

**IN THIS ISSUE**

President's Note..... 1  
 Panel Summaries.....2-14  
 Anton E. Basetić.....15-17  
 Memoriam.....18-19  
 ACS Members & Friends.....19-20  
 Books & Reviews.....20-23  
 Membership Dues.....23-24

**ASSOCIATION FOR CROATIAN STUDIES**

The ACS is a professional organization dedicated to the advancement of scholarly studies related to Croatia and the Croatians. The ACS was founded in 1977 and it is affiliated with the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES).

**Officers:** Aida Vidan—President  
 John Kraljic—Vice-President  
 Ivo Soljan—Secretary  
 Ellen Elias-Bursać—Treasurer  
 Newsletter Editor: Nancy Crenshaw

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SLAVIC STUDIES**

The ASEEES (formerly AAASS) represents scholarship in the field of Russian, Central Eurasian, Central and East European studies. The association has twenty-eight affiliates that are concerned with particular topics, areas, or peoples within the field. The ASEEES publishes the quarterly journal *Slavic Review*. <http://www.aseees.org>

**A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear ACS Members and Friends,

Our November meeting at the ASEEES convention in Los Angeles marked another year of successful and versatile research which resulted in a series of engaging panels and roundtables. It is heartening to see not only at the ASEEES convention but also at other relevant conferences in the U.S. that the number of scholarly events related to South Eastern Europe has been gradually on the increase. As the primary goals of the ACS concern promoting Croatian studies and bringing a comparative perspective to Croatian topics, we can observe that this mission was successfully accomplished at the last convention. Our panels and roundtables encompassed themes such as the relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina; twenty years of Croatian democracy from political, economic, media, and legal viewpoints; current Croatian cinematography in the context of South Slavic war film production; war and the discourse of violence with the focus on language patterns in the speech of political leaders using Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian; the Croatian military frontier and its influence on society; issues in translation with examples from various periods and genres of Croatian literature; and war in Croatian literature, to mention just some of the central subjects.

Our business meeting was devoted largely to ideas for the possible panels and roundtables for **the next ASEEES convention to be**

**held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC, November 17–20, 2011.** I would like to alert you that the early pre-registration ends on August 19, 2011. While our overseas members need not have a membership in ASEEES, all participants do need to register for the convention. By now the ASEEES organizing board has notified all the organizers of the panels/roundtables whether their event has been accepted for the next convention.



Our business meeting also addressed our ongoing collaboration with the Croatian Academy of America. We hope that we will be able to make issues of the *Journal for Croatian Studies* available online in the coming year and assist in maintaining its more regular publishing schedule in the future. I have also been looking into the options for making old issues of the *Journal* available through a university library database, but the details of this are still to be finalized with the Academy. As we iron out the logistics of cooperation between the two organizations, we hope that our joint effort will result in a boost for this important scholarly outlet and that it will encourage our members to consider submitting their papers to the *Journal* after the convention. As you are all well aware, there is a constant shortage of scholarly and teaching

materials on Croatian subjects in English, and it is our hope that the *Journal* will redress this situation while providing a lively intellectual forum and giving an opportunity to both members and non-members to have their work appear in a specialized peer-reviewed publication.



Furthermore, we discussed the need to create a website for the Association, which has now been successfully launched owing to the generous assistance of the Zagreb School of Economics and Management, Dean Djuro Njavro and his colleagues, Professors Dina Vasić and Jagoda Poropat Darrer. The cooperation between Zagreb and Boston has been very productive, and we have received a number of positive reactions to our new website found at this address: <http://www.croatianstudies.com/>.



Needless to say, this is an ongoing project and we would be grateful for your ideas and suggestions as well as for alerts of any malfunctioning of the links. The idea behind this project is not only to make our activity more visible, but also for the site to become a hub of resources and materials pertaining to Croatia and a scholarly promoter of Croatian culture in the broadest sense. From now on we will be publishing our Bulletin concurrently on the web and

in print (with the hope to continue decreasing the print/ mailing segment in order to minimize expenses). We will continue sending it also to your inboxes.

With best wishes to all for a successful completion of the academic year and a pleasant summer break,

Aida Vidan

### 2011 PANEL SUMMARIES

#### Twenty Years of Croatia's Democracy, 1990-2010: New State, New System, New Economy

##### Dr. Josip Glaurdić

In the first decade after the fall of communism, Croatian politics was marked by unprecedented instability of its electoral institutions. Croatia was the only newly-democratic country in Eastern Europe which used drastically different electoral systems—majoritarian, mixed, and proportional—for each of the four post-communist elections to the Sabor's Lower House. All of that changed in the aftermath of the 2000 elections which brought to power a coalition of six parties with different bases of electoral support. Since 2000, the fundamentals of the electoral rules have not changed. Has that happened solely because of the division of power which has been practically ensured by the 2000 proportional representation system? And what have been the consequences of the current electoral law, particularly regarding accountability and competition among the political elites?

##### Prof. Dr. Branko Salaj

A policy of medial openness during the 1991 war of independence gave foreign correspondents an almost unique liberty of movement and action. Their reporting eased the way to international recognition by informing the world about war tragedies and the Croatian determination to hold out against the aggression. However, Croatia was kept under a form of partial isolation throughout the 1990s, mainly because

it opposed international initiatives aspiring to create some kind of a regional surrogate for defunct Yugoslavia. The resulting atmosphere of besieged fortress, with mutually reinforcing reprimands at home and abroad, was hardly conducive to improving freedom for the Croatian press. The freedom was not inhibited but a number of incidents marred its reputation.

A change occurred at the start of the new millennium when the semi-presidential system was replaced by the parliamentary model. It led to coalitions, on both sides of the political center, which were weak on strategic thinking and rather adaptable to outside demands. A slow process of joining the EU was started under these auspices and was paralleled with a considerable growth of private, foreign-owned media in Croatia. The increased diversity of media is slowly improving in quality but still far from using the newly won power of steering political agenda to address crucial problems of society. In the meantime, the media is still plagued by value premises and inadequate professional standards inherited from the past.

