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THE FULFILLMENT OF A THOUSAND-YEAR DREAM was how Franjo Tudjman, leader of Croatia's independence struggle, described his country's recognition by the international community in 1992. The phrase was scarcely off his lips that year. It strikes a discordant note in most Western ears—too grandiloquent and vaguely reminiscent of a thousand-year Reich. But it sounded sweet to most Croats, who, like many small, subjugated peoples, are much more obsessed with their own history than those nations that have generally had an easier ride. If not quite ten, their intellectual leaders had certainly spent several centuries pondering what strategy might best rescue them from their fallen state.

The Croat experience of independence was rather brief. And it was terminated much earlier than that of their Serb neighbors, whose empire reached its height in the mid-fourteenth century and whose independence was not entirely snuffed out by the Ottoman invaders until the 1450s.

The rulers of the Croat tribes in Dalmatia began adopting the title of *Dux Croatiae* (Duke of Croatia) in the 820s. The greatest among them, Tomislav, who was believed to have ruled from about 910 to 928 (the hard evidence is scanty), seems to have united the various Croat statelets in Dalmatia and Pannonia into one unit that encompassed most of contemporary Croatia and Bosnia. He had himself crowned king, and under him Croatia was sufficiently powerful to warrant an admiring reference in the Byz-

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antine emperor Porphyrogenitus's account of his empire, *De Administrando Imperio*.

Tomislav's big Croatia in the tenth century, like Tsar Dušan's great Serbia in the fourteenth century, was a temporary phenomenon. The Croats were unable to withstand the aggressive attentions of their more powerful Magyar and Venetian neighbors, and in 1102 the Croatian crown passed to the Arpad dynasty in Hungary under a pact by which the Croatian kingdom preserved its separate identity and institutions—above all, its parliaments, known as the *Sabor*, and a viceroy, known as a *ban*.

Serbs and Croats, therefore, shared a history of foreign domination. But the Serbs at least remained together in their servitude, under one Ottoman roof. They also had a national church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, founded in the thirteenth century and revived under Ottoman patronage in the 1560s. It was this institution, long after the extinction of the native aristocracy, that preserved the Serbs' strong sense of national identity and ingrained in their collective memory a recollection of a great pre-Ottoman independent kingdom.

The Croats in some ways were in a less favorable position. They did not remain united under foreign rule but were split three ways. The Ottomans ruled over Bosnia, the Dalmatian interior, and the eastern half of Slavonia; Venice ruled the Dalmatian coast (with the exception of the city-state of Dubrovnik); and the Habsburgs ruled a rump kingdom of Croatia after their election to the Croatian crown in 1527, following Hungary's virtual annihilation by the Turks at Mohacs.

Nor did the Croats have a national church that could foster memories of their former statehood. The early Croat rulers, after a brief hesitation in the 870s, took their religion from Rome rather than Byzantium. The popes thereafter frowned on any attempts to impart a national, Slav tone to the church in Croatia, suppressing the use of the native Glagolitic script and the vernacular liturgy, the use of which, with a few exceptions in certain areas, was prohibited in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Much later the Counter Reformation in Croatia would further weaken the national element in the Church, for the Croat Protestants wished to propagate the use of the Glagolitic script and made a conscious attempt to write in a dialect that would be understand-

able in all the different Croat regions. As a result of the Counter Reformation, the Croats remained under the deracinating influence of bishops loyal first to Rome, and then to Hungary, Venice, or the Habsburgs.

What kept alive a sense of common Croat identity among these separated and subjugated peoples, therefore, was not the Catholic religion.¹ It was literature and the memory of history sustained by the intellectual elite. During the Renaissance era, Venetian-ruled Dalmatia and Dubrovnik gave birth to influential intellectuals—mostly minor aristocrats and clergymen, Jesuits especially—who kept alive the memory of Croatia and the Croatian language when they composed or translated plays and books from Italian and Latin into the vernacular. No matter that the dialects of Dalmatia and Dubrovnik were different from each other—Dubrovnik used the so-called *štokavian* while further north, in Split, they preferred *čakavian*—and that both these dialects were somewhat different from the dialect of Zagreb, capital of the Habsburg-ruled north. They still thought of it as Croatian.

