1938. Eine Dokumentation.* (Vienna : Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984).

[27] Par example chez F. Fellner, « The Background of Austrian Fascism », Sugar, *Native fascism in the Successor States*, 15–23. Toutefois, dans ses conclusions, Sugar lui-même insiste sur le dépassement des notions de « clérico-fascisme » et de « monarcho-fascisme », Sugar, *Native fascism in the Successor States*, 148.

[28] Voir, en français, É. Boisserie, « Eléments sur le fascisme en Slovaquie dans l'entre-deux-guerres », La Périphérie du fascisme, eds. Catherine Horel, Traian Sandu et Fritz Taubert, La Périphérie du fascisme, spécification d'un modèle fasciste au sein de sociétés agraires. *Le cas de l'Europe centrale entre les deux guerres*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2006, 167–177.

[29] Scurtu, Ioan, *Totalitarismul de dreapta în România. Origini, manifestări, evoluție* [Letotalitarisme de droite en Roumanie. Origines, manifestations, évolution]. București : Institutul-Național pentru studiul Totalitarismului. Vol. I, 1919–1927 (2000).

volonté significative d'assimilation le fascisme et le communisme. Trois autres volumes suivent, assurant la couverture de l'entre-deux-guerres jusqu'en 1938.[30] La lecture en profondeur de ces volumes révèle une belle diversité de sources, essentiellement d'archive, mais aussi mémorialistiques, couvrant toutes les thématiques, de l'idéologie à l'action politique. Digne de remarque est le regroupement de la plupart de ces documents autour de la formation fasciste de la Légion de l'Archange Michel, qui détermine aussi le découpage chronologique de la série : la ligne éditoriale correspond aux exigences scientifiques.

La Roumanie a suscité de nombreuses études d'*histoire des idées politiques et des mouvements culturels*. Cette discipline jouit d'un accès plus facile aux sources, souvent imprimées donc davantage protégées des interdits officiels frappant les archives. Elle bénéficie aussi de la séduction de personnalités et de thèmes relevant de la spéculation intellectuelle : Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine[31] s'inscrit dans un courant de recherches fécond, en Roumanie comme en Occident, en raison de l'importance de l'idéologie dans la structuration de tout mouvement politique, mais aussi de la célébrité ultérieure de certains jeunes intellectuels fascistes roumains. Précisément, Eliade et Cioran représentent deux tendances différentes, l'une fondamentaliste orthodoxe, l'autre moderniste radicale, du fascisme intellectuel roumain. Mac Linscott Ricketts en 1988[32], Leon Volovici en 1989[33] et Zigu Ornea en 1995[34] publièrent des ouvrages de référence aux côtés d'ouvrages collectifs ou d'actes de colloque.[35] De futures célébrités y côtoient des plumitifs obscurs de la Légion, de mouvements extrémistes non-fascistes ou des compagnons de

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[30] Scurtu Ioan, *Ideologie si formaţiuni de dreapta în România* [Idéologie et formations de droite en Roumanie].– Vol. II : 25 juin 1927–2 janvier 1931 (2000); Vol. III : 5 janvier 1931–7 juin 1934 (2002); Vol. IV : 1934–1938 (2003).

[31] A. Laignel-Lavastine, Cioran, Eliade, Ionesco, L'oubli du fascisme, Trois intellectuels roumains dans la tourmente du siècle, (Paris : PUF, 2002), 557.

[32] M. L. Ricketts, Mircea Eliade. The Romanian Roots, 1907–1945, 2 vols., (New York, 1988).

[33] Volovici, Leon. *Ideologia naţionalistă şi « problema evreiască » în România anilor '30* (l'idéologie nationaliste et le « problème juif » dans la Roumanie des années '30), (Bucarest : Humanitas, 1995), 254, version révisée d'un ouvrage publié à Oxford, Pergamon Press, en 1991.

[34] Z. Ornea, Anii treizeci. Extrema dreapta româneasca, (Bucarest : ed. Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 1995), 470.

[35] F. Alexandru et C. Petculescu, Idea care ucide, dimensiunile ideologiei legionare (l'idée qui tue, les dimensions de l'idéologie légionnaire), (Bucarest : ed. Noua Alternativă. Voir aussi le débat suscité par le Journal de l'écrivain juif Mihai Sebastian -traduit chez Stock, Nouveau Cabinet Cosmopolite, 1998), 568 - témoin de l'évolution pro-légionnaire de certains de ses amis, dans Sebastian sub vremi, singurătatea şi vulnerabilitatea martorului (Sebastian à l'épreuve des temps, la solitude et la vulnérabilité du témoin), Editura Universal Dalsi, sans date, 484.

route plus ou moins épisodiques. L'ouvrage de Florin Ţurcanu sur la jeunesse d'Eliade a été traduit[36] et Marta Petreu vient de publier un essai en anglais sur le fascisme de Cioran.[37]

Problématiques des fascismes centre-européens

Le problème de l'unicité du parti fasciste se trouve au cœur des difficultés d'une définition. En effet, cette question interroge la situation du mouvement fasciste sur la scène politique nationale : elle le dégage de critères transnationaux dépassant non seulement les folklores locaux – dont les fascistes savent manipuler les signes et en recouvrir leur véritable nature – mais également les controverses historiographiques, traversées par des enjeux idéologiques et/ou méthodologiques qui nuisent à cette délimitation. Partons de caractéristiques empiriques : consensus de l'opinion de l'époque ; impossibilité de la multiplication de formations fascistes véritables, donc qui réunissent à la fois les critères idéologiques, le style et l'impact consécutif auprès des masses ; enfin, la reconnaissance de l'historiographie postérieure.

C'est à ce moment que la nouvelle historiographie des années quatre-vingt-dix dérape par bien des aspects. Par exemple, toutes les études occidentales confirment l'unicité de la Légion comme mouvement fasciste roumain.[38] Or certains historiens, visiblement entraînés par le mouvement de révision historique enfin possible, mais marqués par une interprétation marxiste du fascisme, donnent du fascisme roumain une définition étendue à une bonne partie de la droite qui paraît nettement abusive. Radu Ioanid hérite de ces interprétations du communiste Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu, ministre de la Justice immédiatement après la guerre.[39] Si Radu Ioanid dédouane Carol II de l'accusation de

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[36] F. Ţurcanu, Eliade, le prisonnier de l'histoire, (Paris : La Découverte, 2003), 540.

[37] M. Petreu, An Infamous Past : E. M. Cioran and the Rise of Fascism in Romania, (Londres: Ivan R. Dee Publisher, 1999), 320.

[38] Voir le chapitre XI de Heinen, *Die Legion « Erzengel Michael » in Rumänien*, (« La définition conceptuelle du mouvement légionnaire ») et particulièrement la p.467 de l'édition roumaine : « De tous les partis roumains de l'entre-deux-guerres, seule la Légion peut être appelée « fasciste ». » De larges synthèses aboutissaient aux mêmes conclusions : P. Milza, Les Fascismes, (Paris : Le Seuil, 1991), 382, définit la dictature royale de Carol II à partir de février 1938 comme « un régime autoritaire qui est parfois qualifié de « monarcho-fasciste », mais qui est en fait parfaitement réactionnaire et traditionaliste » ; quant à la dictature d'Antonescu de janvier 1941, il ne lui reconnaît qu'« une teinture de totalitarisme » (ibid., 467–468).

[39] L. Pătrăşcanu, *Sous trois dictatures*, (Paris : ed. L'horizon international, 1946), 330. Ioanid, *The sword of the archangel*, 16 : « L'analyse faite par Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu du fascisme roumain s'impose à l'attention du chercheur. … Son œuvre comprend, sans aucun doute, la plus pertinente et profonde analyse du fascisme roumain entreprise jusqu'à aujourd'hui »

fascisme, il en charge le professeur antisémite Constantin Cuza et le poète Octavian Goga[40], deux nationalistes qui finirent par fusionner leurs petits mouvements politiques. Outre que l'historiographie occidentale confirme le caractère non-fasciste des deux hommes, les intéressés eux-mêmes reconnaissaient l'impossibilité d'adopter en Roumanie ce modèle[41]. Cuza avoua ouvertement aux journalistes, à son retour d'Allemagne, les insuffisances d'une assise sociale agraire et l'absence d'une classe moyenne et d'un prolétariat urbains parmi sa clientèle capables d'embrigadement et de mobilisation politique.[42] Jusque dans les méthodes de la violence physique, certains observateurs y virent une différence logique.[43]

La justesse de l'analyse du vieux professeur monarchiste qui finira parmi les grandes notabilités durant la dictature royale[44], ne pouvait qu'irriter son jeune dissident Codreanu, désireux de faire advenir de façon volontariste une réalité fasciste qui pouvait s'appuyer sur une industrialisation et une tertiarisation timides, mais croissantes, de la société roumaine, ainsi que sur une acculturation politique qui soustrayait les masses au vote conservateur en faveur du parti au pouvoir et les livrait aux démagogues populistes. Les mouvements

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… en Roumanie, a-t-on envie d'ajouter à l'attention de Radu Ioanid, visiblement peu au courant en 1994 de la thèse de Heinen soutenue dès 1984 et publiée en 1986 ou de la thèse de Francisco Veiga.

[40] Ioanid, *The sword of the archangel*, 24 et 35.

[41] T. Sandu, « La génération fasciste en Roumanie : recrutement, doctrine, action », Histoire, économie et société, 3 (2003), 437–449.

[42] D. n°166 de Jean de Hauteclocque, chargé d'affaires français en Roumanie, du 21 avril 1933, Z Roumanie 171, f.11–14 : « L'efficacité du national-socialisme et sa rapide ascension en Allemagne s'expliquent par le fait qu'ils s'adressent aux ouvriers des fabriques dans les grands centres industriels. C'est pourquoi les réunions national-socialistes ont toujours été si populées [sic]. Nous, qui sommes un État agraire et dont les ouvriers sont surtout les paysans, nous ne pouvons pas exercer la même influence immédiate sur les grandes masses répandues sur toute l'étendue du pays. Si l'on ajoute à cela l'état de civilisation arriéré de nos grandes masses et le manque de préparation à une vie politique indépendante, on se rend compte que les conditions locales chez nous sont beaucoup plus défavorables au succès immédiat qu'en Allemagne. »

[43] Voir les souvenirs du militant socialiste P. Pandrea, Garda de Fier, Jurnal de filosofie politică, memorii penitenciare (la Garde de Fer, journal de philosophie politique, mémoire pénitentiaires), (Bucarest : ed. Vremea, 2001), 639. : « Celui qui fomentait les désordres à Iași était A.C.Cuza, qui armait ses étudiants non seulement avec sa doctrine criminelle, mais aussi avec la matraque. … il précisait que l'on ne tue pas et qu'on ne mutile pas. ») (28, notre traduction)

[44] Voir la note du Comité alsacien d'études et d'informations du 21 octobre 1935 : «Cette sympathie qu'on garde à l'Allemagne d'Hitler n'exclut pas du reste que la haute bourgeoisie roumaine fasse généralement siennes les thèses de l'Action française, de Gringoire, de Candide, qui sont les journaux français de beaucoup les plus lus à Bucarest.» (Z Roumanie 172, f. 194–198)

fascistes centre-européens entrent ainsi dans les catégories interprétatives de leurs équivalents ouest-européens[45] : ils répondent au positionnement social défini par Seymour Lipset d'une radicalisation des classes moyennes en crise, avec un recrutement des cadres locaux parmi les prêtres et les instituteurs, et des cadres supérieurs dans les milieux estudiantins, les chômeurs intellectuels, les officiers et les fonctionnaires de rang moyen ; l'électorat se trouvait dans les masses paysannes, artisanales et ouvrières mécontentes des réformes agraires destinées à les transformer en propriétaires satisfaits. Mais les fascismes centre-européens remplissent aussi les critères de Barrington Moore, qui analyse le fascisme comme une voie alternative de la modernisation socio-politique réalisée en Occident par le couple libéralisme-socialisme : les partis fascistes en appellent à la participation politique des classes populaires par l'activisme organisé et par le suffrage universel contre les partis conservateurs traditionnels et leur manipulation des élections par les pressions administratives.

Ces fascistes refusaient les catégories droite-gauche et se réclamaient d'une dynamique inter-classes prenant en écharpe la société selon des logiques ethno-religieuses et surtout selon la volonté de s'enrôler dans le mouvement fasciste totalitaire, seul critère véritable d'appartenance à la nation telle qu'elle était entendue par les idéologues fascistes. Une telle prétention n'existait pas chez Cuza ou chez les autres idéologues ultra-nationalistes et antisémites, qui se « contentaient » d'exclure les allogènes pour définir le corps national – *dignus est intrare* – sans *compele intrare* massif dans la nouvelle Église fasciste.

Des reproches similaires peuvent être adressés aux *qualifications en fascisme des mouvements conservateurs de masse ou des partis radicaux, mais sans prise auprès des masses*. Dans la première catégorie, on peut ranger les partis officiels de gouvernement au service de conservateurs plus ou moins dynamiques, monarques – comme Alexandre de Yougoslavie, son beau-frère Carol de Roumanie et le régent Horthy – ou roturiers plus politisés – le Gömbös de 1932 en Hongrie, Averescu en Roumanie, Stojadinović en Yougoslavie, Tiso en Slovaquie ou Dollfuss en Autriche. Ces derniers adoptèrent eux-mêmes le style mobilisateur et durcirent leur autoritarisme contre la gauche, contre les partis démocratiques, mais souvent aussi contre les fascistes menaçants.

Les partis ou les groupuscules à idéologie et style radicaux ou explicitement fascistes, mais sans prise auprès des masses, constituent l'autre cas scabreux d'une tentative de définition. Nous trouvons ainsi une profusion de petits mouvements ou de courants à l'intérieur de partis-parapluies officiels qui se réclament plus ou moins bruyamment du fascisme. La Hongrie et la Roumanie sont, là encore, spécialistes de la chose : les faux-croisées de l'agrarien mystique Zoltán Böszörmény, réprimé par Gömbös, puis l'hitlériste auto-proclamé Zoltán Mesko à

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[45] Voir Lyman Legters, introduction au recueil de Sugar, *Native fascism in the Successor States*, 3–11, notamment 6–7.

la tête du Parti National-Socialiste des Paysans et Ouvriers, ouvrirent la voie, selon István Déak, à « des dizaines de partis nationaux-socialistes »[46], avant le regroupement sous l'autorité du chef, Szálasi. Plus ambigu reste le statut du parti créé par Imrédy, que certains qualifient de fascisme aristocratique car il recrutait au sein de la bourgeoisie radicale et qui procéda à l'emprisonnement de Szálasi.[47] En Roumanie, le Front Roumain du Transylvain Vaida-Voevod est apparu en 1935 avec l'appui du roi, qui souhaitait la constitution d'un grand parti de la droite autoritaire capable de légitimer un régime personnel royal ; la même année le poète nationaliste transylvain Octavian Goga a fusionné son Parti National-Agrarien avec la Ligue de la Défense Nationale Chrétienne de l'ultra-antisémite Cuza pour créer le Parti National-Chrétien, seule force d'extrême-droite non-fasciste crédible face aux légionnaires. Ceci n'empêchait d'ailleurs pas, comme en Hongrie, l'existence d'un Parti National-Socialiste de Ștefan Tătărescu, une Svastica de Feu de Ion Emilian ou le Front Nationaliste Roumain de Mme Lucia Caragea-Aliot, tous sans aucune influence auprès des masses, donc n'ayant de fasciste que les noms et les aspirations.

Outre leur auto-proclamation, plaiderait en faveur du fascisme de ces derniers mouvements *l'intérêt que leur portent les grandes puissances fascistes*, l'Allemagne notamment, qui se livre à des injonctions de regroupement des scènes politiques à droite à partir de 1935 dans les pays danubiens, notamment en Hongrie et en Roumanie. Or précisément, leur faiblesse sur la scène nationale détermine leur malléabilité entre les mains d'une puissance étrangère et plaide aussi en défaveur de leur caractérisation comme fascistes. A l'inverse, les grands mouvements fascistes ont injustement été accusés d'être une « Cinquième colonne ». Outre que l'accusation est rejetée par les intéressés[48] et par tous les historiens occidentaux sérieux[49], il ne pouvait être autrement : les mouvements

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[46] Déak, István, « Hungary », dans Hans Rogger et Eugen Weber, *European Right : a Historical Profile*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1966), 364–407.

[47] P. Sipos, Bela Imrédy és a Magyar Megújulás Pártja (Bela Imrédy et le Parti Hongrois du Renouveau), (Budapest : Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970), 261, et, du même, Bela Imrédy (Politikai Eletrajz) (Bela Imrédy (une biographie politique)), (Budapest : Elektra Kiadóház, 2001), 135. Pour un aperçu récent sur ces mouvements, voir l'étude de M. Ormós, « Mouvements et partis d'extrême droite en Hongrie dans la période de l'entre deux guerres », eds. Catherine Horel, Traian Sandu et Fritz Taubert, *La Périphérie du fascisme*, 69–78.

[48] Lors de son procès, il est vrai, Codreanu rappelle que les nazis allemands, notamment l'organe officiel, le Völkischer Beobachter, lui préféraient le parti de Cuza. Voir les actes du procès des 23–25 mai 1938 dans Din luptele tineretului român, 1919–1939 (culegere de texte) (des luttes de la jeunesse roumaine, 1919–1939 (recueil de textes), (Bucarest, ed. Fundației Buna Vestire, 1993), 413, 279–409, 354–355.

[49] Pour la Légion, voir Heinen, *Die Legion « Erzengel Michael » in Rumänien*, 306–321 (« Le mythe de la « Cinquième colonne ») et Veiga, *Istoria Garzii de Fier. Mistica ultranationalismului*, 251–255. Voir aussi les interventions ci-dessous.

fascistes arrivés à maturité étaient structurellement contraints à une certaine indépendance financière et de jugement géo-stratégique, s'ils souhaitaient influencer les masses. Évidemment, leur anticommunisme les rapprochait souvent de l'antisoviétisme nazi, mais tous les antisoviétiques n'étaient pas nazis et l'Italie fasciste avait été une des premières puissances occidentales à reconnaître officiellement l'Union Soviétique, immédiatement après la Grande-Bretagne ! Il y a une évidente contradiction dans les thèses de certains historiens comme Radu Ioanid, qui rendent à juste titre à la Légion son statut de mouvement fasciste de masse autochtone, mais lui refusent, en matière de diplomatie, ce même indispensable statut d'autonomie de décision.[50] A trop vouloir prouver en chargeant le dossier – déjà très lourd ! – des fascistes centre-européens, on finit par ne plus rien prouver, si ce n'est un acharnement qui mène à des anticipations historiques et à des télescopages chronologiques avec la période de la guerre : dès 1971, Sugar réfutait le statut de « Quislings » pour les leaders fascistes d'Europe centrale.[51] Pour l'historiographie hostile à ces mouvements – position très compréhensible au vu de leurs excès idéologiques et politiques – il est certainement tentant de leur infliger l'humiliation suprême consistant à « prouver » leur caractère antinational et leur tendance à la trahison. Malheureusement, l'excès de preuve tue la preuve et est une fois de plus mauvais conseiller.

Une fois le mouvement fasciste défini dans sa spécificité et situé statiquement sur les scènes politiques nationales, reste à étudier sa *stratégie de prise du pouvoir*, en cohérence avec ce qui précède, mais également tributaire des contextes nationaux. Or, après nous être ingéniés à distinguer ces mouvements de leurs congénères de droite, l'action politique nous ramène souvent à leur capacité apparemment infinie à composer avec la réalité, capacité que leur permettaient le principe d'obéissance aveugle au chef omniscient et le positionnement ni gauche-ni droite.

Signalons d'emblée que certains leaders fascistes affirmaient leur refus du pouvoir, préférant prétendument la création préalable de l'homme nouveau, ce qui repoussait la prise du pouvoir dans un horizon éloigné. Évidemment, au-delà de la phraséologie propre à ces idéologies – qui a trompé bien des historiens qui n'ont voulu voir dans ces mouvements que des sectes mystiques parfois sympathiques dans la pureté de leur idéal[52] – il y a la volonté de ne parvenir au

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[50] Voir mon article, « Le renouvellement de l'histoire politique roumaine…», 77–83.

[51] Ibid., 149.

[52] Voir une bonne partie des articles des années soixante signalés ci-dessus, mais repris aussi, pour Codreanu, par K. Treptow, « Politica regală şi alegerile din 1937–1938 » (la politique royale et les élections de 1937–1938), Sabin Manuilă, Istorie şi demografie (Sabin Manuilă, histoire et démographie), (Bucarest : ed. Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 1993), 257–265. Voir aussi la récente biographie de Codreanu par C. Sandache, Istorie şi biografie, Corneliu Ze-

sommet de l'État que par les moyens propres d'un parti unique omnipotent et soumis au chef charismatique, sans l'appui déterminant des forces traditionnelles, et une fois les masses suffisamment embrigadées.

Un seul exemple suffira pour faire éclater la contradiction : le 20 janvier 1938, après son succès aux élections de décembre 1937, Codreanu annonce la création d'écoles de maires et de préfets légionnaires[53], visiblement dans la perspective d'une prise de pouvoir à moyen terme ; et le 21 février, face à la réaction violente du gouvernement d'extrême droite Goga-Cuza, il dissout le Parti Tout pour le Pays pour éviter le rapport de forces, visiblement défavorable à son mouvement.[54]

Donc les mouvements fascistes centre-européens sont bien destinés, comme leurs congénères d'Europe occidentale, à se saisir du pouvoir dans les conditions et avec les moyens jugés propices par eux. Encore faut-il les déterminer. Une donnée rapproche ces mouvements fascistes populaires au-delà des frontières : leur non-appartenance aux élites historiques et leur succès auprès des masses les prive de toute légitimité à une prise de pouvoir par des moyens autoritaires et les guide paradoxalement mais logiquement vers la méthode des élections libres, qu'ils se promettent d'ailleurs de supprimer dès leur arrivée au pouvoir. Là encore, le parallèle roumano-hongrois est parlant : jamais en quinze ans les élections n'avaient été plus honnêtes dans les deux pays que lorsque les partis fascistes ont imposé, soit le vote secret en Hongrie en mai 1939, soit la baisse de la répression administrative sur les élections en Roumanie en décembre 1937.

Ainsi, *la sociologie du fascisme* est une question saturée idéologiquement : la difficulté des historiens marxistes à reconnaître le succès fasciste à mobiliser les masses populaires est significative. Le militantisme a été assez bien cerné dès les années trente par les protagonistes eux-mêmes[55] – avec son noyau initial estudiantin, puis l'essaimage urbain auprès des fonctionnaires et des classes moyennes en crise au début des années trente, l'accueil de certains membres de l'aristocratie latifundiaire touchée par les réformes agraire

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lea Codreanu (histoire et biographie, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu), (Bucarest : editura Mica Valahie, 2005), 412, dont le dernier chapitre s'interroge : « Codreanu et la Légion : saints ou démons ? ».

[53] C. Zelea-Codreanu, *Circulări şi manifeste, 1927–1938* (circulaires et manifestes, 1927–1938), 5e édition (Munich : ed. « Ion Mării », 1981), 240–241.

[54] Ibid., circulaire n°148, 272–275.

[55] Voir L. Pătrăşcanu, *Sous trois dictatures*, et même le journal de Carol II sur l'enquête qu'il avait fait mener par le plus éminent statisticien roumain, Sabin Manuilă, qui ne relève que 6000 « chômeurs intellectuels », alors que Carol, dans son journal, en craignait quatre fois plus : Între datorie şi pasiune, însemnării zilnice, 1904–1939 (entre devoir et passion, notes quotidiennes, 1904–1937) (Bucarest : ed. Silex, 1995), 160). Réprimer six mille extrémistes semblait à la portée de la dictature à la fois traditionnelle et moderniste de Carol.

et électorale et l'embourgeoisement des élites, et enfin le succès auprès d'une partie du monde ouvrier privé de l'exutoire communiste. Les résultats de la propagande pour toucher les masses et engranger les bénéfices électoraux sont moins bien connus, malgré des essais, parfois conséquents, de sociologie électorale comparée.[56] Mais leur ductilité idéologique bien définie par George Mosse – et sur laquelle nous reviendrons – renvoie à une capacité à recruter dans toutes les catégories sociales mécontentes des évolutions du moment, même si c'était pour des motifs contradictoires : les paysans insatisfaits du choc de la crise sur leurs exploitations médiocres pouvaient côtoyer les aristocrates ruinés par une réforme agraire que les premiers jugeaient insuffisante. Le nationalisme socialement indéterminé – sauf à l'encontre de certaines minorités jugées inassimilables – rassemblait ces catégories par ailleurs opposées si l'on jugeait selon de simples critères d'intérêt socio-économique. Plutôt que de chercher longuement une logique sociale stricte au recrutement du fascisme roumain, Constantin Iordachi propose à juste titre de le définir comme un « catch-all party » et de promouvoir l'interprétation d'une attraction tous azimuts par une surpolitisation de l'ensemble de la société.[57] Une première analyse d'ensemble sur des sources lacunaires des archives centrales de Bucarest menée par moi-même confirme l'image d'aspiration à un embrigadement total de la société, malgré la priorité idéologique et sociale de la jeunesse[58]; cette recherche a été poursuivie à l'échelle du département.[59]

Le régulateur entre volonté populaire et continuité du système traditionnel de domination restait toutefois *le monarque, qui arbitre* entre partis ou entre courants à l'intérieur des partis. Dès lors, l'histoire des tentatives de prise de pouvoir par les partis fascistes se résume par moments à la relation entretenue avec le pouvoir royal.

Le nœud de cette relation réside, d'une part, dans le désir du roi – ou du régent – de donner une assise sociale plus large et plus populaire au régime, ce qui passe par l'attraction des partis fascistes dans le jeu politique et, d'autre part, le refus de frayer avec des chefs populistes et, *a fortiori*, de se soumettre à leur logique socio-politique. Il semble qu'il y ait une différence

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[56] J. J. Linz, « Some Notes Towards a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective », Laqueur, *Fascism, a Reader's Guide*, 3–121. Larsen, S.U., B. Hagtvet & J. P. Myklebust, Who were the fascists : social roots of European Fascism, (Oslo : Bergen : Universitetsforlaget, 1980).

[57] C. Iordachi, Charisma, Politics and Violence : The Legion of the « Archangel Michael » in Inter-war Romania, Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures & Societies, 2004.

[58] T. Sandu, Un Fascisme roumain. Histoire de la Garde de fer, (Paris : Perrin, 2014), 494, 288–322.

[59] J.-O. Schmitt, « Approaching the Social History of Romanian Fascism. The Legionaries of Vâlcea County in the Interwar Period », Fascism 3 (2014), 117–151.

entre cas hongrois et roumain, mais selon nous elle reste formelle. En effet, selon Istvan Déak, lorsque le chef du cabinet militaire de Horthy rencontra Szálasi fin 1937 ou début 1938, ce dernier lui aurait proposé une collaboration avec le régent, avec lui comme Premier ministre[60], alors que lors de la rencontre entre Carol II et Codreanu, ce fut le chef légionnaire qui refusa la prise de contrôle du parti en échange de sa nomination au poste de Premier ministre.[61] Il s'agissait en fait à chaque fois et pour chacun des protagonistes de soumettre l'autre à sa logique : la proposition de Szálasi revenait à entraîner Horthy dans un coup d'État au bénéfice des Croix Fléchées, dont il aurait alors été l'otage sur le modèle d'Hindenburg, ce qui était inacceptable pour lui. A l'inverse, il était tout aussi inacceptable pour Codreanu d'abandonner le mouvement légionnaire entre les mains d'un roi qui poursuivait l'instrumentation des partis d'extrême droite au bénéfice d'un régime autoritaire royal. La synchronie entre les réactions royales hongroise et roumaine est assez remarquable, ainsi que les solutions données au problème fasciste, c'est-à-dire la répression au cours de l'année 1938 par des gouvernements d'extrême droite, celui d'Imrédy et de Goga-Cuza.

De ces relations avec la royauté dépendent également les relations avec les autres institutions des sociétés traditionnelles, l'Église et l'Armée. La plupart des chefs fascistes centre-européens affichaient une foi profonde et un engouement marqué pour la chose militaire, au point que leurs partis furent parfois assimilés à des sectes ou à des organisations paramilitaires. Les cadres de ces mouvements se recrutaient souvent aux niveaux bas et intermédiaires de la hiérarchie religieuse et militaire, plus rarement au sommet.[62] Toutefois, l'Église et l'Armée en tant qu'institutions liées étroitement à la chose publique, avalisèrent presque systématiquement la rupture avec les partis hors-système, y compris leur répression.[63] En réalité, les hiérarchies avaient compris que le mimétisme

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[60] Déak, « Hungary », 299.

[61] Z. Boilă, Amintiri şi consideraţii asupra Mişcării legionare (souvenirs et considérations sur le mouvement légionnaire), édités par Maria Petreu et Ana Cornea, (Cluj, 2002), 51–55, cité dans Ideologie şi formaţiuni de dreapta…, *Ideologie si formaţiuni de dreapta în România*, vol. I, doc. n°181, 314–316.

[62] D. Beldiman, Armata şi Mişcarea legionară, 1927–1947 (L'Armée et le mouvement légionnaire, 1927–1947), (Bucarest : Institutul naţional pentru studiul totalitarismului, 2002), 272.

[63] F. Müller, « Atitudinea Bisericii ortodoxe române faţă de mişcările de extremă dreaptă în perioada interbelică în România » (l'attitude de l'Église orthodoxe roumaine face aux mouvements d'extrême droite entre les deux guerres en Roumanie), Naţional şi universal în istoria românilor (national et universel dans l'histoire des Roumains), (Bucarest : ed. Enciclopedică, 1998), 175–189.

des fascismes était en bonne partie destiné à vampiriser l'aura charismatique de la sainteté ou de l'autorité indiscutable de l'ordre militaire, tout comme le chef fasciste phagocytait la personnalité royale. Bref, devant le risque d'une religion séculière et d'un totalitarisme civil, les deux institutions ont eu une réaction de défense de leur intégrité allant jusqu'à la guerre ouverte, ainsi que la répression de la Légion par Antonescu l'a prouvé en janvier 1941. Les forces traditionnelles ne pouvaient pas transiger sur le cœur du succès fasciste entre les deux guerres, c'est-à-dire sur la question du charisme de ses chefs dans les différents pays. Les ressorts de ce transfert opéré par des sociétés désenchantées, en mal de projet idéologique commun et mobilisateur après les immenses efforts et bouleversements du conflit et de l'après-guerre, sont d'ordres divers – culturel, politique et socio-économique – et les mouvements totalitaires prétendent y apporter une réponse globale.

L'apport des sciences politiques est une des voies les plus fertiles pour le renouvellement de la question des fascismes. Pourtant, aucune étude n'a encore croisé, pour des raisons conjoncturelles ou méthodologiques, la plongée dans les archives avec l'approche récente du « *new consensus* »[64] définissant le fascisme comme une révolution globale idéologiquement articulée reposant sur une pratique de religion politique, avant la publication de ma thèse d'habilitation.[65] Or la religion politique est définitoire du fascisme, car elle consiste en la « privatisation » de la religion civile – progressivement instituée par l'État depuis la Révolution française pour légitimer et magnifier le nouveau régime – entre les mains de chefs politiques qui contestent la légitimité des élites traditionnelles occupant encore le sommet de l'État. Le fascisme représente donc l'autre branche de l'alternative révolutionnaire en matière de réaction sociale consécutive au choc de la Première Guerre mondiale. Si la réaction de gauche a consisté, dans sa version radicale, à renverser l'ordre politique et social, le radicalisme de droite a aussi profité de son affaiblissement à la suite de la Grande Guerre et de la crise de 1929 pour le vider progressivement de sa légitimité en s'insinuant à l'intérieur de ses cadres pour le phagocyter. De nouvelles catégories sociales ont reconnu à des chefs charismatiques la légitimité politique pour déplacer la réalité du pouvoir au sein de mouvements politiques où elles étaient surreprésentées. L'approche d'une documentation archivistique désormais abondante[66]

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[64] La définition la plus englobante et la plus claire de ce mouvement interprétatif se trouve chez R. Griffin, « The Concept that Came Out of the Cold : the Progressive Historicization of Generic Fascism and its New Relevance to Teaching Twentieth-century History », History Compass 1 (2003) 39, 1–41 ; ses réalisation les plus achevées se trouvent dans les publications de George Mosse, Stanley Payne et Roger Griffin.

[65] T. Sandu, Un Fascisme roumain. Histoire de la Garde de fer, (Paris : Perrin, 2014), 494.

[66] Outre notre propre corpus décrit dans les « sources » à la fin du volume cité ci-dessus (Sandu, *Un Fascisme roumain*,…), voir la série dirigée par I. Scurtu, Totalitarismul de dreapta

peut enfin s'effectuer grâce aux outils fournis par la réflexion politiste sur le fascisme, enfin dégagé des errements marxistes orthodoxes – le fascisme comme adjuvent anticommuniste du grand capital – ou des minimisations libérales – le fascisme comme parenthèse délirante de l'histoire européenne, mais aussi de l'enfermement méthodologique dans l'histoire descriptive dépourvue d'armature conceptuelle ou, du côté des politologues, dans des sous-sections réservées aux atypiques inclassables.

Ainsi, la somme d'Arnim Heinen, parue en 1986, ne pouvait pas connaître les archives roumaines pour cause de bouclage de l'époque Ceauşescu et s'attachait encore à une approche socio-économique dominante, même si elle faisait une part sérieuse aux idées du mouvement. Quant aux études portant directement sur l'idéologie légionnaire, souvent brillantes, soit elles se concentrent sur des personnalités devenues célèbres après la chute du fascisme historique et qui n'ont pas forcément eu un impact déterminant et/ou précoce au moment de l'élaboration de la synthèse fasciste, soit elles portent sur les aspects idéologiques sans en suivre fermement les prolongements en matière de socialisation politique au-delà du simple concept de la propagande, ignorant notamment la mise en place d'une véritable religion civile au rituel et aux officiants plus ou moins strictement définis. Les approches des politistes, pleines de promesses et d'un intérêt interdisciplinaire fondamental pour sortir de la myopie d'une historiographie au plus près de l'évènement, elles n'ont que partiellement convaincu. L'essai d'Antoine Roger[67] ne fait qu'esquisser un modèle d'insertion du fascisme – qui n'est d'ailleurs pas vraiment nommé en tant que tel – dans l'ensemble de la société agraire en voie de modernisation, sans compter que son approche reste largement déterminée par les « fondamentaux » socio-économiques même pour la structure organisationnelle de base, le « nid » – en fait véritable cellule d'incubation d'une nouvelle religion politique aux séances strictement ritualisées.[68] Les études les plus abouties conceptuellement et les mieux menée méthodologiquement, qui se réclament directement du *new*

în România. Origini, manifestări, evoluție (le totalitarisme de droite en Roumanie. Origines, manifestations, évolution), vol. I, 1919–1927 ; Ideologie si formațiuni de dreapta în România (idéologie et formations de droite en Roumanie), vol. II, 25 juin 1927–2 janvier 1931, 2000, vol. III, 5 janvier 1931–7 juin 1934, 2002, vol. IV, 1934–1938, 2003.

[67] Roger Antoine, *Fascistes, communistes et paysans, Sociologie des mobilisations identitaires roumaines (1921–1989)*, (Bruxelles : Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2002), 285.

[68] Max Weber insiste sur le caractère politique des organisations obéissant à un chef charismatique, qui est incapable d'assurer le bien-être matériel de ses adorateurs et insiste sur l'esprit de sacrifice et le refus du compromis avec la société jusqu'à la victoire politique.

consensus, appartiennent à Mihai Chioveanu[69] et à Constantin Iordachi.[70] Si le premier s'intéresse au fascisme en général, en privilégiant l'exemple roumain, le second centre son analyse sur la Garde de fer, mais sans faire appel aux sources d'archive, même celles publiées par Ioan Scurtu. Si l'exercice se justifie d'un point de vue méthodologique pour se cantonner au seul champ des idées politiques, il aboutit néanmoins à une distorsion de la problématique : Iordachi situe la principale tension dans la contradiction entre la référence religieuse affichée par l'idéologie légionnaire et la violence des méthodes. Or cette tension a été désamorcée par les légionnaires, au niveau du discours, grâce à une double argumentation idéologique et fonctionnelle. Codreanu avait posé le problème dans ses *Circulaires* et y avait répondu par la distinction entre perfection du royaume du Ciel et royaume terrestre dans lequel il se mouvait et faisait de la politique, ainsi que par le rappel du rôle des Églises dans la légitimation de la violence officielle de la guerre – à travers la bénédiction accordée aux drapeaux avant le combat, les messes de célébration des victoires, etc.[71] La véritable problématique posée par le new consensus en Roumanie et en Hongrie – où le fas-

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[69] Chioveanu, Mihai, *Feţele fascismului. Politică, ideologie şi scrisul istoric în secolul XX* [Les visages du fascisme. Politique, idéologie et écriture historique au XXe siècle], (Bucarest : Ed. Universităţii Bucureşti, 2005), 369. Plusieurs autres auteurs ont fourni de plus brefs essais : voir par exemple V. Săndulescu, « On the ideological characteristics of the Romanian Legionary Movement : a synthetic account », *Studia Universitatis Petru Maior*, Series Historia, 2005, 141–154. Florin Müller a fourni un volume d'études qui dépasse le seul cas de la Garde de fer : F. Müller, *Metamorfoze ale politicului românesc, 1938–1944* [Métamorphoses de la chose politique roumaine, 1938–1944], (Bucarest : Ed. Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2005), 359, mais il a aussi consacré certains articles au mouvement fasciste en particulier : « En démocratie, vers la dictature. La Monarchie et le Mouvement légionnaire en 1937 », dans Traian Sandu, *Vers un profil convergent des fascismes ? « Nouveau consensus » et religion politique en Europe centrale* (Paris III, 2 avril 2009), (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2010), 231–246.

[70] C. Iordachi, Charisma, Politics and Violence : The Legion of the « Archangel Michael » in Inter-war Romania, Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures & Societies, (2004), 190.