##### Prof. Dr. Davor Vidas

A feature that makes Croatia truly distinct is the placement of its long Adriatic Sea coast. Under international law, it is the coast—an objective geographic criterion—that serves as the key parameter in attributing the rights of states over the sea. However, in the Adriatic Sea there is a disproportion of political power in favour of the western (Italian) coast, whereas international law, due to coastal geography, generally works in favour of the eastern (mostly Croatian) coast.

That is the first layer of Croatia's Adriatic Sea context of the past twenty years. The second layer is found in the placement of that coast along the eastern Adriatic, to which several developed, land-locked

countries gravitate and on which they depend for energy and other supplies. And there is a third layer: the countries here are not only part of the Adriatic Sea region, most of them (now excluding Slovenia but including Albania) are also part of one other “region,” in recent political vocabulary called *the Western Balkans*.



**Professor Dr. Davor Vidas**

That multifaceted context of Croatia's placement has two key aspects. Under globally agreed rules of the international law of the sea, developments in the Adriatic Sea area are to be governed by the rule of law. In practice, however, relations in the Western Balkans are governed by politics, since agreements and arrangements there have not been quite settled as yet. The outcome has increasingly been a spill-over of the Western Balkan political path to the Adriatic Sea aspects. The consequences have been highly detrimental:

1) for the Adriatic as a marine region: as a result of the failure of international law, there is *status quo* on regulatory action, with continuation of marine ecosystem stresses;

2) for the Western Balkans: the trend contains a nucleus of future destabilization, whereas the essence of EU involvement, and a declared goal, should be *stabilization* of the area;

3) and for the EU as a whole: its foundation is the Rule of Law—and this should be employed to strengthen cooperation in both the Adriatic and the Western Balkans regions. However, that cannot be done by

facilitating circumvention of international law there.

**Prof. Dr. Djuro Njavro and Prof. Dr. Vedrana Pribičević**

During twenty years of transition, Croatia transcended from market socialism to an upper middle income country, a NATO member in the final phase of EU accession negotiations. As the second wealthiest Yugoslav republic it underwent reforms which were aimed at securing macroeconomic stability; liberalization of prices and trade, financial and monetary stabilization, currency convertibility, privatization and development of institutions to support a market economy. The combination of transformation and homeland war lead to a sharp decrease in output, with industrial production shrinking by 21% in 1991. In 1993, Croatia experienced hyperinflation, a culmination of almost a decade of two-digit inflation rates. A successful stabilization program based on monetary tightening with limits on public sector wages and foreign currency convertibility reduced inflation to acceptable levels. On the other hand, privatization brought a substantial drop in personal income and pessimistic expectations by limiting citizens' involvement in privatization and not enabling individuals to reap war profits and divert them into equity. Pathologies such as crony capitalism, rent-seeking, clientism and regulatory capture emerged, with which Croatia still needs to deal fully in the future to ensure steady flows of foreign direct investment as motors of future growth. Once these are dealt with, Croatia may begin assessing its problem of structural unemployment, the adequacy of human capital, and sustainability of both public and external debt. In the meantime, Croatia remains torn between continuation of reforms and populist policy measures intended to salvage the economy in the aftermath of the

world financial crisis

Two panels at the ASEES 2010 convention were devoted to Croatian literature. **Negotiating Binaries in Translation: Examples from Croatian Literature** looked closely at a selection of literary texts ranging from the Renaissance to the contemporary period which, each in its own way, present challenging tasks for the translator. The roundtable discussed translation problems stemming from the specific styles and linguistic parameters in an attempt to probe the tensions generated between target and source texts, dialect and standard language, and diverse cultural notions inherent in each text. **Ellen Elias Bursać** focused on August Šenoa's prose, looking closely into several passages from *Zlatarevo zlato*, while **Dasha Nisula** presented some of the translation issues characteristic for modern poetry in her comparative investigation of poems by Drago Ivanišević and the Russian writer Vjačeslav Kuprijanov. **Aida Vidan** looked into problematics of translating oral traditional poetry and its formulaic language as well as into challenges arising from polyglossia in older Croatian Renaissance texts. The panel **Sursum Corda: War and Peace in Croatian Poetry** turned out to be a natural extension of the translation roundtable with the focus on a range of texts from Marko Marulić to contemporary poetry. In addition to discussing their war orientation and reflections of the precarious political situation in literary texts, the audience enjoyed a special treat provided by Ivo Šoljan's masterful translations of texts hitherto unavailable in English. Both events had the format of a workshop with a lively and enthusiastic participation from the audience.

**Military Society in War and Peace: Cultural Identifiers in the Croatian Military Frontier**

Session 14, Panel 8, took place

on Sunday, November 21. It was sponsored by the Association for Croatian Studies and organized by Nives Rumenjak (Visiting Scholar, University of Pittsburgh). Three papers had been scheduled, but only two were delivered.

Sarah Anne Kent (University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point) and John Peter Kraljic (Croatian Academy of America) contributed as panel discussants.

**Sanja Lazanin** (Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, Zagreb) presented the paper entitled **Josephinic Beschreibung des Warasdiner Generalats (1783): Perception of a Traditional Society between Militarization and Sustainable Development**. Since the authoress could not attend the convention the paper was read by panel-chair Ellen Elias-Bursac (Independent Scholar). Hereby the author would like to express a special gratitude to Dr. Ellen Elias-Bursac for her assistance.

The paper examined a narrative source that evaluated the conditions and the introduction of reforms in the Croatian Military Frontier, more precisely in the Varaždin Generalate (situated in present-day northwest Croatia). "The Description of the Varaždin Generalate" was written by a military official in 1783.

The paper aimed to outline the Habsburg perception of the Military Frontier area and its people at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, based on the mentioned document. The author focused on several groups of research questions relevant for determining cultural identifiers in a society living amid permanent preparation for war and attempts to organize sustainable social and economic development.

Analyzing the source, the author pointed out that the structure of the *Beschreibung* reveals state interests and the intents of the Emperor Joseph II, who was inclined toward the ideas and reforms of the Enlightenment. Examining the *Beschreibung*, one

could note that it reflected general interests of the Enlightenment for nature, people and language. On the other hand, it highlighted fields in which the state intended to implement reforms. In the *Beschreibung* emphasis was placed on recording the existing situation in the Croatian Military Frontier. Descriptions of natural conditions, of political and military circumstances and of the population of the Varaždin Generalate were made for the purpose of organizing a better administrative and economic system and a more effective military force in the Generalate.