When Šimun Kožičić, bishop of Modrus, had the Roman Missal printed in the vernacular in 1532, the title on the frontispiece was *Misal Hrvacki* (the Croatian Missal), and when Marko Marulić (1450–1524) of Split published the first known vernacular poem in Dalmatia in 1521, the *History of the Holy Widow Judith*, he put on the title that it had been composed “*u versih hrvacki slozena*,” “in Croatian verses.” The Dubrovnik poet Dominko Zalatarić (1555–1610) explained on the frontispiece of his 1597 translation of Sophocles’ tragedy *Elektra* and Tasso’s *Aminta* that it had been “*iz veće tudieh jezika u Hrvacki izložene*,” “translated from the great foreign languages into Croatian.”²

Many of these Dalmatian writers dedicated their works to heroes from the northern, Habsburg-ruled kingdom and, in so doing, showed that they still considered themselves members of a Croatian nation that transcended contemporary political boundaries. Zalatarić dedicated his plays to Juraj Zrinjski, son of Nikola Subić Zrinjski, the warrior *ban* of Croatia who had perished in 1566 defending Sziget in Hungary from the Ottoman army for the Habsburgs. The Dubrovnik poet Vladislav Menčetić dedicated his *Trublja Slovinska* (*Trumpet of the Slavs*) in 1663 to another member of this cel-

ebredated Croatian noble family, in this case Peter Zrinjski, whom the emperor Leopold I had executed in 1671.

These poets and writers complimented each other as great Croats when they addressed their baroque epistles to one another. “The Croatian peoples shout that you are the golden crown of which we are all proud,” said Nikola Nalješković (1510–1586) of Dubrovnik to Ivan Vidali, of the island of Korcula, in an address from the early 1560s. Vidali replied in kind. “You are the glory and fame of the Croatian language,” he declared in 1564, in an address that also extolled Dubrovnik—an oasis of Slav liberty between Venice and Turkey—as the “crown of Croatian cities.”

The Dalmatian writers of the Renaissance era were pan-Slavs, using the words Croat, Slav, and Illyrian—the latter term borrowed the classical name for the Balkan peninsula—almost interchangeably. As the Ottoman juggernaut rolled over one Croat town after another (by the 1590s the Turks were only a few miles south of Zagreb), they put their faith in a great Slav brotherhood of nations that they hoped would eventually unite to liberate them from humiliating servitude to the sultan and the doge. While they were being enslaved, it was balm to the soul to dwell on the fact that way in the north, and to the east, there existed great independent Slav kingdoms. For Ivan Gundulić (1588–1638), the baroque poet of Dubrovnik, that Slav liberator was going to be Poland, and it was to Poland that he dedicated his epic poem *Osman* following the Poles’ victory over the sultan at Chocim in 1621.³

After the decline of Catholic Poland, Orthodox Russia took its place as the object of some Croat thinkers’ hopes, inspiring Juraj Križanić (1618–1683), a Jesuit from Karlovac in Habsburg Croatia, to undertake a hopeless and rather bizarre pilgrimage to the court of the Tsar Alexis in the 1680s. Križanić’s Slav internationalism was so indefatigable that even after the suspicious tsar had exiled him to Siberia his enthusiasm did not flag. After all, the Poles, though they were Slavs themselves, had many foreign rulers, whereas Russia alone was pure in this respect. “The Poles have been called pigs and dogs by some of their queens,” he commented indignantly. “There are no rulers of Slavic origin anywhere except here in Russia.”⁴

There was no tension between a commitment to Illyria and Croatia. It was not a case of either/or but of both/and. Pavao

Ritter Vitezović (1652–1713) of Senj's influential history book *Croatia Rediviva* (*Croatia Reborn*), written in 1700, wound the two notions together. Vitezović identified as Croats all the contemporary Slav inhabitants of what the classically educated generally called Illyria. To be Croatian and Illyrian was as natural as being, for example, Prussian and German in the nineteenth century, or Scottish and British in the same period.