[71] Codreanu, Zelea Corneliu, *Circulări şi manifeste 1927–1938* (circulaires et manifestes 1927–1938), 5e éd., (Munich : coll. Europa, 1981), 105–106 : « La ligne historique est une : celle que nous vivons. Car nous vivons dans le siècle. La ligne de l'Église est bien au-dessus de nous. Vers elle nous tendons, mais nous ne réalisons que peu. … Il me semble toutefois que l'Église aussi (ses représentants, les hommes) se sont éloignés de la ligne de l'Église, dans les faits. Ainsi, il y a peu : les prêtres bénissent de leur main les armes, les épées, les fusils, les mitrailleuses et les canons des armées, qui partent à la guerre. » Une autre illustration se trouve dans *Cărticica şefului de cuib* (bréviaire du chef de nid), Sibiu, 1937 (ed. originale juillet 1933), qui reprend le discours du jeune député Codreanu du 3 décembre 1931 au message royal : à un député qui lui reproche son apologie de la peine de mort qui choque dans la bouche d'un chrétien militant, il répond qu'il préfère la mort du voleur des deniers publics au dépérissement de sa patrie (point 85).

cisme revendique également une dimension spirituelle transcendante – réside ailleurs.

Il existe en réalité une ambiguïté lorsqu'on évoque la religion dans le cas du légionnarisme. *Religion politique et religion en politique se télescopent et brouillent apparemment les cartes.* Ayant surgi dans une société agraire et traditionnelle, donc en retard sur les modèles urbains et industriels dominants d'Italie et d'Allemagne, la religion orthodoxe fait partie intégrante de la synthèse idéologique légionnaire davantage que chez ses congénères athées ou païens. Le déplacement du sentiment religieux de la Sainte Trinité vers Codreanu et ses acolytes-apôtres s'effectue donc à la fois plus aisément en pratique – en tant que néo-Messie qui utilise l'ancien Messie pour mobiliser les masses paysannes – mais aussi plus difficilement dans la distinction, en tant qu'interprétation des registres du transfert de sainteté : les paysans croient dans le néo-Messie en tant qu'il représente l'ancien, mais y croient-ils pour lui-même, pour sa propre valeur ? Bref, Codreanu doit à la fois instrumenter la religion transcendante et s'en débarrasser, ou plutôt en vampiriser l'aura – tout comme il doit révérer la monarchie tout en faisant croire qu'il ne combat que le roi. Il doit utiliser Jésus pour attirer les masses paysannes, puis l'évincer une fois la religion fasciste fonctionnant de manière autonome, sans l'appui de la béquille chrétienne. *La problématique du charisme appliqué à la massification de la politique dans les pays agraires passe donc par la substitution de la religion politique à la religion en politique officiellement affichée*, et non par l'analyse de la dichotomie entre idéologie religieuse et pratiques violentes. Cette dernière ne peut surgir que de la confrontation entre aspirations totalitaires de l'idéologie légionnaire et résistance de la société à ces prétentions ; donc seule l'histoire des phénomènes socio-politiques peut véritablement approcher la réaction violente du fascisme aux réticences de la société à l'embrigadement total. Les sciences politiques, en l'absence d'une utilisation des documents d'archive, doivent se contenter de la dimension de violence idéologiquement assumée comme héritage du darwinisme social passé au tamis de la guerre et de la « brutalisation » sociale. Bref, Constantin Iordachi a raison de situer la véritable problématique du fascisme dans la tension entre religion politique et violence, mais ce ne sont pas les sciences politiques qui peuvent en décrire seules les manifestations. La problématique du fascisme pour les sciences politiques se situe dans la tension entre vie politique traditionnelle – y compris dans sa dimension religieuse – et religion politique.

Certaines études ont ainsi insisté sur la dimension morbide jusqu'au paganisme de l'attirance des légionnaires pour la mort[72], sans en faire un élément

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[72] C. Sandache, Istorie şi biografie, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (histoire et biographie, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu), (Bucarest : editura Mica Valahie, 2005), 67. L'ouvrage relève d'ailleurs en bonne partie de l'hagiographie.

d'une nouvelle spiritualité politique radicale. D'autres ont assimilé avec perspicacité la Légion, surtout lors de ses confidentiels débuts, à un phénomène sectaire[73]; mais l'intérêt de la religion politique réside à l'inverse dans la massification de la socialisation politique, et non dans son confinement élitiste, malgré la phraséologie des *happy few* développée par ses promoteurs pour mieux attirer, précisément... C'est ainsi que les articles que j'ai consacrés à la ritualisation religieuse des pratiques paramilitaires[74] et plus généralement collectives[75] dans la Légion de l'archange Michel (mouvement spirituel)/ Garde de fer (traduction politique) n'avaient de substrat que la lecture des textes originaux – surtout de Codreanu[76] – et l'analyse des nombreux documents visuels et audio[77] à la lumière des ouvrages fondamentaux d'Emilio Gentile sur la religion du fascisme italien.[78]

  Le caractère révolutionnaire de la Garde de fer est une analyse mieux partagée. Outre les déclarations des intéressés, leur affrontement avec le pouvoir établi prit des formes suffisamment radicales et violentes pour confirmer leur volonté de conquête. Au-delà de ses formes spectaculaires, ils ne pouvaient prétendre renverser l'ordre social existant faute de deux attributs caractérisant tout personnel révolutionnaire digne de cette œuvre : une cohérence sociale et générationnelle d'un groupe jeune et frustré et un projet idéologique fort et structurant. Ces deux aspects ont déjà été abordés, pour le second aspect dans les études sur l'idéologie déjà évoquées, pour le premier dans le livre d'Irina Livizeanu. Mais ces deux dimensions prises séparément de la pratique d'une religion politique sont nettement insuffisantes pour rendre compte de la nature et

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[73] Voir, entre autres, les articles « empathiques » E. Weber : « Romania », E. Weber, Varieties of Fascism, (New Jersey : Princeton, 1964); « Romania », E. Weber et H. Rogger, The European Right. A Historical Profile, (Berkeley et Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1966); « The Men of the Archangel », Journal of Contemporary History, 1, (1966).

[74] « Mémoire de la Première Guerre mondiale au sein des jeunes droites roumaines de l'entre les deux guerres », actes de la table-ronde sur la mémoire de la Première Guerre mondiale, à paraître fin 2007 dans Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains sous la direction d'Antoine Marès et de Catherine Durandin.

[75] « Signes et couleurs de la mobilisation fasciste dans un pays majoritairement agraire : le Mouvement légionnaire roumain », actes du colloque Signes et couleurs du politique organisé à l'Université de Poitiers du 14 au 16 juin 2007 ; « La Garde de Fer : méthodes de mobilisation et d'encadrement », dans Judit MAAR et Patrick RENAUD, Temps, espaces, langages, la Hongrie à la croisée des disciplines, actes du colloque international organisé les 14–16 décembre 2006 par le Centre Interuniversitaire d'Études Hongroises, à paraître fin 2007 dans Les Cahiers d'Études hongroises, chez L'Harmattan.

[76] Tous les écrits du « Capitaine » sont à ce titre essentiels, mais plus particulièrement Codreanu, *Cărticica şefului de cuib*.

[77] Une masse impressionnante se trouve rassemblée, sur divers supports, sur le site néo-légionnaire miscarea.com.

[78] E. Gentile, *La religion fasciste*, (Paris : Perrin, 2002), 354 et Qu'est-ce que le fascisme ? Histoire et interprétation, (Paris : Gallimard, 2002), 528.

du succès du fascisme roumain. Le phénomène générationnel caractérise bien des mouvements politiques et les analyses des idées politiques en tant que telles des légionnaires se heurtent à leur refus des programmes précis et structurés. Finalement, le cœur spécifique incompressible qui subsiste de cette tentative d'approche idéologique n'est pas seulement l'ultra-nationalisme raciste « fin de siècle » hérité du vieil anti-sémite I.C. Cuza, parrain politique et proche de la famille du jeune Codreanu. Deux grands leviers caractérisent ce noyau dur. C'est d'abord la capacité de populariser l'ultra-nationalisme en le métissant de nombreuses autres influences idéologiques qui inspirent une jeunesse très éclectique, ainsi que les listes de sujets de conférences abordés dans le cadre des associations estudiantines, et même de la Garde de fer elle-même, en témoignent amplement. C'est ensuite la dynamique inverse, soit la capacité de cristalliser cet amas « attrape-tout » passablement contradictoire – trait qui a longtemps nui à une étude systématique de l'idéologie légionnaire, à l'image de ses aînés italien et allemand – en un système d'autant plus efficace que chacun y trouvait des aspirations idéologiques d'emprunt, subitement enchâssées dans un syncrétisme dont la force revenait aux pratiques collectives ritualisées. Cette analyse, qui innerve l'ensemble de l'œuvre de George Mosse,[79] trouve un vaste champ d'application avec la synthèse légionnaire : par exemple, le simple appel aux morts débutant chaque réunion de nid combine l'appel militaire des casernes de l'État moderne bâti par les francs-maçons progressistes au XIXe siècle et l'évocation traditionnelle des morts à intervalles réguliers en pays orthodoxe dans une synthèse qui parle à l'ensemble de la palette des sensations de la population masculine jeune de Roumanie. Nous revenons ainsi à l'indissoluble lien entre étude des idées et de leur imposition, au sens politique et religieux, à la société civile. Comme nous y invite à juste titre le « nouveau consensus », il faut prendre au sérieux le refus des fascistes à élaborer des programmes[80] au profit de structures et de manifestations rituelles témoignant au sens fort d'une foi politique dont le simple contenu ultranationaliste et syncrétique, déjà présent au XIXe[81], ne vaut que par le radicalisme de sa défense, la massivité de la mobilisation et la réalité de son application.

Une autre dimension particulièrement fertile du modernisme idéologique fasciste réside dans son articulation avec les sciences biologiques au

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[79] « Vers une théorie générale du fascisme », chapitre 1 de Mosse, *La Révolution fasciste*, 269.

[80] Voir, par exemple, Roger Griffin, «The Concept that Came Out of the Cold», 19.

[81] George Mosse, *La Révolution fasciste*. Paris: Seuil, 2003 : « Le nationalisme exacerbé des fascistes n'enrichit guère cette définition » et 16–17 : « C'était un mouvement politique nouveau qui n'inventa jamais rien de neuf ». Voir aussi Codreanu, *La Garde de fer : pour les legionnaires*, Grenoble : I. Maril : Belmain, 1972. (chapitres sur sa dette envers I. C. Cuza) et T. Sandu, « La Garde de Fer : méthodes de mobilisation et d'encadrement », dans Temps, espaces, langages, la Hongrie à la croisée des disciplines, , Les Cahiers d'Études hongroises, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008, vol.2, p.395–415.

sein du racisme proclamé, puis institutionnalisé. Le racisme est, selon George Mosse, une idéologie à part entière, distincte du nationalisme et du fascisme – ainsi que l'exemple mussolinien le prouve –, mais susceptible de les rejoindre et de s'y articuler.82 Dans le cas roumain, les trois semblent consubstantiellement liés, mais leur généalogie du tournant du siècle les distingue néanmoins : la synthèse fasciste insiste beaucoup moins sur l'exclusion des juifs que sur l'intégration des Roumains dans le mouvement totalitaire, même si un antisémitisme radical et éliminationiste comme celui d'A.C. Cuza a aussi été intégré à l'idéologie légionnaire. Plusieurs jeunes historiens ont suivi l'impact des idées hygiénistes, puis eugénistes, dans la naissance du racisme moderne83, cette voie étant un aspect important de ces nationalismes ethniques radicaux et purificateurs de la race. Le fait que ces pays fussent retardés n'enlève rien, au contraire, à leur désir de rattrapage en la matière. L'intervention des pouvoirs publics ou des élites scientifiques peut être d'autant plus intrusive, autoritaire ou mobilisatrice au nom de la modernité que celle-ci est encore limitée mais déjà désirable. Ainsi que l'article parfaitement Maria Bucur dans son ouvrage sur eugénisme et modernisation, « [les] eugénistes roumains présentèrent leurs théories comme une voie vers la modernisation qui conserverait des éléments vitaux du passé tout en s'ouvrant vers l'avenir à travers une combinaison de politiques étatistes et de volontarisme de base. »84 C'est reconnaître la particularité de l'eugénisme raciste dans un pays en voie de modernisation, où l'État, même corrompu, faible et illégitime joue encore un rôle très important face aux élites indépendantes d'une société civile et politique encore balbutiante. Le principal partisan de l'eugénisme roumain est le Transylvain formé dans les Universités occidentales Iuliu Moldovan, fondateur de l'École de Médecine de Cluj et directeur de l'Institut d'Hygiène et d'Hygiène sociale, auteur en 1926 de Biopolitica, que Maria Bucur qualifie de thèse en faveur de « l'État eugénique total ».85 Bien que Maria Bucur lui attribue une grande influence, un seul nom se dégage parmi les intellectuels de cette génération qui aient directement milité pour la Légion dans les années trente, celui de Traian Herseni, même si on relève aussi le radicalisme d'une personnalité de la génération suivante, Iordache Făcăoaru. Nous verrons l'influence du discours scientifique sur le style et les idées de Codreanu ; mais son langage reste métaphorique lorsqu'il compare le judaïsme

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82 « Racisme et nationalisme », chap.3 de Mosse, *La Révolution fasciste*, 269.

83 M. Bucur, Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania, (Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002), 298; M. Turda et P. Weindling, « Blood And Homeland » : Eugenics And Racial Nationalism in Central And Southeast Europe, 1900–1940, (Central European University Press, 2007), 467.

84 Maria Bucur, *Eugenics and Modernization*, 4.

85 D. Stone, « Review of Bucur's Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania », East European Politics and Societies, 17, 3 (2003), 568–574, ici 569.

à une maladie sociale. Il faut néanmoins nuancer les propos de Maria Bucur si elle se maintient sur les positions d'une Garde de fer traditionaliste contre le modernisme eugéniste. Marius Turda, inspirés par le travail théorique de Roger Griffin sur le modernisme fasciste, est de ce point de vue plus convaincant :

> « Je propose le terme de modernisme ethnique pour décrire le complexe d'idées biopolitiques se développant en Roumanie dans les premières décennies du vingtième siècle, dont le principal but était la création d'une nation saine, un processus appuyé sur la protection de qualités raciales supposées supérieures et sur l'introduction de mesures préventives contre les individus déviants ou des groupes raciaux perçus comme inférieurs, donc comme une menace envers la nation. »[86]

En effet, le génocide juif procède du fascisme raciste hyper-moderne de la grande puissance allemande, ainsi que Zygmunt Bauman l'a démontré.[87]

L'angle d'attaque doit donc privilégier un gros complexe idéel-organisationnel initial, comprenant les points de doctrine entremêlés aux éléments contextuels qui ont favorisé leur éclosion. En effet, la force du bloc idéologique fasciste procède, nous l'avons dit, de cette capacité à ne pas transférer des idéologies d'importation que les jeunes conservateurs dynamiques du « junimisme » avaient dès la fin du XIXe qualifiées de « formes sans fond », mais de donner un style moderne et technique, euro-synchrone donc militarisé, à une variété d'idées, de traditions, de personnages historique mythifiés, de paysages, de pratiques dont les fascistes s'attribuent ensuite le mérite à juste titre, puisqu'ils en sont les « inventeurs », ou du moins les talentueux synthétiseurs.

En Roumanie comme ailleurs, les frustrations sociales consécutives à la guerre et les désordres apparents du jeu politique démocratique qui en est rendu responsable assignent trois buts paradoxaux à la mobilisation fasciste. D'une part, il faut secouer la chape que font peser les élites anciennes sur le corps politique, donc soulever ce dernier par des méthodes « révolutionnaires » de rupture. D'autre part, il s'agit de pérenniser cette mobilisation au-delà du soulèvement paysan archaïque, aussitôt retombé. Enfin, les dirigeants légionnaires doivent la structurer de façon à éviter la déstabilisation du régime fasciste une fois celui-ci mis en place – hantise de tout régime révolutionnaire. Les méthodes et les cadres de la régulation viennent par ailleurs buter contre

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[86] M. Turda, « Ethnic Modernism and Scientific Nationalism : Reflections on Biopolitics in Interwar Romania ». Voir aussi la conclusion de D. Stone, « Review of Bucur's Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania »,574 : « En vérité, l'appellation 'réactionnaire' du fascisme pourrait en definitive être considérée comme un aspect de la modernisation, et non son rejet. »

[87] Voir le premier chapitre de Z. Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust, (Cambridge : Polity Press, 1989) [traduction française : Modernité et Holocauste, Paris, Complexe, 2008, 298] et Modernity and Ambivalence, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991.

la dispersion du corps politique dans l'espace rural assez cloisonné et contre le traditionalisme de la culture politique de révérence très ancrée chez les paysans.

Toutefois, l'importance et la nouveauté des interprétations « *new consensus* » dans le succès politique final rencontré par le fascisme auprès des sociétés italienne et allemande colorent d'une teinte quelque peu fataliste certains écrits de George Mosse[88] et d'un solide optimisme heuristique les articles historiographiques de Roger Griffin.[89] Les tenants du « *new consensus* » nous mettent d'ailleurs sainement en garde contre tout déterminisme socio-économique consistant à déduire trop mécaniquement la réussite ou l'échec de ces mouvements caméléoniens d'une structure socio-économique déterminée, liée trop clairement à la concentration urbaine et aux pratiques d'organisation politique et corporative propres aux activités secondaires et tertiaires. Bref, si l'importance du recrutement parmi les fameuses et parfois bien volatiles « classes moyennes frustrées et/ou déclassées » n'est pas niée, l'adaptabilité du fascisme, que nous avons déjà explorée dans le cas roumain et qui se vérifie aussi bien dans cette zone que sous d'autres latitudes, nous conduit à explorer plutôt les voies culturalistes. Pour les tenants du new consensus, le succès du fascisme dans tel pays plutôt que tel autre ne tient pas prioritairement à des données structurelles de longue durée, mais plutôt à la capacité d'adaptation du mouvement et de son chef charismatique à la société cible.

Si nous adhérons pleinement à une telle analyse – comment expliquer autrement le succès populaire du fascisme dans un pays aussi retardé que la Roumanie ? – force est néanmoins de constater que les éléments de la synthèse fasciste supposent un certain degré de développement. Ainsi, quel qu'ait été le talent de tel chef fasciste pour proposer une mixture hautement étudiée au corps social, il faut reconnaître que le but restant sa mobilisation massive, cette dernière est plus facile à réaliser auprès d'une société déjà concentrée géographiquement, habituée aux rassemblements et aux organisations de masse au nom de la nation. L'interprétation qualitative et culturaliste du new consensus bute donc sur un effet de seuil quantitatif, ce que George Mosse reconnaît en fait.[90]

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[88] « Sa force réelle résidait en partie en cela : il proposait la régénération et la sécurité, la révolution fondée sur le déjà connu. » Mosse, *La Révolution fasciste*, 17.

[89] « This is good news for students who have turned to this article for help with their essay or exam revision, because insight into its relevance to understanding 'real' historical events in modern history should now start to 'kick in'. » Griffin, « The Concept that Came Out of the Cold", 17.

[90] « Les facteurs économiques et sociaux s'avérèrent certes cruciaux dans l'effondrement qui suivit la Première Guerre mondiale et dans la crise économique de 1929... Mais, et ceci semble tout aussi crucial, les choix politiques sont déterminés par la perception réelle que les gens ont de leur situation, de leurs espérances et de leurs attentes, l'utopie pour laquelle ils luttent. ... ce fut le seul mouvement de masse entre les deux guerres qui pouvait affirmer avoir des sympathisants issus de toutes les classes sociales » Mosse, *La Révolution fasciste*, 73.

La conséquence heuristique en est que l'apport le plus novateur du *new consensus* est indispensable, mais pas suffisant pour rendre compte concrètement de la réception – donc, fatalement, du succès – du fascisme au sein des sociétés cibles. En effet, si le fascisme mérite ce nom, c'est qu'il est parfaitement adapté à l'ensemble du tissu social, donc il ne peut, à terme, que l'emporter fatalement sur les autres forces politiques. Or l'évidence même est qu'il ne s'imposa pas partout, ce qui ne peut pas être attribué seulement au plus ou moins grand charisme de ses chefs, mais aussi à la résistance inégale des sociétés à la séduction fasciste. Si le *new consensus* insiste à juste titre sur l'aspect peu abordé d'« offre » fasciste correspondant à une forte « demande » sociale présente dès la fin du XIXe siècle, mais exacerbée après la Première Guerre mondiale dans le sens d'une révolution idéologique et de pratiques politiques, les vieilles approches privilégiant la diversité de la société et la capacité de résistance de certains de ses segments doivent s'articuler à cette dynamique pour en montrer portée et limites. Ces approches sont évidemment intimement mêlées, et l'étude de la réaction sociale ne doit pas être disjointe du complexe idéel-organisationnel.

Le troisième aspect qui interagit avec ces deux dimensions est l'action sur la scène politique nationale et, éventuellement, internationale. Le panachage de la palette idéologique fasciste n'a alors d'égal que la ductilité des pratiques et des alliances en vue de la prise de pouvoir. La capacité des mouvements fascistes à composer avec la réalité renvoie aussi au principe d'obéissance aveugle au chef et au positionnement ni gauche – ni droite. Elle permet de vérifier en action l'efficacité redoutable d'une idéologie ayant phagocyté l'ensemble des grandes idéologies disponibles et leur renvoyant l'image d'un « digest » animé, d'un montage composite mais vivant ayant surmonté les contradictions entre doctrines et marchant au pas dans la rue. Cette thématique est tout simplement celle de la prise du pouvoir dans le cas roumain. Le récit des événements politiques fait partie intégrante du modelage du mouvement fasciste : si le mixe idéologique n'a pas besoin de modifications notables, l'accent mis sur tel aspect, l'action entamée auprès de telle catégorie sociale, régionale ou internationale, selon les opportunités ouvertes par le jeu politique, modifie le discours et enrichit en retour, par un effet « vertueux » d'accumulation, les possibilités du mouvement. En réalité, les sauts quantitatifs étant aussi qualitatifs, l'ouverture de nouvelles possibilités révèle des latences et des potentialités des mouvements comme des régimes fascistes. L'absence de programme rigide au bénéfice d'une idéologie protéiforme, d'un idéal et de pratiques, favorise l'occupation de l'espace politique et, dans le cas d'un mouvement aussi mobilisateur que le fascisme, l'espace tout court.

Doit-il y avoir de conclusion à une étude historiographique ? Sans doute pas, d'autant que la prétention de ceux qui la rédigent est d'y ajouter de nouveaux – et glorieux… – chapitres. Toutefois, dans le cas qui nous préoccupe, il me semble que l'étape qui doit suivre les études conceptuelles et politolo-

giques de Constantin Iordachi, Mihai Chioveanu et Florin Müller, ainsi que ma propre plongée dans les archives centrales, est le dépouillement minutieux d'archives départementales, ce à quoi s'est attaché Jens-Oliver Schmitt.

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Weddings of the Dead:
Ustasha Funerals and Life Cycle Rituals in Fascist Croatia

Abstract: This paper seeks to thoroughly describe the 1941 Ustasha funerals of Mijo Babić and Antun Pogorelec, two of the most important early Ustasha martyrs, and to demonstrate the centrality of funeral practices in the Ustasha project to reconfigure Croatian society in the 1940s and its role in mediating the relationship between the individual and the state. Funeral practices are not seen only as cultural values imposed from above, but also as events of importance for the members of the movement as well as their supporters in the wider local community that participated in them.

Keywords: Independent State of Croatia, Ustasha movement, fascism, funeral practices

Ritual, as anthropologists have noted, is a means of bringing order and making sense of change in societies being transformed. In her classic study of the rituals and life and death cycles of a Romanian village in the late 1970s, Gail Kligman wrote that rituals, rather than imposing a "sychronic, static vision of culture in history," produced a "structure of relations in time and space sensitive to historical transformation." As such, they imposed a "hegemonic" view upon what were actually paradoxical realities, thereby "ordering and controlling the transitions and the potential disorder associated with them." As Kligman also notes, life cycle rituals such as funerals, weddings, births and, in the case of rural Romanian society, weddings of the dead produce as well as reproduce the social order itself, linking individual and "social-structural developmental cycles." Life cycle rituals, in particular, she writes may be viewed as "condensed, symbolic expressions of the nature and dimensions of social relations and exchange." Since they require collective participation, such rituals represent the transformation of the individual as a transformation of the collectivity. In essence, then, these life cycle rituals express a system of thought and action that structures fundamental gender relations, life and death and nature and culture. It is a system which makes it possible for disorder such as illness and death to be incorporated into

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experience and to be made comprehensible. At the same time, such rituals also help to mediate relations between the state, communities, and the individual.[1]

In her study of rural Transylvania, Kligman observed that rituals were a means by which ordinary citizens in traditional peasant communities – "from below" – could cope with systematic, rapid and fundamental change "from above" in the form of the Romanian socialist state. But sometimes life cycle rituals are incarnated by totalitarian states as a means of inculcating a population with its value system and transforming the practices and rituals of the party-state as everyday experience for the masses. In such a way, they aspire to remove any intermediary or civic space between the people and the state so that the two are symbiotically conjoined. While this is hard to achieve even in centrally planned and efficient bureaucratic states with large urban centres and educated populations generally well disposed to programmes of developmental modernization, it is a far more challenging enterprise in predominantly rural societies where the movement aiming at reshaping everyday life lacks countrywide support or strong roots in local communities. Such was the case with the Ustasha movement, the fascist movement which founded and ruled – often chaotically, usually precariously – the satellite wartime Independent State of Croatia [Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH] between 1941 and its collapse in 1945 with the support of Italian and German occupation forces. Yet studying the life cycle rituals and practices of the Ustasha movement in the 1940s can tell us important things about the nature of Ustasha rule.

One of the rituals Kligman examined in her book was the "wedding of the dead" [*Nunta mortului*], a practice in which people of marriageable age who remain unwed at the time of their death undergo a symbolic wedding ceremony as part of their funeral rite dressed in wedding clothes. The aim of this ritual is to placate the soul of the deceased and to prevent them returning as spirits or the living dead [*strigoi*] to realize their thwarted social destiny or fulfil their sexual desires.[2] Although the Ustasha movement developed numerous life cycle rituals for aspects of everyday life such as Ustasha weddings, libraries and drug stores, the most significant contribution the movement made to the practice of everyday life was in funerary practices, in particular the burial of militia men who had fallen in battle against insurgents. These elaborate funerary practices became part of a wider set of rituals related to the commemoration of martyrs and the consecration of their bodies. As such, it represented a means by which the Ustasha movement sought to root its dead in the local communities from which they had come in a context in which their claim to legitimacy as the representatives of

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[1]   Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 7–24.

[2]   Ibid, 215–47.

the nation was ideologically and socially contested. As importantly, the rituals of martyrdom and the Ustasha life cycle also served as a means through which the movement aimed to instill order and discipline within often disputatious local Ustasha camps and organizations far from the centre.

Through a thick description of one set of Ustasha funerals – the burials of Mijo Babić and Antun Pogorelec, two of the most important early Ustasha martyrs following the establishment of the new state – this article seeks to demonstrate the centrality of funeral practices in the Ustasha project to reconfigure Croatian society in the 1940s and its role in mediating the relationship between the individual and the state. This approach also sheds light on the subjectivity and perspectives of the Ustashas themselves, demonstrating that funerary practices were not simply a set of cultural values imposed from above, but had real meaning for those members and activists of the movement as well as their supporters in the wider local community that participated in them.

At the same time, a microhistory of the funerary practices of wartime Croatia complicates our picture of the role which religion played in the life of the state and challenges us to think more imaginatively about the ways in which the Ustasha movement utilized the rites and iconography of Catholicism for its own ideological purposes.[3] Most importantly, perhaps, zeroing in on the funeral rituals and martyrdom culture of the movement helps to explain the sanguinary and ritualistic nature of Ustasha mass killing, probably the defining aspect of Ustasha rule. In fact, as the story of the deaths and funerals of Babić and Pogorelec suggest, there was a symbiotic relationship between the ritualistic and performative nature of Ustasha mass killing in the early months of the state's existence and the practices the movement employed to bid farewell to its martyrs. In contrast to the subjects discussed in Gail Kligman's study, the life cycle habits of the Ustasha movement involved and were understood to involve both rituals of killing and dying.

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[3]   Current scholarship on the Ustasha regime and Catholicism tends to focus on the relationship between the state and the Catholic Church as an institution and the importance (or lack thereof) of Catholicism to Ustasha ideology. So far, there have been few anthropological or sociological readings of the role of Catholic traditions and rites in the movement, including at the local or ground level. See e.g., Nevenko Bartulin, *Honorary Aryans: National Racial Identity and Protected Jews in the Independent State of Croatia* (London, 2013), 6–7; Mark Biondich, "Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustaša Policy of Forced Religious Conversion, 1941–1942," *Slavonic and East European Review* 83, no. 1 (January 2005): 113. Cf with Radu Harald Dinu, *Faschismus, Religion und Gewalt in Südosteuropa: Die Legion Erzengel Michael und die Ustaša im historischen Vergleich* (Wiesbaden, 2013), 229, 250, 252.

A Short History of Ustasha Funerary Practices and Mass Killing

In most fascist states, the belief in the afterlife, the commemoration of the dead and the belief in the transcendence of martyrs have been central elements of cultural politics and public ritual. This was the case in both Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.[4] It was also true of many Southeast European fascist movements in the 1930s and 1940s. In contrast to the sacralization of politics in Italy and Germany which typically used the concept of blood discursively and symbolical and conceptualized the martyr leaving behind a pristine body, martyrdom culture in Romania and Croatia, however, was more sanguinary in nature, emphasizing the dismemberment, mutilation, torture and humiliation of the martyr's body and emphasizing the notion that immortal life came through death. By contrast, this latter idea only entered mainstream Nazi culture after it became clear that the war was lost.[5] The sanguinary aspect of martyrdom culture in both the Romanian Legionary movement and the Ustasha movement in part, at least, represented a form of mirror imaging in which the ritualized and performative methods by which Ustasha militia men and Legionary death squads slaughtered "national enemies" in mass liquidations – in the case of the Legionaries mostly Jews and in the case of the Ustashas mostly Serbs – was projected back onto the bodies of fallen comrades. In both the short-lived Legionary state and fascist Croatia, the programmes of mass killing initiated by the respective states in order to render them ethnically or nationally pure were accompanied by sacralized forms of politics which stressed the need for martyrdom and the nationally regenerative power of blood. These drew heavily on the rites of organized religion – in the case of the Legionary movement Romanian Orthodox traditions and in the case of the Ustasha movement, Catholicism.[6]

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[4]   The standard works on Italy and Germany remain Emilio Gentile, *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy*, trans. Keith Botsford, (Cambridge, Mass, 1996) and Jay Baird, *To Die for Germany: Heroes in the Nazi Pantheon* (Bloomington, 1992).

[5]   Michael Geyer, "'There is a Land Where Everything is Pure: Its Name is Land of Death.' Some Observations on Catastrophic Nationalism," in *Sacrifice and National Belonging in Twentieth-Century Germany*, eds. Greg Eghigian and Matthew Paul Berg (College Station: Texas A and M Press, 2002), 138–40; Jay Baird, *To Die for Germany: Heroes in the Nazi Pantheon* (Cambridge and New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1992); idem, *Hitler's Poets: Literature and Politics in the Third Reich* (Cambridge and New York: University of Cambridge Press, 2008), esp. 197–99. For a useful overview of Nazi martyrdom culture, see Jesús Casquete, "Martyr Construction and the Politics of Death in National Socialism," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10, nos. 3–4 (2009): 265–83.

[6]   Regarding ritualized and symbolic killing by Ustasha militias, see e.g., Radu Harald Dinu, "Honor, Shame, and Warrior Values: The Anthropology of Ustasha Violence," in *The Utopia of Terror: Life and Death in Wartime Croatia*, ed. Rory Yeomans (New York: Rochester University Press, 2016), 119–42. See also Alexander Korb, *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs: Massengewalt der Ustaša gegen Serben, Juden und Roma in Kroatien 1941–1945* (Hamburg: Hamburger

Likewise, within the Legionary movement in the 1930s and the Ustasha state in the 1940s, public life was structured by a series of sacralized ceremonies and festivals distinguished by the eulogization of fascist martyrs, demands for the avenging of their shed blood through the "cleansing" of the national body, and a conviction that they continued to live beyond the grave and command their troops from the afterlife. In Legionary Romania and fascist Croatia, the politics of sacralization had strongly instrumentalizing uses. It aimed to bring the masses together in collective mourning for fallen martyrs who were to be incarnated as pristine martyrs who had sacrificed their lives, suffering agonizing deaths for the salvation of the homeland. As such, they were a source of temporal legitimation, palingenetic rebirth and national regeneration.[7] With the veneration of the lives and deaths of these fascist martyrs from which all sordid aspects of their past were expunged, funerary practices and martyrdom culture provided ordinary people as well as the movement's activists with a set of instructions by which to live. As much as they endeavoured to bind citizens to the movement in shared mourning for the martyrs, rituals of commemoration sought to mobilize them around a set of national-ideological aims, including the eradication of "undesired elements." In this way, the politics of sacralization was an integral part of the system of terror.[8]

Edition, 2013); idem, "The disposal of corpses in an ethnicized civil war: Croatia, 1941–45," in *Human Remains and Mass Violence: Methodological Approaches*, eds. Jean-Marc Dreyfus and Elisabeth Anstett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 106–28. For the Legionary case, see Dinu, *Faschismus, Religion und Gewalt in Sudosteuropa: Die Legion Erzengel Michael und die Ustasa im historischen Vergleich (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013)*; Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); Constantin Iordachi, *Charisma, Politics and Violence: The Legion of the Archangel Michael in Inter-war Romania* (Trondheim: Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures & Societies, 2004).

[7]   For a discussion of the palingenetic and regenerative myths in fascism, see Roger Griffin, Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler (Houndmills, 2007). See also Griffin, "'I am no longer human. I am a Titan. I am a God!' The Fascist Quest to Regenerate Time," in A Fascist Century: Essays by Roger Griffin, ed. Matthew Feldman (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2008), 3–23.

[8]   The literature on death and martyrdom rituals in the Legionary Movement is extensive. Important studies include Radu Ioanid, "The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 5, no. 3 (2004): 419–53; Valentin Săndulescu, "Sacralised Politics in Action: The February 1937 Burial of the Romanian Legionary Leaders Ion Moța and Vasile Marin," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 2 (2007): 259–269; Constantin Iordachi, "God's Chosen Warriors: Romantic Palingenesis, Militarism and Fascism in Modern Romania," in *Comparative Fascist Studies: New Perspectives*, ed. Constantin Iordachi (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 326–56; Mihai Stelian Rusu, "Staging Death: Christofascist Necropolitics during the National Legionary State in Romania, 1940–1941," *Nationalities Papers* 49, no. 3 (2020): 576–89. There is com-

As an analysis of the funerary rituals after the deaths of Babić and Pogorelec demonstrates, the discourse and semiotics of mysticism, sacrifice and rebirth which drew heavily on Catholic rites became a central an element of Ustasha life cycle practices. In addition, Ustasha mysticism and the sacralization of politics were not purely top-down, instrumentalized processes imposed from above; rather, evidence from local Ustasha camps suggests that Ustasha activists believed in the values represented by the movement's martyrdom culture. When Krune Devčić, a lieutenant in the elite Poglavnik Bodyguard Battalion militia [Poglavnikov tjelesne sdrug – PTS], died in battle against Partisan insurgents in Ludbreg in 1944, *Ustaša* journal held him up as the epitome of a new "race" of ideal Spartan warriors whose life would set an example from which younger Ustasha officers would learn.[9] His recovered body was placed on an altar in the Ante Pavelić barracks in an open casket surrounded by candles, a huge crucifix, a tapestry of a crucifix behind him and a guard of honour as well as flowers; the front cover of *Ustaša* showed a montage from various moments of his life cycle, including his funeral and a photograph of a teenage Devčić immediately after he joined the Ustasha movement in the 1930s. In his obituary, Mijo Bzik, the Ustasha propaganda chief, wrote that Devčić had "drenched" the liberated Croatian soil in his blood. Addressing him directly, Bzik expressed the view that despite dying Devčić's spirit would continue to be with them.[10]

This public, state-organized funerary rite sounds a lot like bottom-up life cycle ceremonies organized by local Ustasha camps throughout the state to commemorate their fallen martyrs. One of these was the funeral held on 6 March 1942 at the Zavidovići Ustasha camp for two "brave warriors," Franjo Duvančić and Ivica Kocer, who had perished fighting insurgents. The camp leader described how their bodies were transferred to the Ustasha camp at Zavidovici where they were exhibited in the middle of the hall surrounded by candles and flowers before receiving an elaborate funeral accompanied by a local factory orchestra playing a funeral dirge and emotional eulogies by local Ustasha officials. The funeral, the leader noted, was the "most solemn that could be recalled in this area." It was attended by large numbers of citizens and peasants.[11]

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paratively less literature on such practices in the Ustasha movement. See Rory Yeomans, "Cults of Death and Fantasies of Annihilation: The Croatian Ustasha Movement in Power, 1941–45," *Central Europe* 3, no. 2 (November 2005): 121–42; idem, *Visions of Annihilation: The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism, 1941–1945* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013); Stipe Kljaić, "Apostles, Saints' Days, and Mass Mobilization: The Sacralization of Politics in the Ustasha State," in *The Utopia of Terror: Life and Death in Fascist Croatia*, ed. Rory Yeomans (New York: Rochester University Press, 2015), 145–64.

9 	"† Vitez Krune Devčić, uzor častnik," *Ustaša* 14, no. 9 (27 February 1944): 1–3.

10 	Mijo Bzik, "Naš nezaboravni Krune," *Ustaša* 14, no. 9 (27 February 1944): 4–5.

11 	Zadovići Ustasha camp leader to the State Information and Propaganda Directorate, 26 March 1942, HDA, NDH, GRP, 3,234/8756/42.

Mass Killing and the Martyrdom of Babić and Pogorelec

If the wartime Croatian fascist state was defined by one policy in the early months of its existence, it was the campaign of genocide against the state's Serb minority. In the new state which comprised Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina and parts of the Vojvodina, ethnic Serbs made up approximately one third of the total population or nearly two million inhabitants. The Ustasha regime devised a number of methods to eradicate or dramatically reduce the state's Serb population. These included a programme of mass expulsion to occupied Serbia; deportation to the embryonic concentration camp system, most notably the Jadovno-Slana-Metajna concentration camp complex in the Lika region and on the Island of Pag; and through ghettoization and exclusion from the economic life of the state.

Numerous laws and edicts were also introduced which targeted Serbian community life such as the institution of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Serbian schools and the Cyrillic script.[12] However, by far the most frequent tactic used in the formative period of the state's existence was a series of campaigns of mass killing in the countryside, led by Ustasha militias, assisted by groups of so-called "wild Ustashas."[13] Although some of these Ustasha militias were local, more usually the mass killings were organized and led by militias sent directly from Zagreb who used the knowledge of the structure of the local Serb population provided by regional Ustasha members to arrest prominent Serbs. The first

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[12] Regarding anti-Serbian legislation under the Ustasha regime, see Igor Vuković, "An Order of Crime: The Criminal Law of the Independent State of Croatia, 1941–1945," *Balcanica* 48, no. 1 (January 2017): 289–342.