The second point emphasized in the paper referred to the area/space of the Varaždin Generalate. The area of the Generalate, as described in the *Beschreibung*, was not presented only as a geographic and physical fact. It could also be analyzed as a space for projection and implementation of various interests of the Habsburg Monarchy. Following the description, the population, land-holding, agriculture, trades, crafts and military obligations could be identified as "elements" that participated in the construction of the space of the Generalate.

The paper also stressed that the attitude of the author of the *Beschreibung* toward the described area was very important for further steps regarding reforms. The author's interest in the Varaždin Generalate could be characterized as premeditated and conditioned by his service. He did not originate from the society and area he described. Precisely his "outsider" position is important, since he mediated in providing higher authorities with a specific image of the Military Frontier, based on which they made their proposals in regard to implementation of reforms, decisions and concrete actions.

Thirdly, the *Beschreibung* could also be seen as a narrative on the formation of identities in the frontier society, on the basis of its dual

function—military and agrarian.

**Dr. Rumenjak's** paper, **Narrating Identity: Military and Post-Military Croatia in the Literary Works of Bude Budisavljević of Prijedor**, focused on Budisavljević's autobiographical discourse and used these writings for research into the collective identities found in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Lika-Krbava region of Croatia.

Budislav Budisavljević of Prijedor (1843-1919) was a Croatian and Serbian writer who was born in the heart of the Croatian Military Frontier, in Bjelopolje in Lika. Budisavljević was much more than just a writer. From 1884 to 1905, he served as governor in several of Banska Hrvatska's counties and was one of the closest political allies of the Ban (Vice-Roy) Károly Khuen-Héderváry (1883-1903). His autobiography is the Serbian counterpart to the famous diary notes of Isidor Kršnjavi, which for many years represented the single autobiographical source in the research of the influential pro-governmental Croatian and Serbian elites during Ban Khuen-Héderváry's tenure. Specifically, Budisavljević's memoirs and novels represent the rare materials of everyday life and the mentality of the markedly rural, mountainous region of his Lika-Krbava homeland. In that regard, his autobiographical work is a prime research source on the transition from traditional to modern collective identities in the former Croatian borderland region.

Three dominant themes of Lika-Krbava's traditional borderland collective identity emerged from the author's analysis of Budisavljević's work: the unquestionable loyalty to the Habsburg emperor and king, a general fascination with the Likaner brigands (hajduci), and strong Croatian patriotism. Research showed that after the dissolution of the frontier in 1881, the remote and underdeveloped Lika-Krbava district

in which the Orthodox, Serbian population constituted the most numerous collective was significantly challenged in its transition from a military to a civil society. Analysis of Budisavljević's narrative revealed that the disappearance of these traditional borderland identities, particularly the Croatian patriotism and the peaceful coexistence of Christian ethno-confessional collectives, intensified the identity crisis during transition. This crisis inflamed antagonism toward the new civil administration and helped to develop ethno-confessional and national conflicts among the local Croatian and Serbian population.

The author concluded that Budisavljević's narrative is uniquely important from two basic perspectives. This is the first intimate exposure of the distinctive world of mentalities and collective identities of the rural peasant population in Lika-Krbava in the second half of the 19th century. Secondly, Budisavljević's work provides rare information about the views and ideas of the domestic Serbian intellectual and political establishment of the time. Additionally, this research uncovered Budisavljević's powerful Croatian patriotism in the period when he was affiliated with the pro-Magyar Serbian Club. This confirms that Budisavljević had dual—Croatian and Serbian—national identity and forces researchers to re-examine the existing Croatian and Serbian intellectual map of the period.

Prepared by Nives Rumenjak and Sanja Lazanin **From the History of Croats in America.**

### **War and the Discourse of Violence**

This panel explored the language of propaganda and incitement employed by Yugoslav political leaders during that country's collapse amidst several bloody conflicts. It brought together experts from several disciplines, each with a distinct methodological framework, who

analyze this potentially destructive use of language before and during the wars. The importance of this issue has been highlighted in trials before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, where it has proven difficult to establish forensically what often seems obvious to casual observers—that discourses of violence or nationalist exclusivity have contributed to hatred and war crimes.

In his paper "**Four Paradigms of Provocative Rhetoric in the Speeches of Former Yugoslav Leaders**" Andrew Corin (Defense Language Institute) compared four paradigms of provocative speech encountered in the rhetoric of former Yugoslav political leaders, Radoslav Brđjanin, Radovan Karadžić, Alija Izetbegović and Slobodan Milošević, and articulated difficulties facing a forensic analyst of each paradigm.

Robert Donia (University of Michigan) presented on "**Poetics and Politics: The Incendiary Rhetoric of Radovan Karadžić**" demonstrating how Karadžić's poetic style as a young man prefigured elements of his later incendiary political rhetoric. On numerous occasions in September and October 1991, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, in private telephone conversations, employed the word "disappear" as the central concept in his vision of an apocalyptic end to the Bosniak people. These quotations are contained in telephone intercepts admitted into evidence in open session at various trials at the International Criminal Tribunal and therefore in the public domain. The verb "disappear" is distinctive in that it posts a beginning state and an end state—that which was, is no more—without specifying the agent or describing the process that brought about the disappearance. In his use of the word in the fall of 1991 (well before the war began), Karadžić identified the agents of any such prospective disappearance as either the "Serb people" or no one at all. In

no case did Karadžić suggest that he would be the agent of such disappearance. Rather, he often spoke of being impotent to prevent Serbs from exercising their popular will and wreaking a bloody vengeance on the Bosniaks. Herein lay the curious linguistic device with which Karadžić denied responsibility for whatever might befall the Bosniak at Serb hands.

Karadžić was very familiar conceptually with unnamed but powerful causal agents, as shown in poetry written in his youth. His poems include the grammatical construction and concept of unspecified but seemingly omnipotent natural forces intervening to wreak destruction in human affairs. I do not argue, as some have done, that Karadžić was from youth a devoted Serb nationalist poet-warrior, but rather that he had earlier expressed notions of causation, agency, and uncontrollable forces that prefigured his disappearance discourse in the 1990s.