The pan-Slav element in Croat thought was a defense mechanism. The Dalmatian writers knew only too well that they were too puny, divided and few in number, to even contemplate confronting their Venetian or Turkish overlords. They were mournfully aware of the fact that they were a mere scrap of what they once had been, the "*reliquiae reliquiarum*," as the Croatian *Sabor* often described the country—a fragment of a fragment of the once-great and famous kingdom of Croatia. The fantasy of belonging to a united Slav people that was as seamless as the robe of Christ (and as phony as the talk of African or Arab unity in our own time) sustained their hopes during the long centuries of foreign rule.

The Croats not only were broken up into several bits but now lived intermingled with large numbers of settlers—the result of the huge demographic changes in the Balkans caused by the Ottoman invasion. In Bosnia, the most peripheral of Tomislav's conquests in the tenth century, the old Catholic population⁵ had been enormously diluted since the sixteenth century by the conversion of a large proportion of the native Slavs to Islam and by an influx of Serb Orthodox settlers to the barren and war-devastated lands of northwest Bosnia. There the demographic change was so striking that a region known until the early nineteenth century as "Turkish Croatia" had very few Catholic Croat inhabitants at all by that time.

Even in the small Habsburg-ruled Croatian kingdom, Catholics increasingly lived cheek by jowl with Serb Orthodox settlers. This was especially so in the long strip of land, bordering the Ottoman Empire, known as the Vojna Krajina (the Military Border), which was governed directly by the Habsburg military authorities and in which the authorities expressly invited Serb refugees to settle. So a notion of Croatness that was designed to appeal to as many Slavs

as possible was not merely idealism. It was a very practical response to Croatia's changed demographic reality.

Unable to alter their own destiny single-handedly, the Croats had to wait on the decisions—and armies—of the great powers. In the 1680s, the Habsburgs inflicted a series of stunning defeats on the Ottomans, ending their century-and-a-half rule over Slavonia and driving them, temporarily, from Bosnia as well. In Dalmatia the Ottomans were forced to relinquish control of the interior to Venice. When, in the course of the Napoleonic wars of the 1790s, Venice's Dalmatian empire passed also to the Habsburgs, most Croats found themselves again under one roof for the first time since the Middle Ages.

There is no doubt that most Dalmatians wanted union—or as they would have put it, reunion—with the rest of Croatia. This was demonstrated by the great reception the city of Zadar gave the Croat Habsburg general Juraj Rukavina when he entered the city on behalf of the emperor in July 1797. The Austrians, however, were careful to block the calls for Dalmatia and Croatia to be united into one administrative unit inside the empire, and they tried to foster a separate Dalmatian identity. In spite of this, popular support rose in Dalmatia throughout the century for the *narodnjaci* (nationals) who supported a reunited Croatia within the Habsburg Empire.

Now it was the turn of the richer and more developed northern Croats to pay homage to the patriarchs of the "Illyrian" movement two centuries previously. Nothing could be more symbolic of this attitude of reverence than the great curtain designed in 1895 for the new Croatian National Theater in Zagreb. On it was portrayed a procession of literary worthies, sweeping up towards the figure of Gundulic, who was enthroned against a backdrop of the skylines of Dubrovnik and Zagreb—the former the symbol of Croatia's great past, the latter the hope of the future.⁶

The expansion of the Habsburg Empire solved the greatest problem facing the Croatian nation since the 1500s, being dispersed in three states. And it brought to the forefront the question of Illyria—or, as it became known as in the less classical atmosphere of the 1860s, Jugoslavija, the land of southern Slavs. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the dream of Slav unity had been a comforting fantasy, sustaining the drooping

spirits of a defeated nation's thinking classes. By the nineteenth century, Illyrianism was no longer just a vague ambition but a pressing political question. The southern Slavs were no longer all subject to foreign rulers and thus were equal, if only in a common state of subjection. The first quarter of the century saw the creation of small Greek and Serbian principalities; later, a Bulgarian state would join their ranks.