[13] The term "wild Ustashas" ["Divlji Ustaše"] refers to bands of Ustashas which were not formally part of the official Ustasha militias, but which participated in the mass killing of Serb civilians in the countryside, especially in the formative months of the state's existence. Sometimes, these were informal auxiliary groups of local citizens dressed in civilian clothing. However, more often they wore Ustasha uniforms. When Pavelić ordered a halt to the killing sprees in the late summer of 1941 in the face of a growing uprising by Serbs, the "wild Ustashas" were invoked as convenient scapegoats, depicted in the press as lawless and bloodthirsty bandits outside the control of the central Ustasha authorities. They were contrasted with the "honourable" and "legal" activities of "self-sacrificing" Ustasha Corps. After orders were issued by Pavelić to disband the "wild" Ustashas, a propaganda campaign was launched against them; a number of alleged "wild" Ustashas were, with great publicity, executed. However, as Tomislav Dulić has pointed out, when Pavelić ordered a halt to the first wave of killings in early July 1941, most "wild" Ustashas stood down, suggesting that the GUS enjoyed control over them. Moreover, they were, for the most part, provided with arms and uniforms by GUS. In fact, while most of the early large-scale massacres were perpetrated by militia units sent directly from Zagreb working with local Ustasha units, the spectre of the "wild Ustashas" nonetheless proved to be a convenient means of publicly separating the regime from the atrocities it had itself organised.

to be targeted were members of the Serb intelligentsia, affluent businessmen, Orthodox priests and the middle-class elite. Usually, they would be taken away under the pretext of being questioned about alleged communist or nationalist activities and then detained and beaten before being transported by truck to outlying villages where they were murdered with axes, sickles, hammers, and mallets and then thrown into deep karst pits or ravines. While elites were usually the first to be murdered, increasingly as Ustasha militias were confronted by resistance from Serb communities, this policy of "cleansing" was extended to the whole population in a particular region and was frequently accompanied by the mutilation of the bodies and faces of the victims.[14] By contrast, although plans for the destruction of the Jews and to a lesser extent Roma and Sinti were already underway during the formative stage of the state's existence, they mostly took the form of legal sanctions, economic and social exclusion and ghettoization, and deportation to concentration camps rather than mass killing in the countryside.[15]

Babić and Pogorelec were actively involved in the initial stages of Ustasha anti-Serb terror. Both of them had been active members of the Ustasha movement since its founding in the early 1930s, and both had been implicated in terrorist attacks against the Yugoslav state. Babić had participated in the 1929 assassination of the newspaper editor Toni Schlegel as well as being involved in various gun-running and weapon-smuggling activities while Pogorelec, who had taken an oath of allegiance to the Ustasha movement in 1933, had been sentenced to death for his involvement, along with his nephew, Josip Begović, and other Ustashas, in a conspiracy to assassinate King Aleksandar during a visit to Zagreb in December 1933. While his young nephew, a radicalized student at the University of Zagreb, was executed for his role in the assassination attempt, Pogorelec's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in Lepoglava prison. He was released in a general amnesty of 1938.[16] Meanwhile, Babić fled Yugosla-

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[14] The standard English-language work on the mass killing of Serbs in the formative period of the Independent State of Croatia is Tomislav Dulić, *Utopias of Nation: Mass Killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1941–1942* (Uppsala: Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 2007). More recent important publications include Max Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force: Identity, Nationalism, and Memory in a Balkan Community (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016)*; Korb, *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs*. Serbo-Croat studies include Vladimir Dedijer, *Protjerivanje Srba sa ognjište 1941–1944 (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1985)* and Gojo Riste Dakina, *Genocid nad Srbima u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1994).

[15] Nonetheless, there were some killings of Jews in rural parts of Croatia and Bosnia by Ustasha militias; most of the victims were refugees from other states who had settled in Yugoslavia in the period between the late 1930s and April 1941.

[16] Stipe Pilić, "Virovitička hrvatska nacionalna omladina između dva svjetska rata do pristupa Ustaškoj mladeži 1941. godine," *Zbornik Janković* no. 4 (2019): 219–20.

via for the Ustasha terrorist training camps of Italy and Hungary following the slaying of Schlegel and a shootout with the police during which one policeman was killed. While in exile, Babić, alongside other members of the hardline Ustasha elite around Ante Pavelić, the leader of the movement, played a central role in plans for the extermination of the Serbs in a future Ustasha-led independent Croatian state.[17]

Following the invasion and occupation of Yugoslavia by Axis forces and the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, both Babić and Pogorelec were to play important roles in the anti-Serb terror of the Ustasha regime. Babić was appointed an adjutant to Pavelić who as Ustasha leader was the supreme ruler ["Poglavnik" or chief] of the new state as well as being made a commissioner in the nerve centre of the Ustasha government, the Main Ustasha Headquarters [Glavni Ustaški stan – GUS]. Shortly, Babić was appointed head of Bureau 3 of the Ustasha Supervisory Service [Ustaška nadzorna služba – UNS], the Ustasha version of the Gestapo, where he was charged with the establishment of the embryonic concentration camp system for the liquidation of the state's ethnic enemies.[18] However, at the beginning of June 1941, Babić, now a captain in the PTS, was dispatched along with Pogorelec, a sub-lieutenant, to eastern Herzegovina on the orders of Andrija Artuković, the interior minister, with orders to repress a rebellion among the local Serb population which had broken out in response to the massacres by Ustasha militias in the region and to exterminate or "cleanse" the Serb population. It was during this operation in the village of Berkovići on 4 July that Babić and Pogorelec were killed by insurgents.[19] In response, Pavelić declared eight days of mourning for the members of his elite bodyguard battalion and the body of Babić was transported through Sarajevo to his final resting place in his home region on the outskirts of Zagreb.

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[17] Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i Ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1983), 287; Paul Mojzes, *Balkan Genocides: Holocaust and Ethnic Cleansing in the Twentieth Century* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011), 53.

[18] Slavko and Ivo Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu* (Zagreb: Liber, 2001), 268.

[19] The most comprehensive accounts of the uprising in Eastern Herzegovina by Serb insurgents are Davor Marijan, "Lipanjski ustanak u istočnoj Herzegovini," *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 35, no. 2 (October 2003): 545–76 and Nevenka Bajić, "Komunistička partija Jugoslavije u Hercegovini u ustanku 1941. godine," *Prilozi* 2 (1966): 193–260. However, Marijan's article, in particular, should be read with caution as it is generally apologetic in tone. Also useful are Enver Redžić, *Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Second World War* (Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2005); Marko Attila Hoare, *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941–1943* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Savo Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba '41* (Belgrade: Stručna knjiga, 1991).

The deaths and funerals of both Babić and Pogorelec received extensive and emotional coverage in the national and party media.[20]

The official internal report prepared for the Poglavnik's Military Office explained that in the days prior to the arrival of Babić, Pogorelec and other members of the PTS, there had been telephone requests from various localities in Eastern Herzegovina requesting help in the form of men, weapons, and munitions because the Croatian population feared that on 28 June, the Serbian festival of St Vitus Day [Vidovdan], local Serbs would launch an insurgency. As a result, hundreds of rifles as well as munitions were issued to regional Ustasha centres to arm volunteers from Croatian villages so they could defend themselves. Nevertheless, the report also acknowledged that the "radical cleansing" operations in Berkovići, Fojnica, Gacko and other places by Ustasha units, killing "not just men but also women and children" en masse and "throwing the bodies into various pits and rivers" as well as the plundering and burning down of the homes of Serb inhabitants, some of it carried out by Croatian civilians, had stimulated the uprisings. It complained that there was a general impression that there was no legal government in the region and that instead the Ustasha Centre in Mostar had "sucked in" men of "various occupations and dubious political pasts" who aimed to create "turmoil and disorder."[21]

A report from the military section of the Ustasha centre in Mostar, written by an unnamed lieutenant, by contrast, valorized the actions of Babić, attributing his death to rushing bravely into action against Serb insurgents who wanted to destroy the state. The report stressed the self-sacrificing nature not only of Babić's deeds. but also those of his comrade Pogorelec; they had sought to immolate themselves for the love of comradeship, the salvation of the nation and "liquidation" of the rebellion. The report described Babić as "always calm and smiling," thereby underlining his fanaticism and bravery as the commander of the unit, who had sacrificed his life, opting to selflessly stand in the "first fighting ranks." Falling in the heat of battle, it was only later, it explained, after the "liquidation" of the insurgents' front, that his comrades were able to retrieve Babić's body and confirm that the news "to our great sadness" was true. There then followed an account of the events leading to Babić and Pogorelec's death, reconstructed from eyewitness testimonies. Note, in particular, the application of idealized heroic imagery, detailed descriptions of the manner of their deaths and emphasis on the brotherhood of the two Ustasha fighters:

The deceased Babić arrived with his unit...where they found Chetniks in a heavily fortified position. To set an example to the other Ustasha fighters,

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[20] Bajić, "Komunistička partija Jugoslavije u Hercegovini u ustanku 1941. godine," 225.

[21] Special assistant to the Poglavnik to the military office of the Poglavnik, 30 June 1941, HDA, NDH, Jadransko Divizija Područje, 1203.3/8/30/VI.

he endeavoured to pass through a clearing of open space which was under the deadly fire of Chetniks towards their positions to attack them further. During this action, he was shot in the temple and riddled with Chetnik bullets. His long-time partner and friend and well-known Ustasha fighter Ivan Pogorelac [i.e., Antun Pogorelec], when he saw that Captain Babić had died, raced alone in an assault towards the Chetnik position, climbed onto the cliff and threw a hand grenade into the Chetnik nest. During this action, he was hit in the head and fell gloriously. As he reached the cliffs, all he had left of his Ustasha uniform was his cap which before he perished fell off his head. First from the battlefield, the dead body of Captain Babić was removed and immediately transferred by car to Stolac to be then transported to Zagreb. As it was already late in the night, the identity of the deceased Pogorelec was not immediately confirmed until after the body of Babić had already been taken to Stolac and so a special transport had to be ordered for the deceased Pogorelec.[22]

This description suggests that Pogorelec was almost immolated in the attack by insurgents. However, in his account subsequently published in the party journal, *Ustaša*, Pogorelec's PTS comrade, Antun Žličarić, expressed it somewhat more aesthetically, writing that he had "fallen heroically." Although his naked corpse remained unclaimed for some time on the top of the cliff, in dying he had testified his faith in the Poglavnik and Croatia "in blood."[23]

While their immediate Ustasha comrades mourned Babić and Pogorelec, as Đorđe Jovanović, a fifty-year-old cabinet maker from Srpska Trnova in Bijeljina, living in Zagreb, testified to the Countrywide War Crimes Commission in 1945, their passing was marked by other Ustashas by meting out terror to Serb residents. Ustashas in Zagreb, for example, gathered together 250 Serb families as hostages who were to be shot in retaliation for the two men's deaths. On 5 July 1941, Jovanović was arrested with his wife and two children, and they were loaded onto a wagon at the station but were saved when a German transportation train deporting Slovenians to Serbia ordered the Ustashas to release the Serb hostages who were then transported with the Slovenians to Belgrade. Nevertheless, he had lost everything; he later found out that his cabinet-making workshop had been sold at auction while he and his family, now destitute refugees alone in Belgrade, had been forced to leave behind the entirety of their possessions.[24]

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[22] "Izvještaj o okolnostima pod koji je poginuo ustaški satnik Mijo Babić," undated but probably July 1941, HDA, NDH, Jadranska Divizija Područje, 1203.3/unnumbered.

[23] Bu., "Mučenički put Antuna Pogoreleca," *Ustaša* 11, no. 23 (28 June 1942): 2.

[24] Đorđe Jovanović to the Commissariat of the ZKRZ in Belgrade, Serbia, undated but 1945, HDA, NDH, CGK-ZKRZ, 1.306/330/1.

Laying to Rest Mijo Babić, Ustasha "Blood Sacrifice"

After they died, both Babić and Pogorelec received elaborate funerals and commemorations at the state and local level. First, let's consider the funeral of Babić who was the better-known and more illustrious of the two martyrs and therefore the recipient of more extensive funerary rites. Before Babić was buried at Mirogoj, his coffin was driven through the streets of Sarajevo and other towns and villages, a reflection of the grief ordinary people felt at his death, according to *Hrvatski narod*, the party's daily newspaper: "Through all the regions and villages which the dead body of Mijo Babić passed by car, from Nevesinje through Mostar to Sarajevo and further around Bosnia, the Croatian people everywhere greeted the dead Ustasha fighter decisively, peacefully and respectfully. Through Hercegovina his car was accompanied by Ustasha youth from Stolac. Everywhere the car was showered with flowers, blessed with water and accompanied by the prayers of people." This was especially the case on the arrival of Babić's body in Sarajevo where it received "a magnificent and touching" reception in the square in front of Saint Josip's church to honour "the posthumous remains of the national warrior and hero Mijo Babić." From Sarajevo, the car carrying his body, accompanied by a phalanx of automobiles, travelled through the Ivan Mountains; among those escorting Babić's body were the commissioner for Bosnia, Jure Francetić, later commander of the Black Legion militia, and Božidar Bralo, a prominent member of Francetić's council of commissars and the Catholic parish priest of Saint Josip's. Members of the Ustasha Corps and Croatian army, some of whom were playing music, lined the route. In front of the church, a group of Ustasha peasants who had travelled from Štupa in national costume gathered as did a "multitude" of citizens who crowded the square and the nearby streets. Two Ustasha units were positioned at the entrance of the church and when the dead body of Babić arrived at 4pm from the railway station, the bells of Saint Josip's rang out to announce the cortege's appearance and a funeral dirge from the Ustasha Corps orchestra broadcast the "mournful march" of the phalanx of automobiles led by Bralo's. In the square on Marijin Dvor, six uniformed Ustashas lifted the silver coffin draped in the Croatian tricolor onto their shoulders into the church where a catafalque had been prepared. Behind the coffin, an "enormous mass" swarmed into the church. Dozens of wreaths from Ustashas and comrades had been laid behind the catafalque. As soon as the coffin entered the church, the rites of absolution began to be carried out over the dead body by Bralo and his assistants.[25]

Likewise, the Zagreb daily *Novi list* reported that in downtown Sarajevo residents had bid farewell to the dead body of their "meritorious son" in "a mag-

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[25] "Herceg-Bosna odala je počast junačkom ustaškom borcu Miji Babiću," *Hrvatski narod*, 6 July 1941.

nificent, worthy and sad way. Only two days before, it wrote, he had fallen at the hands of the same oppressors "against whom he had fought heroically for twelve long years at home and abroad," thereby linking insurgents and terrorized Serb communities in rural Bosnia to the interwar Yugoslav regime. Declaring Babić to be "one of the most shining Ustasha personalities," it noted that "everywhere the truck appeared with the dead body of the Ustasha, people piously removed their caps and lowered the hoes from their callused hands, bidding farewell to the deceased Miško."[26] Inside the church, Bralo gave a farewell eulogy shot through with sanguinary imagery drawing attention to the fact that only a few days after visiting this church he had perished on the battlefield, thereby framing him as a virtuous Catholic son. "Our dear Mijo! Not even eight days have passed since you stepped inside this very church so vigorous, strong, powerful and healthy and prayed before the defender of all of us from death, our Saint Josip. You were amazed at his temple and the man, the archbishop who built it, and just four days after leaving this blessed church of Saint Josip's, embracing the bloody tri-color, accompanied by the thoughts of your faithful comrades, you are no more our dear Mijo." Fate, he noted, had demanded that Babić sacrifice his life for the liberation of the homeland, but Sarajevo, he declared, would accompany him "with love all the way to the arcades of Zagreb in the company of the July Victims and those thousands of Croatian revolutionaries who immolated themselves and gave their lives for the homeland." Alluding to the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia at Easter, he asked, "this great God who on the day of his resurrection opened such a sacred door of liberation" to reward Babić for his Ustasha work "from the first days to the last moment when the shameful dum-dum bullets took you from us" and for "dear Miško" to "remain with us" in God eternally.[27]

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[26] While Babić's body was driven across Bosnia in a hearse, it seems that it arrived at and left the church in a truck. Trucks were symbolically important for Ustasha militias, both as a method of transport for their killing spree and as the favoured form of vehicle for the transportation of their dead. In the countryside, trucks were probably partly favoured for funerals for their space and practicality but also because they served as a means of emphasizing the utilitarian and working-class ethos of the Ustasha movement. It is likely that the exchange of the hearse for the truck carrying Babić's remains on the journey to the church was a deliberate act, serving to connect Babić and hence the PTS militia to the people.

[27] Bu, "Veličanstven sprovoda ustaškog borca i mučenika Mije Babića," *Novi list*, 7 July 1941. The "July Victims" [Srpanske žrtve] refers to the massacre of protesting Croatian students in Saint Mark's Square in Zagreb by Austro-Hungarian troops on 29 July 1845. The martyred students were incarnated as revered martyrs in the calendar of the Croatian national struggle and the massacre was also incorporated into the cultural politics of the wartime fascist Croatian state. For example, the massacre is a one of the set pieces in Oktavijan Miletić's 1944 feature film *Lisinski*, a biopic of the Croatian composer, Vatroslav Lisinski.

After seven uniformed Ustashas lifted the coffin through the main doors, Munir Šahinović-Ekremov, a young writer, journalist and head of the Office of the Vice-President of the Independent State of Croatia paid his own typically emotional and adulatory farewell to the deceased captain of the PTS.[28] Particularly notable here is that he refers to Babić as a "blood sacrifice," a common term for fallen Ustashas which aimed to imply the predetermined, intentional and necessary nature of their sacrifice.

We today have seen off one of the worthiest blood sacrifices of our liberation, a warrior who burnt entirely in struggle for the freedom of Croatia, the captain Mijo Babić, the best among the best, the most honourable among the most honourable, the most patriotic among the most patriotic. We have lost him at the moment when he came to save his Muslim brothers in Herzegovina and when he came to liberate the Hercegovinan Croats from tyranny. Mijo Babić has fallen, a beautiful hero, he has laid down his life for us, for the freedom of Croatia. He fell at the hands of the eternal enemy which today fantasizes about how it will destroy us. The Croatian people should not mourn this great sacrifice. We say farewell to our great hero with the cry: "Glory to Mijo Babić!"[29]

Novi list added that Šahinović-Ekremov was so moved that he could barely finish this speech. "From the masses one heard shrieks. The Ustashas received the coffin; they placed it in the delivery truck which stood in the square in front of the church and then moved off towards the railway station. With the greatest of pain Sarajevo said farewell to the dead Ustasha Mijo Babić." *Hrvatski narod* reported that on all sides Ustasha comrades accompanied their dead captain. "Under the sad reverberating bells of the church of St Josip's and military music the funeral cortege set off. Every wreath was carried by three Ustashas. On the square in front of the main station there was a mass farewell by Sarajevo in front of our hero. For the last time, Ustashas raised their right hand to their dead

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[28] Šahinović-Ekremov, one of the more energetic and prolific propagandists for the Ustasha regime in Bosnia, was well known for his emotional tributes to fallen Ustasha militia commanders such as Babić and Francetić, in particular his emphasis on their male warrior "beauty." Sometimes, it seems even he went too far for the Ustasha censors. An essay he submitted to the Main Directorate for Propaganda [Glavno ravnateljstvo za promičbu – GRP] to mark the announcement of Francetić's passing in March 1943 was censored for being "profane" and for failing to adhere to the guidelines set down by NARPROS about how to write about his death. See Ivo Bogdan to Mile Starčević, 15 April 1943, HDA, NDH, GRP, 44.237/3077/43. Nonetheless, an eulogy to Francetić by Šahinović-Ekremov was later broadcast on Sarajevo State Radio. In it, he described Francetić as a "beautiful knight" and "handsome hero" who was loved by his "dashing" Legionaries "far more than their own fathers and children, more even than they loved themselves." Whether this reflected the sentiments of the censored composition is not clear. See Munir Šahinović-Ekremov, "Pozdrav i zavjet Francetiću," *Novi Sarajevski list*, 6 April 1943.

[29] Bu, "Veličanstven sprovoda ustaškog borca i mučenika Mije Babića," *Novi list*, 7 July 1941.

comrade Mijo Babić and paid their beloved comrade their final farewell."[30] *Novi list* added philosophically that "the Croatian and Ustasha blood of the warrior Mijo Babić flowed. Blood! This is the sacred content of Ustasha struggle, and the framework of liberationist thought; in blood, freedom is created and in blood its construction is cemented. Blood flowed and while he fought, sacred and martyred blood consecrated the foundations of Croatia, and these same foundations were once again strengthened by the blood of the Ustasha Mijo Babić."[31]

Babić's funeral and burial took place on 6 July 1941 at Mirogoj cemetery, the traditional resting place of all notable Croatian public figures since the nineteenth century. Prior to his burial, his open casket was laid in the mortuary on a catafalque surrounded by wreaths and flowers, protected by an honour guard of Ustasha soldiers. Around the catafalque huge candles burnt, near to which were placed flowers in vases. A Croatian flag had been draped over the coffin as well as two bouquets of flowers in the national colours. Wreaths had been sent from family members and Ustasha comrades including from the Poglavnik to his "adjutant and Ustasha captain" with a second from his fellow PTS fighters addressed "to a brother Ustasha." Trade unions also sent wreaths: the chauffeurs' union remembered Babić as an "unforgettable colleague" while Croatian Workers' Union [Hrvatski radnički savez – HRS] recalled him simply as "our comrade." Bralo also sent a wreath for a "fearless Ustasha"; for Francetić who would soon join him in the afterlife he was "the most loyal among the most loyal." His colleagues from Bureau 3 of the UNS, meanwhile, recalled him as a "a model patriot" and the Ustasha camp of Sarajevo as "the hero of our liberation struggle." The wreath from his wife simply read: "For an unforgettable husband."[32]

Babić's funeral was an elaborate affair and began at 4pm with mourners gathering at the mortuary. Facing the mortuary was a unit of the PTS under the command of Ante Moškov as well as a unit of Croatian army officers from the Officers' Army Training School under the command of Jure Orešković and musical units of the Officers' School and First Ustasha Regiment, shortly to gain notoriety as the Black Legion. After a blessing performed by the Ustasha priest Vilim Cecelja, the funerary dirge "Mirno spavaj" [Sleep Peacefully] was played by an Ustasha choral group, with soldiers and Ustasha militia men forming an honour guard. At 5pm, the funeral procession walked slowly towards the place of "eternal rest." A monumental cross was carried at the head of the procession with the words "For Ustasha captain Mijo Babić." This was accompanied by the huge number of wreaths carried by columns of Ustashas and Croatian youths

[30] "Herceg-Bosna odala je počast junačkom ustaškom borcu Miji Babiću," *Hrvatski narod*, 6 July 1941.

[31] Bu, "Veličanstven sprovoda ustaškog borca i mučenika Mije Babića," *Novi list*, 7 July 1941.

[32] "Dirljiv pogreb ustaše Mije Babića," *Hrvatski narod*, 6 July 1941.

walking next to the coffin. As the procession moved from the mortuary to the "Mirogoj arcade," citizens who were standing in rows "greeted the coffin full of mourning and full of pain," raising their right hands in tribute to the procession and "the body which was being carried in it." Directly behind the coffin stood Cecelja who, at the entrance to Mirogoj, recited a prayer. Then Babić's coffin was once again lifted onto the shoulders of the Ustasha officers who "bore their fellow fighter to his final resting place," accompanied by an Ustasha honour guard. They were followed by his widow Josipa, his father and brother Mato and his sister Francika Brkić, colleagues from the Ustasha Personnel Office of the UNS 3 and high-ranking Ustasha including Andrija Artuković, other members of the hardline Ustasha "Ras" elite, and militia commanders such as Ivica Šarić of the First Ustasha Battalion who had made his mark in planning the mass liquidation of local Serb men in the town of Glina at the beginning of May. Others accompanying the procession included trade union representatives, Ustasha Youth leaders, Ustasha student leaders, and members of the Thirteenth Student Assault Battalion – nicknamed "the Ustasha battalion of death" – whose members had become battle hardened through a series of sanguinary massacres of Serbs in eastern Herzegovina, also in May. Joining these diverse groups, crowds of citizens "followed the sad procession and accompanied the mortal remains of brave Ustasha warrior Mijo Babić to their final rest."[33]

As the mourners led by the family stood by Babić's grave and his dead body was lowered to the accompaniment of funeral music, they listened in "perfect silence, raising their right hand and paying a last farewell to the deceased." A "painful shriek" which "pierced the hearts of those present cried out from the hearts of the deceased's nearest and dearest who were saying their farewell to the person who was dearest to them and whom they were leaving forever…This shriek of pain grew ever louder and stronger as the attendees began to throw earth as the final goodbye to the deceased. The twitching of muscles on the faces of Ustashas who attended this sad event, their warm and mournful glances into the distance, and their thunderous cry: 'Glory to him!' were words of farewell to a comrade, warrior and the best of them."[34]

Mijo Babić's burial at Mirogoj was covered in hermeneutic detail by the press. *Novi list*, for one, vividly described the atmosphere as his body was taken up the long winding hill to its final resting place at Mirogoj, powerfully conveying the visceral grief of mourners, Babić's sanguinary sacrifice and his comrades' desire for vengeance. Note here the evocation of shed blood as not simply a material reality, but a source of regeneration and growth. The newspaper wrote that Babić's death had shaken "the souls of every Ustasha. Many manly eyes moistened with tears but

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[33] Ibid.

[34] "Dirljiv pogreb ustaše Mije Babića," *Hrvatski narod*, 6 July 1941.

also every Ustasha fist was clenched with anger for the desired satisfaction. The death of the elite warrior Mijo Babić has given the Ustasha movement one martyr more, has given it one sacrifice more, contributed to the altar of the homeland, but has also given it a leader who with his example and his life teaches all Ustashas and the entire Croat people how to perish when one knows why one is perishing. A sacrifice is contributed, a seed is drenched in blood and sown in good earth and the fruit will not lag behind." The newspaper described how the body of Babić had been taken from Zagreb Cathedral on the Kaptol to the mortuary at Mirogoj winding its way through the streets of Novi Ves and Zvijezda to Mirogoj. It noted that as well as the striking visual impression made by the thousands of wreaths carried by mourners as part of the procession, some by hand and others transported by minibus, the funerary music of the orchestra "echoed in the hearts of those present, imbued with a kind of pain of a completely terrifying tone." The account of the different stages of his funeral underlined the mystical nature of Ustasha burial rites and the life cycle of Ustasha martyrdom, especially the notion that the dead continued to communicate with the living beyond the grave, martyred death as a legitimation for what Ustasha theorists termed "the revolution of blood" – the war of extermination against the state's Serb minority – and the idea of the fallen Ustasha fighter as a "blood sacrifice."

A deathly silence began among onlookers when the car carrying the body of the deceased neared. Some magical power streamed from the dead remains of the martyr which at the same time filled us with a venerating sorrow, courage and belief. There were no shrieks, cries, nor were there any laments, no, because this would not be Ustasha conduct. Deep pain for a dead comrade lay on the faces and in the eyes of all those present…With silent steps and deep piety, they accompanied the earthly remains of the Ustasha-martyr, with silent steps and silent pain but a strong and powerful desire for struggle and work imbued with belief in complete victory…As the coffin was taken out of the car, everyone present paid their respects. The coffin was decorated in the Croatian tricolour and was carried by Ustasha comrades into the mortuary. There the lid was removed from the coffin so that all those present could see the head of the martyr and pay their respects to the Ustasha warrior who fell on the field of duty and honour. There, many tears were shed because they could not insensitively look on the young life cut short by bestial hands, because they could not look at death in those eyes which had given so much belief and preserved hope in victory… The sacrifice has been made, the blood has been spilt and there are cries for revenge, and the example of an Ustasha martyr shines and leads Ustasha warriors. The martyred visage of Mijo Babić will remain in the eternal memory among Ustasha ranks and let the Croatian earth liberated by warriors like him be soft. With his conduct, example and life, from his dead lips he speaks and cries out more strongly than if he had remained alive. These lips condemn the killers and

those who stand behind them, condemning and crying out for satisfaction. The apparition of the Ustasha martyr will be eternally among his comrades so that with his example he sends a message, teaches them, leads them, reminds them to be ready.[35]

The newspaper added in an editorial that if in returning to Croatia with the Poglavnik to "liberate" Croatia, he had fulfilled his life's desire, in perishing Babić had fulfilled a "second equally intense" desire: he had died "gloriously" in the struggle for the homeland and Poglavnik, waiting for something he had "persistently" sought for years. But more than this, Babić's "blood sacrifice" would encourage other young Ustasha militia men, in spite of their "heroic and manly sorrow," to temper their grief with the determination to immolate themselves for the homeland. In the meantime, in mourning for their fallen comrade and waiting for death, they lived in two worlds, as flesh and blood warriors prepared to embark "on the same journey" and carrying out their "everyday responsible work" while at the same time their "souls wander in the brown and hard mountains of Herzegovina painted in heroic Ustasha blood." Babić, though "riddled with the bullets of many stronger enemies," had a similarly metaphysical existence. The mourners set off with him, *Novi list* wrote, with the intention of asking him "in the last moments of the bodily residence of the dead warrior" to say something about his work as an émigré Ustasha. Thus, Babić was not just a fallen Ustasha martyr but one who spoke as if alive to his young comrades who, the newspaper averred, fervently desired to share his fate.

Aware of and knowing to value their pain in these last moments of farewell to a model warrior, we did not expect any kind of extensive statement. We knew that the Ustasha easily dies and suffers for the homeland and hearth. We knew that he considers death his duty. We knew that [Ustashas] are imbued with a strong belief that penetrates their soul and heart even after the corresponding level of suffering through which they have all passed. But beyond all of this we are deeply impressed by their conviction to be victims and to sacrifice. And we maintain that we are not exaggerating if we say that many of them are sorrowful in their heart that they cannot switch places with Mijo…Because to perish heroically, on the battlefield, in a battle with the sworn enemy and until yesterday tyrants over our race – this is the greatest honour for every Ustasha! But the Ustasha is also a man and a comrade, true to every comrade as if he was his own brother. And thus they…as men and comrades are burdened by thoughts of the eternal farewell from him, all of those from his ranks especially loved.[36]

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[35] Bu, "Za ostvarenje velikih ideala potrebne su i velike žrtve: slavna smrt Ustaše Mije Babića," *Novi list*, 6 July 1941.

[36] "Još jedan kamen u temelje Nezavisne Državne Hrvatske," *Novi list*, 6 July 1941.

The Burial of Antun Pogorelec and the Ustasha Funeral-As-Wedding

In her study of Palestinian martyrdom culture, Laleh Khalili has noted the way in which funerals of young martyrs are transformed into weddings. She writes that the funeral-as-wedding "reaffirms hope amidst death and allows for transformation – however fleeting – of wasted youth and human loss into a meaningful and heroic death that can give dignity and honour." In such "weddings," the martyr's comrades organize "wedding" processions from the martyr's house to his ostensible grave ("wedding chamber") while firing bullets in the air. As a political event targeted at national audiences, "the funeral-as-wedding and the very act of martyrdom it celebrates give heroic life to the movement."[37] Geographically closer to Croatia, Romanian legionaries in one of their most well-known "death team" songs declared that "death, only the *legionarii* death/ is a gladsome wedding for us."[38] In a similar way, the burials of Ustasha warriors such as Babić and Pogorelec can be seen as funerals-as-weddings insofar as they united fighters in death that had been together in life and presenting them as akin to a married couple, a practice that was not uncommon when Ustasha fighters or Croatian soldiers had fallen together.[39]

Although Babić and Pogorelec were buried in separate ceremonies at Mirogoj, in both the public imagination and Ustasha propaganda martyrdom culture they were imagined as partners predetermined to perish together. This partnership between the two men drew on two aspects which significantly influenced Ustasha gender politics: first, traditional Balkan ideas about male kinship connected to the practice of *pobratimstvo*, a form of fictive ritual brotherhood which involved a ceremony resembling a male marriage, and second, the homosocial culture of fascism which was amplified within the Ustasha movement by the years its émigrés spent in harsh conditions in Italian overseas camps and the generally young and unmarried status of most members of the militias.[40]

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[37] Laleh Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 125–6.

[38] Zev Barbu, "Rumania," in *Fascism in Europe*, ed. Stuart J. Woolf, revised edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 162–3.

[39] See e.g., the joint funeral notice for Vojko Novak and Ivan Schlehan, *Nova Hrvatska*, 9 February 1943.

[40] Regarding the practice of *pobratimstvo*, see e.g., M. Edith Durham, "Some Montenegrin Manners and Customs," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 39, nos. 1–6 (January-June 1909): 85–96; idem, *Some Tribal Origins, Laws and Customs of the Balkans* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1928); Dinko Tomašić, *Personality and Culture in Eastern European Politics* (New York: George W. Stewart, 1948). If these accounts suffer from an orientalist framing typical of the time in which they were written, a more recent interpretation of this practice is provided in Wendy Bracewell, "Ritual Brotherhood across

The partnership or ritual brotherhood of Babić and Pogorelec was a distinctive part of the memory culture which grew up around the two men. According to *Hrvatski radio list* which put the images of the deceased warriors on its front cover surrounded by an edging of thorns to symbolize the arduous journey they had set out on together they were martyrs whose "two wreaths of thorns crowned the Independent State of Croatia." Inside the magazine, there were photographs of their funerary processions and burial ceremonies at Mirogoj.[41] On the journey of the remains of the two men to Zagreb, their bodies were displayed to the public in open caskets in Banja Luka though at slightly different times, courtesy of the Ustasha centre leader of Bosanska Krajina, Viktor Gutić.[42]

However, more broadly the commemorations of Pogorelec's death and the coverage of his funeral emphasized his brotherhood with Babić even as it followed much of the same rhetorical trajectory of sacralization, revenge and predestination as his partner's funeral. Pogorelec was buried at Mirogoj on 9 July. That evening's edition of *Hrvatski narod* described how "the dead body of the fearless warrior Antun Pogorelec who fell victim to perfidious criminal hands" was laid to rest. The newspaper stressed that although he was dead, "his spirit is alive; he comes among us. Those who killed Ante Pogorelec only killed his body but did not kill his spirit." The burial was preceded by a mass after which his body "was carried to eternal rest, constructed into the foundations of the Independent State of Croatia." The coffin, adorned with flowers and large candles, was guarded by fellow PTS fighters while two former political prisoners who had been in jail with him also paid their respects. Among the wreaths on his coffin from "brother Ustashas" in the PTS and elsewhere was a "beautiful" one from "brother prisoners" composed of flowers in the form of the Croatian national coat of arms and the large "U" sign surrounded by a "symbolic crown of thorns" while workmates at the City Electricity Company where he had been employed sent a "final farewell to the Ustasha fighter and martyr." As an Ustasha band played a funerary lament, his coffin was brought to the front of the mortuary and Vilim Cecelja said a prayer of absolution over his dead body. His coffin was then carried to the grave by six Ustashas accompanied by militia members, family relatives and former fellow prisoners. At the front of the funeral posses-

Frontiers in the Eastern Adriatic Hinterland, 16th -18th centuries," *History and Anthropology* 27, no. 3 (2016): 338–58.

[41] "Dva trnca vijenca," *Hrvatski radio list*, 20 July 1941. Shortly afterwards, this radio listings magazine was renamed *Hrvatski krugoval*, in line with the linguistic policy of the Ustasha state which deemed "radio" to be a "foreign" and "uncroatian" word.

[42] "Počast banjalučkih Hrvata palom Ustaši Miji Babiću koji je junački pao u borbi sa srpskim četnicima," *Hrvatska krajina*, 6 July 1941; "Prema ubojicama ne smije biti obzira" and "Nekoliko tisuća Banjalučana odalo je počast palom heroju Anti Pogorelcu," *Hrvatska Krajina*, 9 July 1941.

sion, an Ustasha carried a cross. At the entrance to the cemetery, Cecelja carried out a blessing for Pogorelec's remains and then the funeral party proceeded to his final resting place located next to the grave of his fictive partner in life and death, Babić.[43]

Meanwhile, as with Babić, the description of Pogorelec's funeral in *Novi list* combined the concept of life after death and the reproductive power of blood with the idea of the Ustasha as a "blood sacrifice," and a narrative which framed his burial as a wedding of the dead, a funeral-as-wedding:

The wax dripped from the heavy candles; the sacred silence filled the hall of death covering a secret second life and in the middle in an agony of flowers…There he lay, the warrior and martyr, the Ustasha Ante Pogorelec, dead… Dead?…The Ustasha Antun Pogorelec remains among us he remains with all of those who in the greatness of the sacred and eternal Croatia seek the greatest idea of life, which seeks satisfaction in the greatest sacrifice, and in blood the great future of Ustasha Croatia. Ustasha Antun Pogorelec is with us! He is with us in every twitch of the Croatian organism and this mortuary atmosphere and heavy smell of candles and flowers is just a quiet honour to a great blood sacrifice who sacrificed himself for the Poglavnik and Ustasha Croatia…To the sad sound of music Pogorelec approached his own grave to be soothed forever in the blood of the liberated Croatian soil…There at the freshly dug grave stands an entire hillock of flowers on the grave of Mijo Babić. We noticed over there one wreath: oak leaves and in the centre a Croatian coat of arms and the great letter U crowned with thorns. The symbol of the Ustasha journey which the two martyrs Babić and Pogorelec have passed through. It was a journey of bravery and a journey of Ustasha thorny endurance. The journey is finished: one lies in his grave and the other Ustashas carry ever closer to his open grave.[44]

Shortly before he set off with Babić on their fateful journey, Pogorelec had written a letter to the editor of his local Virovitica newspaper, *Hrvatski tjednik*, thanking him for a recent commemorative issue dedicated to the memory of his nephew Josip Begović, now incarnated as one of the most important pre-liberation Ustasha martyrs. An editorial in the newspaper used Pogorelec's death as a rallying cry for the continued cleansing of Croatian soil which Pogorelec and Babić had begun. In such a way, their sacrifices would not be in vain.

So, Pogorelec is no more. Begović left and then his mother and now finally the third in a row from the same family, our Antun Pogorelec. The bloodthirsty hydra sought yet one more sacrifice. He contributed himself. The third from one family. Is there any solace here? Maybe. But if there is, it cannot be of

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[43] "Posljedni put ustaše Ante Podgorelca," *Hrvatski narod*, 9 July 1941.