Mirjana N. Dedaić (Georgetown University) presented a paper entitled "**Anticipatory Discourse in Franjo Tuđman's War Speeches.**" She focused on the discursive strategies used by the former Croatian president in his speeches delivered between October 1991 and October 1992 to justify the war and mobilize people. Franjo Tuđman's speaking prowess did not come from his oratorical charisma. Rather, the powerful force in his speech that motivated people to sacrifice was embedded in the anticipation Tuđman constructed in his listeners. Dedaić identified four illocutionary forces formed in the discourse of President Tuđman's speeches that were responsible for igniting the perlocutionary effect that changed people's minds and moved them to action. The four forces—oracular and agnostic knowledge of future, and fatalistic vs. agentive approach to the actors form the epistemic stand for the positioning of the speaker and the listener in the discourse-shaped moral world projected to the future realities.

**The Troubled “Special Relationship”: Croatia’s Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1990-2010**

**Dr. Josip Glaurdić**, University of Cambridge, presented **“A Grain of Power and a Fistful of Justice: The Presidency of Stjepan Mesić and Bosnia and Herzegovina.”**

In his campaign for Croatia’s 2000 presidential election, Stjepan Mesić promised dramatic changes in the country’s domestic and foreign policies.

The greatest change was arguably to come in the policy of Croatia toward Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ambiguities of the late president Franjo Tuđman regarding the viability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the support of his government for the Croat element in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, were to be substituted with a strong assertion of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s sovereignty and with Croatia’s active withdrawal from Bosnia and Herzegovina’s internal affairs. Ten years later, the results of this policy—which was more or less successfully implemented—are possibly the greatest disappointment of Mesić’s whole tenure. This paper seeks to explain the roots of Mesić’s policy choices by utilizing a systematic content analysis of his verbal output on foreign affairs in order to ascertain his leadership traits. It also explores the causes of his policy’s failures by tracing the decade-long interaction of regional and international players regarding the political developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Dr. Jure Krišto**, Croatian Institute for History, presented **“Bosnia and Herzegovina and Tuđman’s Vision of the Republic of Croatia.”**

Was Tuđman in collusion with Milošević to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH)? Did the Croatian Army attack BH? What is the role of

the international community in the war in BH? Those are some of the questions that this paper tries to answer. Even before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the representatives of all of its former Republics knew that BH was both the problem and the key for the resolution of the problem called Yugoslavia. The solution of that quandary was first left to Alija Izetbegović, Franjo Tuđman, and Slobodan Milošević. They were aware that it is expected of them to propose some form of “division” of BH. So were the representatives of various international bodies, including the European Community and United Nations. However, when it became clear that the Serbs were against any BH, two solutions seemed appropriate, either the preservation of BiH as a confederation of Serb, Croat, and Muslim states or the creation of a Muslim state and unification of Serb and Croat regions to Serbia and Croatia respectively.

The Muslim leadership (Bosniaks) has chosen a third solution, which denied any legitimacy to Serb and Croatian claims in BH and aimed at the creation of a Muslim state in the entire territory of BH. The international community, especially the United States of America, gradually adopted a modified form of the Bosniak solution. In the hope that the USA would accept a confederate solution, Tuđman tried to defend the areas inhabited by Croats. However, when he realized that America did not entertain the Croatian territory in BH, he tried to justify it by a supposed role given to Croats to “westernize” Muslims of BH.

**Dr. Aziz Hasanović**, Deputy Mufti in Croatia, presented **“Integration of Bosniaks in Croatia and Autochthony of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Underlying Factors of Healthy Politics Between the Two Countries.”**

After reviewing the key concepts that are the framework and foundation

for the observation of these issues, it is necessary to access to the main topic and see how the Bosniaks in Croatia during the centuries-long co-existence managed to maintain their independence and fit within the Croatian society to develop and strengthen their own institutions and become an integral part of Croatian society. With the same view, we should take a look at the autochthonous component of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I have no aspirations to go deeper into these segments, because the others papers will address it. I would like to focus attention on the models or forms of integration of Bosniaks in the Croatian society through the positive legal framework of the Republic of Croatia.

The intention of the Bosniaks in Croatia is integration to all spheres of social reality in Croatia with the policy: INTEGRATION-YES, ASSIMILATION-NOT! Bosnian existence in Croatia is an existence with a double vision. On the one hand, it is a strengthening of multi-cultural, multiethnic, multinational and multi-confessional Croatian social reality, and on the other, it is a strengthening of its own institutions in order to preserve independence and Bosnian integrity by using all available infrastructural resources of the state. Only such a model is sustainable and guarantees preservation of specifics of minorities within the majority community. We often hear about the lack of sensitivity for ethno-cultural issues in Croatia. This comes from associations or from individuals involved in the protection of human rights and freedoms. We need to know that the attitude towards minorities all over the world reflects the maturity of the state as well as the society. We must learn that preserving the identity as well as development of togetherness do not exclude each other, and that the struggle against uniformity and pursuit of an open dialogue are always more fruitful for

the maturity of people and for their unity in a democratic society, which boldly and meaningfully moves towards a different, wealthier and peaceful future.

Round Table 20 Nov 2010

## The Role of Media in Croatian Democracy: A Glance Back on the First Twenty Years

**Branko Salaj**

During most of its almost two-hundred-year-old history, the Croatian press has suffered from outside interference and outright repression. Despite deep historical scars, the country found enough strength in 1991 to pursue an information policy of extraordinary openness in the Homeland war. Some of the main policy ingredients which contributed to the ultimate success in the fight for freedom, are described in the first part of this essay.

The freedom won had serious limitations. In the beginning of 1992, a few years following the armistice, more than a quarter of the Croatian territory remained in control of insurgents. Strong doubts from some of the big powers about the wisdom of Yugoslavia's breakup lingered even after the territorial integrity was achieved. Croatia found itself isolated and obstructed in its efforts to become an EU member. This stimulated a siege mentality in Croatia and its media and led to a cumulative process of mutual recriminations which lasted until the Croatian political landscape changed in the beginning of the new millenium.