These little states all had big ideas. The Greeks dreamed of an empire in Asia Minor, the Bulgarians of Constantinople and Macedonia. In Serbia, as early as the middle of the century, there were important politicians who talked openly of the impending dissolution of the Turkish empire and the coming battle with Austria over the spoils. The Serbian foreign minister Ilija Garašanin was one such official; in his *Načertanije*—an outline of Serbia's foreign policy aims written in the 1840s—he spoke of their determination to reconstruct the great state that had once belonged to Tsar Dušan. "The foundations for building the Serbian empire must therefore be cleared and freed of all ruins and alluvia," he declared. "They must be revealed and then, on this hard and permanent foundation, new building must be undertaken and continued."⁷

The famous, though controversial, reformer of the Serbian alphabet, Vuk Karadžić, was another. Looking westwards, he pronounced Croatia a mere geographical expression and its inhabitants "brothers of the Roman law." They did not know that they were Serbs, he admitted, but in time would become Serbs, because they had no other name to adopt.

The Croat intellectuals of the nineteenth century were disappointed by the rise of an expansionist and rather belligerent Serbian nationalism. However much they railed against the Habsburgs or the Hungarians, they had taken it for granted that they lived in an infinitely more civilized and progressive state than their Illyrian brothers and sisters, who had spent the previous four centuries under the Ottomans, and they were surprised to find out that the newly independent Serbs now looked down on them. They did not like it when their Illyrian sympathies were interpreted as an admission that they did not really exist as a nation. Yet this was just how Vuk Karadžić did interpret it. "Clever Serbs," he said, "both Orthodox and Roman Catholic admit they are one nation," in

“Serbs All and Everywhere,” written in about 1836. “Only those of the Roman Catholic Church find it difficult to call themselves Serbs, but they will probably get used to it, little by little, because if they do not want to be Serbs, they have no other choice. . . .”⁸

The traditional yardstick of Serb identity was membership in the Serbian Orthodox Church. Karadžić took the more modern and secular yardstick of language in order to work Catholics and Muslims into his particular Serbian tapestry. Slavs who spoke a language that resembled Serbian were Serbs. Slavs who called themselves Croats were deceiving themselves: “I would say that this name belongs rightly first and only to the *čakavci*,” he said, referring to the inhabitants of several Dalmatian islands where the local dialect used *ča* for the word “what,” as opposed to the more widespread *što*. Even the inhabitants of Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, and its hinterland were Serbs. According to Karadžić this area was more truly known as upper Slavonia, not Croatia, and the local dialect was not a national speech at all but a “transitional” speech between Slovene and Serb.

Garašanin and Karadžić were not, of course, the sole voices of nineteenth-century Serbia. In the last quarter of the century, Serbia became a virtual vassal of Austria-Hungary, the absolute opposite of what Garašanin had counseled. As for Karadžić, he was a *persona non grata* in the new Serbian state, where the powerful Church hierarchy deeply disapproved of both his reforms to the Cyrillic alphabet and his secular brand of nationalism, which seemed to place no special emphasis on the Orthodox faith. But what was increasingly typical of Garašanin and Karadžić among their contemporaries in Serbia was the assumption that Serbia was destined to absorb its smaller and weaker Slav neighbors.

The Croats did not drop their Illyrian, or Yugoslav, program, however. Again, this was not only idealism, but the result of a profound pessimism concerning their abilities to confront their enemies on their own. In the nineteenth century, these enemies were no longer the sultan or the doge but Hungarians, who from the 1790s with increasing energy and resolution pursued a policy of forcing the Hungarian language into Croatia’s schools and official institutions, in spite of the fact that most Croats felt this violated the terms of their relationship with Hungary under the historic pact of 1102.

In 1848 Austria went to war and invoked the intervention of Russia in order to quash the Hungarians' revolutionary separatism. But in 1867, after the disastrous defeat at Sadowa at the hands of Prussia, Austria was too weak to resist the Hungarian demands for what was virtually a state within a state, and the subsequent division of the empire into two halves had enormous ramifications for the empire's smaller nationalities. Austria had become Austria-Hungary, and great Hungary gained a free hand over the Croats, the Serbs of Vojvodina, the Slovaks, and the Romanians of Transylvania. With that development Croat hopes of winning a greater degree of home rule disappeared, as did the hope of uniting Croatia and Dalmatia into one unit inside the empire; for while Croatia passed into the Hungarian half of the empire, Dalmatia remained inside "Austria"—the lands represented in the Vienna parliament.