[44] Bu and Po, "Ustaša Antun Pogorelec – s nama je! Ustaška krv izgradjuje ustašku Hrvatsku," *Novi list*, 9 July 1941.

the everyday conventional sort. Simply this sacred aim for which the victim fell, this sacred aim alone is the condition for reconciliation. Virovitica is once again in black. It is in black again for its great sons, warriors, who with the greatest of their gifts, their lives, with the greatest sacrifice, placed themselves on the altar of love for the homeland. Once again from the bloody Croatian crown drops of blood have been shed – perhaps not the last. Perhaps. But if they are not, let the insatiable monsters, the bloodthirsty monsters, know that their end is near. The Ustasha race has crushed the Chetnik monster, the monster thirsty for martyred Croatian blood; this monster is still crawling, crawling and showing the last of its twitches. There will be some, perhaps, that the monster will poison in the last of its fury, to bring it death, but then – then it will experience the aim of the heroic Ustasha Pogorelec, and the monster will once and for all lie crushed.[45]

Pogorelec, Babić and the Mimetic Ustasha Life Cycle

The Ustasha life cycle was mimetic in two senses. First, Ustasha mass killing was mimetic since it sought to perform on the bodies of its Serb victims the mutilations, tortures and indignities that Ustasha propagandists insisted had been inflicted on its own activists in interwar Yugoslavia by the Serbian-led regime. After spontaneous uprisings erupted in reaction to Ustasha atrocities, slain Ustasha militia men were buried with extensive ritual, the alleged tortures they had endured before death described in great detail and then used to mobilize public opinion in support of the state's campaign of mass killing by reframing death squad members as defenceless, young and therefore innocent victims of "wild" and "primitive" Balkan hordes.[46] The Ustasha life cycle was also mimetic in the sense that martyrdom culture involved a restaging of the past. Not only did commemorations of the Ustasha dead frequently involve the rerunning of the different stages of their own life cycle in flashback – a recurring theme of Ustasha martyrdom literature as well as obituaries and eulogies[47] – but for the

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[45] "Draga uspomena na Antuna Podgorelca" and "Opet jedan! Da li zadnji?...," *Hrvatski tjednik* 3, no. 27 (12 July 1941): 3. The discourse framing the state's Serb population as a filthy and insatiable Chetnik monster poisoning and sticking its claws into a pristine and pure Croatian body, whether individual or collective, was a recurring motif in Ustasha rhetoric. See Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation*, 77, 326.

[46] See, for example, Franjo Rubina, *Tri mjeseca pod crvenom zviezdom: s "Vražijom divizijom" za partizanima po Grmeču* (Zagreb: Nova Hrvatska, 1943), 96–8; Vilim Peroš, "Život i djelo pjesnika Josipa Križanca," in Josip Križanac, *Junačka djela Jure viteza Francetića u stihovima* (Zagreb: Nova Hrvatska, 1943), 53–55.

[47] See e.g., Vilim Peroš, "Izmedju života i smrti," *Ustaša* 13, no. 1 (8 January 1943): 5; Salih Alić, "Smrt ustaše Salke," *Ustaški godišnjak* 2 (1943): 302–303; "Nad grobovima naših mučenika," *Ustaša* 13, no. 41 (11 October 1942): 5; "Primjer kako treba ljubiti svoj narod i

movement the real, existing funerals of fallen Ustashas – accompanied by empty caskets and catafalques in the case of more illustrious Ustasha martyrs – were often followed in subsequent years by fictive funeral masses in which the dead were once again re-remembered. As a result, the deaths of martyrs were constantly being re-enacted in the public consciousness.[48]

The memory culture which grew up around Babić and Pogorelec replicated many elements of this pattern and lasted long after their official funerals. These included obituaries and tributes in party journals and newspapers; profiles in mass-market tabloids; poetry collections; and Catholic masses, reflecting the state's wider cultural politics of martyrdom. In fact, the daily Zagreb newspaper *Nova Hrvatska* published a profile marking the sixth-month anniversary of their passing.[49] More significant commemorations marked the first anniversary of their deaths, many imbued with a chiliastic fervour which framed their martyrdom as not merely preordained, but desired by the two men themselves. In July 1942, a special commemorative issue of the Ustasha worker's newspaper *Hrvatski radnik* was dedicated to Babić in recognition of his background as a former mechanic. In his obituary, Marijan Snidaršić described him as an Ustasha-worker whose materially deprived childhood had been a school of life from which he had emerged "with chiseled, calm and firm characteristics." In 1923, he recalled, he had come to Zagreb as an apprentice mechanic and become involved in militant nationalist politics and consciousness-raising among working-class youth, becoming their "apostle." As an Ustasha worker, he also led an unceasing struggle against "the sworn enemies of humanity – world capital and Bolshevism," preparing the "Ustasha revolution" as a "worker warrior." According to Snidaršić, after the "national revolution" of 1941 Babić had declared to his fellow workers that his only wish was to live to see a "liberated" Croatia with the Poglavnik at its head, adding that it was easy "to die now when I have fulfilled my wish." He fell, Snidaršić claimed, "with that well-known smile on his lips which never left him even when he was suffering most." However, even Snidaršić's tribute could not resist making oblique references to Babić's role in the implementation of anti-Serb terror; the deceased Ustasha, he added, had told his fellow workers that they must work day and night to construct the new state and remove "all the consequences" of decades of "backwardness."[50]

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domovinu: junačka smrt jurišnog obkoparskog poručnika Ratimira Šega," *Nova Hrvatska*, 13 January 1943.

[48] See e.g., "Zadušnice za pok. dra Antuna Ilika i Jelenu Šantić," *Nova Hrvatska*, 18 November 1943.

[49] See e.g., "Navršilo se pol godine od smrti: Mije Babića i Antun Pogorelca," *Nova Hrvatska*, 31 January 1942.

[50] Marijan Snidaršić, "On će vječnoj ostati velik u srcima hrvatskih radnika," *Hrvatski radnik* 14, no. 27 (9 July 1942): 3.

The same edition of *Hrvatski radnik* carried a report of a mass that had been held for Babić at the church of Saint Blaž in Zagreb on 4 July 1942, in memory, of a warrior who had perished "fighting zealously to the last breath of his duty and defending his people from the enemy who had burnt and plundered Croatian villages." The mass and eulogy were led by Nikola Šabić, a chaplain of the Black Legion militia; among the prominent mourners were activists of worker youth groups who also visited his grave the next day from their workshops in Zagreb and outlying villages. A speech by the head of the Office for the Protection of Working Youth set out the important events from Babić's life, including the posthumous award of the Silver Medal and the conferring of the title of knight on the anniversary of his death by the Poglavnik in recognition of his "selfless and self-sacrificing Ustasha labour." The worker youth then raised a chant of glory to Babić and lingered at his graveside, "drawing strength" for their own "still greater and arduous work" for the Independent State of Croatia."[51]

By contrast, the eulogy published in *Nova Hrvatska* for Babić was more explicit about his cleansing in the lead up to his death even while it maintained the myth of his death as one foretold. He had been, it wrote, among the movement's "elite warriors and most conscious idealists." Imbued with the "heroism of the Croatian soil," from the first days of the Serbian "reign of terror" he had contributed incalculably to the Croatian "liberation struggle" through his "revolutionary Ustasha activism." Having endured so many sacrifices for the establishment of an independent Croatian state, more than anyone, Babić had the right to expect a holiday or, at the very least, a little rest.

But he could not relax; he could not rest until the whole of Croatia was liberated. He knew that in the southern regions of Croatia a struggle was being waged with Partisans and bandits. Mijo Babić did not think long about it: he took a gun in his hands and hand grenade and set off to the battlefield. In one assault, Ustasha captain Mijo Babić fell, punctured by enemy bullets. Mijo Babić fell, he fell in his liberated homeland; he fell in a battle with the enemies of Croatian liberation. He fulfilled his final wish which he once stated thus: "I would like to perish in the liberated homeland, in a struggle on the battlefield..."

Inspired by the "sacredness" of the Ustasha liberation struggle, Babić, the article continued, had set off in the footsteps of the "revolutionary" Eugen Kvaternik. As such, he was a "living example to all warriors," a "model fighter," a figure of "iron" significance who embodied "Ustasha strength" and a "radiant example" of "Ustasha heroism." If Babić had fallen on the "path of struggle" for the liberation of the Croatian people, his spirit, the newspaper predicted, would "continue to live in our thoughts and his image continues to live in all our hearts."

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[51] "Svečane zadušnice za ustaša-radnika Miju Vitez Babića," *Hrvatski radnik* 14, no. 27 (9 July 1942): 3.

His image would "illuminate the paths of our own struggle." His life and death would therefore serve as a template of how to struggle and perish for the "liberated homeland."[52]

Sacralized discourses were also apparent in the obituaries written for Pogorelec on the anniversary of his death. For the Ustasha student Stanislav Polonijo, writing in *Ustaša*, the police stations of Zagreb and prisons of Ada Ciganlija and Lepoglava in which Pogorelec and other Ustasha martyrs were brutally tortured were "stations of martyrdom." Polonijo likened Pogorelec's ideological beliefs to a religion, observing that "in Pogorelec they had found someone whose Ustasha faith they could not cool, and they could not take from him the memories which connected him to martyrs with whom he lived and who before his eyes went to their deaths, faithful to the Ustasha ideology, the Poglavnik and Croatia." Moreover, like Babić, Pogorelec fulfilled his "martyred and celebrated journey," passing through the biblical cycle of sacrifice, martyrdom and resurrection. "From a quiet worker-Ustasha through the tyrannical prisons in the shadow of the gallows," he wrote, "Pogorelec awaited the great moment of the Croatian resurrection and shortly after this he arose serene and clear and in the liberated homeland contributed the sacrifice of his life on the altar of the native soil…He will remain with us as an example and hope in days of despair and difficulty; he will remain with us now when in the serene and great Croatia we enjoy the fruits of his Ustasha work and martyr's death."[53] Hence, Pogorelec's death was framed as a predestined act for which his entire life was a preparation. This was also how popular poetry commemorated Babić and Pogorelec's deaths. For example, in his 1942 epic poem about the "heroic deaths" of Babić and Pogorelec, the peasant-poet Ante Lugonjić imagined the two warriors issuing orders to their comrades while expiring from their bloody wounds, dying side by side as they had fought and as they would later be buried: Babić, overcome by his gushing injuries and barely conscious, tells his men, "Don't think about your lives,/ don't think about your heads/just protect the Croatian state." Meanwhile, the expiring Pogorelec declares:

> In truth, I have wanted for a long time
> to perish as a defender of the homeland.
> Thus, I will be a memory
> and future time will show,
> in this hour of my death.
> I am dying without tears in my eyes,

[52] Pe., "Mijo Babić svijetao primjer idealnog ustaškog borca," *Nova Hrvatska*, 3 July 1942. Eugen Kvaternik was a nineteenth-century politician who, with Ante Starčević, created the Croatian Party of Right. He led a failed uprising against Austro-Hungarian rule in 1871 after which he was executed.

[53] Bu., "Mučenički put Antuna Pogoreleca," *Ustaša* 10, no. 23 (28 June 1942): 2.

I drink from the cup of death gladly.
As an Ustasha I smile joyfully.[54]

Conclusion

The life cycle of the Ustasha state involved rituals of both killing and dying. The two axes of Ustasha martyrdom culture were linked symbiotically and provided essential context for each other. In the spring and summer of 1941, battalions of men from the elite party militias and death squads such as the PTS were sent into the Croatian and Bosnian countryside where, joined by local Ustashas and the so-called "wild" Ustashas, they perpetrated a wave of mass atrocities, for the most part against the state's Serb minority in villages, settlements, and small towns throughout the state. One of the most striking aspects of these killing sprees was their ritualistic nature, characterized by torture, mutilation, dismemberment, and sanguinary methods of murder. As these "cleansing" campaigns stimulated an armed insurgency among the targeted population, increasingly resulting in casualties among young militia men, the disorder in the countryside was used as retrospective legitimation for the cleansing, with the slain death squad members reframed as virtuous and martyred victims of "primitive" Balkan bands.

A thick description of the funerary rites and memory culture which grew up around two of the most illustrious of the early militia martyrs – Antun Pogorelec and Mijo Babić – helps us understand more clearly the relationship between killing and dying in Ustasha culture. At the same time, it enables us to better understand the centrality of life cycle rituals in the project by the Ustasha movement to remake society and mediate the relationship between the state and individual. As can be seen with the deaths of Babić and Pogorelec, the movement made energetic efforts to recover the bodies of fallen martyrs in order to give them funerals and burials – and where that was not possible fictive, symbolic, sometimes annual "burials" – not only as a means of psychologically shoring up the fallen fighter's comrades and providing comfort to their family, but also rooting the militias and hence the movement in local communities.[55] Moreover, Ustasha activists at the local level took the practices associated with the burials of fallen martyrs seriously. Therefore, studying these funerals from the inside

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[54] Ante Lugonjić, *Junačka smrt ustaša Mije Babića, Ante Pogorelca i njihovih ustaških drugova* (Dubrovnik: Dubrovačka hrvatska tiskara, 1941), 8, 12.

[55] Where it had not been possible to recover the corpse of a martyred Ustasha fighter, a catafalque or empty coffin was commonly used to represent their body at funerals and requiem masses [Zadušnice]. For an insight into the lengths the movement was prepared to go to in order to recover the bodies of fallen fighters, see, for example, the death notice by Milan and Blanka Šega for their son, Ratomir, an Ustasha lieutenant, *Nova Hrvatska*, 15 January 1943.

out allows us to see the Ustasha moral universe the way it appeared to many rank-and-file Ustasha members and militia men themselves.

As the cycle of ritualistic killing by Ustasha militias and martyrdom at the hands of insurgent groups shows, there was a dynamic relationship not only between the atrocities against rural Serb communities and the growing litany of fallen militia men, but between the ritualistic nature of the killings and the practices of martyrdom culture. The ways in which deceased Ustasha fighters were commemorated in fascist Croatia bore similarities with the Transylvanian wedding of the dead Gail Kligman encountered in 1980s Romania and the Palestinian funeral-as-wedding. In the Ustasha variant, funerals were employed as a means of binding dead militia men to each other, the nation and the movement in perpetuity while also representing a form of mirror propaganda in which the mutilations, dismemberments, tortures and atrocities performed on the bodies of the state's ethnic enemies by Ustasha death squad members were retrospectively transferred to the biographies and bodies of deceased perpetrators. To put it another way, it is only through studying the life cycle of Ustasha culture, in particular, the willingness of the Ustasha man of myth to die, that we will understand his desire to kill.[56]

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[56] As Ana Antić has observed, not all those who served in Ustasha militias were ideologically committed to the cause of the Ustasha movement or even conscious of the cause they were fighting for. See Antić, *Therapeutic Fascism: Experiencing the Violence of the Nazi New Order in Yugoslavia* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 97–142.

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The Refractory Community:
Yugoslav Anti-communists in Post-war Italy

Abstract: In the months between the Italian armistice (September 1943) and the end of the war (May 1945), Italy became the destination of a large group of Yugoslav exiles who, in various ways, opposed Tito and the Socialist and Federal Republic in the process of being formed. These exiles, divided by nationality and political affiliation (ranging from exponents of the resistance linked to the government in exile in London to the most radical collaborators with the Nazis), were united by their staunch anti-communism. Carefully observed by both the Italian secret services and the Allied military government, with the approach of the Cold War this Yugoslav "refractory community" was increasingly used as a centre of propaganda and in part also of information by the West. After the Tito–Stalin split, this function was reduced, and the community waited for new developments that would only appear forty years later with the dissolution of the disdained Federal and Socialist Republic. This essay is an integral part of research based on the archives of the Italian Military Intelligence Service (SIM) kept at the Historical Office of the Italian Army General Staff in Rome, in the fonds of the Confidential Affairs of the General Directorate of Public Security of the Italian Ministry of the Interior and in the "Affari Politici – Jugoslavia" collections of the Historical-Diplomatic Archive of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The research is still in progress and aims to create a map of the Yugoslav anti-communist community in Italy from the end of the Second World War until the dissolution of the Federal Republic between 1989 and 1992.

Key words: Yugoslav collaborationism, anti-communist propaganda, Allied intelligence, Italian secret services, political emigration

In September 1952, a notice from the embassy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Rome stated:

> The Yugoslav refugees who are in various foreign prisoner camps [...] in Italy and wish to be repatriated are warned that they must present themselves [...] at the consular department of the Embassy, [...] Refugees are considered to be former members of the Yugoslav army who were imprisoned by the enemy after they were betrayed by the rulers of old [sic] Yugoslavia and did not return to their homeland after liberation; civilians and members of military formations who fought on the side of the enemy and took refuge abroad; persons who collaborated in various ways with the enemy during the war, beyond the borders of our country and, finally, all those who, after the war, for various reasons illegally left Yugoslav territory. *Traitors of the country, war criminals and active organizers*

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of enemy activity abroad against the New Yugoslavia, whether convicted by Yugoslav courts or not, do not have the right of return (italics are ours).[1]

Seven years had passed since the end of the war and eleven since the beginning of a civil conflict that had bled Yugoslavia dry. Having entered the war as a monarchy and conservative country, divided between centralist and centrifugal forces, this Balkan state had emerged from the cauldron of war as a republican, socialist and federal state. A triumph for some, a tragedy for others: thousands of Yugoslavs (or, if you prefer, Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Kosovars, Macedonians) had rejected Tito and his "Federation", as was defined the socialist republic clandestinely created in 1943 and officially proclaimed in 1945 was called.

Within the anti-communist group scattered around the world, there was everything. First and foremost, there was the almost complete government-in-exile, which was fighting for the restoration of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia headed by the Karadjordjević dynasty; the Montenegrin legitimists linked to the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty; representatives of the Slovenian bourgeoisie that had grown up in Habsburg Austria, divided between imperial nostalgia and dreams of independence and united by staunch Catholic traditionalism or Anglo-Saxon liberalism; the collaborationist militia from Belgrade with a group of politicians who had already served the Germans; the former ministers of the deposed pre-war prime minister Stojadinović; the remnants of Ante Pavelić's regular Croatian army and his Ustaša militia; the aging colony of Russian tsarist exiles who had fled to Yugoslavia after 1918; Catholic priests, Orthodox clergy, Muslim ulemas, united by their hatred of the atheistic and materialistic state established by the Partisans; exponents and guerrillas of the "Ravna Gora Movement" of General Draža Mihailović, the "Yugoslav Army in the Homeland" created to fight the Germans and their collaborators in the name of the exiled sovereign and transformed during the war into an anti-communist army not averse to agreements with the occupiers; *voivode* and members of the Chetnik formations created in Croatia and Bosnia to protect the Serb minorities from the Ustaša pogroms and transformed into collaborationist units with an anti-Partisan function; leaders of pre-war "bourgeois" or social-democratic political parties, who hoped for a democratic and parliamentary turnaround by rejecting the Titoist dictatorship; clerical fascists and Belogardists from Axis-occupied Slovenia; high dignitar-

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[1]   Notice of the Consular Department of the Embassy of the FNRJ [Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavija, Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia, first name of socialist Yugoslavia until 1963] received by the Directorate of Camp AAI (Amministrazione Aiuti Internazionali) in Capua (Caserta) through the Central Directorate of AAI in Rome, copy to the Chief of Police, No 224–22287, 24th September 1952, in Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, Affari Generali e Riservati (d'ora in avanti ACS MI DG PS AR) 1951–53, Busta 30, Fascicolo 10/9.

ies of the powerful Yugoslav Freemasonry, linked to France or Great Britain; nationalists of all kinds ill-disposed to the unitary and federal solution wanted by Tito and in favour of a Greater Slovenia, Greater Croatia or Greater Serbia; Kosovar and Macedonian independentists.

It was a Babel tower of nationalities with different and opposing political and personal positions but united in their political and military opposition to Tito. Italy was a country that welcomed a large part of this group. This group, which might be called the Yugoslav "refractory community" in Italy, grew in successive layers between the war and the post-war period. First of all, between 1941 and 1943, there was a vanguard made up of political-military exponents who collaborated in various ways with the occupying authorities and who moved between Italy and Yugoslavia under Axis control. After 25 July 1943 and the fall of the fascist regime, some of these political and military figures attempted to approach the Badoglio government, and after the Italian armistice of 8 September, they sought to position themselves alongside post-fascist Italy, now co-belligerent with the Allies. This small but enterprising community was to be joined by others. Between the autumn of 1944 and the spring of 1945, the course of irreducible Yugoslav collaborationism would turn into a flow of fugitives who joined – not without difficulty and problems – the vanguards in Italy, making the "refractory community" reach significant numbers. Finally, from May 1945, the usual consequences that accompanied the building of every People's Republic in Europe (punishment of collaborationists, the annihilation of bourgeois and social-democratic opposition, ethnic cleansing, collectivisation, confiscation and nationalisation) led to a new arrival of refugees of various kinds.

This was a problem in a wider context. Leaving aside the issue of refugee flows from Eastern Europe to Italy to be discussed in other studies, we can recall here, as Matteo Sanfilippo writes, that "the Peninsula was becoming the destination of a massive immigration".[2] Above all, the author notes, the Italian route was followed by the entire anti-communist universe, both democratic and pro-Western and pro-Nazi and collaborationist, both fleeing the repression enacted by the new regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

It was in this context that the great Yugoslav exodus to Italy took place, and with it the birth – in the camps run by both the Allies and the Italian authorities (civil and Vatican) – of a variegated and unsettled community of south Slavs. In this paper, we will try to outline the main aspects of what happened with the Yugoslav community "refractory" to Tito's regime in Italy between the last phase of the conflict and the early post-war period, a theme that current

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[2]   M. Sanfilippo, "Per una storia dei profughi stranieri dei campi di accoglienza e di reclusione nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra", *Studi Emigrazione/Migration Studies*, XLIII, 164 (2006), 838–839.

research still in progress aims to continue, at least until the 1970s–1980s. The most interesting fact, we believe, is that this "refractory community" was, while the war was still in progress, looked at with caution, if not with active vigilance. Later, when the eastern border heated up, as the Cold War between the two blocs began to take shape, the same community was first tolerated and then used until it was transformed, with the 1946–47 negotiations for the delineation of the eastern borders, into a deterrent, a propaganda tool or even an operational instrument (in the form of an information and intelligence service) in the confrontation with the new socialist Yugoslavia. From the documentation consulted, moreover, it would appear that after 1948 and the break between Tito and Stalin there was less Allied attention towards this community (due to the détente with Belgrade) compared to a continuation of relations between the Italian military authorities and some exponents of the anti-communist exile, at least until the phase of the confrontation over Trieste (1952–54).

Just over two months after the liberation of Rome, on 24 August 1944, Major Guido Ripoli, group leader of the "Bonsignore" section of the Military Intelligence Service (SIM) at the General Staff of the Royal Italian Army, forwarded to the headquarters of the military intelligence service three important secret reports concerning the "activity of Slavic and Croatian elements" in Rome. These were reports from the Allied Military Government (AMG) and some reports made by the new authorities on the "refractory community".[3] From those reports, a broad and heterogeneous reality emerged, from both a political and an ethnic-national point of view. On the whole, there were about 1,200 Yugoslav subjects in the capital. Of these, 850 received assistance from the Royal Yugoslav Legation (representing the royal government in exile in London). Note the comment of the anonymous writer of the report: "Since the Partisans claim that most of the Yugoslavs in Rome are their members, it is evident that many of them, until our arrival, had been receiving money from a government to which the Partisans were opposed. It is, therefore, to be doubted whether many of them are perhaps Partisans now that things are unfolding in favour of the latter."[4]

Which government was the report referring to? A diplomatic delegation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, i.e., its government in exile, before 4th June 1944

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[3] Il maggiore capo gruppo CS Guido Rispoli – Stato Maggiore Generale – SIM Sezione "Bonsignore" al Centro C.S. di Roma, n. 43979/B/CS, 24 agosto 1944, in Archivio dell'Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito (d'ora in avanti AUSSME), Fondo SIM, Serie RGPT 12^ divisione, Busta 22. Le versioni in lingua inglese di queste relazioni si trovano in: AUSSME, Fondo SIM, 1^ divisione, Busta 94.

[4] 'Yugoslavs currently in Rome' (translation), SCI/R/434/I, enclosed in: Il maggiore capo gruppo CS Guido Rispoli – Stato Maggiore Generale – SIM Sezione "Bonsignore" al Centro C.S. di Roma, n. 43979/B/CS, 24 agosto 1944, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Serie RGPT 12^ divisione, Busta 22.

and thus during the German occupation, was unthinkable. Perhaps those donations had come from the government in exile in Great Britain (which was not recognised by the People's Liberation Army until the Tito- Šubašić agreement) through clandestine channels – unless the reference was to an unofficial deputation of the Serbian collaborationist government of Milan Nedić, with which Mussolini's Italian Social Republic (RSI) had some diplomatic relations[5] or the embassy of the independent Croatian state, the Ustaša Croatia allied to the Third Reich and the RSI.

Apart from this, another conspicuous aspect of the document is the unreliability of the large group. Among the prominent names (carefully divided between Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, "Partisans" – the Titoists, "doubtful elements", and various personalities), important names emerged. Among the Serbs, for example, there was the Archbishop of Šibenik Irinej Djordjević (interned in Florence during the Italian occupation), considered the "ideological head of the pan-Serbian movement". Djordjević was one of the representatives of Mihailović's movement in Italy, and his secretary had close contacts with the Chetnik leaders. Then there was General Milojko Janković, former commander of the 6th Army of the Royalist Army until 1941, a senior officer who had signed the armistice of 18 April and was interned by the Italians. Released after 4th June 1944, Janković was a candidate for the post of commander of Yugoslav forces abroad in the British army. Other names included the former Minister of Press and Propaganda in the Stojadinović government, Milan Marjanović, who was suspected by the Allied authorities of having relations with members of the "Government of National Salvation" of the Belgrade quisling Nedić.

The Croats were more numerous, although less easily identifiable than the Serbs. They were concentrated in Rome around the secretive and mysterious rectory-college of San Girolamo degli Illirici (today the Church of San Girolamo dei Croati), in Via Tomacelli. It was an institute founded in the 14th century to welcome to the Eternal City Catholics fleeing from the Ottoman advance in the Balkans, to whom Pope Nicholas V had granted the creation of a "Congregation of the Slavonians" (a term of direct Venetian derivation indicating the mostly Croatian inhabitants of the Dalmatian regions) for charitable purposes. Since 1941, San Girolamo had been collaborating with the University of Zagreb and the Pavelić regime, and many of its religious guests had been of the Ustaša persuasion.[6]

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[5]   M. Viganò, *Il Ministero degli Affari Esteri e le relazioni internazionali della Repubblica sociale italiana (1943–1945)*, (Milano: Edizioni universitarie Jaca, 1991), 321–323.

[6]   P. Adriano, G. Cingolani, *La via dei conventi. Ante Pavelić e il terrorismo ustascia dal Fascismo alla Guerra Fredda*, (Milano: Mursia, 2011), 370.

Immediately after the liberation of Rome, the monastery became the centre of operations for the Croatian community already present in the city or recently expatriated from Yugoslavia. To this end, a "Committee of Croatian Refugees" was created to handle any future mass exoduses. From August 1943, the secretary of the college was a theologian, professor of Church History at the University of Zagreb, Monsignor Krunoslav Draganović, who also held the position of Croatian representative in the Italian Red Cross: a fervent nationalist, suspected of being an Ustaša, and in any case always surrounded by numerous Ustaša members, in an ambiguous relationship with the Allies, Draganović would become a key figure in the flow of political refugees from Croatia, helping to provide Pavelić's followers and collaborators with facilities such as the San Girolamo and creating escape routes to safer shores, such as Argentina.

However, at the time, the enterprising monsignor claimed to be "one of the main adherents" of the Croatian Peasant Party (Hrvatska seljačka stranka) led by Vladko Maček, hostile to Pavelić since 1941 and repeatedly arrested or confined by him. The old leader of the Peasant Party had come in handy to restore a license of loyalty to Croatian exile, removing suspicions of past collaboration with the Nazis and at the same time maintaining an anti-Communist identity, and his name was mentioned by Draganović at a meeting in July 1944 with the Hungarian ambassador to the Holy See, Baron Gabriel Apor. On that occasion, the secretary of St Jerome had proposed a plan for the creation of a Danubian Confederation with Croatia, in place of Yugoslavia. Draganović had assured the Hungarian diplomat that Croatian troops loyal to Pavelić were ready to betray him and follow Maček and the Allies in the event of a probable German collapse. Therefore, he requested that Apor act as a go-between with the GMA to obtain the necessary support. From the conversation, the elderly Hungarian diplomat got the impression of the Croatian prelate's strong ambiguities, and the fact was promptly registered by the British authorities.[7]

However, the largest Yugoslav community in Rome in the summer of 1944 was Slovenian. This was mainly due to the fact that since 3rd May 1941 the southern districts of the Slovenian Banovina (i.e. Ljubljana) had been annexed as an autonomous province to the Kingdom of Italy. In the summer of 1944, numerous members of the clerical Slovenska ljudska stranka (Slovenian People's Party), the main political force that had partly sided with the Axis after the invasion (but with a powerful member in the government-in-exile, the Minister of Education Miha Krek), were based in the capital. One of the most

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[7] "Croatian aspirations (translation) SCI/ROME/434 (5, 22 luglio 1944, enclosed in: Il maggiore capo gruppo CS Guido Rispoli – Stato Maggiore Generale – SIM Sezione "Bonsignore" al Centro C.S. di Roma, n. 43979/B/CS, 24 agosto 1944, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Serie RGPT 12^ divisione, Busta 22.

famous names was Ciril Žebot, the last leader of the "Storm Guard" (Straža v viharju), an anti-communist and anti-Semitic organisation that had staunchly sided with the Italians between 1941 and 1943. Numerous among the Slovenes were the Belogardists (from Bela Garda, White Guard), whom the Italians had recruited to form the MVAC (Anti-Communist Voluntary Militia) units, and who had fled to Italy after 8th September, disliking the German presence and fearing Partisan revenge. Others, however, maintained relations with the Slovenian quisling Lev Rupnik, the new strongman in Ljubljana in the service of the Nazis. The group had formed a "Slovenian Committee" in Rome, which used funds from the Yugoslav government-in-exile intended for refugees to strengthen anti-communist political initiatives. The Committee consisted, among others, of Ivan Ahčin, a prelate and professor of sociology at the University of Ljubljana, a member of the People's Party and collaborator with the Italians in 1941–43, who was under sentence of death by the Titoists, and Milko Brezigar, an economist and exponent of the most conservative wing of Slovenian liberalism before the war. In another document, Brezigar was described as "perhaps the most fanatical anti-Partisan element among Slovenes in Rome" and his movements had to "be monitored", not least because it appeared that he had made a trip to Ljubljana in May 1944, "a trip that was not possible without some authorisation from the German authorities". Despite this, Brezigar also went to Bari to meet some representatives of unidentified "British organisations" ("certain British organisations", the English version reads), to explain the imminent transfer of Slovenian collaborationist units to the Allied camp and to advocate the occupation of Slovenia and Croatia by the Americans and the British, possibly entrusting the task to the Polish Corps attached to the British 8th Army. Brezigar's collaborators also included the organisers of another ambiguous Slovenian Chetnik group, the royalist "Blue Guard" (Pleva Garda) of Major Karel Novak, a controversial figure closely linked to Mihailović. Others were arrested by the British as "informers in the pay of the fascists". The Committee, according to the Allied authorities, carried out a "courier service" between Italy and German-controlled Slovenia, linking up with the entire exile movement (Slovenian, Serbian and Croatian) and with Mihailović's units, but also maintaining relations with Minister Krek in London. In the annex devoted to the Slovenes, the Allied authorities expressed their opinion as follows:

> In view of the very close relations between the Slovenian clerics [sic!, recte: clerics] and the Germans in Slovenia, it would be advisable that the policy of the Slovenian group in Rome and its moves [...] be carefully watched, especially the diplomatic personnel in Rome. The vast majority of suspected couriers and agents in the service of the clerics, who are believed to have collaborated with

the Nazi-Fascists, are still free, and their arrest and the investigations into their activities would clarify what is still a confusing situation.[8]

Finally, the lengthy translations by the SIM described the "suspicious elements" (an expression used in the Italian translation, but the English version used the more disturbing definition of "sinister elements"). It was a mixed group, composed of Serbs, Slovenes and Croats, all linked to the central figure of Dobroslav Jevdjević, the Bosnian Serb deputy for four legislatures before the war, exponent of the Yugoslav National Party (Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka), then leader (vojvoda) of the Chetnik formations in Herzegovina and from 1943 throughout Croatia. A convinced anti-communist and anti-Semite, a great friend of Italy with ties to the Italian intelligence services during the first phase of the war,[9] Jevdjević had decided to side with the Germans after 8 September, and in the summer of 1944, he was fighting the Partisan units with his men in the inland districts of the Slovenian coast. A military leader but also a skilled politician, the former deputy, anticipating a German collapse, was attempting to establish relations with the Yugoslav community in Italy and, through it, with the authorities in Rome and with the Allies. But, at the time, Jevdjević represented an enemy like any other collaborationist and, therefore, his group of "itinerant agents" (the "sinister elements") was carefully controlled by the GMA and, consequently, also by the SIM.

In short, it was a variegated and ambiguous "refractory community", where, at times, elements generating a certain embarrassment stood out, especially taking into account the diplomatic relations between the Italian cabinet and the new Yugoslav Tito-Šubašić government, which came into being in May 1944 and which had definitively recognised the communist leader as the only resistance leader in his homeland.[10] The fact that some of these exponents declared themselves members of an unspecified "Yugoslav Committee" seemed more of an aggravation than a guarantee. It is no coincidence that the first annex of Major Rispoli's report concluded with the suggestion to transfer the Yugoslavs to "transit camp number 1" in Bari, where they would be "minutely interrogated"

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[8]   Al: Sig. Maggiore Ripoli, S.I.M. – C.S.; dal: N. 1 S.C.I. Unit – segreto (traduzione), appended in Il maggiore capo gruppo CS Guido Rispoli – Stato Maggiore Generale – SIM Sezione "Bonsignore" al Centro C.S. di Roma, n. 43979/B/CS, 24 agosto 1944, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Serie RGPT 12^ divisione, Busta 22.

[9]   A. Vento, *In silenzio gioite e soffrite. Storia dei servizi segreti italiani dal Risorgimento alla Guerra fredda*, (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 2010), 384.

[10] L. Monzali, "La questione jugoslava nella politica estera italiana dalla prima guerra mondiale ai trattati di Osimo (1914–1975)". In *Europa adriatica. Storia, relazioni, economia*, (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2004), 36.

by the official representatives of AVNOJ, the Titoist Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia, present on Italian territory.[11]

The Bari transit camp opened the question of the collection centres. As has been mentioned, there were 1,200 Yugoslavs in Rome alone, and the number was progressively rising as the advance of the People's Liberation Army continued. With the fall of Belgrade (October 1944), the retreat of Serb royalist nationalists began, including some of the collaborationists and the Chetniks: expatriations to Italy increased accordingly. The subsequent fall of Sarajevo (April 1945), Zagreb and Ljubljana (May 1945) to the Partisan troops would lead to new waves of refugees and displaced persons from Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia.

Between the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, a sort of "Yugoslavian emergency" therefore arose, which the democratic government – with the limited means at its disposal and the cumbersome presence of both the GMA and the omnipresent Vatican mission (Pontificia Opera di Assistenza – POA) – tried to manage as best it could. The old internment facilities set up by the Fascist regime were used, public or private buildings where displaced persons of all kinds, but also prisoners of war, including soldiers of the Royal Yugoslav Army captured in the April 1941 campaign, had been gathered.[12] During the twenty-nine months of Italian occupation of the former Balkan kingdom, these were joined by the so-called "Slavic internees", also known as "elements considered Italian by annexation":[13] these were people from the occupied areas who were imprisoned there for various reasons (displaced persons, sociopaths, politically unreliable or potentially dangerous); soon these groups were joined by a portion of Slovenian deportees from the "Autonomous Province of Ljubljana" and several hundred Roma. Collection centres generically referred to as "Slavic camps" were thus created. After the fall of the fascist regime and the subsequent armistice, these centres continued to hold thousands of Yugoslav citizens with an uncertain fate. Among the main gathering places were the Renicci camp, near Arezzo, and the Lipari camp, which had been training centres for Ustaša terrorists before the war; Ferramonti di Tarsia, in the province of Cosenza, formerly a transit camp for Jews; and above all, the former "Mussolini's Hollywood", Cinecittà, which, after reuniting the victims of the Nazi-Fascist round-up of the

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[11] 'Yugoslavs currently in Rome' (translation), SCI/R/434/I, appended in: Il maggiore capo gruppo CS Guido Rispoli – Stato Maggiore Generale – SIM Sezione "Bonsignore" al Centro C.S. di Roma, n. 43979/B/CS, 24 agosto 1944, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Serie RGPT 12^ divisione, Busta 22.

[12] M. Sanfilippo, "I campi in Italia nel secondo dopoguerra", *Meridiana*, 86 (2016), 41.

[13] La R. Prefettura di Bari al ministero dell'Interno, n. 05876, Bari, 18 luglio 1945, in ACS, MI DG PS AGR., "Massime (1880–1954)", Busta 74, Fascicolo 30, Sottofascicolo 31 "Ex confinati ed internati" Ins. 3 "Iugoslavi".

Roman district of Quadraro in 1943 and Italian evacuees, had become a refugee camp for foreigners, mainly Yugoslavs. In total, at least according to the Yugoslav War Crimes Commission, there were at least 195 "Slavic camps" at the end of the conflict, with a total of 98,703 detainees (civilian and military) from the Balkan country.[14]

Obviously, at the end of the conflict, the past management of the camps had been done away with, with on the one hand the aforementioned Commission of the Yugoslav government accusing Fascist Italy of mistreating, if not torturing, the detainees, and on the other hand the prefectural and police authorities of democratic Italy refuting these accusations, describing life in the camps, even under the former regime, as dignified and acceptable. However, the problems were not limited to the past. What to do with these multitudes now that the war was over? The former prisoners of war from 1941 and, even more so, the civilians from the Balkan country, with the arrival of the Allied authorities and the liberation of Italy, could consider themselves free to repatriate. To this end, in December 1944, the new government in Belgrade began to send officers of the People's Army (and OZNA, Tito's political police) to the camps to enlist former prisoners in the new Titoist armed forces. One of the very first centres visited was Cinecittà. But, to the surprise of the captain sent from Belgrade, the reception was not what he had hoped it would be. "Since it is known to all", recalled a dispatch from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "that the Yugoslavs in that camp are royalists and anti-Bolsheviks, they are in great ferment, and many have fled to avoid repatriation, which is presumed to be imminent".[15] It was in this context that the action of the leaders of the "refractory community" found its catchment area, which would grow with the arrival, across the Adriatic and the eastern borders of Italy, of the "other Yugoslavia" that had been collaborating with the German occupying authorities. From the fusion of the former prisoners of 1941 and the new refugees of 1945, together with the thousands of civilians who had fled in terror of the imminent establishment of the communist regime at home, the manoeuvring space of Yugoslav nationalists in exile would emerge. And Marjanović, Draganović and Ahčin, with the support of the Royalist ministers in London – now defeated by Tito and eager for revenge – would find, or believe they would find, the nucleus of the new anti-communist liberation

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[14] Stralcio di relazione n. 2 della dalla "Commissione di Stato per l'accertamento dei crimini degli occupanti e dei coadiuvatori", a firma Dušan Nedeljković, s.d., in ACS, MI DG PS AGR., "Massime (1880–1954)", Busta 74, Fascicolo 30, Sottofascicolo 31 "Ex confinati ed internati" Ins. 3 "Iugoslavi".