**Professor Dr. Branko Salaj**

It was then that the mainstream media switched from preoccupation with nation-building during the first decade to an unqualified euointegrationalist view during the second decade of independence. Did weaknesses inherited from the troubled past survive and merely adapt to the changing political realities of

both of these periods? The second part of the essay describes the present media structure and identifies some areas of remaining professional concern.

### Heritage of a muzzled press

It is impossible to evaluate an information system without understanding the historical context in which it developed. Before World War I, Croatian journalism was shaped under conditions similar to those in most Central and East European countries. It toiled in the periphery of an empire under substantially more difficult conditions than the press in sovereign West European countries and at the centers of the empire, Vienna and Budapest. The fact that all important political and economic decisions were being made elsewhere was not the only one influencing the periphery. In the case of Croatia, central political powers continued to attempt to strengthen their dominance by suppressing even the most basic elements of the Croatian national identity and imposing their own languages and culture.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the press environment differed from the one found in functioning democracies whose ambitions of compromise-seeking and an involvement of the citizenry improved public life and institutions. Realities of the Croatian public scene in the beginning of the 20th century were very different—the dominant theme was how to attain national freedom as a precondition for directing its own destiny and gaining other freedoms.

After WWI the Croats found themselves in the new Yugoslav state which turned out to be an even worse nightmare for national freedom and democratic liberties than the previous one. Leaders of the main Croatian democratic party were assassinated during a 1928 parliamentary debate and a Greater

<sup>1</sup> Opposing the use of the German or Hungarian languages, the Croatian Parliament persisted in holding its debates in Latin until 1847 when Croatian was designated to be the diplomatic, official language. This came twelve years after the publication of the first newspaper in Croatian (1835). Still, during a long time, two main Zagreb newspapers, backed by central authorities, were published in German, respectively Hungarian. In Dalmatia, conquered by Napoleon in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the first Croatian newspaper (started in Zadar in 1806) continued to be published during three and a half years as a bilingual (Croatian/Italian) paper with overtones of propaganda for the French rule.

Serbian dictatorship which followed forbade even the use of the name of the nation itself. These events led to the creation of the underground Croatian liberation movement Ustasa which, during WWII, proclaimed a national state, closely controlled by the Nazi and Fascist occupiers of Yugoslavia. A civil war ensued from 1941-45 in which grave crimes against humanity were committed.

The Communists, who organized the main wartime resistance movement, used it to reestablish Yugoslavia, but as a Soviet-style dictatorship. The inherited tradition of muzzled press fitted well into this pattern. The national question was—at least formally—sidetracked by defining Yugoslavia as a federal state. The press was to be used as an instrument of the Party in transforming the society and journalists were defined as “sociopolitical workers,” with the corresponding obligation to follow a given party line. Initially the party maintained an extremely close and uncompromising control of media as its means of directing the masses. Even during the subsequent periods of liberalization the control remained quite effective.

After the breach with the Soviet bloc in 1948, the system started to slowly evolve toward more openness, gradually leaving some latitude for individual opinions. There was, however, no tolerance for discussing, either in public or in private, a number of subjects like the personality of Tito, the leading role of the Party, treatment of political prisoners, “brotherhood and unity,” the army and secret police, etc. These topics were considered sacrosanct until the very end of the regime, and the media served as an important gauge of such imposed limits. Whenever the attention of the public had to be distracted from some embarrassing subject or when it was deemed desirable to gain a measure of legitimacy for the decisions made in seclusion by the highest party bodies, the media could also be used as an instrument of manipulation. So, far from serving just as an instrument of information, the press had an important political role, and an overwhelming majority of journalists were party members.

Yugoslav President Tito died in 1980, and shortly afterwards demonstrations started in Kosovo. Heavy repression, leaving many Albanians dead and hundreds wounded, further aggravated the

situation. Belgrade media intensified reporting news and rumors from the province, some quite inflammatory. The mood of the Serbian capital radicalized, nationalist excesses became more frequent, and verbal sniping developed between Belgrade and the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana.

In Croatia, the political environment was quite different—the media, under relatively tight party control, were silent, and for a good reason. After WWII, Croats had constantly been suspected of harboring separatist thoughts and close secret police scrutiny was the rule. By the mid-1960s, two out of three persons at an economically active age—practically all families in Croatia—were registered in secret police files, which was almost 9-fold more than in the so-called Inner Serbia (excluding the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina). In the beginning of 1970s, a liberal “Croatian spring” movement, with some separatist overtones, ended in harsh repression. Hundreds were imprisoned, many thousands thrown out of their jobs or out of the party, and the party itself was bestowed with new leadership.

When the unrest in Kosovo started, the party feared that it might spread to Croatia and opted for preventive action. The post-Tito period (1980 and onward) started with some leading Croatian dissidents—Tudjman, Gotovac and Veselica—being tried and sentenced to years in prison, mainly for giving interviews to Western journalists. As the Belgrade media engaged in an increasingly populist frenzy about the situation in Kosovo, the Croatian media was informed about the conflict but remained rather restrained in comments even after Milošević took over control of the party in Serbia.

The lines of division became, however, quite obvious when the fury of Milošević’s Greater Serbian movement turned against the federal system. A final shift in media positioning occurred when the Slovenian and Croatian parties left the Yugoslav League of Communists and decided to seek popular mandate in free elections in the spring of 1990. In Croatia a new party, HDZ under the leadership of Franjo Tudjman, then emerged as the new dominant political force, basically demanding implementation of the sovereign right of the republic to decide its own future. Milošević’s countermove in August 1990 was to engineer an

uprising by extremist elements in communities with local Serb majority in certain strategically important rural areas of Croatia.

The republic, practically unarmed, faced an extreme military and political challenge to its very existence, and the decision was taken to follow the policy of national reconciliation and avoid a political lustration of the type taking place in the Communist bloc countries. The reconciliation enabled former party members to hold offices in the new government, both on the highest central level and locally. Such a policy of transition did not raise many eyebrows in the West, where the Yugoslav party was previously treated as a somewhat odd species in the communist menagerie. However, in an extraordinary situation with national survival at stake, it was probably an additional reason for a relatively slow change of former attitudes toward the media.