In both halves of the empire, Croats again found themselves in need of allies. In Dalmatia, the Austrians favored the small Italian-speaking elite in the towns—the legacy of centuries of Venetian rule. In Croatia proper, Hungary built up the local Serb minority as a counterweight to the Croats. The prevailing opinion of Croat leaders such as Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905), the bishop of Djakovo, was that Croats needed to keep their national movement as broadly based as possible in order to frustrate the Austrian and Hungarian policy of divide and rule.

But not everyone in Croatia was happy with Strossmayer's irenic approach to the Serbs and with the direction that Illyrianism was taking Croatia. It was clear to these more skeptical spirits that Hungary's divisive tactics in Croatia in the last decades of the century were succeeding only too well and that despite what the Illyrians said about Slav brotherhood, the local Serb Orthodox population (which then comprised about 25 percent of the population) increasingly perceived its interests as quite separate—even antagonistic—to those of their Catholic Croat neighbors.

Earlier in the nineteenth century, the Serb Orthodox of Croatia had seemed content with a Croat identity; indeed, the Habsburg "Croat" regiments in northern Italy that had gained such a fearsome reputation for savage warfare contained many—perhaps a majority of—Serb Orthodox soldiers. During the year of revolutions in 1848, the question of whether Croats were Catholic or

Orthodox was fairly irrelevant, so that when the strongly Illyrian patriot Josip Jelacic was installed as *ban* of Croatia in that year in Zagreb, it was the head of the Serbian church, Metropolitan Rajačić, and not the Catholic Archbishop, Haulik of Zagreb, who presided at the ceremony. The Metropolitan's benediction then had included an invocation to Jelacic "to protect the august House of Austria, sweet liberty, our nationality, and the common good of the Truine kingdom [of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia]." Only a generation later, the assumption that there was a common nationality among Serbs and Croats and that all Serbs wished to protect the "august House of Austria" or the "Triune kingdom" would have sounded very anachronistic.

By the turn of the century, the Serb Orthodox subjects of the Habsburgs thought of themselves simply as Serbs and, like Garašanin and Karadžić, confidently anticipated the day when a reinvigorated Serbia would come and claim the land as its own. One reason for this change in attitude was that the young Serbian state was expanding and developing, and it became a much more powerful focus for the loyalty of all the Orthodox subjects of the Habsburgs than it had been a few decades earlier.

In the 1860s the last Ottoman garrison was driven out of Belgrade. In the 1870s Serbia nearly doubled in size, at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, and—symbolically important—graduated from a mere principality, theoretically loyal to the sultan, to being a full-fledged kingdom. Serbia's growing power and self-confidence changed the terrain on which Serbs and Croats now met. The Serbs had at no stage been more than half-interested in Croat intellectual talk of Illyria or Jugoslavia. Now they became less so, as the tantalizing project of restoring Dušan's great empire loomed up before their imagination.

Towards the end of his life even Strossmayer, the inspiration and financier of the whole Yugoslav movement (he poured much of his own money into founding a Yugoslav Academy of Art and Science in Zagreb in the 1860s), became thoroughly disillusioned with the business of trying to build cultural and political ties with the Serbs. No man had done more in his generation to realize the dream of the Illyrian poets and writers of an earlier age and to hold out the hand of friendship. Yet by 1885 he was so alarmed by the rise of an exclusive Serbian nationalism that he was pleased

when the Serbs were crushed in their brief war with Bulgaria. “The idea of resurrecting Dušan’s kingdom is insane,” he fumed. The Serbs, he declared, were now “crushing the idea of a Croatian state. We should pray now that they see that the grave they were digging for others they were preparing first of all for themselves.”¹⁰