[15] G.E.P. Sottogruppo Balcani, "Questioni jugoslave", 3 dicembre 1944, in Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Affari Politici (d'ora in avanti ASDMAE, AP) Jugoslavia 1946–50, Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

army. The shadow of the Cold War would soon be cast over everything, and the enemies of yesterday could become today's allies.

The government in Belgrade was aware of this new situation, also thanks to the discouraging reports of the itinerant agents who, like the anonymous captain sent to the Cinecittà camp, encountered a penetrating nationalist and anti-communist rivalry from the various expatriate committees, which literally flooded the Yugoslavian assembly centres with propaganda material of a Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian royalist-nationalist kind. Protests by the minister plenipotentiary of Tito's Yugoslavia in Rome, Mladen Iveković, were almost weekly. The conversation between the Italian ambassador in Moscow, Quaroni, and his Yugoslav colleague, General Vlado Popović, on 20th October 1945 is interesting in this regard. Invited to celebrate the first anniversary of the liberation of Belgrade, Quaroni was hit by the Balkan diplomat's vehement protests. Popović not only condemned the fact that Italy was protecting the "traitors" (i.e. the followers of Mihailović, Nedić, and Pavelić) "from the people's vengeance": "They were not satisfied with having saved themselves in Italy; they were hatching intrigues, organising armed gangs, engaging in threatening activity against the Yugoslav government". In his report to the Foreign Ministry, Quaroni said that Belgrade's suspicion that the Italian government was continuing the fascist policy for Yugoslavia "was not entirely unjustified". However, the able diplomat omitted to mention this observation to his Yugoslav colleague, limiting himself to reminding him that the Italians were not "masters" in their own house: the activities of the old quislings in the country could take place almost undisturbed, Quaroni seemed to suggest, because the GMA allowed it. Popović replied that it was Italy that gave accommodation to "these people" and that "there were Italian elements, even important ones, who collaborated in all this activity". The Yugoslav ambassador then asked the Allies to intervene to obtain a drastic crackdown on the whole affair. Quaroni concluded his report to the Foreign Ministry by suggesting that action be taken as requested and pointing out that "clearing the field" of "minor issues" (i.e. Yugoslav emigrants) would improve the relations between Rome and Belgrade, especially in view of the negotiations on the eastern borders.[16]

On 7th March 1945, the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia united with the Tito-Šubašić government, leading to the definitive defeat of Mihailović's national movement. For some months, Mihailović had sent to Bari the president of the "National Democratic Union of Yugoslavia" (JDNZ, a clandestine political formation of rural-democratic persuasion founded in 1944

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[16] L'ambasciatore a Mosca, Quaroni, al Ministro degli Esteri, De Gasperi, R. 954/429, Mosca, 20 ottobre 1945, in: *I Documenti diplomatici italiani*, Decima serie, 1943–1948, volume II (12 dicembre 1944–9 dicembre 1945), (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1992), 883–884.

at the Chetnik congress in Ba), Živko Topalović, former leader of the Yugoslav Socialist Party and exponent of its anti-communist fraction. Topalović planned to make the Chetnik forces available to the Allies in the event of the expected and believed-to-be imminent break between the Anglo-Americans and the Soviets.[17]

During contacts in January with officials of the Italian Foreign Ministry, the JDNZ leader spoke of about a hundred thousand Chetniks on Yugoslav territory ready to go into action under Anglo-American orders.[18] However, in May 1945, about ten days after the surrender of the Third Reich, the war also ended in Yugoslavia. Thousands of collaborationists and anti-communists, not necessarily connected to the Nazi occupation system but certainly hostile to the new regime established in Belgrade, had started the long journey to the Italian borders. Mihailović's troops had been routed, and any Allied initiative seemed impossible. Therefore, the remnants of the "Yugoslav Army in the Homeland" also joined the flood of Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian fugitives. Most of those who were not repelled and captured by Tito's soldiers headed for Italy.

Topalović, helped by a group of expatriate Serbian soldiers and politicians, set up a new "Yugoslav National Committee" in Rome, which could enjoy the favour of the Allied authorities (especially the French and Polish). According to reports from the Italian Foreign Ministry, the "Slavic camps" were transformed into "Chetniks camps", "scattered throughout Italy". In Cesena and Forlì, several thousand followers of Jevdjević, who in the meantime had escaped capture and arrived in Italy, were grouped together. General Miodrag Damjanović, former commander of Nedić's collaborationist troops and the new military and political leader of the Chetnik emigration, dominated the scene.[19] To this ever-growing Serb colony, which, according to Italian sources, amounted to 100,000,[20] were to be added the Slovenes from Ahčin and Brezigar, under the supervision of former minister Krek, and the Croats from the College of St. Jerome and the College of St. Anthony in Via Merulana. Both Slovenes and Croats, according to the Italian Foreign Ministry notes, were subsidised by the Holy See and the US embassy.[21] The Serbs enjoyed special British protection, French sympathy, and

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[17] W. R. Roberts, *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies 1941–1945*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 283–284.

[18] Promemoria, 24 gennaio 1945, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50, "Yugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[19] Personalità jugoslave a Roma, 6 luglio 1945, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50, "Yugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[20] M. Sanfilippo, *I campi in Italia* cit., 44.

[21] Personalità jugoslave a Roma, 6 luglio 1945, in: ASDMAE, AP 1946–50, "Yugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

relationships with many Italian officials developed during the years of collaboration in occupied Yugoslavia in 1941–43. Among the most famous names of the newcomers, for some time, was Ante Pavelić, who had escaped the collapse of his Independent State of Croatia with some of his fellow Ustaša and was believed to have arrived in the Vatican under a false name.[22] In reality, the former Croatian *poglavnik* was in Austria at the time and only came to Italy, disguised as a monk, in mid-1946.[23]

The situation immediately became incandescent. The "Yugoslav National Committee" united with Krek's Slovenes and a part of the Croats (those less compromised by involvement with the Ustaša) and, having obtained the support of the Allies and the Polish units of General Anders, tried to maintain contact with the anti-communist units still present on the Yugoslavian territory and far from resigned to defeat.[24]

In the following months, various politicians from the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia arrived in Rome, starting with Dragiša Cvetković, the former prime minister who had joined the Tripartite Pact and had been deposed in the coup d'état of 27th March 1941.[25] Others included prominent members of the collaborationist governments, such as Serbian leader Mihailo Olćan, former Minister of Economy in Nedić's government and commander of Ljotić's militia of the "Serbian Volunteer Corps" (Srpski dobrovoljački korpus).[26] The activities of Yugoslav nationalists present in Italy raised more than one perplexity within the Italian authorities: a report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the programme of this vast group was divided into three levels: the minimum, a "Greater Serbia", the medium, the restoration of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia along pre-war borders, and the maximum programme, a "Greater Yugoslavia, from the Isonzo to Varder (Thessaloniki), a programme perfectly equal to Tito's" (underlined in the original).[27] A useful but also dangerous group, at least in view of future post-war arrangements: a leaflet distributed by anti-communist Slovenian nationalists praised Yugoslav Trieste and ended with the phrase "We

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[22] Questioni jugoslave, 9 luglio 1945, segreto, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[23] P. Adriano, G. Cingolani, *La via dei conventi* cit., 375.

[24] Comitato Nazionale Jugoslavo e situazione jugoslava, segreto, 24 luglio 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[25] Z", Seguito segnalazione del 24 corrente, 25 novembre 1946, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[26] Mouvement de criminal de guerre, appunto jugoslavo dattiloscritto, 4 maggio 1946, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, Fascicolo "Attività degli Ustascia in Italia".

[27] Promemoria riservato "Nazionalisti jugoslavi", 21 agosto 1945, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

are not afraid of anyone. Not the communists, not the Italians", was just the confirmation of the emerging explosive situation.[28] The affair involved the historian Federico Chabod who, as president of the Aosta Valley Council, wrote to the Ministry of the Interior in July 1946 that the Serbs who had taken refuge in the valley were "fascists" and were proving to be "neither friendly nor loyal" to the Italian authorities.[29] For these reasons, the Italian government preferred not to take any position for the time being, in order not to irritate the British who, on the other hand, were very interested in helping, even materially, the exiles' movement in Italy.[30]

In any case, the objective of the "Yugoslav National Committee" was the "reorganisation of the Royal Yugoslav Army" using the thousands of ex-prisoners and refugees present in the various camps. The aim was to create an invasion force to be sent to the Balkan country, with Anglo-American, French and Polish support (and Italian approval) to depose the government in Belgrade and restore King Peter to the throne. At the head of the new militia (still unarmed) was General Damjanović, who was in the Cesena refugee camp.[31] Having moved to Eboli, in the province of Salerno, the Serbian officer had to face difficult issues: his "army" was showing restlessness and indiscipline bordering on criminality. The confidential reports of the SIM agents described a picture far removed from the image of an organised liberation army. The report on the camp where the command of the new Yugoslav army was to be based encapsulates the situation:

> [In the Eboli camp], the behaviour of the refugees leaves a lot to be desired.
> Being free to move about, they constantly roam the nearby countryside and the
> town of Eboli, asking for bread and offering themselves as domestic service personnel, committing wrongdoings and thefts. There are frequent cases of drunkenness. The intervention of the CC. RR. with the Yugoslavian commander of

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[28] Volantino distribuito a Trieste il 10/VIII/1945 (ad opera dei nazionalisti jugoslavi: monarchici), n. 69091/9.7, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[29] Il Presidente del Consiglio della Valle d'Aosta, Federico Chabod, al Ministero dell'Interno, Direz. Gen. Della P.S., Div. A.G.R. – Sezione 3^, Aosta, 11 luglio 1946, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50, "Jugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[30] Notizie sul movimento jugoslavo contrario all'attuale regime, s.d., p. 14, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia", Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[31] Riorganizzazione Reale Esercito Jugoslavo – Campo di Cine Città, 19 agosto 1945. AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività". Il campo di Cesena conteneva nell'agosto 1945 almeno 18 mila cetnici (Situazione forze fedeli a Re Pietro di Jugoslavia in patria e all'estero; sentimenti verso l'Italia, n. 69034/3, segreto, 26 agosto 1945, in: AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività").

the camp [possibly Damjanović himself] did not have a satisfactory outcome, as the commander pointed out that he was unable to curb the misconduct. [32]

Even the leadership of the organisation seemed not immune to such laxity. An associate of Damjanović, Lieutenant Colonel Vukotić, former head of the military mission in Rome of the government in exile and a travelling agent between Rome and London, had even been captured by the British and tried for currency trafficking and document forgery.[33] It is probable, according to the papers consulted, that this was an artfully orchestrated allegation, perhaps by the more political fractions of the "refractory community" (Topalović, for example), who saw themselves disempowered by the military: a fact that confirmed the high level of quarrelsomeness within the group. Alternatively, the accusations could have been the work of Tito's agents who, having infiltrated the camps, worked to tarnish the "good name" of the anti-communists and, in some cases, even kidnapped and killed former alleged or real collaborationists locked up in Italy.[34] But one cannot exclude the real culpability of Vukotić, who later reinvented himself as an international businessman.

Both the War and Foreign Ministries began to monitor the situation, using informants from within the "refractory community". Among the numerous reports, one, dated 26 August 1945, written by an anonymous "Vojvoda" (Chetnik leader) described the organisational charts and personnel of the Yugoslav royalist army, under the command of which the anonymous nationalist leader (presumably Jevdjević) indicated General Mihailović himself.[35] In addition to the forces at home (overestimated and amounting, according to the document, to as many as three divisions), the forces in Italy were described: 18,000 "combatants" in the camps at Cesena, under the former commander of the Dinara Division of the "Yugoslav Army in the Homeland", priest Momčilo Djujić. He

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[32] A Piero, n. 34/R R.f. n. 869/R del 10–10 u.s., 29 ottobre 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[33] Traduzione del col. Vukotić a Salisburgo, segreto, 30 novembre 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[34] Stato Maggiore del Regio Esercito – Ufficio informazioni, n. 69077/3/7 di prot., "Campo di Cine Città", 11 settembre 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività". Nell'aprile 1946 venne rinvenuto in una località presso Eboli il cadavere della fidanzata di Damjanović, uccisa da mano ignota con una serie di coltellate (A Piero, Napoli, 19 aprile 1946, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, "Personalità jugoslave a Roma. Loro attività".

[35] In realtà le truppe cetniche erano ormai disperse e Mihailović, braccato dall'esercito di Tito dopo la definitiva sconfitta a Kalinovic, in Bosnia meridionale (22 maggio 1945), stava ritornando nella sua Serbia con solo diciassette uomini al seguito (J. Tomasevich, *The Chetniks. War and revolution in Yugoslavia 1941–1945*, (Standford: Standford University Press, 1975), 456). Il "Combattente di Ravna Gora" sarebbe stato catturato il 12 marzo 1946, quindi processato e fucilato il 17 luglio dello stesso anno.

was a well-known member of the complicated Chetnik hierarchy, which had – resolutely fought alongside the Italian occupation authorities in 1941–43. The report went on to add "modest numbers" of soldiers from the former Royal Yugoslav Army serving with the Allies (belonging to the few contingents that had followed the sovereign to Cairo after his surrender in April 1941), as well as unidentified "other groups" believed to be in the process of being formed in Italy.[36] Finally and significantly, 200,000 civilian refugees scattered between Italy and Austria were added to the available troops. At the head of all the forces in Italy was General Damjanović.[37]

The confusion would increase with the arrival of the Ustaša. Unlike the Serb-Chetnik, Slovenian and Croatian components of a "Maček-ian" persuasion or in favour of Croatia being included in the restored Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which, giving themselves a "democratic" image (if not social-democratic and labour, as in the case of Topalović), could represent for the Italian military authorities an interlocutor – admittedly restless, not very disciplined and at times unpresentable, but at least in line with the previous Allied ideas about the future of Yugoslavia, the Ustaša were something else. The pro-Axis orientation of Pavelić and his bloodthirsty regime and the blatantly fascist ideology that inspired them represented a problem not easy to solve. In August, the first members of Pavelić's regime (Independent State of Croatia, Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH) had arrived on Italian territory (in Venice and Treviso), mostly from the Croatian consulate in German-occupied Ljubljana, led by Salih Baljić, a Muslim Herzegovinian who had embraced the Ustaša creed, helped by Teodor Longarić, former head of the Ustaša secret service in the Slovenian capital.[38] Longarić, in particular, was followed for a long time during his journey from Venice to Rome, where he was received at San Girolamo. Another prominent name was General Vilko Pečnikar, former NDH police chief, who arrived in Rome between September and October 1945 and who, according to Foreign Ministry sources, was preparing the ground for Pavelić's imminent arrival.[39]

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[36] I cetnici oltre a Cesena erano distribuiti nei campi di Argenta (in provincia di Ferrara), Forlì e Rimini (Promemoria riservato "Nazionalisti jugoslavi", 21 agosto 1945, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia" Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia").

[37] Situazione forze fedeli a Re Pietro di Jugoslavia in patria e all'estero; sentimenti verso l'Italia, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, Fascicolo "Attività degli Ustascia in Italia".

[38] Il Ministero della Guerra – SMRE Ufficio I – 2^ sezione, segreto, n. 103379/2/CS di prot. , P.M. 3800, 5 settembre 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, Fascicolo "Attività degli Ustascia in Italia".

[39] Il Ministero degli Affari Esteri D.G.A.P. – Uff. IV al Ministero della Guerra, Stato Maggiore, Uff. I, telespresso n. 949, Roma, 19 ottobre 1945, "Generale ustascia Vilko

The presence of the Ustaša, hated by all Serb-Montenegrin and royalist elements, who considered them "war criminals",[40] forced the Italian authorities to separate them into different camps (Santa Maria di Leuca, Riccione, Forlì, Cesena but in a camp far from the Serb one).[41] However, as the head of the collection centre in Bologna recalled, the future "Yugoslav National Army" would soon include "selected elements" from the ranks of the Ustaša. In the name of the anti-communist cause, the old rivalries, as they had been at the end of the conflict at home, would disappear or at least be palpably softened.[42] Soon, the "refractory community" thus composed (and composite) would be employed by the SIM to monitor the new socialist Yugoslavia. The network of informers from across the border would be formed not only around the military opposition groups present on the spot (the so-called "Crusaders", or Križari), but also by numerous agents from the Italian camps sent undercover to Yugoslavia under the command of the Italian military authorities. The reports, contained in the SIM archives and opened as early as the summer of 1945, were written by former Chetniks, passed off as loyal Titoists and sent across the border, and – in a task renamed the "Chethniks Service" by the Italian intelligence commands – would have reported any useful information on the military situation in the new federal and socialist Yugoslavia: the new, fearsome enemy of Italy. The "Chetnik Service" would continue until the early 1950s.

Starting from the Yugoslavian figures for 1945 (98.000 Yugoslavs interned in Italy) and the arrivals of post-war "refractory" people (Ustaša, Chetniks, anti-communists of all kinds), amounting to at least another 100,000, the number of Yugoslav emigrants to Italy would decrease over the next two years. Some returned home (obviously, those who risked little or nothing or who acted "undercover"); to others, Italy had been merely a transit station before they moved on; others – the most problematic and heavily compromised – had been accompanied, with varying degrees of grace, to the borders (Pavelić, for example). Nevertheless, the numbers remained significant for a long time. In January 1946, the "refractory community" was redistributed into nine camps: Eboli

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Pecnikar", in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia" Busta 1, Fascicolo "Esponenti del cessato regime ustascia in Italia".

[40] Attività svolta all'estero dagli jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito, D.G.A.P., Uff. IV, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia" Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[41] Il Ministero degli Affari Esteri, D.G.A.P. Ufficio IV alla R. Ambasciata a Londra, telespresso n. 14983, Roma, 4 agosto 1945, "Attività jugoslave contro Tito", in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia" Busta 1, Fascicolo "Esponenti del cessato regime ustascia in Italia".

[42] Il Maggiore dei CC.RR. Capo centro Umberto Pompei, "Riorganizzazione dei militari jugoslavi reduci dalla Germania", n. 2657 di prot.,Bologna, 6 giugno 1945, in AUSSME, Fondo SIM, Prima Divisione, Busta 273, Fascicolo "Attività degli Ustascia in Italia".

(the Chetniks under Djujić's command, Olćan's Serbian fascists, General Parac's Croats loyal to Maček), Fermo (Ustaša and former members of the Croatian army the NDH); Palombina, Jesi, Riccione and Grumo (Croatian civilians and politicians), Padua (Slovenes), Turin (sorting centre) and Aversa ("international" camps with a hundred or so Yugoslavs of various ethnicities).[43] In Naples, in March 1953, an "Association of Fighters of the Royal Yugoslav Army" was founded under the leadership of a certain Ljubomir Spasojević, named after Mihailović and linked to the world headquarters created in Chicago and presided over by General Damjanović, who had immigrated to the United States in the meantime. Inspired by pan-Yugoslavism and therefore open to accepting not only Serbs but also members of other ethnic groups, this organisation contrasted with the groups of Djujić and Jevdjević, open only to Serb exiles. The opposition between the two organisations was fierce, as evidenced by a circular from Jevdjević, who warned to "beware of the Yugoslav Royal Association led by General Damjanović" because its representatives were "generally swindlers and suspicious persons".[44] In September of the same year, Djujić would also depart for Chicago, leaving only Jevdjević in Rome, at the head of a "Local Committee for Italy of the Serbian Chetnik Organisation". This committee, which had a press organ, the "Srpske Novine" ("Serbian Newspaper"), distributed among the Serbian communities in Italy and abroad, would have been monitored by the Italian police authorities, fearful of the infiltration of Belgrade agents among the Chetniks of the *Voivoda*. The comment made by the Questor of Rome in January 1954 is illustrative:

> It is not known whether any of Tito's agents are hiding in the group linked to Jevdjević, but it is a fact that the local Yugoslavian Legation, while not disturbing him, follows his activity, which it does not consider dangerous, especially because Jevdjević, due to his personal ambitions [sic] and lack of farsightedness and experience in the problems of emigration, contributes with his actions to unwittingly supporting Tito's manoeuvre, which aims to split up and break up the communities of Serb exiles abroad.[45]

Similarly, Jevdjević's anti-communist activities – he moved between the Chetnik communities in Italy and those in the USA, participating, for example, in the congress of the "Srpska Narodna Obrana" ("Serbian National Defence")

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[43] Campi jugoslavi in Italia, 12 gennaio 1946, in ASDMAE, AP 1946–50 "Jugoslavia" Busta 33, Fascicolo "Attività di jugoslavi contrari al regime di Tito in Italia".

[44] Il Questore di Napoli, Dott. F. Salvatore alla Questura di Caserta e alla Questura di Roma, n. 1034252 Div. UP, Napoli, 22 novembre 1953 "Organizzazione Cetnica Serba", riservata, in ACS, MI, DGPS, AARR 1951/53, Busta 30, Fascicolo 10/9.

[45] Il Questore di Roma, Arturo Musco, alle Questure di Napoli e di Caserta, e al Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale della P.S., Divisione Affari generali, n. 050024 U.P. A.$, Roma, 2 gennaio 1954, in ACS, MI, DGPS, AARR 1951/53, Busta 30, Fascicolo 10/9.

organisation in Niagara Falls in June 1952 – were also followed by the American CIA, as a 1955 report suggests.[46]

From these communities, some continued to move in the political and conspiratorial background: the Slovenes would concentrate along the eastern border, in the Free Territory of Trieste and then in Trieste, by then returned to Italy; the Serbs settled mostly in Rome; the Croats, for the most part, joined the powerful communities in Western Europe and overseas. Others, such as the socialist Topalović, are said to have worked as informants for the British: according to a note from a trusted source at the Questura in Rome, the former president of the JDNZ was commissioned by the UK Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin to resume contact with the community of Yugoslav exiles in order to convince them to tone down their arguments with Tito and the government in Belgrade. According to Topalovic himself, "[...] both the British and the Americans want the Yugoslav refugees in the West to respect the truce and not to do anything against Tito, pending further developments and progress in Tito's rapprochement with the West". The information is dated 23 November 1949, a year after the break between the Yugoslav head of state and Stalin.[47] Yugoslavia's new international position suggested that the subversive initiatives of the exiles' organisations should be reduced to a minimum or cancelled altogether. However, the Allied decision was not shared by the Italian SIM and, at least until the resolution of the Trieste crisis (1953–54), the "Chetnik Service" would continue to operate.

In the first months of 1948, according to the British authorities, the Yugoslav "refractory community" in Italy exceeded 23,000,[48] a medium-sized town, largely politically inclined to consider the lost war as a simple, temporary defeat and the attenuation of friction between the West and Belgrade as a passing setback. The redde rationem of Tito's "Socialist Federative" would come almost half a century later. And some of the younger members of the "refractory community" would have had time to become the elderly spectators and, in some cases, inspirers of the new dissolution of Yugoslavia.

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[46] Official Dispatch ORW-6h89, 16th June 1955, secret classification, subject: "Dobroslav Jevdjevich", in www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DJUJIC,%20MOMCILO_0016.pdf.

[47] Appunto per il Dr. Darcangeli, n. 224/39030, 23 novembre 1949, in ACS, MI, DGPS, Cat. O, Busta 97 "Stranieri pericolosi", Fascicolo "Topalowich Zivko"

[48] P. Adriano, G. Cingolani, La via dei conventi cit., 366.

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Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality in Trieste in Yugoslav-Italian Relations 1954–1971**

Abstract: The paper analyzes the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality in Trieste (SOCM) in Yugoslav-Italian relations in the period from the signing of the London Memorandum in 1954 to the early 1970s. In that period, the SOCM president Dragoljub Vurdelja, an anti-communist and an opponent of socialist Yugoslavia, had a decisive role. Yugoslavia perceived the SOCM under Vurdelja's leadership as a center of anti-Yugoslav propaganda, so it sought to take control over this church community. To that end, Yugoslavia raised this issue in its relations with Italy and used all available diplomatic means to persuade this country to remove Vurdelja from Trieste. However, the improvement in relations between the SOCM and Yugoslavia began only after Dragoljub Vurdelja died in 1971.

Keywords: Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality in Trieste, Italy, Yugoslavia, Dragoljub Vurdelja

The founding of the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality (SOCM), or Comunità religiosa serbo-ortodossa, in Trieste dates back to the second half of the eighteenth century. In 1751, the Orthodox population of Trieste, Greeks and Illyrians, received permission from the Austrian Empire to establish an official religious community (known in Serbian as "church municipality"). The union of Greeks and Illyrians – in fact, Serbs – lasted for the next three decades. However, after years of quarreling, the two communities split in 1781. The Illyrians/Serbs formed a separate community/municipality, which passed its statute in 1793. Since then, as Marco Dogo states, a "nation of pious merchants" has been gathered around its Church Municipality, its school and its magnificent church of St. Spyridon, built in the 1860s.[1] Most of the Trieste

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[1]   M. Dogo, "Narod pobožnih trgovaca. Srpsko-ilirska zajednica u Trstu, 1748–1908", in *Svetlost i senke. Kultura Srba u Trstu*, ed. Marija Mitrović (Belgrade: Clio, 2007), 61–115. On the history of SOCM, see D. Medaković & G. Milossevich, *Letopis Srba u Trstu* (Belgrade: Jugoslovenska revija, Jugoslovenska knjiga, 1987); M. A. Purković, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne*

Serbs were members of the Confraternity and elected from their ranks a board which governed the Church Municipality. Thanks to the generous gifts of its members, the Municipality became prosperous and wealthy over time.

An important change occurred after the First World War when Trieste became part of Italy. The treaty between the Kingdom of Italy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes signed in Nettuno in July 1925, the so-called Nettuno Conventions – which came into force in November 1928 – regulated, among other things, the position of the Church Municipality. Although the old statutes remained in effect and "full religious autonomy" was guaranteed, the Nettuno Conventions stipulated that the SOCM, through the Bishopric of Zadar, would fall under the religious, ecclesiastical and hierarchical authority of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its patriarch (Article 1). It seems that even more important provisions were contained in Article 2, which stipulated that "rights and controls" over the operation of the Municipality, which until then had been exercised by the Italian state, would now be transferred to the new Yugoslav state.[2] On the basis of the Conventions, a new *Pravilia* was adopted in 1929, which partially changed the position of the Church Municipality.[3] One of the provisions stipulated that a representative of the Yugoslav Consulate in Trieste attend the sessions of the Confraternity. This direct interference of Yugoslavia in the work of the Municipality was visible as early as July 1930, when the SOCM session was attended by Vice-Consul Ilija Milikić.[4]

The circumstances created by the Nettuno Conventions made it easier for the new authorities of communist Yugoslavia to put the Municipality under their control during the (in)famous "forty days of Trieste" (Trieste Crisis in the spring of 1945). The Provincial National Liberation Committee for the Slovenian Littoral and Trieste appointed a pre-war teacher at the school, Velimir Đerasimović, as president of the Church Municipality, and he remained in that position until October the same year.[5] Disregarding the old customs, Đerasimović introduced fifty new people into the ranks of the Confraternity, including some non-Serbs, mostly local Orthodox Slovenes who had distinguished

crkvene opštine u Trstu (Trieste 1960); V. Đerasimović, *Srpska crkvena zajednica u Trstu. Važniji događaji oko Sv. Spiridona* (Trieste 1993).

[2]   Diplomatski arhiv Ministarstva spoljnih poslova Republike Srbije, Politički arhiv (DA MSP, PA) [Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Political Archive], 1969, folder 67, doc. no. 42672, Agreement on the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality in Trieste.

[3]   M. Sekulić, *Jedna srpska opština prkosi celom svetu* (London 1960), 12.

[4]   DA MSP, PA, 1972, f. 53, no. 49372, Report of the Consulate General of Yugoslavia in Trieste on the situation in the SOCM, March 8, 1972.

[5]   Purković, *Istorija*, 169; F. T., *Srpska pravoslavna opština u Trstu. Istina o događajima u poslednjih 15 godina* (Caracas 1962), 4.

themselves in the Partisan ranks.[6] The school premises were used for the needs of the National Liberation Committee, a tricolor flag with a five-pointed star was flown on the Municipality building, and opponents of the new pro-communist bodies in the Municipality later often stated that official documents ended with the slogan "Death to fascism, freedom to the people".[7] After Đerasimović, the Municipality was managed by Đorđe Gavela,[8] and the situation remained unchanged for a few more years.

Things started to change in the late 1940s amidst intense pressure coming from the political emigration that had found refuge on the Apennine Peninsula after the war. Thus, the pro-Chetnik emigrant Dragoljub Vurdelja managed to become the president of the Church Municipality in 1951. During the war, Vurdelja was the head of the Smederevo and then the Vračar district, because of which, after the war, he was declared a war criminal by the Yugoslav State Commission for Determining War Crimes.[9] After the war, Vurdelja fled from Yugoslavia and ended up in Trieste under a false name in 1946, where he soon joined the Anglo-American Allied Military Government as an officer in the San Sabba refugee camp.[10] At the end of 1947, he became a brother in the SOCM and initiated the adoption of a new statute in 1950, which would later enable him to control the work of the Municipality more easily.[11] From the time he became the head of the Municipality until his death in 1971, he fully controlled the work of the Municipality by introducing into the ranks of the Confraternity people who were sympathetic to him and they received financial compensation from the Municipality in return for their support to his policy. With the arrival of Vurdelja at the head of the Church Municipality in 1951, a new two-decade-long phase, marked by conflicts and animosity, began in the relations between the Church Municipality and the Yugoslav state.

Given that Trieste was under the control of the Allied Military Government until the fall of 1954, the role of Italy was not visible in this period. In the first post-war years, the Allies provided financial assistance to the Church Municipality in order for it to maintain its immovable property during the destitute post-war period.[12] In addition, in March 1950, the Allies approved changes to

6   Ibid.

7   Purković, *Istorija*, 169.

8   Velimir Đerasimović was a teacher at the school of the SOCM in Trieste until 1953, when he was fired, and the following year he was expelled from the Confraternity (ibid. 171).

9   Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ) [Archives of Yugoslavia], Fonds 100 – State Commission for Determining the Crimes of the Occupier and Its Helpers, folder no. 8854, Dragoljub Vurdelja.

10 F. T, *Srpska pravoslavna opština*, 10.

11 DA MSP, PA, 1969, f. 66, no. 411774, Annual report of the Consulate in Trieste for 1969.

12 Đerasimović, *Srpska crkvena zajednica u Trstu*, 35.

the Municipality statutes, while the local Italians seemed to show restraint on this issue.[13] From the very beginning, the Allied Military Government was sympathetic to Vurdelja's administration.

The Yugoslav state and especially the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) did not pay particular attention to the situation in this Municipality until the beginning of the 1950s. Thus, when asked by the State Commission for Religious Affairs (SCRA) in 1950 to assess the situation in this Municipality, the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church replied that it was under the spiritual care and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate but completely financially independent and that the Synod had not received any reports and did not provide the Municipality with operational instructions.[14] Although a SOC delegation visited Trieste the following year, no closer contact seems to have been established.[15] The leadership of the Serbian Orthodox Church was distrustful of the Church Municipality of Trieste and ignored initiatives coming from that side.[16] Therefore, it is understandable that some members of the pro-Yugoslav Slovene minority in Trieste, in a conversation with Edvard Kardelj in 1955, criticized the authorities in Belgrade for having neglected the, as they stated, very wealthy municipality and left it in the hands of refugees.[17]

Things began to change in the second half of the 1950s, especially as a result of the deep rift among the Confraternity members within the Church Municipality. Namely, Vurdelja arbitrarily excluding from the municipality old members who opposed his autocracy, and the culmination was the case of the priest Stevan Lastavica. Unlike the previous priests, who were emigrants, Lastavica was sent by the Patriarch from Belgrade to serve as a parish priest in Trieste.[18] However, like many before him, Lastavica did not stay in this place for

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[13] Purković, *Istorija*, 173.

[14] AJ, Fonds 144 – Federal Religious Commission, folder no. 3, item 73, Letter of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the State Commission for Religious Affairs under the Presidency of the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, March 16, 1950.

[15] In 1951, a delegation of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which included German Đorić, titular bishop and future patriarch, and Dušan Glumac, professor at the Faculty of Theology, visited Trieste – AJ, 144–3–83. Patriarch German later recalled how, during his stay in Trieste, Vurdelja had proposed to him to cooperate by secretly sending intelligence reports from Belgrade and the Synod. However, German refused – AJ, 144–73–171, Note on the conversation between the Secretary of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs Miloje Dilparić and Patriarch German, April 3, 1964.

[16] Thus the then Patriarch Vikentije refused to approve the appointment of Slavko Nićetin as a priest in Trieste – AJ, 144–14–212, Report on the visit to Patriarch Vikentije.

[17] DA MSP, Strictly Confidential Archive, 1955, f. 2, no. 191, Note on Comrade Kardelj's conversation with Dr. Besednjak, Dr. Tončić and Dr. Škrk, March 25, 1955.

[18] F. T., *Srpska pravoslavna opština*, 13.

long because, a few years later, he clashed with Vurdelja. This conflict led to deep divisions within the Serb community gathered around the Church Municipality and reached its climax when a group of fifteen or so former brothers, expelled by Vurdelja, formed a "Initiating Committee" and became active opposition to the Municipality leadership.[19] The events culminated in a trial before the Italian court and the condemnation of this "opposition" group in 1960.

Since Vurdelja emerged victorious from this conflict and Lastavica was forced to leave Trieste, the new patriarch, German, decided to actively intervene, removing Vurdelja from Trieste and putting the SOCM under the control of the Serbian Orthodox Church. That is why he asked the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get involved in the case and intervene with the Italian government in order to resolve the "unhealthy" situation in the Municipality caused by political emigrants from Yugoslavia.[20] The interests of the state and the church coincided because Belgrade officials were also against the hostile actions of refugees in the Church Municipality. However, the state limited its intervention to submitting an aide-mémoire and orally transmitting the Patriarch's remarks to the representatives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[21] The ambassador in Rome presented Vurdelja's harmful actions to the Italians, and the solution to the problems in the Church Municipality, and thus transferred the whole case to the diplomatic level. The main argument in the Yugoslav presentation to the Italian state was the anti-Yugoslav actions of the Municipality leader Vurdelja.[22] From that point a constant campaign against the SOCM leader began.

The issue of the Church Municipality in Trieste and its president gained momentum after the split within the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1963, after which the autonomous Serbian Orthodox Diocese in the USA and Canada was created under the leadership of the dismissed bishop Dionisije Milivojević. Vurdelja reacted to this decision by convening an irregular assembly of the Confraternity the same year, which made the decision to side with Dionisije.[23] The Church Municipality of Trieste was the only church community in Western Europe, Latin America, and Australia that openly sided with the breakaway part of the church, and Vurdelja became an increasingly prominent figure. The SOCM

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[19] Đerasimović, *Srpska crkvena zajednica u Trstu*, 37.

[20] DA MSP, PA, 1960, f. 50, no. 42741, Letter of the Legal Council of the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (SSFA) titled "Situation in the Church Municipality of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Trieste".

[21] Ibid.

[22] DA MSP, PA 1960, f. 47, no. 42184, Note on the conversation between Ambassador to Italy, Mihailo Javorski, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Giuseppe Pello, on January 22, 1960.

[23] AJ, 144–71–530, Report on the situation in the part of the Orthodox Church abroad. Vurdelja conditioned this decision by respecting the Statute of the SOCM in Trieste.

in Trieste became a refuge for all clerics who fled from Yugoslavia. At one point in early 1964, there were as many as five priests and one deacon who had fled Yugoslavia.[24] Vurdelja also tried to win over other church communities for Dionisije, such as the one in Vienna. Namely, he organized an illegal municipality that fought to overthrow those who supported the Patriarch and the unity of the Serbian Orthodox Church. To that end, according to the pro-Yugoslav administration of the Church Municipality in Vienna, Vurdelja spent large sums of money in order to legally overthrow the existing administration and install a new one.[25] At the same time, he showed animosity towards socialist Yugoslavia by hosting former King Peter II Karađorđević in Trieste in October 1962, and then demonstratively bringing him to the Yugoslav-Italian border.[26] In Yugoslavia, they considered all of the above as sufficient proof that the Church Municipality was an espionage hub that worked in the interest of King Peter II and some foreign services, primarily Italy, and one of the centers of hostile propaganda against Yugoslavia.

The described course of events intensified the efforts of the state and the church to replace Vurdelja and get the Italians to expel him from Trieste. At the end of 1963, the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (SSFA) decided to take all available measures to remove "the Chetnik Vurdelja" and put the Church Municipality under the control of the pro-Yugoslav opposition. This decision was in line with the wider action of the state to decisively deal with the enemy emigration and neutralize it. It should not be forgotten that the Church Municipality of Trieste was very wealthy and that its annual revenue in the 1960s amounted to over 50 million lire (about 500,000 euros). Those funds were used for propaganda against socialist Yugoslavia and activities in favor of Dionisije.[27] To that end, a plan for synchronized action was devised in Belgrade in January 1964, which included intervening with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also the Ministry of the Interior, some politicians, and the press, always noting that Vurdelja was a war criminal who had seriously damaged bilateral relations.[28] A special place was given to the Consulate in Trieste, which had the task of

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[24] AJ, 144–72–64, Note on the conversation of the Secretary of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs with Patriarch German, February 1, 1964.

[25] AJ, 144–74–255, Note on the conversation with the representatives of the church community in Vienna, May 18, 1964.

[26] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 60, no. 48636, Aide-memoire.

[27] DA MSP, PA, 1969, f. 66, no. 411774, Annual report of the Consulate in Trieste for 1969. According to the Consulate, the total income of the SOCM in 1951–1961 amounted to 350 million lire. Total annual expenditures were estimated at a maximum of two-thirds of the revenue.