#### **The communication war within the war**

As one of the first results of the Milošević-led campaign, in August 1990 the Serb insurgents gained control of the main land line for telecommunications between North and South Croatia. The Yugoslav army, already under Milošević’s control, supported it by interdicting movements of Croatian police and securing the areas under extremist control with its armored units. Unknown to the broader public, the Army also took control of two key points in the civilian wireless telephone grid and thus gained direct access to and control over the entire flow of communications between Croatia’s two halves.

Croats succeeded in establishing a provisional alternative communication lifeline but had a clear foreboding of what to expect during the full-blown war, which started in the second half of 1991. Yugoslav jets repeatedly attacked national and local broadcasting transmitters intending to use their wide military superiority to gain a total control of telecommunications.

At the outset, Belgrade had an immense advantage of uninhibited use of its civil and military communication networks and full access to international news agencies; it was able to communicate with the world through a myriad of foreign and former Yugoslav federal diplomatic, intelligence, economic

and media channels. Comparatively, Zagreb was seen as a poor cousin from the countryside, with some vulnerable broadcasting outlets and broken land communications: a political midget with a few foreign consulates, a few Croatian companies with international experience, and open lines only to an engaged but operationally unorganized Diaspora.

A few modest steps were taken in Croatia to redress the situation. The news agency Hina started its operations by mid-August 1990, replacing the Yugoslav agency Tanjug, which had been overtaken by Milošević’s activists. It is indicative of the degree of initial international isolation of Croatia that, of all international news agencies, only the French AFP cooperated with Hina from the start. Others felt bound by existing exclusive agreements with Tanjug. The satellite information and program exchanges with Europe by Zagreb TV were intensified to maximum. When the aggression developed into full-scale offensive operations during the summer of 1991, Croatian public TV and radio programs had practically the whole nation watching and listening. There was a complete, and to a large extent self-organized, mobilization of the Croatian public scene and diaspora around the theme of peace but also a determined resistance to the military might of the aggressor.

One of the first decisions I had to make as the wartime minister of information was to choose whether the Ministry would take part in disinformation which is an important tactical element of warfare. For reasons which will be apparent in what follows, we stayed out of disinformation/propaganda and entirely left it to specialized bodies.

Of course, even the most straightforward information is not a value-free product. It has to deal not only with hard facts but also with perceptions—it takes into account knowledge, state of mind, and terms of reference of the targeted public. So, everything in a news item, from the choice of subject to the semantics of presentation and the distribution of the final product, is to some degree a result of value judgments. As such it is also open, particularly during a war, to different degrees of subjectivity.

Having all this in mind, I can only state that every effort was made to keep the output emanating from the Ministry of Information as factual as possible even

while riposting to some of the most outrageous lies from the aggressor side. For example, on the day Vukovar defenses were falling apart and the slaughter of prisoners-of-war started, Reuters was lured into carrying in its worldwide news service a Serbian allegation that the defenders of the city had held 41 Serb children imprisoned throughout the siege and that they killed them during the final assault. Another ridiculous lie widely repeated in the Belgrade press was that the leading Zagreb physics research institute was developing a nuclear weapon and that Croats had habitually dispensed radioactive waste into the river Sava.

### **Key problem: how to reach foreign audiences**

The Ministry was convinced that the overwhelming problem of the Croatian cause was not the domestic stage but global perceptions of war. Despite demonstrations of Milošević's divisive ethnic populism which evidently wrecked regional peace, in many international quarters he was still believed to stand for Yugoslav unity, a solution preferred by big powers ever since WW1. Croatian aspirations, on the contrary, were often interpreted not only as the main threat to such internationally aspired unity but also as a reflection of ideas in the war-time Ustasa Fascist-aligned state. Four and a half decades of Yugoslav propaganda and a very favorable treatment of the Titoist regime in the West left traces which were not easily removed.

The key strategic problem of the Croatian information system was how to approach foreign audiences. They experienced a humanitarian shock of sorts when viewing TV reels of destruction and death and seeing a practically defenseless nation being overrun. Then the horrors of Vukovar, Dubrovnik, and other tragedies came on the top of it. Much of the Croatian official and purely private volunteer effort went into supporting peace initiatives which multiplied in the West, taken by Nobel Prize winners, philosophers, and actors. Information materials were printed, press conferences held, interviews given, and mountains of faxes sent.

Yet the breakthrough did not come easily: The images, which for victims were incontestable, had to be painstakingly explained to the Western

public and it should have been done—I believe—by those they trusted. After all, some governments made conscientious efforts in their own countries to “reshuffle the semantics” so as to make the news unintelligible. Government briefs often confused the issues, bypassing the question of how the war started and how a land grab through genocidal means was attempted. Instead of establishing this clear causal relationship, some Western governments systematically termed aggressors and victims as “warring factions,” referred to rowdy extremists as combatants, and equally hammered all “parties to conflict.”

This made **foreign correspondents** very important witnesses of the war and interpreters of its bloody reality. Trusted in their countries, usually with no personal interest involved and at the outset often even sympathetic to Yugoslavia, they could closely follow what went on. Intellectually honest, most of them did not hesitate to report what they saw even when this went counter to the established, “politically correct” preferences in their home countries or even their own preconceived ideas.

The Ministry of Information had hoped to gain sympathy for Croatia with a policy of extreme openness toward journalists. The logic of using this opening was very simple: Our cause was just and it would win over the public if given a chance. How could we get this chance when practically devoid of basic material means? We decided to follow three simple principles which—to be frank—in some people's opinion bordered on a hopeless blue-eyed naiveté:

- Never compromise our own trustworthiness
- Create the best possible conditions for the press, including a complete freedom of movement
- Prohibit censorship

Allowing such extreme professional freedom of action in wartime, including the possibilities to visit combat zones, was not only unique, it was risky in several respects. There was, to begin with, a huge security risk: The country was awash with spies and provocateurs of all colors. There was a risk that, as sometimes happens in war, something awkward would happen on one's own side which one would prefer not to have reported. There was also a personal risk for newsmen themselves—

conditions at the front eventually became so bad that journalists and Red Cross teams on the Croatian side often preferred to drive around in unmarked cars in order to be less conspicuous to the other side. A record number of media people, close to 30, and most of them foreign nationals, lost their lives only during the second half of 1991, which is an extraordinary high incidence of casualties in such a short span of time.