The beneficiary of this disillusionment with the Illyrian project was Strossmayer’s archrival for the loyalty of Croatia’s youth, Ante Starčević. Starčević (1825–1896) came from much the same intellectual Illyrian background as Strossmayer. Strossmayer had been a protégé of the great Illyrian *ban* Jelačić; Starčević was the son of a Serb Orthodox mother and a Catholic father, and his uncle Šime Starčević, a Catholic priest, had shown his strongly Illyrian sympathies during the brief Napoleonic occupation of Dalmatia by compiling a “French-Illyrian” dictionary. Starčević and his supports, especially the radical nationalist Eugen Kvaternik, invested many of their hopes in Napoleon III, the godfather of the Italian Risorgimento and patron saint of national unification movements everywhere.

In Starčević, Vuk Karadžić met his match, or his mirror image. Karadžić saw Serbs “all and everywhere” on the basis of speech. Starčević saw Croats everywhere as well, or at least from the Adriatic all the way to Bulgaria, not on the basis of speech but of history—the historical framework of the Croatian state of the tenth century at its greatest extent, under King Tomislav. This was the state that he was convinced the Croats had a historical right to, and his political party was naturally named the *Stranka Prava* (the Party of Rights), by which he meant the party of the Croatian state’s rights.

Like the French revolutionaries, to whom he owed many of his ideas, Starčević was a secular nationalist who placed great emphasis on this concept of statehood—the Croatian state—and he insisted that all those living within the borders of this state were Croat citizens. The various religions and convictions of the people on the ground were of no more consequence to him than they were to Karadžić. Like Karadžić, he would have said, “They have no choice.”

It took a good deal of creative thinking to make sense of this fantasy state, which existed only in the imaginations of his followers, known as rightists, or *pravaši*. This was especially so when it

came to Bosnia, where the Catholic proportion of the population had dwindled by the nineteenth century to only a fifth of the whole. Starčević's *pravaši* met the Serbs' challenge to Bosnia head on, insisting that Bosnian Muslims were not only Croats but the most Croat of all Croats! In fact, they were the very blossom of Croatia, because they had not been corrupted by the dead hand of Austria. Their Islam was inconsequential—in a sense, it was a badge of innocence. As for the Serb Orthodox, who by the nineteenth century formed the largest ethnic group in Bosnia, they were dubbed Orthodox Croats, in spite of the fact that they now almost all thought of themselves as Serbs, pure and simple.

Croatian politics in the latter half of the nineteenth century revolved around a contest of ideas between the followers of Strossmayer, who still advocated Illyrian solidarity and rapprochement with the Serbs, and the followers of Starčević, who matched the Serbs' exclusive expansionist nationalism with a worthy Croatian counterpart. Strossmayer became quite bitter in his old age about Starčević's success in weaning the hearts and minds of the coming generation in Croatia away from him. But in World War I it was Starčević's project that foundered and Strossmayer's that appeared to triumph.

The notion of a great independent Croatia simply could not survive the outbreak of a world conflict that brought home to the Croats just how small and dependent upon others they were for their very survival as a nation. "The only chance for Croats lies in the total defeat of Austria-Hungary but without causing its dissolution" was the gloomy prognosis of the leader of the Croatian peasants party, Stjepan Radić.¹¹ Victory would leave Hungary invincible and more high-handed than ever with its minorities. Defeat was still more terrifying, for in the secret treaty of April 1915 in London, which the Croats soon found out about, the Entente powers offered Dalmatia to Italy, and Bosnia and much of Croatia to Serbia, in order to win them over and keep them on their side.