[28] DA MSP, PA, 1964, f. 76, no. 419923, Telegram II of the SSFA Administration to the Embassy in Rome on January 24, 1964.

regularly monitoring the work of the Church Municipality and Vurdelja, and reporting everything to the SSFA.[29]

Strong pressure on the Italian side was exerted in Belgrade at almost all levels: the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs (FCRA), the Patriarchate, and the press. In the activities against Vurdelja, the state was more energetic than the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Federal Commission for Religious Affairs demanded that Patriarch German take more decisive measures against Vurdelja and the breakaway priests.[30] At the insistence of the state, but with some hesitation, in April 1964, the Patriarch decided to take Vurdelja and the members of the municipality administration to the ecclesiastical court and suspend him from the position of president and member of the administration.[31] He also informed the outgoing Italian ambassador, Alberto Berio, about this decision during his farewell visit to the Patriarchate. He told the ambassador that Vurdelja had abused church property and his position in order to work against the interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church. He concluded that this was a man who did not have the "canonical or moral qualifications to be the president of the Church Municipality".[32] The SSFA, for its part, reminded Ambassador Berio that the Church Municipality of Trieste was a hotbed of anti-Yugoslav propaganda led by a notorious war criminal.

Diplomatic missions in Italy were active as well. Based on the instructions from Belgrade, the Embassy in Rome concluded that "everything should be done to remove Vurdelja from Trieste".[33] To that end, they asked Belgrade for documents on "Vurdelja's criminal activity during the occupation".[34] After receiving

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[29] The Consulate in Trieste regularly reported to the SSFA on issues related to SOCM and Vurdelja. They did so within the reporting line p. pov KS-10. Of the 48 reports sent along this line from Trieste during 1966, 16 concerned Vurdelja and SOCM (DA MSP, PA, 1967, f. 57, no. 414877, Report on the work of the Consulate General in Trieste, 31 March 1967). Unfortunately, line reports p. pov KS-10 were not available to us during the research.

[30] AJ, 144–72–55, Note on the conversation between the President of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs (FCRA), Momo Marković, and the Vice President, Mate Radulović, with Patriarch German on January 11, 1964.

[31] By decision of Patriarch German, apart from Vurdelja, Dušan Relić and Georgije Perini were also suspended. They were accused of "committing the grave canonical wrongdoing of leaving the Serbian Orthodox Church and undermining the church order" by their schismatic act – AJ, 144–82–587.

[32] AJ, 144–73–171, Note on the conversation between the Secretary of the FCRA, Miloje Dilparić, and Patriarch German, April 3, 1964.

[33] DA MSP, PA, 1964, f. 78, no. 412528, Minutes of the meeting of the collegium of the Embassy in Rome held on January 28 and 29, 1964.

[34] Ibid.

the compromising material, they started a wide-ranging activity at all levels.[35] They even took the lead in relation to the actions undertaken by Belgrade.[36]

The Yugoslavs used yet another channel to influence the situation in the Church Municipality – the Vatican. As negotiations on mutual recognition were underway with the papal legate, Agostino Casaroli, the issue of Vurdelja's hostile actions in Trieste both against Yugoslavia and the Serbian Orthodox Church was raised during the discussions.[37] The precise reason for this intervention was the actions of the Catholic clergy in Trieste. The Yugoslavs protested with the Vatican because of the activities of the Bishop of Trieste, Antonio Santin. The Catholic clergy in Trieste, led by Santin, had shown animosity towards socialist Yugoslavia before, mostly because of the way the border issue was resolved. The situation got even worse after Irinej Kovačević visited Trieste and Vurdelja in June 1964 and was elected titular bishop by Dionisije's supporters. On that occasion, Santin held an audience with Irinej, which was a clear sign for Belgrade that the local Catholic Church supported the "rebel" part of the Serbian Orthodox Church.[38] The same complaint about Santin's actions was made by the chief of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs, Moma Marković, in a conversation with Roberto Ducci, the newly-appointed Italian ambassador to Yugoslavia.[39] Assistant Secretary of State, Dušan Kveder, also had a conversation with the ambassador, protesting against Irinej Kovačević's stay in Trieste and Vurdelja's actions. On that occasion, Kveder conveyed to Ducci the position of the Patriarchate that it was a matter of "supporting and helping the schism in the Orthodox Church".[40]

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[35] DA MSP, PA, 1964, f. 74, no. 418445, Operational Letter II of the Administration, May 4, 1964; ibid., no. 421827, Note on the conversation between Sveta Vučić and the Italian Ambassador Roberto Ducci, 18 May 1964 in Skopje.

[36] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 59, no. 45946, Excerpt from the annual report of the Embassy in Rome, February 12, 1965. The case of Grazio Ivanović, the apostolic administrator from Kotor, who visited the Yugoslav Consulate in Trieste on his way to Rome, can be taken as an example of the Consulate's actions in Trieste. Although he intended to visit both SOCM and Vurdelja, he cancelled his visit at the urging of the Consulate. Moreover, he promised to inform the Vatican and Pope Paul VI about the actions of Vurdelja, but also the Bishop of Trieste, Antonio Santin – AJ, 144–75–333, Report of the FCRA to the Executive Council of FR Montenegro, July 14, 1964.

[37] AJ, 144–82–581, Note on the negotiations between Yugoslavia and the Vatican led by Nikola Mandić, Minister-counsellor of the FRY Embassy, and A. Casaroli, Undersecretary at the D. S. Vatican, June 27, 1964 in Rome.

[38] Ibid.

[39] AJ, 144–76–406, Note on the talks between Momo Marković, Federal Secretary for Health and Social Policy, and Roberto Ducci, Italian Ambassador, September 11, 1964.

[40] AJ, 144–75–308, Note on the conversation between Assistant Secretary of State Dušan Kveder and Italian Ambassador Ducci, on June 10, 1964.

It seems that Yugoslavia made an even more radical move in order to remove Vurdelja from Trieste. In addition to trying to remove him from the position of the head of the Church Municipality, the state also seems to have intended to physically remove him from Trieste. Earlier assassination attempts, which Vurdelja blamed on Belgrade officials, were now replaced by an attempt to kidnap and transfer him to Yugoslav territory. Namely, in mid-October 1964, a five-member group tried to kidnap Vurdelja, but failed. The police in Trieste arrested the perpetrators and, after an investigation, came to the conclusion that Yugoslav officials had been involved in the case. Belgrade officially denied involvement in the event, calling the accusations "provocations" by those working against good bilateral relations and an example that "to some people in Italy, Vurdelja [is] more important than good relations with Yugoslavia, and hence they refuse to remove him from Trieste".[41] At the same time, he warned the Italians not to launch an anti-Yugoslav campaign in the press because that would put additional burden on the relations. The case of the kidnapping of Vurdelja ended up at the court of Trieste, but it did not receive publicity outside this city. The press, apparently at the suggestion of Rome, showed restraint, and the only texts with accusations against Yugoslavia could be read in some right-wing newspapers. Finally, in the kidnappers' sentences, there was no reference to Yugoslavia's involvement in the case.[42]

Regardless of the events related to the kidnapping of Vurdelja, Yugoslavia continued its ongoing campaign. In order to strengthen its arguments, at the end of 1964, official Belgrade sent Italy an aide-mémoire with compromising material about Vurdelja.[43] This document summarized all the accusations against the leader of the Church Municipality of Trieste presented to the Italians in the previous period. It was stated that he had been "the initiator, organizer, commander and perpetrator of serious war crimes" during the Second World War and that in 1946 he had been declared a war criminal in Yugoslavia.[44] Vurdelja was accused of forming a Chetnik organization during his time in Trieste, whose members carried out "subversive and sabotage actions" against Yugoslavia, as well as of forming a network of spies who worked "in favor of third countries".[45] He was also accused of propaganda activities such as publishing books and leaflets against Josip Broz Tito and other high officials. His work against the integrity

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[41] DA MSP, PA, 1964, f. 76, no. 441362, Telegram of the Embassy in Rome to the SSFA of October 16, 1964.

[42] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 59, no. 45946, Excerpt from the annual report of the Embassy in Rome, February 12, 1965.

[43] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 60, no. 48636, Aide-memoire.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

of the Serbian Orthodox Church was also underlined, and he was accused of having liberally used the funds of the Trieste Church Municipality to that end. Finally, it was emphasized that his activity was aimed at disrupting neighborly and friendly relations between the two countries and that his presence in Trieste "weighed heavily on" the bilateral relations. Consequently, Italy was strongly asked to remove Vurdelja from Trieste and restore the Municipality to its normal state.[46] This was the most direct act of intervention of the Yugoslav state at the diplomatic level on this issue. Independently of the action in connection with Vurdelja, Yugoslavia also raised the issue of hostile actions of the SOCM with the basic intention to make it possible for all Orthodox believers in Trieste to become members of the Church Municipality and hold "democratic elections" for Confraternity members.[47]

This wide-ranging action pursued throughout 1964 bore some fruit. At the beginning of March 1965, the Italians sent a *promemoria*, in which they fully rejected all allegations and demands made in the aide-mémoire and found that the activities of Vurdelja and the SOCM did not violate the legal framework and that Yugoslavia had interfered in Italy's internal affairs.[48] However, Belgrade objected again, claiming that Vurdelja had continued his anti-Yugoslav publishing activities and printed the second part of his book *The Beheaded Serbian Church* in Trieste, which attacked the regime in Yugoslavia and some statesmen.[49] Despite publicly denying the possibility of influencing Vurdelja's activities and hiding behind legal limitations, the Italians tried to at least partially meet the Yugoslav demands. A special reason was the upcoming visit of Aldo Moro. It was the first visit of an Italian prime minister to Yugoslavia, which had been postponed several times. That is why they influenced Vurdelja to resign his position as president of the Church Municipality.[50] They also tried to reinstate as members of the Church Municipality those who had been expelled earlier and represented opposition to Vurdelja.[51] At the same time, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that they "recognized the political harmfulness of

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[46] Ibid.

[47] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 58, no. 41900, Conclusions from the Collegium of the Embassy in Rome, December 29 and 30, 1964.

[48] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 59, no. 49970, Memorandum of the Italian Embassy of March 4, 1965.

[49] DA MSP, PA, 1965, no. 48636. Vurdelja published the first part of his book *Obezglavljena Srpska crkva* (The Beheaded Serbian Church) in 1964.

[50] Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Carte Moro (CM), busta 78, fascicolo 6, Contenzioso italo-jugoslavo.

[51] AJ, 144–83–12, SSFA to the FCRA, January 7, 1965. The Prefecture of Trieste asked the expelled members Blagoje Kovačević, Marko Vučetić and Velimir Đerasimović to apply for readmission to the SOCM Confraternity.

Vurdelja" and were willing to ban him from undertaking any activity, but that the Ministry of the Interior was "resolutely against" this.[52]

Looking at the situation with Vurdelja as a whole, it seems that it was believed in Italy (at least in state security circles) that one of the main goals of Belgrade was to put the Church Municipality and its considerable property in the service of Yugoslav interests.[53] It saw the conflict between Vurdelja's "independent" faction and the pro-Yugoslav faction that worked for Tito and Yugoslavia as the problem with the Church Municipality. With the defeat of Vurdelja and the victory of the pro-Yugoslav faction, the Church Municipality could have become a "dangerous center of political propaganda and economic expansion of Yugoslavia" in the area of Trieste, "seriously endangering" Italy's national interests. That is why every request of the Yugoslavs for the removal of Vurdelja had to be ignored, especially because, as it was stated, Vurdelja always kept his actions within the legal framework and political freedoms guaranteed by the Italian constitution.[54] From this perspective, it is understandable that one of Italian diplomatic representatives stated that the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would advocate a ban on Vurdelja's activities, but that the Ministry of the Interior would be "resolutely against" it.[55]

However, Vurdelja resigned from the position of SOCM president, which temporarily mollified Belgrade. The Yugoslavs thought that the pressure on Italian state officials had borne fruit, so they waited to see what Vurdelja's fate would be. At the same time, the expelled members of the Confraternity who made up the "opposition" to him received "advice" from Belgrade to take steps to take over the Church Municipality.[56] However, as Vurdelja quickly moved from the position of SOCM president to the position of secretary, the Yugoslavs concluded that all of that had been a maneuver and that nothing had been done against "that hotbed of provocations".[57] They were right when it comes to the unhindered activity of the Municipality under Vurdelja's leadership, as evidenced by the fact that, in August 1965, he ceremoniously received Bishop Dionisije in Trieste. Additionally, in 1966, new statutes of the SOCM were adopted, which

[52] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 60, no. 419120, Note on Bukumirić's conversation with advisor Giulio Teruzzi, head of the II Office of the Italian Foreign Ministry, on May 19, 1965.

[53] ACS, CM, n. 77, f. 1, Riservatissima, Vurdelja Dragoljub, Presidente della Comunità serbo-ortodossa di Trieste: richiesta del Governo Jugoslavo per il suo allontanamento da Trieste.

[54] Ibid.

[55] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 60, no. 419120, Note on Bukumirić's conversation with advisor Giulio Teruzzi, head of the II Office of the Italian Foreign Ministry, on May 19, 1965.

[56] AJ, 144–85–191, Letter of the SSFA to the FCRA, dated 8 June 1965.

[57] DA MSP, PA, 1965, f. 60, no. 419120, Note on Bukumirić's conversation with advisor Giulio Teruzzi, head of the II Office of the Italian Foreign Ministry, on May 19, 1965.

extended the jurisdiction of the Municipality to the whole of Italy, and members of the Confraternity could now become not only Serbs from Trieste, but also those living all across Italy. At the same time, the Municipality formally seceded from the Patriarchate and recognized Dionisije as its primate. Finally, per point of the new statute, the position of the Municipality was to be decided by the responsible Italian authorities.[58] The Yugoslav Consulate in Trieste saw all this as only the first step towards the final goal: to make Trieste the center of Dinosije's part of the Church in Europe and Vurdelja the central figure of this movement.[59]

After a long lull during which the representatives of the opposition within the Church Municipality, aided by Yugoslavia, were the loudest, a new activity followed in early 1968 when Patriarch German decided to definitively replace the suspended Vurdelja administration and appoint a "provisional commission" made up of former Confraternity members. German appointed one of the leaders of the "opposition", Marko Vučetić, as head of the provisional commission.[60] In December 1967, Vurdelja and his closest associates were expelled from the church by decision of the High Ecclesiastical Court.[61] Patriarch German asked the SSFA to provide legal protection to the Serbian Orthodox Church in order for this decision to be implemented. At the same time, the Patriarch and the Synod invoked the 1925 Nettuno Conventions again and demanded that Yugoslavia intervene diplomatically on the basis of them and "prevent the usurpation actions" of the dismissed administration.[62] However, it was a detailed interpretation of the Nettuno Conventions from the mid-1920s that showed the weakness of Yugoslavia's position in relation to the Municipality in Trieste in the entire post-war period. Although, as stated above, this treaty gave Yugoslavia the right to interfere in the affairs of the Church Municipality, it actually lost that right after the war because it ceased to be in force after the signing of the 1947 Peace Treaty. That is why Yugoslavia did not really have a legal basis to invoke it.[63] In addition to the above, the principle of separation of church and state in Yugoslavia needed to be adhered to. The SSFA proposed several models of struggle: to forward the request of the Serbian Orthodox Church through consular channels; to propose to Italy a joint friendly consideration of the case

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[58] DA MSP, PA, 1967, f. 57, no. 414877, Report on the work of the Consulate General in Trieste for 1966.

[59] Ibid.

[60] DA MSP, PA, 1971, f. 64, no. 440390, Report of the FCRA of November 11, 1968.

[61] DA MSP, PA, 1971, f. 64, no. 438656, Letter of Patriarch German to the President of the Federal Executive Council, Džemal Bjedić, of September 28, 1971.

[62] DA MSP, PA, 1971, f. 64, no. 440390, Report of the FCRA of November 11, 1968.

[63] This was the legal interpretation of the SSFA Legal Affairs Service – ibid.

for achieving the autonomy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Municipality; to bring the case before the Yugoslav-Italian Mixed Committee for Ethnic Groups, which was already in charge of the question of national minorities in the two countries.[64] Old methods of struggle remained available: insisting on the removal of Vurdelja as a war criminal and enemy of Yugoslavia and attempts to conquer the Church Municipality from within by assisting opposition representatives, who would then change the 1966 statute after coming to power in the municipality and work in accordance with the interests of Yugoslavia.[65]

A new threat to Yugoslav interests arose in the spring of 1969, after the Serbian Orthodox Church established its Diocese of Western Europe and Australia based in London and headed by Bishop Lavrentije. At the same time, Dionisije and Vurdelja intended to convene a council in Trieste and also form a European diocese with its seat in this city. Yugoslav diplomacy reacted sharply to the news about the upcoming church council in Trieste. In Belgrade, the Italian Embassy was informed about these developments, with the remark that it was a "purely political anti-Yugoslav emigration activity camouflaged as an ecclesiastical-religious matter" that could have a negative impact on relations between Yugoslavia and Italy.[66] The Italian authorities were asked to prevent the council from taking place, describing it as being directed against the friendship between the two countries. The Yugoslavs again expressed astonishment at the Italians' support to Vurdelja, "a stateless emigrant, whose activity is in violation of the emigrant status". When the Italian Embassy remarked that Patriarch German had also intervened and asked them to prevent "Vurdelja's schismatic activity", the SSFA distanced itself from German's position, stating that it was intervening because of anti-Yugoslav activity and not for religious reasons.[67] Obviously, what was at work here was the premise, already heard in the past, that socialist Yugoslavia professed non-interference in religious affairs, limiting itself to those that undermined the state system. The Embassy in Rome also reacted to the possibility of a council being held in Trieste. This diplomatic pressure bore fruit. However, the mentioned gathering did not happen thanks to Italy, which intervened much more decisively this time, since that was the time when bilateral

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[64] DA MSP, PA, 1969, f. 67, no. 42672, Note for the SSFA Collegium on possible measures taken by the Italian government in connection with the anti-Yugoslav activities of Dragoljub Vurdelja in the Serbian Orthodox Municipality in Trieste.

[65] DA MSP, PA, 1971, f. 64, no. 438656, Legal opinion on the position of the Serbian Church Municipality in Trieste.

[66] DA MSP, PA, 1969, f. 68, no. 414083, Note on the conversation of Nikola Mandić, head of the Directorate for Western Europe, with the Minister-counselor of the Italian Embassy Brigante-Colonna, April 22, 1969.

[67] Ibid.

relations were on the rise after the turbulent fall of 1968.[68] Moreover, thanks to the intervention of the Consulate General in Trieste, representatives of local Italian authorities no longer attended SOCM assemblies, which had been common practice until then.[69]

The 1970s brought a new dynamic, different from that of the previous two decades. The beginning of the new phase was in 1971, when Dragoljub Vurdelja died. Thus ended his two-decade-long sovereign rule over the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality. Vurdelja was succeeded by his closest associate Dušan Reljić, who proved incapable of continuing the policy set by Vurdelja. However, two more years passed before the pro-Yugoslav faction finally came to lead the Municipality. This did not end the disputes within the Church Municipality, but the pro-Yugoslav faction managed to maintain its dominance.

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[68] DA MSP, PA, 1969, f. 68, no. 414888, Telegram of the Embassy in Rome was sent to the SSFA on April 24, 1969. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that a request for the establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Church for Europe based in Trieste had been submitted in 1965, but that its position on this question had been negative even then.

[69] DA MSP, PA, 1970, f. 80, no. 412517, Information on the conversation between Marijan Tepina, Consul General of Yugoslavia in Trieste, on April 6 and 7, 1970.

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"Hidden Religious Landscapes":**
Religious Minorities and Religious Renewal Movements in the Borderlands of the Serbian and Romanian Banat[1]

Abstract: The paper explores the ways religious grassroots actors in the borderlands contribute to the new understanding of cross border regions and religious groups in the space between the Serbian and Romanian Banat from the perspective of the anthropology of borders. The border region included in this paper was the place of interreligious and interethnic encounter, where religions and languages mixed and there was a continuous interaction between Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Protestants. By studying the region that had strong cultural, historical and religious connections, the aim is to provide new insights on the borders and religious groups that are understudied. This article explores the "liminal" character of religious identities, development of renewal movements and crossing symbolic boundaries with the examples of the "home-grown" religious movement of the Lord's Army (Rom. *Oastea Domnului*) emerged in the first decades of the 20th century.

Keywords: Orthodox Christian renewal movements, the Lord's Army, Romanians, grassroots religious movements, neo-Protestants, the Serbian and the Romanian Banat.

Introduction

Borders, especially in periods of their change, represent important symbolic boundaries between ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. From the perspective of ethnographic research on borders and borderlands, according to Marta Sánchez it "emerges as a methodology and a stance to deconstruct the ways in which ethnographers and ethnographies are radically situated in their own histories, and how radical contextualization of those histories is required

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to understand across borders and uncover the limits of cultural representation, language, and ethnography as a tool to understand the lives of people, their histories, and communities. Borders are necessarily evoked – geopolitical, social, cultural, national, regional, global, and personal ones, such as gender, race, class, and ethnicity".[2] As Victor A. Konrad argues, "it is necessary to change perspectives to focus on the dynamic interaction that occurs at the border and, in particular, on mobility, instead of focusing on the borderline. Moreover, borders of different types encourage and stimulate some actors or networks to participate more eagerly than others".[3]

Research on borders and religious groups in this part of Europe raises several important questions: What impact do the borders between nation states have on religious groups and their practices? How do borders echo and reverberate as religious geographies? What was the role of religious groups in crossing borders? What means were used by religious communities to preserve continuity or religious practices?

The border regions included in this paper were historically the places of interreligious and interethnic encounter, where religions and languages mixed and there was a continuous interaction between Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Protestants. The area of the Serbian and Romanian Banat is also characterised by the presence of different home-grown religious and renewal movements, as well as the presence of neo-Protestant groups. The movements of religious renewal among Orthodox believers date back to the end of the nineteenth century and occurred almost simultaneously in different areas of Europe, often taking the form of informal gatherings of believers.[4] The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the development of their organizational capacities, which allowed them to become mass phenomena in the interwar period.[5] According to James Kapaló, "from the nineteenth century onwards a proliferation of movements, networks and splinter groups have emerged to occupy liminal or marginal spaces in relation to the official Church Orthodoxies of Central and Eastern Europe. The emergence of these groups has been interpreted as a symptom of the processes of late modernity in Orthodox societies. The increased mobility of people within the Russian Empire, new formations of the self-brought about by increased social differentiation and freedom of expression, and expo-

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[2]   See M. Sánchez, "Ethnography Across Borders" In: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education.* 28 Aug. 2019 (accessed 23 Sep. 2021) https://oxfordre.com/education/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264093–e-552.

[3]   Victor Konrad, "Toward a Theory of Borders in Motion", *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 30(1), (2015), 1–17.

[4]   Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, Radmila Radić (eds). *Christian Orthodox Renewal Movements in Eastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 11–22.

[5]   Ibid.

sure to religious diversity and missions from the West, especially in the form of Evangelical and radical Protestant groups, are all cited as catalysts for the dynamic and enthusiastic religious movements that appeared in the Orthodox East."[6]

The theoretical framework this research paper is based on relies on the concepts developed within the anthropology of border studies of P. Ballinger,[7] R. Alvarez,[8] H. Donnan and M. Wilson[9] and the liminal character of home-grown religious groups following the research of religious studies scholar, James Kapaló[10]. The paper is also based on the results of several ethnographic field-works in the Serbian and Romanian Banat with the focus on religious agency of non-nation forming religious minority groups of neo-Protestants and Orthodox Christian renewal communities. Contemporary research on religious expression and practice in the Serbian and Romanian Banat reflects the internal complexity and dynamics of religiosity in the region that has constantly faced various challenges, including shifting borders, ethnic and religious groups' diversity and migrations. This landscape in which people talk about ethnic and religious co-existence as a matter of history was a place of encounters with the Other. In the religious sense, this encounter was mostly a result of the spread of various forms of Reformation movements, in the form of new Protestant communities which had a significant influence on the emergence of the renewal movements as well.[11]

The paper focuses on the dynamics of religious practices in the border area of the Serbian and Romanian Banat, growth of movements of religious dissent and their existence during different historical periods, more precisely during the interwar period and during the communist era and the period of the so-called "hard" borders. Including a segment of contemporary ethnographic material, the paper also sheds light on the existence of renewal movements in the present-day Romanian communities in the Serbian Banat. The main research aim is to explore the ways grassroots actions in the borderlands contribute to

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[6]   James Kapaló, "*Liminal* Orthodoxies on the Margins of Empire: Twentieth-Century Home-Grown Religious Movements in the Republic of Moldova", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 23:1 (2017), 33–51, DOI: 10.1080/13537113.2017.1273673

[7]   Pamela Ballinger, "Authentic Hybrids, in the Balkan Borderlands", *Current Anthropology*, vol. 45, no 1, (2004), 31–60.

[8]   Alvarez, R. R. "The Mexico – US border. The Making of an Anthropology of Border-lands", *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, (1995), 447–470.

[9]   Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson (eds.), *Borders. Frontiers of Identity, Nation, State* (Oxford, New York: Berg Press, 1999).

[10]   James Kapaló, "*Liminal* Orthodoxies on the Margins of Empire", 33–51,

[11]   Bojan Aleksov, "The Nazarenes among the Serbs: Proselytism and/or Dissent?", in: A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić, *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern Eur*ope (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 105–136.

the new understanding of cross border regions and religious groups in the space between the Serbian and Romanian Banat in different historical periods. By studying the region that had strong cultural, historical and religious connections, the aim is to provide new insights on the borders and religious groups that are understudied and to showcase examples of the permeability of borders for religious groups in different historical periods.

The emergence of neo-Protestant groups and the change of religious landscape

The Nazarenes were the first Protestant-origin religious group with a significant number of converts from the predominantly Orthodox population – Serbs and Romanians. The Nazarenes are colloquially called "Followers of Christ", "The New Believers", or "Evangelical Baptists". [12] The Nazarenes formed sizable communities mostly in rural settlements in the Banat and Bačka regions. In multiethnic and multidenominational Austria-Hungary, the Nazarenes were of a very mixed ethnic origin, which enabled their rapid spreading to different settlements.[13] As a movement of religious dissent, emphasizing strong community commitment, the Nazarenes were in conflict with the state authorities from the moment they appeared in the southern areas of Austria-Hungary. One of the strengths of this religious community was its ability to recruit members from all the ethnic groups that inhabited this ethnically mixed area. In spreading the Nazarene teachings and conversion, the use of the vernacular language and even several languages had an important role in religious services and hymn singing. In 1868 the British and Foreign Bible Society reported on the distribution of copies of the Bible among Serbs, stating that there were a large number of the Nazarenes. Before WWI there were 236 congregations and more than 86,000 believers in the Empire. Severe persecution of the Nazarenes started in the newly formed Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia and it continued in the communist time as well.

Beside the Nazarenes, the largest of the neo-Protestant groups were Baptist, Brethren, Pentecostal, and Seventh Day Adventists. The term "Protestant" refers to the denominations coming directly out of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation (Calvinists, Lutherans), while the Neo-Protestants, seen as off-shoots of Protestant churches, developed out of subsequent religious revivals and attempts to carry further the reforms of the sixteenth century Reformers.

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[12] See more on emergence of Nazarenes: Bojan Aleksov, *Religious Dissent Between the Modern and the National. Nazarenes in Hungary and Serbia 1850–1914* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag).

[13] Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, *Dvostruke manjine u Srbiji. O posebnostima u religiji i etnicitetu Rumuna u Vojvodini* (Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 2015).

In the public discourse they were deemed sectarian, heretical, and dangerous proselytes. Their presence among both Serbs and Romanians was the most visible in the border regions of Banat, but also in other regions such as Bačka and Crişana-Maramureş, and their history, intimately linked to ethnic minorities (particularly Germans, Hungarians and Russians), made them particularly suspicious and a hindrance to projects of national consolidation. The neo-Protestants were perceived as a direct national threat by the Orthodox Church hierarchy, much of the Romanian elite, and by the government officials. Nevertheless, neo-Protestant congregations continued to grow despite marginalization.

There are a number of possible explanations why the growth of these religious minorities persisted and grew significantly especially in ethnically mixed areas (particularly among ethnic minorities). For some members, these communities offered the means for spiritual and even social advancement, seen in the increased literacy as a result of the emphasis on the Bible reading within these communities. The importance of an individual in the decision of repentance through baptism was evident but its efficacy lay in the public acknowledgement of new commitments, which was stressed to the body of believers. Despite the fact that all of them practised adult baptism, their theologies, rituals, and aesthetics of communal worship were different. Their unique relationship between the individual and the community was formed through the importance placed on an individual reading the Bible as God's word, through giving the personal testimony (speaking the word read) in the presence of the church community, and then through engaging in corporate singing of the word that had been read and whose potency had previously been testified through personal accounts.

As Birgit Meyer argues in relation to aesthetics and meaning, for neo-Protestant groups the sensational form developing around the icon was replaced by the one which developed around the Bible. Among the growing neo-Protestant communities, the power that a religious artefact is perceived to have over a person, as Meyer describes it, is seen in the power attributed to the physical Bible, and reverence toward it due to the words inside.[14]

The Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in the Balkans

The emergence of these new religious communities at the end of the nineteenth century had a profound social, cultural and political impact on the region in the following decades. In this encounter with the *religious Other*, the Orthodox churches responded differently. In the dynamic and polyphonic religious sphere during the interwar period, new religious impulses significantly contri-

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[14] Birgit Mayer, "Aesthetics of Persuasion: Global Christianity and Pentecostalism's Sensational Forms", *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109(4), 741–763.

buted to the emergence of several renewal movements within different Ortho-
dox Churches. What was common for all these renewal movements among Or-
thodox believers was their simultaneous appearance in different areas of Sou-
th-eastern and Eastern Europe.[15] From the period of early Christianity, there
have been movements that aimed to intensify religious experience and life. Thus
"since the early centuries Christianity has known movements that have inten-
sified and radicalized religious life. The aim of such movements has often been
to regain the simplicity and zeal of the church of New Testament days, or to
restore some lost or neglected aspect of primitive church life. Sometimes such
movements leave a lasting mark on Christian teaching, institutions, worship and
patterns of conduct. Some deeply affect the institutional church; some divide it;
some are driven from it; some run into the sand. All reflect a desire to renew the
Christian community, to bring to it new life and vigor".[16]

Reform movements, apostasy from the Orthodox Church and desires
for restoration had already begun in Russian Orthodoxy in the late eighteenth
century and lasted until the first half of the twentieth century.[17] They were born
as a reaction to the general crisis in the Russian Orthodox Church. The evan-
gelical movements of Stundism (*Maliovantsy*), Pashkovism and Baptism that
had begun to spread in the nineteenth-century Imperial Russia, particularly in
Ukraine, had a significant influence on Orthodox believers and others.[18]

In Greece, the community founded by Apostolos Makrakis in 1876 ran
Sunday schools for children, philosophical lectures and sermons for adults and
published its own magazine "Logos". In 1907, Makrakis collaborated with Ar-
chimandrite Eusebios Matthopoulos and founded Zoe. The community ex-
panded after 1927, when Archimandrite Seraphim Papakostas took over the
lead and started opening hundreds of catechetical schools for young people. Zoe
functioned as a community, having an almost semi-monastic character. Accor-
ding to Logotheti ,"the main purposes of Zoe were twofold: the spiritual growth
of its members according to the principles of Orthodox spirituality and com-

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[15] For a more detailed overview of different Orthodox Christian renewal movements see: A.
Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić (eds.) *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern
Europe*.

[16] A. Walls, L. Sanneh, B. Stanley, Religious Movements of Renewal, Revival and Revitalisa-
tion in the History of the Mission and World Christianity, 2012 (https://divinity.yale.edu/
faculty-research/programs-and-initiatives/yale-edinburgh-group-world-christianity-and-
history-mission/religious-movements-renewal-revival-and-revitalization-history-missions-
and-world-christianity)

[17] Sergei I. Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation: Peasants, Millenialism, and Radical Sects in South-
ern Russia and Ukraine, 1830–1917* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004).

[18] A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić (eds.) *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in
Eastern Europe*, 14.

plete dedication to the expansion of Orthodoxy within Greece in a framework of growing urbanisation and secularisation".[19] The main mission of Zoe was to introduce reform to the Church, as it was the case with other renewal movements.

According to Galina Goncharova, the Bulgarian case is specific. The White Cross monastic fraternity in Bulgaria shows how renewal movements functioned when they succeeded in negotiating church politics and aligning them with ecclesiastic and national goals. Influenced by the Protestant example, the brotherhoods had a communal, semi-monastic character and accepted the three virtues of traditional Orthodox monasticism: celibacy, poverty and obedience. The case of the Union of the Christian Orthodox Fraternities in the Kingdom of Bulgaria was to some extent different because it was founded within the framework of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. The main reason for its establishment was to foster monasticism in the country and revive the influence of the Church in society. It was inspired by Catholic orders and social organizations such as the Red Cross and the Child Protection Union, and it combined monastic life with social activities and public events. It consolidated existing organizations at the parish level "into one living spiritual body", validated charity as a meaningful relationship between the clergy and laity and supported the restoration of the traditional authority of the BPC in social and national terms.[20]

The renewal movements were all characterized by intensity of personal religious experience, holiness, discipline, communion, Scriptural authority, the use of vernacular languages in liturgical practice, hymn chanting, prayer, and the revival of pilgrimages and monasticism. There are sources that confirm the first founder of the so-called Pious (Ser. *Pobožni*) group, as the initial informal bands of the new religious movement were called, was Vitomir Maletin (1826–1873), a pious peasant and church sexton in Padej in Banat. His mystical visions, which he described in two booklets, were widely read and attracted a following among peasants in neighbouring villages. The God Worshippers (Ser. *Bogomoljci*) developed a life almost independent from the Church. However, they saw themselves within the 'framework of Orthodox Faith'. They also adopted some of the protestant principles: worship services in the native language, singing hymns, reading and interpretation of the Bible, printing religious brochures. Informal groups of believers would gather for prayer meetings at homes on which occasions they were reading parts of the New Testament. They also organized

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[19] Amarylis Logotheti, "The Brotherhood of Theologians Zoe and its influence on the twentieth century Greece". in: A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić, *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 285–302.

[20] Galina Gonchareva, "The Case of *Chrystianka Journal*: The Bulgarian Orthodox Charity Network and the Movement for Practical Christianity", in: A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić (eds.), *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 303–322.

regular pilgrimages to Orthodox monasteries. They lived almost ascetic lives, avoiding alcohol and tobacco; they dressed modestly and they called each other 'brother' or 'sister'. The God Worshippers took over some of the hymns from the Nazarene hymnbooks and published them in the first hymnbooks of their own. The religious practices of the God Worshippers resembled a great deal those of the Nazarenes, which themselves were created under the influence of one of the radical fractions of the Reformation – Pietism. Their mission was a moral renewal of people through the faith in God, spiritual awakening and spreading of the Holy Gospel, increased piety of the folk, through establishing brotherhoods and gathering at the God Worshippers' congregational meetings. The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the development of their organizational capacities, which allowed them to become mass phenomena in the interwar period. The established churches responded differently according to the specific circumstances, but most sought to channel these movements, aware that they could provoke religious renewal but also might have devastating consequences if they developed beyond the Church control. The appearance of these movements was significantly influenced by the spread of Evangelical or neo-Protestant movements, since their number grew dramatically in the interwar period (Baptists, Nazarenes, Brethren, Seventh Day Adventists). Orthodox reforms, such as regular preaching, were a response to the Nazarene influence. In particular, the God Worshippers belonging to a grassroots movement emphasizing individual piety and holiness learned to read the Bible from the Nazarenes. Therefore, it could be said that Orthodox churches encountering these new forms of religious expression that emphasized personal religiosity responded in a struggle to redefine religion in the 20th century.

How was the Lord's Army movement founded?

Simultaneously with the emergence of the God Worshippers, the Lords Army (Rom. *Oastea Domnului*) was founded in Sibiu by the Romanian Orthodox priest Iosif Trifa in 1923. Iosif Trifa was a village priest in Vidra de Sus in Alba where he served from 1911 until 1921. Upon the call of Nicolae Bălan, Metropolitan of Ardeal, to come to Sibiu, Trifa became the chaplain of the theological academy, director of a church orphanage and he established a newspaper called the "Light of the Villages" (Rom. *Lumina Satelor*). Balan completed his studies at the University of Czernowitz and later studied Protestant and Catholic theology in Breslau. His efforts in promoting the Bible study and increasing theological literacy among Romanians led to his support of publishing the Light of the

Villages newspaper with the main aim of reaching out to peasants.[21] It was a period of growth of the neo-Protestant or Repenter's communities among Romanians. Thus, the need for preaching and consolidating religiosity in the Orthodox Church was one of the central motives. Trifa published a pamphlet "What is Lord's Army?" (Rom. *"Ce este Oastea Domnului?"*) in which he emphasized the importance of morality of believers, preaching the Holy Gospel, singing hymns, reading the Bible and prayer. As early as the 1920s, Trifa's journal *Lumina satelor* was regularly sent to some parish libraries. In the spreading of the Lord's Army movement one of the most important roles was held by various articles in the newspapers, especially in the 1920–1930 period. The aim of these articles was to popularize the movement among the readers. The mission of the movement was the moral renewal of people through faith in God, spiritual awakening, the expansion of the role of the Gospels in lay worship and increasing people's piety through fraternities and assemblies. The movement growth was rapid and impressive. *Lumina satelor* reported that the movement reached 60,000 members in 1932. New members had to sign an oath and in every new newspaper issue, new members were announced. Sometimes, their personal stories of joining the movement were also included. The distribution of printed material, newspapers, hymnbooks and pamphlets had a significant impact on the movement spreading in the country but also across borders in the Romanian parishes that existed in the neighbouring regions such as the Serbian and Hungarian Banat. In over 40 books he wrote, Trifa was stressing the importance that sinners should return to the right path of salvation through the faith in Jesus Christ. "Soldiers", the colloquial name for the members of the movement, could be recognized by the way they behaved: not drinking alcohol, smoking and swearing, reading the Bible, praying, calling each other "brother and sister". Their personal spiritual rebirth was very similar to the neo-Protestant discourse of conversion. Another similarity with neo-Protestant communities was demonstrated in free and inspired sermons and prayers, personal devotion, singing hymns backed up with musical instruments, which very much resembled neo-Protestant communities. In his monograph *Sectarianism and Renewal in 1920s Romania: the Limits of Orthodoxy and Nation-building*[22], Roland Clark argues that the Lord's Army is an example of liminal Orthodoxy emerged in Transylvania. Responding to repeated complaints, according to Clark, "about apathy and irreligion of Romanian Orthodox believers, a number of church leaders engaged in concerted campaigns to renew the interest of parish priests and lay Christians alike in attending church ser-

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[21] Roland Clark, *Sectarianism and Renewal in 1920s Romania. The Limits of Orthodoxy and Nation-Building*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 145–146.