The policy of openness paid off. Changing mood and perceptions of Western audiences made it more palatable for many EU politicians—as acknowledged e.g. by Hubert Védrine (who later became French foreign minister)—to finally give in to the mounting pressure and accept the Croatian quest for independence at the end of 1991. Of course, it was essential that the Croats had shown they could militarily hold their stand and a resulting diplomatic crisis abundantly revealed the lack of common European foreign policy with repercussions for the whole European edifice. But the media and their influence on foreign audiences were an important element in achieving the final outcome.

### **Securing the domestic front**

In the beginning of open warfare, the Croatian Ministry of Information asked the media to refrain from publishing any data of military nature. The request was honored, with some exceptions which fortunately did not have serious consequences. The wartime Croatian coalition government felt, however, it had to have in reserve a legal stick to use against attempts to seriously jeopardize national security through media. The nature of dangerous covert provocations played by the enemy at that time is best shown by the fact that operatives of the Yugoslav army intelligence engineered explosions in front of the Jewish community center and Serb Orthodox bishopric in Zagreb and at the Jewish monument at the Zagreb cemetery.

A crisis decree, of the type used in other fields, gave extraordinary powers over media to the Ministry of Information and Information Headquarters, consisting of three ministers (coming from different parties) and three well-known journalists (with very different professional profiles). In a series of extensive interviews at that time, I stated that the decree was to be kept in reserve for some extreme and as

yet unforeseen circumstance. This was strictly observed. The Info HQ did not have any staff and met four times, for informal seminar-like discussions of the general media situation. On three occasions a member of the Info HQ—a deputy prime minister and Social Democrat—informally briefed editors-in-chief on the political situation.

The powers of the decree were used once, in the beginning of 1992, on the very day when the Yugoslav air force shot down a U.N. helicopter, killing five foreign observers. A boulevard-type weekly, despite a previous warning by the Ministry, had continued to publish extensive, illegally taped, conversations between the commanding officer of the Vukovar front and highest military and civilian authorities in Zagreb. The incriminated issue of the weekly was removed from circulation and it soon reappeared with the former transcript and pages filled with reports on protests against the measure. But the official notice had been served that a willful publication of military matters would not be tolerated. Soon after the cessation of general hostilities the Decree was withdrawn.

### Laying legal foundations of the free press

A few months after the general armistice in the beginning of 1992 a new Law on Public Information—a kind of Magna Carta of Croatian journalism—was promulgated. It was subsequently redacted on two occasions but its general philosophy was never put in doubt. Its overall approach was inspired by the Swedish principles of free press, which seemed to set ambitions high enough. It soon turned out, however, that incorporating good intentions into law was far simpler than having them strictly applied in a society with specific previous experiences. It is a matter of conjecture whether the Ministry of Information, dissolved by autumn of 1992 for fear that it might be labeled abroad as “ministry of truth,” could under more peaceful conditions have served as an institutional promoter of press liberties under the new law.

As it turned out, in the 1990s, during the initial period of relative military peace but continued high international suspension and pressures, there was no administrative body within the

bureaucratic structures of government which could decisively act on behalf of the free press. Seen in retrospect, it is evident that the officialdom, faced with criticism of all sorts—well-founded, exaggerated or straightforward malignant—responded with an inherent tendency to indignation and a feeling of betrayal of national interests. An in-house countervailing power to this frame of mind could have made a lot of difference, but there was none.

One of the main provisions of the Law on Public Information was to take the freedom of the press out of the courts. A public Commission on the Freedom of Public Speech was to be instituted not only as a matter of principle but also as a practical solution to avoid inefficiently long court proceedings under judges unfamiliar with journalistic deontology. The Commission would consist of representatives nominated by different trades and professional groups within the information/culture segment of society. Their task would be to promptly deal both with journalists’ complaints, concerning any infringement on their professional freedom, and complaints from citizens about the media. The media concerned would be obliged to publish the findings.

Unfortunately, the Commission was never appointed and as a result the whole decade of the 1990s was marred by a number of interminable legal actions in ordinary courts in which, among others, some leading politicians alleged that unsubstantiated assertions in the press had caused them anguish and damaged their honor and reputation.

An interesting detail in this sordid story is why this important Commission remained a dead letter. One of its members was to be nominated by the oldest Croatian cultural institution *Matica hrvatska*, and its chairman, a noted author, was at the time also president of a liberal party. Illustrating the proverb about the road to hell being paved with good intentions, he felt that it would run counter to his liberal persuasion to nominate someone to a body which would formally be appointed by the government. And those who did not like the idea of a Commission to begin with had their day: Without a prescribed member, no Commission was possible.

There were also several other important provisions of the law which for years proved to be “too much too early.”

One of them was the obligation for the administration to respond to newsmen’s inquiries within a reasonable amount of time. Only data specifically classified as secret was to be withheld from the public. Publishers were required to annually list the owners of their media. While substantial progress has been made in observance of these and similar rules basic to creating a vibrant, knowledgeable and responsible information system, the application of the law is still often marred by considerable delays and hesitation.

### Postwar trends in Croatian media

To evaluate freedom and professionalism of a country’s media is a methodologically complex task. This is particularly true of a country which gained independence and built institutions for a sovereign state in war-like conditions while at the same time changing the underlying political and economic systems. As if the effects of the profound parallel changes of value premises, institutions and conditions of life during the last twenty years were not enough, a global wave of technological innovation has been transforming the media.

These methodological problems point to the necessity of comparative analyses which have been almost completely absent from the debate about Croatian media. Very few attempts have been made to systematically compare former Yugoslav practices with the present ones. To what extent is the media a mirror of society at large? How could specifically Croatian problems be distinguished from the ones common to transition societies in general? Should the shortcomings of the transition period be gauged in terms of high principles or the actual practice observed in old Western democracies? What should the terms of reference be when evaluating freedom of speech: extensive, trial-and-error court interpretations of the First<sup>1</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution or various European traditions of legally defining it?