Faced with a threat that was, in a way, as calamitous as the Ottoman invasion, a new generation of Dalmatian intellectuals resolved to take action. Led by Ivan Meštrović, Ante Trumbić, and Frane Supilo—an internationally famous sculptor, a former mayor of Split, and a journalist, respectively—they set up the Yugoslav Committee in 1915 as an organization dedicated to ensuring that

the Great Powers did not succeed in consigning Croatia to another partition. Since Croatian independence seemed a hopeless prospect, they were determined at least to secure union for the whole of Croatia with their Slav neighbors in Serbia, on terms that approximated as much as possible the Illyrian ideal of freedom in diversity. It was fortunate for them that by the end of the war, the kind of secret diplomacy once practiced by the British and French was no longer in favor and that under Woodrow Wilson, America was forthright in championing the self-determination of nations. The Yugoslav Committee was also fortunate in that 1917 found the Serb leadership at their lowest ebb, in exile on Corfu and in despair of achieving a great Serbian state. The Yugoslav advocates were thus able to persuade the Serb leaders to line up—rather reluctantly—behind the idea of a common state of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

They succeeded in a sense, for it was the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes that inherited Dalmatia (or most of it), not Italy. Beyond that, however, they were to be disappointed. They had never been Illyrian, or Yugoslav, at the expense of their own Croatian identity any more than the seventeenth-century Dubrovnik poets had been. Yet the Croats were incorporated with a certain amount of force into a centralized state that, though it officially adopted the name Yugoslavia in 1929, was really an extension of Serbia. The result was that Starčević's goal of a great independent Croatia did not die out, as might have been expected, but went underground, recruiting disciples from all those who were disaffected with life in the new state. Starčević's ideas had already been modified since his death in 1896. Under Josip Frank, who carried the rightists into a new era, the party became obsessively anti-Serbian. "Their adoration of Starčević, their hatred of Serbs—these are feelings and passions, not ideas," was the disapproving verdict of many moderate and practical Croat politicians, such as the peasant party leader Stjepan Radić.¹²

In the hostile atmosphere of the 1920s, the Frankist remnant became more extreme; in 1929, when Yugoslavia became a royal dictatorship, this residue evolved in exile into a new and still more authoritarian movement, led by a former deputy in the Yugoslav parliament, Ante Pavelić, and his colleagues—a collection of former Habsburg officers, university professors, and writers. Pavelić re-

christened the movement the Ustashe, from the word *ustanak*, meaning uprising. They believed strongly in Croats *svi i svuda* (all and everywhere) and in a state whose borders were fixed by history, not ethnicity, which encompassed the borders of Tomislav's kingdom of the tenth century. They also made strenuous efforts to put into practice Starčević's theory about Muslims as the flower of the Croatian nation.

Whether Starčević would have recognized his ideas in those Ustashe who bore his name with such pride, however, was questionable, for while Starčević had taken most of his inspiration from revolutionary France, Pavelić borrowed most of his ideas about running a state from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Starčević had rejected Strossmayer's Jugoslavism. The Ustashe went several leagues further, denying that Croats were a Slav nation at all and putting forward a theory that they in fact descended from the Goths.¹³ Handed the government of Croatia virtually on a plate after Nazi Germany invaded Yugoslavia in April 1941, the Ustashe takeover unleashed pogroms against Serbs on an enormous scale, soon followed by racial laws based directly on those of the Nazis and the erection of death camps for the "Independent State of Croatia's unwanted Orthodox and Jewish inhabitants."

Not surprisingly, the communist-led opposition to the Ustashe, known as Partisans and led by a Croat communist named Josip Tito, eagerly appropriated the mantle of Strossmayer, Jugoslavia, and Illyria for their cause. So the civil war in Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1945, besides pitting Left against Right, carried echoes in Croatia of the political struggle of the previous century between the *narodnjaci* and the *pravaši*—between those who stood for Croatian statehood and those who believed Croatia's destiny lay within a wider Slav community. When Tito promised the Croats and the other smaller nations that there would be no return to the centralized prewar "Versailles" Yugoslavia, he was drawing on a common perception in Croatia that the real Yugoslavia had yet to be tried out and that it might be the final solution to a smaller nation's centuries-old dilemma. With this Illyrian inheritance in mind, Tito lectured the Croatian Catholic clergy after the communist victory in 1945 (the clergy were seen as a prop to the Ustashe regime) on the need to return to the path laid down by Bishop Strossmayer.¹⁴ Tito's appeal carried weight. His dedicated sup-

porter among the Catholic clergy was Svetozar Rittig, dean of the prestigious St. Mark's church in Zagreb—and Strossmayer's secretary.