[22] Roland Clark, *Sectarianism and Renewal in 1920s Romania. The Limits of Orthodoxy and Nation-Building*.

vices, reading the Bible and cultivating holy living".[23] Religious poetry, which was one of the central elements of the Lord's Army religious practice, developed in the late 1930s by Trifa's followers Ioan Marini, Traian Dorz and Simion Paraschiv. The songs used were reflecting the questions of salvation, love for Jesus Christ and the importance of gathering as a community of believers. Due to the complicated relationship and personal disagreements, Bălan removed Trifa from the leadership position and took over the movement as well as the printing house. In 1932 when Bălan took control over the movement, the movement also introduced certain changes, turning its course to a more nationalistic orientation.[24] Trifa died in 1938 and the movement leadership was taken over by teacher Ioan Marini together with a young Christian poet Traian Dorz until the movement was banned by the communist authorities in 1949. Clark notes that "communists would arrest anyone who continued holding meetings, but despite heavy persecution the movement outlived socialism and continues today as a parachurch movement affiliated with the Romanian Orthodox Church."[25]

The Lord's Army across the border in the Serbian Banat

In the early 1930s, the Lord's Army started to spread among Romanians in the Serbian Banat. As an integral part of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Romanian parishes in the Serbian Banat maintained a strong connection with the dioceses in Caransebeş and Arad, from which they received circular letters, journals, and other publications. The parish libraries from the Serbian Banat were on the list for the regular reception of the journal *Lumina satelor*: Mramorak, Ecica, San Mihai (Lokve), Sarcia (Sutjeska). From the circular letters and exchange that existed between local priests and Eparchies in Romania, it can be seen that a lot of uncertainty and tensions emerged in the 1930s period when the movement gained more visibility and influence. Church leaders were constantly underlining that the the Lord's Army movement was emerging from the Romanian Orthodox Church and that local branches should be led by the Romanian Orthodox priests only. The role of the local priests was even discussed at the Holy Synod meeting in 1931 in Bucharest.[26] In one of the circular letters, archbishop of Caransebeş Iosif Traian Bădescu wrote that "the Lord's Army was established with the main aim to confront the emergence of sects, to raise reli-

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[23] Ibid, 35.

[24] Ibid. 164–165.

[25] Ibid. 166.

[26] Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, Mircea Măran, *Biserica Ortodoxă română din Banatul iugoslav in perioada interbelică (1918–1941)*, (Cluj Napoca, Caransebeş: Presa Universitară Clujeană, Editura Episcopiei Caransebeşului, 2019), 166.

giosity and morality of people, to promote anti-alcoholism. It is important that in the lead of each local branch we have a priest in front."[27] He emphasized that the movement represents "a reaction against sects which exist among our people, which aims to intensify religious experiences"[28]. The attitude regarding the new movement was ambivalent. One of the reasons were religious songs which were one of the main identity markers of the Lord's Army. However, they were very similar to those of neo-Protestant communities.

The first significant meeting of the Lord's Army movement in the Serbian Banat was held in Sveti Mihailo on August 16, 1931. One of the common religious practices for renewal movements were pilgrimages. In the interwar period, one of the main pilgrimage sites was the monastery of Malo Središte (Rom. *Pârneaora*), where both the Lord's Army and God Worshippers gathered starting from 1933.[29] The call for pilgrimage was announced in the church press for the members of the community across the border in Romania.[30] All Romanians from the Serbian Banat were invited to take part in the pilgrimage on September 14 for the Feast of the Holy Cross (Rom. *Înălţarea Sfintei Cruci*). Around 3,000 of believers from 50 localities of the Serbian but also Romanian part of Banat, gathered in this pilgrimage with great enthusiasm from 1933 to 1935.[31] There was even a record stating that one of the pilgrims said to the priest: "Father, for Jesus even the border is open" (Rom. "Parinte, pentru Cristos și granița se deschide").[32] One of the pilgrimages took place in 1935, organized by the local Lord's Army along with choirs' members from Uzdin, Nicolinț and Sân-Mihai. Publications in the Romanian language published in the Serbian Banat in Vršac (ex. *Nădejdea*, *Foaia Poporului Român*) and Caransebeș (ex. *Foaia diecezană*) regularly reported on pilgrimages organized in the two most relevant sites for the Lord's Army in the Serbian Banat: Malo Središte and Seleuš.

In the interwar period, alongside the Lord's Army, the Romanian Orthodox Church tried to strengthen its position by establishing other associations of a religious character, such as the Society of Saint Gheorghe (Rom. *Societatea Sfântul Gheorghe*) and the Holy Mother Parasheva (Rom. *Cuvioasa Pa-*

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[27] A.P.P. Protocolul circularelor, 1925, no. 81, 65–66.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Mircea Măran, "The *Oastea Domnului* (Lord's Army) Movement in the Serbian Banat", in: A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić (eds.), *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 277.

[30] *Iisus Biruitorul*, nr. 34 din 18 august 1935, Sibiu, p. 2.

[31] Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, Mircea Măran, M. *Biserica Ortodoxă română din Banatul iugoslav in perioada interbelică (1918–1941)*. Presa Universitară Clujeană, Editura Episcopiei (Cluj Napoca, Caransebes: 2019), 80.

[32] A.P.P. nr. 215/1937

raschiva). These two societies had no success or long-term existence among the Romanians in the Serbian Banat because of the active cultural life that already existed.[33] After 1949 the Lord's Army movement was officially banned in Romania by the communist government. Their gatherings were prohibited, although communities tried to keep their religious activities in secret and underground.[34] However, this prohibition could not be consistently implemented in the Romanian parishes in the Serbian Banat: this was because the Yugoslav authorities tolerated the movement's existence. During the socialist period in Yugoslavia, new local branches were established in the village of Vojvodinci near Vršac in 1956. The status of the Church also deteriorated in socialist Yugoslavia, which meant that the local Lord's Army branches could not undertake activities at the pre-war level: some, apparently, even stopped gathering entirely, but a number of local parishes still had an active group of the Lord's Army members. According to Măran, at the end of the 1980s, the movement was active in the following localities: Alibunar (founded in 1971), Sočica (1980), Malo Središte (1980), Lokve (1972), Barice (1979), Straža (1973), Kuštilj (1985), Mali Žam (1972), Nikolinci (1972), Uzdin (1972), Ečka (1975), Veliki Torak (1984), Markovac, Seleuš (1975), Vršac (1980), Vojvodinci (1956), and Grebenac (1972). In 1998, a local branch of the Lords' Army was founded in Jablanka.[35]

During the communist period, religious communities, especially the persecuted minority groups, avoided leaving any written documents or other material traces of their community's history. This was especially noticeable in the Nazarene community whose history is difficult to trace in archival sources.[36] Other neo-Protestant groups had a similar "hidden identity". The marginalization of religious minorities was also caused due to their international and transnational networks and missionary work especially during the communist period. Some communities were persecuted for their pacifism and refusal to take an oath and carry arms in the military (Nazarenes, Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists). Being condemned to long and repeated prison sentences, a number

[33] Mircea Măran, "The *Oastea Domnului* (Lord's Army) Movement in the Serbian Banat", in: A. Djurić Milovanović and R. Radić (eds.), *Orthodox Christian Renewal Movements in Eastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 276.

[34] More about underground religions during the communist period in Eastern Europe, see a recently published edited volume: James A. Kapaló and Kinga Povedák (eds.) *The Secret Police and the Religious Underground in Communist and Post-communist Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2021).

[35] Mircea Măran, "The *Oastea Domnului* (Lord's Army) Movement in the Serbian Banat", 279.

[36] Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, "The possibility of researching religious minorities in the secret police archives of the former Yugoslavia", in: James A. Kapalo and Kinga Povedak (eds.) *The Secret Police and the Religious Underground in Communist and Post-communist Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2021), 289–302.

of community members emigrated, very often illegally crossing the border to Italy and Austria and searching religious freedom in the West.[37] Some communities were left without men while they were imprisoned for many years. Consequently, there was a significant role of women in these movements that preserved religious practices alive.

The period between 1947 and 1971 involved only a minimal contact between the religious communities in Romania and Yugoslavia, as no religious community was allowed to maintain relations with communities outside the country without an official approval. Due to their missionary activity, members of the neo-Protestant churches encountered problems with the communist authorities more often than any other religious group. Although the majority of neo-Protestant churches were active during the communist period, they were persecuted and their religious activities in the public space were strictly forbidden – suc as public baptisms in rivers or lakes, as well as organizing any sermon activities. Furthermore, the distribution of the Bible was limited. Members of the Baptist community were severely persecuted and illegal actions of smuggling religious books were sanctioned by the authorities, while the Bibles were confiscated. When these Bible smugglers[38] were discovered, they were accused of illegal trade (i.e. smuggling) and punished by imprisonment.[39] Beside the already-mentioned members of the Baptist communities in the border area, there were also trade channels involving foreign tourists who brought literature from the West to Romania between 1947 and 1989.[40] The Romanian secret police (Rom. *Securitatea*) took various actions to prevent these illegal imports into the country: namely, two actions named Channel 80 (Rom. *Canalul 80*) and Channel 81 (Rom. *Canalul 81*). During the Channel 80 action at the Stamora Moravița border crossing, the authorities confiscated 2,355 religious brochures, 20 audio tapes and 2,000 postcards with images of Jesus from a German 'tourist'.[41] The fieldwork I have conducted in 2010 among the Serbian communities

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[37] See: Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović, "On the road to religious freedom": a study of the Nazarene emigration from South-eastern Europe to the United States, *Journal for Ethnography and Folklore* (2017), 5–27.

[38] In the European Baptist history, there were preachers who dedicated their lives to the needs of their Christian brothers in communist countries. One of them was Andrew van der Bijl (known as Brother Andrew), a famous Christian missionary who distributed Bibles during the Cold War in communist countries and who earned the nickname *God's Smuggler*.

[39] Aleksandra Đurić Milovanović, "Smuggling Bibles": Everyday Life of Baptist Serbs in Communist Romania," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 32 (4), (2012), 33–40.

[40] Denisa Bodeanu, *Neoprotestanţii din Transilvania în timpul regimului comunist. Studiu de caz: Baptiştii din judeţul Cluj* (Cluj Napoca: Argonaut, 2007), 45.

[41] Elis Neagoe-Pleşa, and Liviu Pleşa, "Cultele neoprotestante din România în perioada 1975–1989," In Petcu Adrian Nicolae (ed.) *Partidul, Securitatea i Cultele: 1945–1989*

in the Danube Gorge (Rom. *Clisura Dunarii*) reveals continuous religious and personal connections across the border. This underground evangelism and missionary activity eventually led to an increased number of new believers in this region even during the period of the state repression:

> "During communism, we were allowed to go only 100 km away from our village. But we went further, crossing the border in Bela Crkva and then going even to Belgrade. It was good. The only problem was that they had Bibles and we did not." (Baptist, Pojejena)
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> "In Yugoslavia, they had Bibles. Once when I went there, we had a blessed transport. But when I came to the customs, one Bible that I held under the coat fell down in front of a customs police officer. I was so afraid what would happen, but he did not see it. God made that, God made that he did not see anything" (Baptist, Pojejena). [42]

Foreign missionary organizations provided financial assistance necessary for building new prayer houses, printing Bibles and religious literature in all communist countries.[43] In 1968, as Fosztó stresses, "Baptists were the strongest denomination, with 66,670 members in 862 assemblies and growth in church accelerated during the most repressive years of Ceauşescu regime".[44]

For those neo-Protestants living in the border area, going to Yugoslavia to meet "brothers and sisters in Christ" from the neighbouring churches was the usual way of acquiring new literature in different languages. When it comes to Baptist Serbs living in the Romanian Banat, the vicinity of Yugoslavia encouraged their continuous religious and personal connections across the border.[45] This was not the only example of such cross-border religious contacts. Diverse religious groups deployed various means to spread their beliefs and practise their religion. Therefore, the border regions, places in-between in an anthropological sense, presented "hidden religious landscapes". One of the examples of transborder religious practices was an example from 1975. During the socialist years in Yugoslavia, a concrete cross was built in a village field near the border in order to be visible for the villagers' co-religionists on the far side in Romania.

(Bucureşti: Editura Nemira, 2005), 368.

[42] Transcribed part of the ethnographic fieldwork material was published in: A. Djurić Milovanović, Serbs in Romania: Between Ethnic and Religious Identity, *Balcanica XLIII* (2010),117–142.

[43] Catherine Wanner, *Communities of the converted. Ukrainians and Global Evangelicalism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 139.

[44] László Fosztó, *Ritual revitalisation after socialism. Community, personhood and conversion among Roma in a Transylvanian village* (Berlin: Lit. 2009), 52.

[45] On the topic of borderline villages and collective memory from the perspective of the Serbian minority in Romania see the paper of Biljana Sikimić, "Poljadija: Život u pograničju", *Ishodišta* 6, (2020), 381–397.

This visualization of religious markers in the landscape can still be found in the border areas charting the "invisible" routes by which the borders were crossed by religious actors.

According to anthropologist Victor Turner, who reintroduced the concept of liminality into anthropological discourse, liminality, in terms of social structure and time, is an intermediate state of being *in between* in which individuals are striped from their usual identity and their constituting social differences while being on the verge of personal or social transformation.[46] Viewed in this frame, border regions fundamentally connect liminality and liminal activities, such as language, trade and religious practices which require transaction or crossings, with marginality, or being on the edge or the periphery,[47] generating centres of the creative or destructive potential. The shifting state boundaries, which also brought with them changing religious jurisdictions, demanded that actors, be they political, economic or religious, engage in "boundary work." Their existence represented the "embodied" acts of resistance to the emerging totalitarian regimes and the competing religious institutions of the time that were seeking the total control of the religious field and of spiritual life.[48]

Members of ethno-religious minority groups frequently crossed borders between states, between religious communities and between ethnic groups, acting as strong network and cohesion builders between two sides. In parallel, a similar phenomenon exists in some groups who crossed the boundaries – of their communities, state or ethnic/linguistic/religious groups, which brought new types of diversity.

Contemporary aspects of the movement

The ethnographic fieldwork of the present-day Lord's Army movement among Romanians shows that only few communities remained active within the local Romanian Orthodox Churches. Although, after the fall of communism in Romania, the Lord's Army movement was officially registered and intensified its activities especially with local parishes in the Serbian Banat, this did not result in the increased number of their members. Several new communities were founded, and some old ones were renewed. The community in the border village of

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[46] Victor W. Turner, Betwixt-and-between: The liminal period in rites de passage. In Turner, Victor W. *The forest of symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 93–112.

[47] Arpad Szakolczai, "Liminality and Experience: Structuring Transitory Situations and Transformative Events," *International Political Anthropology* 2(1), (2009),141–172.

[48] James Kapaló, "*Liminal* Orthodoxies on the Margins of Empire: Twentieth-Century Home-Grown Religious Movements in the Republic of Moldova", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 23(1), (2017), 34.

Jablanka was founded on February 10, 1998 by cantor Iosif Căzan when he saw how women from the church gathered to sing after the church service.[49] With the support of branches from more numerous communities in the villages of Uzdin and Grebenac, a new 15-member community was established, according to my informant from Jablanka:

> "I was going to the church with my husband. We were a religious family, my husband would pray a lot before going to bed and I would do the same with him. One day our cantor Iosif Căzan brought members of the Lord's Army from Uzdin and Grebenac to our village. They were teaching us how to sing those songs. We went to Rugă Alba together, with people from other villages and from the Lord's Army to sing and to pray for the protection of the land and harvest. They would come with fanfares. My son also went there. *Did you have men in the Lord's Army?* Mostly women. *And why is that?* Well, women liked to pray more for children and family. Women would wear long skirts and head coverings. It was said that prayer was better heard if you covered your head with a scarf. *Did you gather with other Lord's Army communities?* Yes, in the Monastery of Malo Središte, all Lord's Army communities would gather from the Serbian Banat and sleep over in the monastery on September 14. We would sing and pray all night, dressed in Romanian folk costumes. Sometimes we would go to Biserica Alba (Ser. *Bela Crkva*) as our Bishop wanted to make this Romanian church alive again. We would gather there and sing and one day a white pigeon entered the church. It was a sign of the Holy Spirit and a blessing. Romanians would come from Romania to bring us books. *They came even in the communist time?* Yes, those who were living in the USA and had their passports. They could cross the border and bring us books. Books were printed in the USA in Romanian, the hymnbooks. *Did you have any other communities in the village?* Yes, we had Baptists. *You didn't have any Nazarenes?* No, this was more in *Pustă* near Lokve. In *Codru*, we had Baptists.[50] Sometimes they would invite us to sing as our songs were similar. And they would come to us. But once the priest told us not to mix with them as they didn't believe in the Mother of God and they were not on the right path but far from God's path. They would come to preach but I told them I didn't want to leave my ancestors' religion and I believed I should serve in the church where I was born."[51]

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[49] Recent studies indicate a significant number of women in both neo-Protestant and renewal/home-grown religious movements in Eastern Europe. See more in: Emily B. Baran, *Dissent on the Margins. How Soviet Jehovah's Witnesses Defied Communism and Lived to Preach about it.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Catherine Wanner, *Communities of the Converted: Ukrainians and Global Evangelism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007). James A. Kapaló, "She Reads me like a Prayer, and I read it Back to Her": a Gagauz Women, Miraculous Literacy and the Dreaming of Charms, *Religion and Gender*, vol, 4(1), (2014), 3–30.

[50] Romanians from the hills around Vršac are locally called *codreni* (highlanders) and those from the plain de la *pustă*.

[51] Interview was conducted with a member of the Lord's Army AS on September 11, 2021 in Romanian language.

Descriptions of the local community gathering show that singing would start with the song *Oh Lord, You Have Gathered Us* (Rom. *O, Doamne Tu ne-ai adunat*), written by "brothers" from Uzdin and printed in the hymnbook used by the Lord's Army movement among Romanian speaking communities:

O, Doamne, Tu ne-ai adunat pe toți aici să ne rugăm și-a Tale Sfinte-nvățături cu dragoste să te ascultăm	Oh, Lord, it is You who have gathered us all here to pray and to listen to Your Holy teachings with love.
Nădejdea Tu ne ești Hristoase, Preabunule Mântuitor In Tine au crezut toți sfinții Și-aflat-au mântuirea lor.	Hope is what you are, our Christ, most holy Saviour, all the saints believed in You, and in You they will find salvation.
Spre-o altă viață mai curată Tu pașii-ndreaptă-ni-i de sus Ca-n veci să fim mereu cu Tine Să Te slăvim in veci Isus...	From the Heavens our steps towards another purer life so that we may always be with You, to forever glorify You, Jesus

Women had very important roles in the transmission of religious knowledge, rituals, prayers, hymn singing and pilgrimages. Therefore, the gender dimension cannot be neglected when we discuss religious practices in the borderlands. An example of a local pilgrimage renewal where the Lord's Army has an active role is the Cross with Four Pillars.[52] The religious monument called The White Prayer or the Cross with Four Pillars (Rom. *Ruga Albă* or *Crucea cu patru stâlpi*) is the one of the most important religious symbols for the Romanians living in the border area.

Concluding remarks

Renewal movements represented communities which evolved and developed from Orthodoxy itself. The socio-historical context in which renewal movements developed was strongly influenced by the appearance of neo-Protestant communities who were perceived as "foreign" religions or new religions in this part of Europe. The influence of neo-Protestantism on the renewal movements' development indicated the need for change and development of Orthodox Christianity in a new and more dynamic direction. What attracted a number of converts from Orthodoxy into neo-Protestantism was often described as: personal relationship with God, singing and praying, personal reading of the Bible, more pious believers, rigorous abstinence from the "world" including alcohol,

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[52] On the Cross with Four Pillars see the study: Aleksandra Đurić, "The Cross with Four Pillars as the Centre of Religious Gahtering: Discussing Micro Regional Identity", *Ethnologia Balkanica* 11, (2007), 171–184.

smoking, swearing, etc. Being a more committed believer meant being a "real Christian", devoted to live a life lead by Christian values. In this sense, the prevailing feeling regarding the situation in the Orthodox Church at the beginning of the century, where a number of believers were distanced from the church, was the one of dissatisfaction. The Lord's Army, as well as the God Worshippers, evolved out of Orthodoxy and developed into communities which had a number of similarities with neo-Protestants and were founded in the region with a high presence of neo-Protestant communities. Border regions, as places in-between, can be perceived as "hidden religious landscapes", but also as the places where religious agencies and networks can be strengthened. In this religious encounter with the religious Other, mutual influences, reactions, and even intergroup tensions, contributed to the development of renewal movements in a particular historical period. This research has revealed some aspects of lesser-known history, the ways people constructed their social relations through religion, and practised their faith in everyday life, while transcending the ethnic, linguistic and state boundaries. Religious minorities and home-grown religious movements spread in the liminal areas where permeability of both the state and other group/community boundaries had an important role in their existence.

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REVIEWS

Reviewed by Jelena Bogdanović*

At the time when he served as director of the United States Office of the American Research Center in Sofia, Todor Petev (PhD Princeton University) originally envisioned a two-volume publication for the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies held in Sofia in 2011 in order to present academic research done in Bulgaria to a wider, international scholarly audience. This volume Medieval Bulgarian Art and Letters in a Byzantine Context is the second of the two prepared for the occasion. The first volume, State and Church: Studies in Medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium, eds. Vassil Gjuzelev and Kiril Petkov (Sofia: American Research Center in Sofia, 2011) focused on historical studies and was published by the time of the Byzantine Congress. This belated but most welcome second volume focuses on cultural studies as a nexus of art history, literary studies, philosophy and theology, and contains twenty-four papers by prominent Bulgarian scholars either prepared particularly for this book or previously published in Bulgarian periodicals. The contributions were compiled by doyens of Byzantine and medieval studies in the Balkans, Dr Elka Bakalova of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Professors Margaret Dimitrova and Georgi Kapriev, both of St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, and co-edited by Bakalova, Dimitrova and M. A. "Pasha" Johnson of the Hilandar Research Library at the Ohio State University, with the latter additionally preparing the translation of the Bulgarian articles into English.

The volume is divided into three sections – Art; Philosophy and Theology; and Philology. Each section begins with an historiographical overview of the discipline in the Bulgarian context, followed by selected papers relevant to each discipline. The texts are complemented by an annotated, chronologically presented bibliography that summarizes selected scholarly publications in

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art and philology of interest to both emerging and established scholars.

The first section of the book contains nine essays dealing with art themes by focusing on monumental church decoration and features of church architecture, such as church entrances, delicately carved church doors or liturgical furnishings, portable objects, and textiles. The essays are supplemented with seventy color and black-and-while illustrations and linear drawings. This art section starts with an important historiographical essay by Elka Bakalova (pp. 3–25), who lucidly surveys the development of art history as an academic discipline and the major scholarly trends in Bulgaria. She presents the actual although curiously elusive presence of medieval Bulgarian art and its context within Byzantine and Western medieval arts, because Byzantine and medieval Bulgarian arts were studied only within general art history and Western medieval art courses at universities in Bulgaria. The National Academy of Art, Institute for Art Studies, and the New Bulgarian University are other institutions that support the study of art. The Archaeological Museum, established in 1892, took up a particular role in the promotion of Bulgarian and Byzantine art. Prominent Russian émigré scholars Nikodim Kondakov and André Grabar, who lived and worked briefly in Bulgaria in the 1920s, laid the foundations of Bulgarian and Byzantine art studies before moving to Charles University in Prague and to Strasbourg and Paris, respectively. With Bulgarian medievalists Krŭstiu Miiatev, Aleksandŭr Rashenov, and Nikola Mavrodinov, Grabar later prepared important publications on Bulgarian art and architecture and worked on their consideration for UNESCO sites, an essential step for their international presence and acknowledgment. Bakalova summarizes post-World War II burgeoning developments of these studies marked by state supported research and, occasionally, the heavy-handed preservation of art and architecture in Bulgaria

as being predominantly understood as the expression of national identity. She additionally highlights the most recent threshold after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe as when, "scholars no longer look for and emphasize the Bulgarian contributions to European civilization; rather, they consider various elements of Bulgarian art more broadly as part of the larger European culture" (p. 24). Bakalova's critical overview of the current state of Bulgarian studies of art history additionally explains the major scholarly methods that predominantly focus on formal and functional analyses of art objects, typological studies, iconography, iconology, and more recently, methods deriving from social studies, cultural anthropology, and semiotics. Within such methodological frameworks, the following art historical essays in this section examine the mural decoration of church entrances (Georgi Gerov, pp. 26–40), the early Byzantine ambos recovered in the churches in the territory of modern Bulgaria (Iva Dosseva, pp. 50–68), Constantinopolitan bronze processional crosses found in Bulgaria (Konstantin Totev, pp. 69–103), monumental paintings of the chapel of Bojana Church (Bisserka Penkova, pp. 104–122), Hreljo's Doors in Rila Monastery (Ivanka Gergova, pp. 123–144), zoomorphic imagery (Daniel Fokas, pp. 145– 159), the theme of the Ancient of Days (Margarita Kuyumdzhieva, pp. 160–191), and the Byzantine liturgical textiles aer-epitaphioi found in Bulgaria (Yuliana Boycheva, pp. 192–222).

The section on philosophy and theology consists of four essays. This section opens with the text by Gergana Dineva (pp. 225–234), who offers an overview of Bulgarian scholarship of selected Byzantine theological texts that can be rightly studied within the context of medieval philosophy, even if Byzantine theology never developed as a systematic discipline as in the medieval West. As a relatively young discipline that situates texts within philosophical research, previously studied only within theological

and literary studies, the study of Byzantine philosophy in Bulgaria follows the general and latest international trends and actively participates in international discourse. Georgi Kapriev in his engaging contribution explores arithmology in the work of Maximus the Confessor (pp. 235–246). Ivan Christov points to the still understudied fragments of an anti-Palamite treatise from the library of Bačkovo monastery (pp. 247–266). Svet Ribolov examines the theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia from the perspective of moral philosophy and educational mission (pp. 267–293).

The third and most developed section presents the philological studies of Byzantine and Slavic texts in medieval Bulgaria, which here, in contrast to the first two sections of this volume, include consideration of both their religious and secular contexts. The section contains eleven essays, the first one again representing an historiographical overview of the state of scholarship in the field. Textual studies have dominated medieval scholarship since its inception, and its maturity and relative methodological cohesiveness is observable in this section. Margaret Dimitrova discusses the development of Bulgarian studies of Byzantine literature, its reception, and translation as early as medieval times (pp. 297–364). Her text essentially has three major parts: an overview of Greek texts preserved in Bulgaria expanded by the study of Greek texts on Mt. Athos by contemporary Bulgarian scholar Cyril Pavlikianov; the presentation of Byzantine-Bulgarian literary dialogue and a significant contribution of Bulgarian scholars to deciphering the extant medieval texts and inscriptions in Glagolitic and Cyrillic and their reference to comparative Greek texts; and a typological synopsis of various textual genres of the Slavic texts within their Byzantine context, ranging from the Bible, exegetical and theological literature, to juridical and historical texts. Dorotei Getov then presents six Slavo-Byzantine palimpsest fragments preserved in the National Libraries

in Plovdiv and Sofia which point to Slavic translations of early Byzantine books (pp. 365–375). Iskra Hristova-Shomova details the linguistic features and translation strategies Sts. Cyril and Methodios may have used when translating Byzantine Greek into Old Church Slavonic, effectively embracing the Slavic cultural milieu in the process (pp. 376–389). Mariya Yovcheva in her text points to the specifics of Slavonic original hymnographical texts that may have developed independently of Byzantine models (pp. 390–419). Ivan Dobrev (pp. 420–436) considers the role of acrostics in the analysis of authorship and authenticity of medieval texts and suggests a Byzantine intellectual, George Skylitzes, as the author of the canons and life of St. John of Rila. Anisava Miltenova focuses on the translations of Byzantine monastic florilegia (pp. 437–465), Kazimir Popkonstantinov on the translations of the letter of King Abgar to Jesus Christ within Byzantine-Slavic contexts (pp. 466–478), Vasia Velinova on the apotropaic function of amulets bearing the name of St. Sisinnios (pp. 479–489), Klimentina Ivanova on the redactions of Tŭrnovo collections (pp. 500–523), Ekaterina Pantcheva Dikova on rhetorical devices in hagiographical works by St. Evtimii, the Patriarch of Tŭrnovo (pp. 524–532), and Boriana Hristova on the exegetical books and their audience in medieval Bulgarian culture (pp. 533–541).

Medieval Bulgarian Art and Letters in a Byzantine Context is an important volume that highlights Bulgarian-Byzantine cultural interactions, examined through the lenses of art, philosophy, theology, and philology. Appropriately presented in the widely used English language, the book is highly relevant for both scholars and general audience interested not only in Byzantine and medieval Bulgarian art and culture but also for those interested in the complexities of Balkan studies, their historical development and research trends.

Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Der Balkan im 20. Jahrhundert. Eine postimperiale Geschichte*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2019, 336 p.

Reviewed by Dušan Fundić*

In his latest book, *Der Balkan im 20. Jahrhundert. Eine postimperiale Geschichte*, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Professor of Southeast European History at Vienna University, and member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, approaches the subject primarily from the perspective of various imperial legacies.[1] The author analyses the history of the Balkans on interwoven imperial, national and regional levels. In this review, the focus will be on the interpretative framework of the book and its main conclusions.

Basing his theoretical approach on the past two decades of research on empires, the author accepts the views that empires and nation-states are not concepts that predate or follow each other but rather that they coexisted while significant legacies of empires survived. The post-imperial approach, according to Schmitt, can be understood simply as a period that chronologically follows the demise of empires and as a range of phenomena that stemmed from imperial legacies. These legacies can encompass some legal or administrative practices and individuals shaped by an imperial social framework. What is important to add is that the post-imperial approach has nothing to do with the notion of imperial nostalgia. Instead, it is a means to understand the nation-states'

ambitions to adapt or destroy their imperial legacies. The interpretative framework applied in the book contains three main categories of analysis: the post-imperial, the nation-states, and the history of violence.

Apart from the introductory and concluding remarks, the book consists of four chapters in which the author identifies common threads of the Balkan "short twentieth century" (1912–1989). The chapters on "two decades of war" – 1912–1923 and 1939–1949 – are followed by chapters on the "quest for a new order" during the interwar years and "post-imperial homogenisation" on the communist-dominated peninsula. Geographically, the book covers the former Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania.

During the "first decade of war", the great powers dominated the Balkans. With the exception of Bulgaria, the Balkan states were under the occupation or their sovereignty was limited by one or the other rival. Nonetheless, as Schmitt concludes, the 1918 turn brought a no less impressive change given the significant territorial gains of Serbia and Romania effectively making them into "small empires".

After the partition of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires among the self-proclaimed nation-states, the author identifies Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (from 1929 Kingdom of Yugoslavia) as "composite post-imperial states". In reality, they were heterogeneous patchworks of several imperial legacies: the Kingdom of Romania inherited parts of the Austrian, Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman lands, while Yugoslavia incorporated parts of the former Austrian, Hungarian

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[1] His books on Balkan history include, among others: *Skanderbeg – der neue Alexander auf dem Balkan* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2009); *Die Albaner – eine Geschichte zwischen Orient und Okzident* (Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2012); *Capitan Codreanu. Aufstieg und Fall des rumänischen Faschistenführers* (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2016).

and Ottoman lands. Schmitt explains this curious concept as an adaptation of the notion accepted by researchers to describe the heterogeneity of premodern states here used to define the countries that emerged in the territories of several former empires and their integration difficulties.

The interwar Balkan nation-states were almost all adherents of French-inspired centralisation and democracy. Viewed from a macro-perspective, the interwar period was marked by the conflicting consolidation of states followed by the quest for a new regional order in an attempt to establish a new regional equilibrium and stable economies, and their eventual succumbing to different modes of authoritarian leadership. The young states failed to recover their economies or to build stable institutions, their efforts being hampered by heavy loss of life and the destruction of infrastructure and the economy in war.

The chapter on the "second decade of war" raises the question of responsibility for the Holocaust in Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia, a new wave of violence with a marked foreign role in which Germany was a decisive factor. Speaking of an especially curious imperial legacy, Schmitt mentions the leading representatives of the Nazi system in South-eastern Europe who came from the former Austria seeking revenge mainly against Yugoslavia, such as Edmund Glaise-Horstenau, Konstantin Kammerhofer, Odilo Globocnik or German or former k. und k. officers in the Ustaša regime, Slavko Kvaternik or Vladimir Laxa.

Schmitt suggests that twentieth-century Balkan history has more common threads than usually believed. State intervention in the economy, politics of national "homogenisation" (which often meant simultaneous social levelling), marginalisation of national and religious minorities accompanied by forced assimilation and mass population relocations, charismatic leaders and unofficial power structures before 1945. But what was completely different was the actual range of

state powers. Communist-dominated Balkan societies used harsh policies to carry out forced collectivisation in agriculture and mass migration to urban centres which transformed the dominantly agrarian Balkans. After the second decade of violence, the communist-led Balkans, excluding Greece, underwent another period of reconstruction. Under the terror of secret services and enormous deprivations that bordered on famine, it was not until about 1960 that the material situation of communist-controlled societies temporarily improved.

The waves of violence in Balkan history are one of the central topics of the book. Schmitt attributes them to the weakness of nation-states to erase the imperial legacy and achieve proclaimed ethnic or religious homogeneity. There are in the Balkans, a region so often associated with violence, more traces of empires, among which the author counts Muslim populations from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Bulgaria. Such conclusions are put into context when compared to the fate of by now almost non-existent Anatolian Christians.

After producing the overview of Balkan history, Schmitt poses, among others, the question of composite states' success. Viewing them in an Eastern-European context, he concludes that only one of the „composite post-imperial states" survived. Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia fell apart, while contemporary Poland is ethnically and geographically different from the multi-ethnic state formed in 1918. Only Romania retained most of its gains since 1918 due to a more favourable starting point and large-scale population changes.

The post-imperial approach applied in the book works best when used to point out the perspectives of areas and groups often marginalised in national historiographies. Schmitt combines such an approach with a consistent structural comparison of the region instead of offering tiresome texts on Balkan countries one after another. The constant comparative perspective offers a

unique overview while demanding more attentive reading. The value of the comparative framework is visible in the subchapters on agrarian reforms after 1918, the Balkan economies after 1945, but also in describing postimperial groups that found themselves engulfed in the process of peripheralisation: the Balkan Muslims (Turkish, Slavic, and Albanian speakers), parts of Hungarian, German and Jewish populations.

In conclusion, by consistently pursuing a comparative look at events and processes in regional and global context, Schmitt succeeds in highlighting various undervalued research perspectives, and approaches the history of the Balkans in a thought-provoking manner which opens room for further research while simultaneously offering a valuable survey of its history.

Marie-Janine Calic, *The Great Cauldron. A History of Southeastern Europe.* Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 2019, 724 p.

Reviewed by Rastko Lompar*

Marie-Janine Calic, professor of Eastern and Southeastern European History at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, starts her voluminous global history of Southeastern Europe by paraphrasing Tolstoy: "All powerful empires are alike; every poor land is poor in its own way." This book is therefore an attempt to highlight what separated the "poor lands" of the Balkan Peninsula from one another and what brought them together, what was unique to each and what was shared amongst them, and ultimately what their place is within the global context. It was originally published in German in 2016 under the title *Südosteuropa. Weltgeschichte einer Region*, and translated, with minor changes, into English by Elizabeth Janik. The translation is excellent, although at times too literal.

This book is a rare attempt at a concise overview of the historical developments in the Balkans from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century. Starting with a brief outline of the region's early history, Calic describes the situation in the 1500s and the breakdown of the pre-Ottoman Balkan order. The rise of Ottoman power is also covered in detail. The struggle between the imperial powers (Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian)

for the region is looked at against the backdrop of the intellectual developments on both sides of the Atlantic. The author discusses the impact of the American and French revolutions in the Balkans and the nascent movements for national liberation in the Balkans. The rise of nationalism and the founding myths of national ideologies are also discussed. Calic follows the banishment of Turkey from the Balkans, the First World War, as well as the polycentric and complicated interwar Balkan order. Focusing on the dialectical relationship between globalization and fragmentation, the author looks at the rise and fall of communism and debates about the place of Southeastern Europe in the global world of today.

Although there are some excursions into economic and financial history, the book primarily focuses on political events, stopping short of Braudel's method. All major chapters contain subchapters named after a paradigmatic city for the period (Krüje 1450, Istanbul 1683, Dubrovnik 1776, Thessaloniki 1821, Plovdiv 1876, Belgrade 1913, Bucharest 1939 and Sarajevo

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1984). However, these subchapters are not case studies devoted to the urbanization and cultural life of these cities, as one would expect. Instead, the author continues describing political events loosely connected to the city in question. Given the vastness of the topic and the enormous task at hand, Marie-Janine Calic understandingly had to gloss over some aspects and focus on others, guided by her own research interests and expertise. Therefore, the book focuses disproportionately on the South Slav lands. Also, some periods are given little attention, most drastically the Second World War, whereas others, such as the foreign policy of socialist Yugoslavia, are discussed in detail. The book suffers from chronological leaps, which sometimes blurs the distinction between causes and effects. For example, the Bărăgan deportations (1951–1956) are mentioned much earlier than the Tito-Stalin split of 1948, and the uninformed readers are left wondering why the Romanian regime undertook a brutal campaign of depopulation of its borderland with Yugoslavia.

Many of the shortcomings are compounded in the last two chapters dealing with the twentieth century. The depiction of the Second World War in the Balkans, despite its immense importance for the shaping of the post-war order on the peninsula, is hurried and contains many problematic and false statements. Also, there are some phrases which differ significantly between the two editions. For example, when describing the alleged goal of the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland and its leader Dragoljub Mihajlović, in the German original Calic writes that it was "the renewal of the monarchy under Serbian leadership" (der die Monarchie unter serbischer Führung wiederherstellen wollte). A quite different formulation than the one in the English edition that he "sought a Greater Serbian monarchy". Also, the author fails to accurately describe the unique nature of the Ustaša regime and even avoids the term "genocide" for the murderous campaigns of the Croatian fascists. The Jasenovac death camp or any other camp in the Independent State of Croatia is not even mentioned by name. When describing the violence of the SS volunteer divisions Handžar and Skanderbeg against the Serbs, the author employs vague formulations, such as "liquidating rebels" and "draining the swamp". On the other hand, Calic greatly exaggerates the scale of the anti-Muslim atrocities committed by the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland, and falsely claims that these crimes brought large numbers of Muslims into the partisan resistance movement. This claim is promptly disproved by the author's own statistics which shows that there in fact were a disproportionate number of Muslims in the partisan ranks.