The last ten years have seen the pendulum swing back again in Croatia, away from Strossmayer, Illyrian, and Yugoslavia to Starčević, statehood, and total independence. In Serbia, too, popular commitment to Yugoslavia faded after Tito's death in 1980 and gave way to a more straightforward belief in *Srbi svi i svuda*—Serbs all and everywhere. The war that broke out in 1991 between the Serb-run Yugoslav army and the hastily organized forces of the Slovenes and Croats dealt an enormous, perhaps lasting, blow to the idea that Croats might only find their freedom in a common Slav state.

Illyrianism, and its successor, Yugoslavism, was a practical response of a pessimistic nation that had been repeatedly tossed around and cut up in the wars between the great powers. It kept the spirits of the Croats up while their country was being annihilated by the Ottomans in the sixteenth century and deracinated by the Hungarians in the nineteenth. During World War I it offered salvation from the threat of partition between Italy and Serbia, and during World War II it offered a third way between Pavelić's grotesque fascist independent state and a return to the centralized, Serb-run state of the 1930s.

But the end of the Cold War removed Yugoslavia from the center of the world stage. In the 1990s, Russia was a spent force, and the Western powers divided amongst themselves over policy on the former communist states and were more or less ready to let the local actors in the Balkans decide their own fate.¹⁵ There was no longer an external threat to Croatia, only a wearisome and increasingly violent struggle with Serbia for domination of Yugoslavia. The Illyrian movement no longer had a practical purpose; at the same time, Starčević's goal of independent statehood appeared once again possible. The moment had arrived for Mr. Tudjman's "thousand-year dream." The image, deliberately harkening back to the time of King Tomislav, was one that Starčević would have approved of.

ENDNOTES

- ¹“The Catholic Church and the Croatian National Identity,” *The East European Quarterly* XIII (1979): 330.
- ²Branko Franolić, *An Historical Survey of Literary Croatian* (London and Paris: Nouvelles editions latines, 1984), 16.
- ³For the literary and historical context in which *Osman* was written, see Zdenko Zlatar, *The Slavic Epic: Gundulić’s Osman* (New York: P. Lang, 1995).
- ⁴Thomas Eekman and Ante Kadić Juraj Križanić, *Russophile and Ecumenic Visionary* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1976), 161.
- ⁵There are several recent books on Bosnia, and most contain accounts of Bosnia’s complicated ethnic and religious evolution. One is Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1994).
- ⁶For a description of the role of Dubrovnik in the Croat imagination, see “The Place of Dubrovnik in Modern Croat National Ideology,” in Ivo Banac, John G. Ackerman, and Roman Szporluk, eds., *Nation and Ideology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 149–175.
- ⁷I. Garašanin, *Nachertaniije*, printed in Bože Cović, ed., *Roots of Serbian Aggression* (Zagreb: Centar za strane jezike, 1993), 70.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, 89.
- ⁹M. Hartley, *The Man Who Saved Austria* (London: Mills and Boon, 1912), 171.
- ¹⁰Ferdo Sisić, *Korespondencija Rački-Strossmeyer*, vol. III (Zagreb: n.p., 1930), 199.
- ¹¹S. Gazi, “Stjepan Radić: His Life and Political Activities [1870–1928],” *Journal of Croatian Studies* XIV–XV (1973–1974): 41.
- ¹²Z. Kulundžić, *Radić Politički Spisi* (Zagreb: n.p., 1971), 203.
- ¹³Ciano ridiculed this craven attempt to curry favor with Hitler.
- ¹⁴Stella Alexander, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 58.
- ¹⁵The Western powers did, of course, interfere in the Yugoslav conflict: France, and to a lesser extent Britain, siding with the Serbs, and Germany, and to a lesser extent the United States, with Croatia. The former strongly supported the UN arms embargo on Yugoslavia, which hindered the capacity of the Croats (and Bosnians) to resist the Serbs, whereas the Germans strongly supported recognition of Croatia. However, the outcome of the Yugoslav conflict was not a priority for any of the outside powers, and there was never much risk that it would lead to, or become caught up in, a much wider conflict.