Even though Calic masterfully avoided being drawn into nationalist and romantic discourses about the heroic past in previous chapters, she does not apply the same criteria to the founding myths of the communist movement in Yugoslavia. The author's portrayal of Josip Broz is almost hagiographical, and she goes so far as to claim that "Yugoslavia became the second country in Europe (after the Soviet Union) where communism prevailed through its own volition". This tendency is evident throughout the rest of the book, as the author paints a rosy picture of the communist regime in Yugoslavia choosing either to completely omit (as in the case of mass executions of the "people's enemies" in 1944) or to gloss over (as in the case of the persecutions of alleged Stalinists in 1948) problematic aspects of Yugoslav post-war history.

In conclusion, despite its shortcomings, the book is a rare attempt at a succinct overview of the last five centuries of the tumultuous history of the Balkan Peninsula. It highlights global aspects of the region's rich history and succeeds in showing what is unique about each "poor land".

John Zametica, *Folly and Malice: The Habsburg Empire, the Balkans and the Start of World War One*. London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 2017, 416 p.

*Reviewed by Miloš Vojinović**

Ever since the historiography on the First World War began, with the publication of documents selected by governments to justify their conduct while the guns were still firing, the Balkan entanglements of Austria-Hungary have played a significant part in explanations of the origin of the war. John Zametica's book comes to grip with a story that was told and retold may times. *Folly and Malice* does not lack a polemical aspect, though. Zametica claims that "In many important respects, however, the story of the clash between Habsburg imperial strategies and South Slav aspirations has been, and continues to be, misunderstood or misinterpreted" (p. xv).

Unsurprisingly, the core of the book revolves around the relations between Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbia. Occasionally storytelling goes as far back into the past as the 1870s but most of the time it depicts the decade prior to the outbreak of the war. As we get closer to 1914, the chapters offer progressively more detail. The parts covering 1914 and the protagonists of the July crisis make up almost a half of the book.

Folly and Malice is clearly a product of long and meticulous research. The number of different archives, as well the abundance of published sources and literature perused for this study is nothing short of impressive. This comes to light most obviously in the parts about the Sarajevo Assassination. A good case in point is the fact that the author was able to locate four different recollections of the conversation between Franz Ferdinand and his entourage in the Sarajevo town hall after the first assassination attempt on 28 June (pp. 502–512). However, the sheer amount of detail does not necessarily help the clarity of argument. Zametica's intention

to always provide background explanation is laudable, but numerous scrutinized descriptions sometimes lead to long excuruses about events that hardly determined the Habsburg Empire's Balkan policies.

What is there in Habsburg Balkan policies that is misunderstood or misinterpreted? In other words, what are the main arguments of *Folly and Malice*? Firstly, Zametica argues that a part of recent historiography overlooks the aggressive nature of Habsburg diplomacy towards its south-eastern neighbour in the years prior to 1914. Above all, he points to the years 1905–1906. The blame is laid on Agenor Maria Gołuchowski, the foreign minister of Austria-Hungary. Zametica maintains that Gołuchowski used every issue that arose to exact absolute submission of the Kingdom of Serbia. He writes: "the rise of the Austro-Serbian discord, it has to be said, was very much his [Gołuchowski's] deed. His bullying tactics were unnecessary at a time when carrot could have done so much more than stick: all the relevant factors in post-1903 Serbia, from the Court camarilla to Pašić himself were quite flexible in their foreign policy orientation" (p. 216). Moreover, Zametica points that even Gołuchowski's successor, Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal, deemed Gołuchowski's policies on Serbia "excessive" (p. 218). Unlike much of historiography which links Austro-Serbian antagonism to the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zametica goes a bit further into the past and points to the Ottoman Empire – conflicting ambitions were what initially sparked bad blood between Belgrade and Vienna. Zametica writes:

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"The post-1903 worsening of relations between Belgrade and Vienna arose in part because, after Mürzsteg [agreement], Serbia perceived what it considered *its* [original emphasis] territories in Old Serbia (i.e., Kosovo and Metohija) and Macedonia to be threatened by Austria-Hungary. The latter's overall threat in the region, imagined or real, was labelled '*Drang nach Saloniki*'" (p. 201).

The question that looms large above studies of Austro-Serbian relations remains the same: was a different kind of Austro-Serbian relations possible? Given the scope of the question, it is not surprising that Zametica's answer is sometimes convoluted. On the one hand, he demonstrates that it is wrong to look from the July crisis back into the past and to understand the arrangement of relations in 1914 as the only possible outcome. He does this most potently by pointing to the numerous episodes of inharmonious relations between Serbia and Russia – from Russia's attitude towards the so-called conspirators' question and its tacit approval of the Habsburg annexation of Bosnia to the lack of support in St. Petersburg for the Balkan states prior to the outbreak of the Balkan Wars. On the other hand, in the chapters that cover the time when Habsburg foreign policy was led by Aehrenthal (1906–1912), Zametica asks: "But was there really ever a chance for an Austro-Serbian reconciliation under Aehrenthal?" (p. 218). His answer is – no.

Zametica argues that for Aehrenthal it was not possible to think about foreign policy without thinking about the Habsburg internal complications. In other words, Aehrenthal, who wrote extensively about constitutional arrangements within the Empire, pursued foreign policy with internal political goals in mind. He saw the dangers of a potential grouping of South Slavs around a centre outside the Monarchy. Consequently, he was in favour of an independent Albania, supported cordial relations with Montenegro, hoped for an enlargement of Bulgaria, but Serbia had to be prevented from gaining any kind of economic or territorial gains. This is how Zametica reads Aehrenthal's schemes in the Ottoman Empire (the sabotage of Serbia's railway project, the proposal of Austro-Hungarian own rail scheme, and Janus-faced attitude of the Monarchy towards reforms in Macedonia) and, in part, the desire to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. All things considered, Zametica sees how relations could have developed differently, but also points to the power of conflicting assumptions. Due to its internal politics, Austria-Hungary, a Great Power with a population of fifty million, felt the need to subdue and encircle Serbia, a tiny and underdeveloped kingdom with a population one-fifteenth of its own. Serbia, conversely, hoped to achieve enlargement and national unification.

Even though some readers might be put off by Zametica's language which is often judgmental – no doubt that neither the "unlikable" Habsburg heir presumptive, Franz Ferdinand, nor the "corrupt" Serbian prime minister, Nikola Pašić, are among his favourites – his richly documented book makes a valuable contribution to the study of the events that led to the First World War. Zametica's book, together with the recently published translation of Vladimir Ćorović's book *The Relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary in the 20th Century*,[1] makes the English language body of literature on Austro-Serbian relations significantly more substantial.

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[1] V. Ćorović, *The Relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary in the 20th Century* (Belgrade: Archives of Yugoslavia, Hoover Institution, Institute for Balkan Studeis, 2018).

Loupas Athanasios, *Απο τισ Σχεσεισ Συμμαχιασ στην Ψυχρανση.*
Η Ελλαδα και το Βασιλειο των Σερβων, Κροατων και Σλοβενων (1919–1924),
[From Alliance to Cooling. Greece and the Kingdom of Serbs,
Croats and Slovenes (1919–1924)]. Athens: Herodotos, 2019.

Reviewed by Radmila Pejić*

The study of Athanasios Loupas, dr. of Modern and Contemporary Balkan History, which is based on his Master thesis, aims at illuminating the main aspects of the Greek-Serbian political relations during the first Inter-war years. As the author indicates, both countries were experiencing a transitional period after WWI. The pre-war small Balkan states were now becoming important factors to be reckoned with. The Serbs were trying to consolidate the new situation that occured since the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (hereafter KSCS), an on the other side Greece was about to realize the lognterm dream of the Megali Idea.

The study is comprised of four chapters. The first covers the period from the end of the WWI until the Greek elections on November, 1920. The author refers to the diplomatic background concerning the recognition of the KSCS by the Greek government - underlining the fact that the Greek prime minister, Eleftherios Venizelos, had attached particular importance to that matter. As Loupas notes, Greece was the only neighboring state with whom KSCS had no territorial disputes, while Venizelos did not give in to lobbying from the Greek refugees deriving from Serbian Macedonia (Strumnitsa, Monastir – Bitolj – Gevgeli). In essence Venizelos abandoned the Greeks of North Macedonia for the sake of Greco-Serbian alliance. In the same chapter, the author describes the efforts that both sides made in order to create a common diplomatic front at the Paris Peace Conference against Bulgaria. He also reveals that, following the signing of the Treaty of Neuilly (1919), Greek and Serbian officials agreed

to clarify their mutual obligations by signing an interpretative protocol, in order to prevent misunderstandings such as had arisen in 1915.

The second chapter discusses the effect of the political change in Greece (November 1920) on the bilateral relations between Athens and Belgrade. As the author stresses, even though the re-establishment of the pro-German political elite and the return of King Constantine was a source of great concern for the Yugoslav government, relations between the two kingdoms remained unharmed an Greece was still considered an ally. In fact, Nikola Pasic declined both Bulgarian and Turkish offers for an anti-Greek alliance. At the same time, as Loupas points out, Serbian statesmen were reluctant to strengthen Greek-Serbian relations and re-examine the issue of the Greek-Serbian Treaty of Alliance (1913) as long as the war in Asia Minor was afoot.

The third chapter features the endeavors of the pro-venizelist political regime that emerged in Athens – after the total failure of the Greek expedition in Asia Minor and the abdication of King Constantine – to ensure the support of the Yugoslav delegation in the upcoming Conference in Lausanne. To that end, on May, 1923, it was signed at Belgrade a Convention on the Regulation of Transit via Salonica, which provided the Yugoslavs with a free zone at the port of Thessaloniki. Apart from that, the Greek side went so far as to offer the Florina district to the KSCS, provided that two Yugoslav divisions or heavy artillery come to the aid of the re-organized

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Greek troops which would retake Eastern Thrace in case negotiations at Lausanne failed and a new round of Greek-Turkish hostilities arose. Loupas stresses that ,eventually, the Yugoslav delegation in Lausanne sided with Venizelos in rejecting the Turkish demands on war reparations, but at the same time acted in such a way that was intended to highlight to all sides concerned that the resumption of warfare was the worst-case scenario.

The last chapter presents the deterioration of bilateral relations between the two states. On the pretext of the Greek-Bulgarian Protocol on minorities (September 1924), the Yugoslav government denounced the Greek-Serbian Treaty of Alliance (1913). The author claims that it was more than obvious that the Yugoslav government, and especially the minister of Foreign

Affairs Momcilo Nincic, were taking advantage of Greece's weakness and aimed at imposing their views upon Greece regarding several bilateral questions.

However, apart from political matters dr. Loupas does not overlook the importance that the Great Powers and domestic affairs of the two countries played on bilateral relations. The young historian very competently handles a large variety of both Serbian and Greek sources (archives, Press, literature, memoirs etc) as well as English and a few German documents. His critical approach and sobriety renders his study well written and easy to follow. Taking into consideration that there's a lack of studies concerning Greek Balkan policy during the Greek-Turkish war (1919–1922), dr. Loupas' attempt becomes even more prominent.

Qualestoria XLXI, no. 1: *L'Italia e la Jugoslavia tra le due guerre*, ed. Stefano Santoro. Trieste: EUT, Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2021, 438 p.

Reviewed by Bogdan Živković*

The prominent role of Trieste in the history of Italian-South Slavic entanglements has led to its becoming a city of the utmost importance in scholarship on Italian-Yugoslav relations. Personal and institutional experiences of everyday contacts with South Slavs have produced an unparalleled body of academic knowledge on Yugoslavia in Italy. The historical journal *Qualestoria* forms a significant part of that milieu. For decades, it has been publishing articles on related topics by both Italian and (post)Yugoslav authors. One of the best examples of this role and importance of *Qualestoria* is the 2013 monographic volume on the Osimo agreements edited by Raoul Pupo.[1]

This year's summer issue of *Qualestoria*, a monographic volume edited by Stefano Santoro, is a continuation of that endeavour. It deals with the interwar period in the history of relations between the two countries, featuring contributions by some of the most renowned scholars in the field, both Italian and post-Yugoslav. Its focus is on the political aspect of bilateral relations, but several articles deal with their non-political aspects (such as literature, art and sports).

The first of the twelve articles is penned by the editor, Stefano Santoro. His text is not a mere introduction. Besides summarizing the other contributions, Santoro contextualizes them into a broader interpretative framework of Italian policies towards the Danube-Balkan region. He also highlights the historical continuities which had an immense impact in formulating

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the fascist foreign policy in the region. Of particular importance in that regard is the scientific knowledge production of some Italian scholars of the region, which Santoro thoroughly presents in his essay. The second article is written by Massimo Bucarelli, one of the most renowned authors on the subject covered by this volume.[2] Bucarelli gives a short but very insightful overview of the history of Italian Yugoslav policies in the interwar period. He highlights not only the dominant conflictual nature of relations between the two countries but also their attempts to forge a fruitful collaboration. Of particular importance in that regard is Bucarelli's analysis of Mussolini's ambiguous stance. As he shows, *Il Duce* intimately believed in the possibility of an Italian-Serbian agreement.

The first two articles constitute a broader introduction to the volume, and are followed by contributions focused on more specific issues and periods. Alberto Becherelli discusses the Adriatic question and its impact on Italian-Yugoslav relations at the time of the Versailles Conference. Based on his research in the Italian military archives, Becherelli writes about two important factors: the *in loco* territorial disputes of the two armies (on various points in the Eastern Adriatic), and the broader international aspects of the Italian-Yugoslav territorial dispute at the Versailles Conference. His analysis of Italy's support to various separatist movements in Yugoslavia, the Montenegrin in particular,[3] stands out, as

this was an important and lasting aspect of Rome's policy towards Belgrade in the following decades. Francesco Guida analyses Italy's foreign policy towards Yugoslavia in the 1920s, placing it in a broader regional context but putting a particular focus on the crucial year – 1928, which was the culmination of tensions between the two countries and Yugoslavia's internal turbulences. Much like Becherelli, Guida extensively focuses on Rome's support to separatist movements in Yugoslavia, a part of Italian plans for the destabilization and eventual division of the Yugoslav kingdom.

The next article, by Jadranka Cergol, shifts the focus from Italian foreign policy to an entirely different topic. The Slovenian author analyses the discursive images of the Other in the Slovenian and Italian literature of interwar Trieste. With a sound methodological introduction, although strikingly more focused on Italian than Slovenian literature, Cergol depicts mutual ethnic stereotypes. Thus, she enriches this volume with an important aspect of Italian-Yugoslav relations that eludes the classical methodology of history of international relations, dominant in this publication. Cergol's article is followed by the contribution of Alberto Basciani, who analyses the impact of the Albanian question on the bilateral relations from 1918 to 1927. As the author convincingly demonstrates, this was the most important and most complex bilateral issue, eventually more damaging to the relations between Rome and Belgrade than the territorial dispute in the northern Adriatic. It is worth noting that Basciani puts particular emphasis on the Italian-Yugoslav economic

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[2] Primarily due to his seminal book on fascist foreign policy towards Yugoslavia: M. Bucarelli, *Mussolini e la Jugoslavia (1922–1939)* (Bari: Edizioni B. A. Graphis, 2006).

[3] It should be noted that Italian scholars (not only Becherelli, and not only him in this volume) tend to overestimate the strength and underestimate the ambiguities of the national identity of the revolted Montenegrins. A possible explanation for such interpretations may be found in the sources they used. Firstly, the Italian primary sources they used undoubtedly are biased due to Rome's interest in and

sympathy for Montenegrin independentism. Secondly, all of these authors tend to use Srđa Pavlović's book on this topic, whose title and explicit nazification of Serb nationalism speaks for itself – S. Pavlović, *Balkan Anschluss: The Annexation of Montenegro and the Creation of the Common South Slavic State* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2011).

competition for power in Albania.[4] Finally, the last article that focuses primarily on the 1920s is contributed by Antonella Fiorio. Drawing on a vast body of literature, but mostly on the work of Luciano Monzalli, she takes a look at this decade in the political history of Dalmatian Italians. Among other aspects, Fiorio demonstrates how the local liberal Italian elites were able to fruitfully collaborate with the fascist government in Rome, based on their mutual wish to have good relations with Yugoslavia. Thus, the ideological discipline and rigidity of fascism was neither easily nor swiftly introduced among the Dalmatian Italians.

The following article, by the Polish author Maciej Czerwiński, is another contribution which does not focus on political relations between Rome and Belgrade. Czerwiński analyses how two figures, the sculptor Ivan Meštrović and the journalist Bogdan Radica, viewed Italy. Although well written and interesting, this contribution has certain shortcomings. Namely, the author tends to put aside the declared intention of the article and focus more on contrasting the two figures. Czerwiński perceives Meštrović as an exponent of racial and cultural Yugoslavism, and Radica as a political Yugoslav who did not neglect the Croatian dimension of his identity. This interpretation becomes problematic in the final paragraph of the article, where, with a staunch orientalism, Czerwiński identifies Meštrović's views as a part of an Ottoman and "emotional" culture, while seeing Radica as a part of a Mediterranean and "rational" political culture.

The following contribution, by the Serbian historian Srđan Mićić, analyses the policies towards Italy pursued by Vojislav Marinković, the Yugoslav foreign minister in

the period from 1927 to 1932 characterized by an intense crisis in Italian-Yugoslav relations due to Italian expansionism in Albania. As the author shows, the Yugoslav minister was keen on relieving the tension and stabilizing the relations in keeping with the principle of pacifism and status quo which shaped his general foreign policy outlook. Mićić particularly highlights the importance of British influence on Marinković, eager to obtain a broader international support in containing what he perceived as the biggest threat to Yugoslavia – Rome. Mićić's article is followed by the last contribution that does not strictly fit in with the dominant framework of the volume – Stipica Grgić's article on the Yugoslav-Italian football encounters. With an insightful methodological introduction, Grgić analyses the contemporary press as his primary source. The conclusion of his research is that the encounters were of a friendly nature, followed by a positive press coverage, which most probably had an impact on creating a favourable image of the Other in the two neighbouring nations.

The final part of this volume deals with relations between Yugoslavia and Italy in the latter part of the 1930s. Namely, three articles by Federico Imperato, Dragan Bakić and Bojan Simić respectively analyse various aspects of the very close collaboration between Belgrade and Rome. During those years, bilateral relations were marked by a fruitful cooperation between the Yugoslav prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Milan Stojadinović, and the Italian minister of foreign affairs, Galeazzo Ciano.

In analysing the Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement, Imperato focuses on the German strengthening in Europe and the region. The author suggests that the growing German influence alarmed the Italian decision makers, prompting them to pay attention to safeguarding their interests in the Balkans, primarily through an agreement with Yugoslavia. Combined with Stojadinović's eagerness to further relations with Rome, this led to a fruitful period of collaboration. Italy

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[4] This aspect of their relations was thoroughly analysed from the Yugoslav point of view by Saša Mišić, *Albanija – prijatelj i protivnik: jugoslovenska politika prema Albaniji 1924–1927* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2009) (Cyrillic).

made significant concessions to Yugoslavia – regarding both the Croatian and the Albanian question, but with Stojadinović's fall from power Rome returned to an aggressive anti-Yugoslav policy on both issues. Simić's article deals with the same topic, but from the Yugoslav perspective. He puts a stronger emphasis on a general overview of Yugoslav foreign policy, such as its relations with Great Britain. The Serbian author adds a well-argued and articulated emphasis on the close personal relationship between Ciano and Stojadinović, an aspect of big influence on the bilateral relations. Finally, Dragan Bakić analyses the ideological aspect of Stojadinović's relationship with Rome as the Yugoslav politician was often accused of being fascist, at first by his political opponents and then by historiography in communist Yugoslavia. Bakić shows that Stojadinović's alleged fascist leanings were predominantly a foreign policy trick, a pragmatic *mise-en-scène* aimed at obtaining support from the Axis. He also examines Stojadinović's party policies and, using António Costa Pinto's and Aristotle Kallis' theoretical approach to the relationship between conservatives and fascists, places Stojadinović in the camp of the conservative right.

In his introductory article, the editor Stefano Santoro remarks that the historiographical production on the topic is quite ample and that therefore the aim of the volume has been to pay attention to some neglected or under-researched issues. It seems, however, that this first attempt to provide a synthesis of the results of Italian and post-Yugoslav historiography on this topic in a single publication has exceeded the editor's expectations. This special issue of *Qualestoria* not only offers fresh analyses and contributions but also reaffirms and reinterprets the earlier historiographical production on the topic, which makes it an inevitable read for interested scholars.

Hidden Galleries: Material religion in the secret police archives in Central and Eastern Europe, eds. James Kapaló and Tatiana Vagramenko. Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2020, 104 p.

Reviewed by Danilo Pupavac[*]

The turbulent twentieth century was for the most part socially and historically marked by socialist regimes, mainly in Eastern European countries. From the present point of view and having in mind significant theoretical and empirical considerations, we can conclude that socialist societies were far from a theoretically ideal type, and that the ideological view of the world was dominant in establishing social relations.[1]

The dominant interpretation of the socialist system and ideological narrative includes the aspiration for removing religious groups and religious content – texts, sacred scriptures, paintings, religious objects, photographs etc. from the public eye, in order to atheize the population and society as a whole. It is exactly this undisclosed

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[1] We emphasize this mainly because we find it important to draw a distinction from Marx's and Engels's original view of socialism as a transitional phase in historical progression

towards communism as its final goal. "Real socialism" as existed in the Eastern Bloc resembled a one-party system with strong government institutions much more than it resembled a transitional social structure which would lead to classless egalitarian society, as viewed from the perspective of anthropological optimism.

question that the study reviewed here deals with. The editors James Kapalo and Tatiana Vagramenko gathered scholars and researchers concerned with this topic, all experts in their respective fields and spheres of interest – Iuliana Cindrea, Ágnes Hesz, Dumitru Lisnic, Gabriela Nicolescu Kinga and Anca Maria Şincan. The study is organized into four thematic sections with a total of fifty-four chapters.

The study covers several Eastern European countries – Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Ukraine, which at once were part of the Eastern Bloc and abounded in different confessions, religious minority groups and their factions. The material objects of the religious communities which were seized as criminal evidence and buried within the systems of former secret services are the very proof of the existence of that parallel universe under the veil of secrecy. They bring to light a completely different real life of people which was not in the public eye. Ethnographically, anthropologically and historically oriented texts of the authors of the study, accompanied by the photographs of a great number of seized possessions of religious communities, capture the zeitgeist and the reality of life of these underground religious communities vividly and astoundingly.

At the very beginning the authors give us an insight into ethical and epistemological difficulties of their endeavour. The question of objectivity of the research results seems to be the most important. The immanent difficulty of reaching complete objectivity lies in the nature of the subject of research on religion and religious communities. The scarce available historical evidence (perhaps, also the one that has yet to be discovered) was noted by witnesses of historical and social events who cannot be guaranteed to have tried to distance themselves from their subjective background. It is unlikely that they tried to use the principle of methodological agnosticism in an attempt to make a permanent record of ongoing events. On the other hand, it seems to us that the study partly "falls into the hands" of double hermeneutics which, in turn, affects the objectivity of the conclusions. In this case, it is difficult to avoid "interpretation of interpretation", at least for now.

The focus of this study is the creation (both metaphorical and literal) of a religious underground of newly-formed small religious communities, monastic orders, sisterhoods, groups of believers seeking to observe their religious practices and preach their religion under the circumstances unfavourable to religious communities.[2]

Under a combination of different historical, political and social circumstances, the believers and clergy of different denominations returned to the original, former forms of practising their faith in a socio-historical context marked by a completely different but rigid worldview. We cannot fail to notice similarities between the religious groups described in these studies and Jewish catacombs or early Christian movements which literally gathered underground.

The archival photographs show us the appearance of places of the religious underground from which one can easily draw a conclusion about the physical characteristics of these facilities. Churches and houses of worship were modestly made of wood and decorated with a few icons. Iuliana Cindrea gives us an ethnographic note of one such photograph, from the village of Cucova in present-day Romania inhabited and operated by an Orthodox community that broke away from the Romanian Orthodox Church over the calendar issue – the Old Calendarist community.[3] This combination of textual description,

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[2] J. Kapaló and T. Vagramenko, eds., *Hidden Galleries*, 10.

[3] I. Cindrea, "Destruction of a Romanian Old Calendarist Church", in *Hidden Galleries*, 14.

historical analysis, ethnographic and anthropological facts and photographic material is the main and fascinating feature of this study.

An even more vivid depiction of the reality of life of the religious underground is provided by the co-editor of this publication Tatiana Vagramenko in her description of monastic communities which after the October revolution gathered and worshipped in private rooms and homes, but also underground. At that time the secret service discovered a community of more than 2000 monks, nuns and believers in the territory of present-day Ukraine. Its leader, priest and monk Serafim, was arrested, as well as many members of the community. In a collapse of the underground structure, several people died and were buried in those very catacombs.[4]

It is a very interesting discovery that in addition to religious rituals, these religious groups pursued many other activities. Thus, a group of Jehovah's Witnesses in western Ukraine operated a printing house in rooms under a local village. The leader of this community, Bohdan Terletsky, was arrested as a well-known (political!) threat in the Soviet Union.[5]

Anca Maria Şincan conveys to us a text that betrays the spirit of the time and a very turbulent social history. We can learn a lot about the struggle of dignitaries of the Romanian Orthodox Church as well as the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania with the then dominant social and political actors (e.g., the Ministry of Religious Denominations). In addition to the commitment of priests to their congregations, documented by photographs of religious rites and rituals in private rooms and apartments, we can also see their commitment to

the interests of citizens and prevention of the persecution of believers. Using text and image, we can be certain of old, brittle and yellowed notes with handwritten messages and notices of various contents. This material was discovered in the dusty archives of the secret services.

Great attention in this study is paid to the forms of communication amongst the underground religious communities. It was key to the survival of secret religious groups and the gathering of believers. Thus, Ágnes Hesz and Tatiana Vagramenko convey to us the meticulous data of "deciphered" letters that circulated within the religious community. When the Hungarian authorities allowed catechism to be taught in schools, intimidated parents very rarely enrolled their children in catechism classes. For the same reason, the teachers did not want to accept larger groups of students. Overcoming this risk was, among other things, conducted by sending letters of seemingly benign content. They contained an invitation and a description of the gathering place (usually in a private apartment) where catechism would be studied more widely.[6] A vivid example is the letters of a group of Jehovah's Witnesses that were coded in the form of everyday words: "fresh food" or "white bread" meant important religious writings, while the word "wine" referred to "preaching the word of God." The term "Mamma" meant the group Watch Tower Society, and "kolkhoz", a religious community.[7] If we know that, it is much clearer what the letter actually means: "Our family is healthy, *we all are working in kolkhoz* and our work is going very well... We receive everything from our office. *Once mamma baked white bread, and the wine was very tasty. It was brother Yuri*

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[4]   T. Vagramenko, "True Orthodox Underground Monastery", in *Hidden Galleries*, 16.

[5]   T. Vagramenko, "Underground Monastery in Bucharest", in *Hidden Galleries*, 19.

[6]   Á. Hesz, "Clandestine Catechism Classes", in *Hidden Galleries*, 29.

[7]   T. Vagramenko, "'Fresh Bread from Mama': Jehovah's Witness Code", in *Hidden Galleries*, 30.

who poured out the wine. The brigadier of the kolkhoz invited all the group leaders for *the party* and they were telling about the work in their units. As we were drinking wine, we're getting merry and started singing then..."[8]

Certainly, the significant discoveries presented by the authors are accompanied, as everything else in this study, by archival recordings, photographs and notes. Undoubtedly, it gives us a deeper insight, captures the zeitgeist, and allows us to relate to the written word. We believe, therefore, that it cannot leave anyone indifferent.

The second part of the study, suggestively titled "Police aesthetics", specifies the ways in which the secret services "battled" against religious groups and movements. Namely, at that time the police made very detailed schemes of religious underground communities, which then helped them plan police operations.[9] Even though the intelligence services' goal was very pragmatic, their schematic representations have helped researchers and scientists understand the logistics of movement and communication of these groups.

The main form of networking of religious communities (i.e. the form of schemes) implied a hierarchical structure where all local cells of religious groups, located in smaller towns and villages, were networked, and all roads led to the centre of the entire network. It was usually located in a larger political and administrative seat.[10]

The work of the police department was not always aimed at the destruction of entire religious networks. Oftentimes they would resort to breaking the "bonds" between a cell and the centre or taking control over a cell. If we metaphorically imagine this type of networking of religious communities as a system of communication and action, the removal of a single "gear" from the "engine" could cause great difficulties and problems for the whole system.

Tatiana Vagramenko and Ágnes Hesz provide examples of the networking of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union after the October Revolution, as well as during the Stalinist regime,[11] and the case of the religious network of Jehovah's Witnesses.[12] These descriptions are supported by archival photographs of hand-drawn plans of the networks compiled by the secret services.

After the discovery of these religious communities, the police would photograph the "crime scenes", and we can be definite about the amount and type of seized items: icons, scriptures, books and other religious objects, as well as several typewriters and some money.[13] Moreover, the secret services and the police would make photo albums with pictures of believers and priests and their lives. They inadvertently made researchers "indebted" by providing them with well-preserved "first-hand" sources. Based on them, they were able to reconstruct the life and practices of religious communities and organizations far more precisely.

With the development of photographic techniques and the possibilities that arose with the development of technology, a kind

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8   Ibid. (emphasis D. P.).

9   *Hidden Galleries*, 34.

10   Ibid.

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11   T. Vagramenko, "Model Network Schemes of the True Orthodox Church", in *Hidden Galleries*, 36.

12   Á. Hesz, "Jehovah's Witness Network Scheme", in *Hidden Galleries*, 37.

13   T. Vagramenko, "Photo-Collage of Members of the True Orthodox Church", in *Hidden Galleries*, 38–39; T. Vagramenko, "Hieromonk Seraphim at the Scene of the Crime", in *Hidden Galleries*, 43; I. Cindrea, "Smuggling Books", in *Hidden Galleries*, 46–47; K. Povedák, "Evidence against the Catholic Underground", in *Hidden Galleries*, 48–49; J. Kapaló and D. Lisnic, "Re-staging Ritual", in *Hidden Galleries*, 50.

of cultural rebellion against repressive regimes also emerged. Religious groups began taking interesting and unusual photos of their religious leaders and arrested supporters. Judging by the archival material, this is very similar to what we would call the collage technique, which is becoming more widespread in providing (*non-violent – D.P.*) resistance.[14] Thus, James Kapaló conveys to us the iconographic production of a photograph of the leader of a religious movement in Bessarabia, Alexandru Culeac. Culeac was portrayed like the archangel Michael holding a sword and shield with a dove on his chest. This was one of the ways religious communities resisted. This is a really valuable account of one of the ways in which religious communities resisted.[15] Also, a very interesting but, primarily, important feature of these movements is the depiction of the characters of women saints. Elena Culeac was depicted as the Mother of God.[16]

Unfortunately, the militaristic formations managed to turn this situation in favour of repressive state apparatuses. The photographs and collages made it easier to identify religious leaders, and still easier to reach them.[17] In the continuation of the paper, one can see very extensive and detailed presentations of the confiscated religious material of a large number of underground religious groups in Eastern Europe.

We will use a touching conclusion by Gabriela Nicolescu, who gave an overview of this study the exhibition Hidden Galleries: Clandestine Religion in the Secret Police Archives at the Museum of Art in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The exhibition was visited by many who could both see and come to terms with an entire universe which had long been hidden. Some of the visitors had been members of the described religious communities. Nicolescu also quoted Derrida[18] to describe two ideas that were the themes of this exhibition – love and death.[19] We would argue that the themes are life and death – communities that lived a reality almost inconceivable to the modern observer, and death which constantly hoveed over them were all recorded and archived.

However, it was precisely this material and this insightful study that revived the religious underground, dispelled the enchanted, and portrayed the invisible.

This study is quite ambitious as it deals with a very broad and multi-layered topic. The topic certainly requires a lot of time and a multidisciplinary approach. However, in our opinion, it is very successful in creating a clear overview of the hitherto largely neglected but no less important topics. The authors of the texts interpret, re-examine and re-actualize the key elements, events, and historical and religious material based on unpublished archival material. The revealed secret archives tell us a lot, and they are also available to the public. It is not unlikely that similar but as yet undiscovered material exists in the former Yugoslavia. Therefore, this collection provides an excellent starting point and explanatory framework for potential future studies on religious groups and socialist regimes. It would be important to see such an initiative in our region as well.

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[14] *Hidden Galleries*, 66.

[15] J. Kapaló, "'The Archangel Michael Looked Just like Me'", in *Hidden Galleries*, 70.

[16] D. Lisnic, "Archangelist Women", in *Hidden Galleries*, 74.

[17] *Hidden Galleries*, 66.

[18] J. Derrida 1998 after G. Nicolescu, "Exhibitions as Tools to Think With: On Impact and Process", in *Hidden Galleries*, 104.

[19] Ibid.

Luca Riccardi, *Yalta. I tre Grandi e la costruzione di un nuovo sistema internazionale*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino Editore, 2021, 327 p.

Reviewed by Bogdan Živković*

Luca Riccardi, Italian scholar of the history of international relations best known for his seminal work on Italian relations with the Middle East, devoted his latest book to one of the crucial events in the history of international relations – the Yalta Conference. Of course, the issue is far from being unknown or understudied. Even so, Riccardi deemed that revisiting it might be relevant and useful. A scholarly publication on Yalta was needed not only because of the importance of the topic itself, but primarily because of the popular and widespread misconceptions about its nature.

As noted in the first pages of the book, the fiftieth anniversary of the Prague Spring revived such misinterpretations. Initially launched by de Gaulle, who was excluded from participating in the conference, and later developed and disseminated by various anti-communist politicians and Eastern bloc dissidents, a *topos* of Yalta emerged in the Western public. According to such interpretations, Yalta was the source of the Cold War. It was regarded by many as a symbol of Western impotence and appeasement of Soviet aggressive expansion, a conference that sanctioned a division of Europe which left its eastern part at the mercy of the "Evil Empire".

Using the traditional method of the history of international relations, Riccardi had two main goals. Firstly, to demonstrate that such perceptions are flawed, and that Yalta was far from sanctioning a division of Europe. And secondly, to depict the reality of Yalta – its complex diplomatic dynamic, collaboration and conflicts, different interests and attempts to strengthen the unity of the Allies. Hence, the reader remains convinced that Yalta was not "the original sin" that led to the Cold War, but quite the opposite – an attempt to prevent it.

The book is divided into eight chapters, which not only thoroughly depict the discussions held at the Crimean resort, but also provide a historical introduction to each of the issues discussed, and an interpretation of the three powers' policies on each. The first two chapters depict preparations for the conference, and the following six chapters analyse the most important issues discussed at Yalta: Poland; Germany; the United Nations; Europe; the Far East; and three less important issues – Iran, Yugoslavia and Turkey.

Some chapters deserve to be particularly highlighted, as they point out important factors that shaped the conference. The chapter about Poland shows that geostrategic security was the imperative of Soviet foreign policy. On the other hand, it also analyses how and to which extent the Western Allies were willing to accommodate such aspirations. The chapter that deals with the issue of the United Nations shows that it was the crux of Roosevelt's diplomacy, as the American president was determined to promote this body and its central role in multilateral international relations in the future. The chapter on European affairs focuses on the Declaration of Liberated Europe. Riccardi clearly shows that, despite several realpolitik compromises with Stalin, Roosevelt (and Churchill) sought to promote the principle of democracy. This was devised not only as a means of containing Soviet influence, but also as a means of establishing multilateral cooperation and preventing the creation of spheres of influences. Finally, the chapter that deals with the Far East, i.e. the negotiations with the USSR about its participation in the war with Japan, demonstrates the importance of the Soviet contribution to

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the Allied war effort which crucially influenced Roosevelt to make compromises with Moscow.

The main protagonist of this book is American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Riccardi's focus on Roosevelt is justified, as he was the dominant figure at Yalta. The intention of the American president was to, echoing the Wilsonian principles and idealism, shape the future of international relations and give the world at least fifty years of peace. In order to do so, Roosevelt intended to transform the Alliance, created in response to German aggression, into a pillar of the post-war world based on unity and multilateral cooperation. But the book does not give a hagiographic portrayal of Roosevelt. The author underlines his limitations, illusions, mistakes and uncertainties, and also highlights the divisions within the US administration, demonstrating that Roosevelt's decision-making process was quite complex. Riccardi's portrait of Roosevelt is one of a complicated but dominant political figure, with a global political vision that set him apart from his interlocutors.

On the other hand, although the book is less centred on Stalin and Churchill, the author does not fail to take into account and analyse the policies and impact of these two figures. Stalin emerges as the most pragmatic of the three, with precise solutions and ideas. His policies revolved around security issues and the desire to prevent another international isolation of the USSR. The British prime minister is depicted as an old-fashioned statesman, who adhered to traditional diplomatic views and solutions, concentrated on preserving Britain's prestige and empire.

As Riccardi underlines in his conclusion, Yalta was an encounter of three different visions, based on the future, the present and the past respectively. Roosevelt's policies were focused on the future, as his main intention was to lay the foundations for an international multilateral order which would bring peace, democracy and capitalist well-being, based on the American model. Stalin was focused on the present, i.e. on ensuring Soviet security and confirming the newly-acquired Soviet prestige and power. Finally, Churchill looked back to the past, aiming to preserve Britain's historical influence and importance that was withering away.

Yalta was an intertwining of these three different political visions, which makes it far more complex than the simplifying *topos* of a division of Europe. Such interpretations are more appropriate for the previous encounters between Churchill and Stalin, which Roosevelt sought to overcome. Challenging that *topos*, Riccardi particularly highlights two aspects. On the one hand, he convincingly demonstrates that the principles of multilateralism and democracy were crucial at Yalta. While some compromises were made, those principles were undoubtedly dominant in Roosevelt's policies. On the other hand, Riccardi underlines how the necessity of collaboration between the USA, the UK and the USSR led to the aforementioned compromises. Agreement among the Allies was not only a military imperative in times of war, but the best foundation for a functional international system in its aftermath.

Hence, Riccardi depicts Yalta as a series of fragile compromises whose purpose was to demonstrate the mutual respect of the three war victors and to preserve the Alliance. It was not Yalta but the abandonment of its principles that led to the Cold War. Yalta was, in fact, a failed attempt to prevent the inevitable international division and conflict that followed.

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