This short and necessarily subjective survey cannot untangle the analytical mess which arises in absence of such in-depth analyses. It is, however, evident that the resulting confusion hurts the fundamental mission of fairly informing the public and explains, partly at least, the tendency of most Croatian media to get involved in petty political entanglements.

In doing so and by failing to initiate informed and sustained debates in crucial matters, the media often ends up functioning as a well of general and ill-defined discontent within society. In times of vast changes, the readers are time and again left without indications of possible alternate approaches, with limited or no access to the background knowledge and data necessary in discussing crucial issues.

These shortcomings can to some extent be explained by the failure of the transition policies, albeit under difficult conditions, and by low standards of professionalism. In the beginning of the democratic era, the Croatian Government had inherited the control of practically all important media, with the exception of a few regional newspapers and some local radio stations. With the role of printed press sharply reduced both by a decreased demand due to the economic crisis and by a shortage of paper, the public TV/radio system initially strengthened its pivotal role in informing the nation.

It could be interpreted as a sign of the strategic importance of this system that a few hundred of its journalists were sacked when the open warfare started. Most of the people in this group were said to have been identified as collaborators of the secret police during the Communist era, a claim which is quite plausible given the exceptional importance which used to be attached to this media. Some journalists may have been unsuspected victims of a revolutionary zest in organizing the defense of the country, and some may have been the undeserved prey of purely personal grudges. This heterogeneous group grew into a breeding ground for a relatively small but vociferous opposition outside the political establishment and frequently a recruitment base for foreign media subsidiaries and regional NGO's.

Activities of the local so-called Crisis Staffs, often turbulent and under a rather loose supervision of central authorities coordinated during wartime local public and private defense efforts, gave rise to some conflicts with the local media, including cases of local censorship and isolated cases of sacking of journalists or, in one case, even a physical takeover of the regional newspaper's editorial offices.

It took a long time for peace to return to Croatia. While it gained full international recognition and became a member of the U.N. by April 1992,

control of almost a quarter of its territory was not reestablished until August 1995 and full sovereignty over the whole national territory could not be claimed until January 1998. When the open military activities subsided, the government faced a great deal of reserve, let alone active opposition, to the process of Yugoslav disintegration among certain influential powers on the international scene. The treatment of Croatia, different from other transition countries in Central and East Europe, created and kept alive a sort of siege mentality in Croatia's ruling establishment.

The government increasingly turned to a defensive posture, facing difficulties in joining the European Union with a relatively open foreign backing of the opposition and diversified and well-funded foreign activities in the media and civil society. To be sure, the press remained free, but the government tried to retain control over some media through manipulated privatizations. Journalists suspected as foreign agents were eavesdropped and friendly editors were favored in the media under government control.

A negative cumulative spiral thus created was used on both sides of the fence, internally and abroad, to justify and intensify the policies which were behind the turmoil in the first place. By the end of the 1990s, economic difficulties and the death of the towering domestic figure in the fight for independence—Franjo Tudjman—added up to a wide-spread disenchantment with HDZ and an electoral victory for the opposition in both parliamentary and presidential elections. The semi-presidential system was replaced by a modified parliamentary system in which neither of the two biggest parties—HDZ and reformed Communists under Social Democratic banner—could govern on the national level without coalitions with smaller parties. This political change was welcomed by big powers who decided to crack open the door to the European Union, provided that Croatia engaged in strengthening ties with other former Yugoslav republics.

The change, however, at the political helm of Croatia brought little substantive alteration of informal rules governing public business: Party affiliations, personal connections and nepotism often continued to be more important than competence or efficiency, even under the

center-left coalition. The trend continued after the new change in parliamentary majority at the end of 2003, when a reconstructed HDZ returned to power, heading a center-right coalition. The new element on the political scene during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was that a dialogue among political parties of similar political persuasion became absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, it did not substantially improve efficiency but the enduring result was to produce governments more amenable to outside pressures than the previous ones<sup>2</sup>.

To indicate how the information system adapted itself to new conditions, sketchy references will be made to three types of factors: Media ownership, inherited value systems and uneven observance of professional journalistic deontology.

#### **Changes in the structure of media**

Using former ideological jargon, the media in ex-Yugoslavia was socially owned and managed by its workers. In fact, companies and workers were both owned and controlled by the government, read Communist party, with considerable variation in the control of time and space. Owing to reasons mentioned earlier, Croatian media was, during most of the 1970s and 1980s, under a particularly watchful eye of the Party. Within the concept of social ownership a certain autonomy of finance was permitted, sometimes even encouraged, but the political dictate of the Party had nevertheless to be observed. The government-controlled national radio and TV channels were—and still are—financed by the income from a separate parafiscal levy and from advertising. During the last years of the Communist period some local ventures, such as Omladinski radio [Youth radio] and Radio 101 in Zagreb and TV Marjan in Split, started slipping into semiprivate ownership.

The Croatian publishing house "Vjesnik" developed during Communism into the largest Yugoslav media behemoth comprising everything from semiofficial newspapers over trade magazines to cartoons and pornographic serials. It

<sup>2</sup> Opinion surveys in Croatia show, for example, a consistently low appreciation of governmental policies, irrespective of who detains power, with short-lived improvements around the elections.

controlled the whole vertical chain of production and distribution, from a large printing plant to a national chain of newsstands, which enabled it to use profits from the sales of tobacco and other daily consumption goods to finance its newspaper losses. After the change of political system the conglomerate quickly started to disintegrate in a rather disorderly fashion. Partly on its ruins and partly as a result of completely new business initiatives and technologies, a profound change of media ownership took place during the first two decades of Croatian statehood.

There are now 13 daily newspapers. In June 2010, the two major ones in Zagreb, *Jutarnji list* and *Večernji list*, were each supposed to be read by some 25% of the population, but the reader listings are not quite reliable. The printed edition of the government-owned paper, *Vjesnik*, has a diminutive circulation, but has developed a complete online edition of documentary value. Two political weeklies, *Globus* and *Nacional*, have a readership of 7 to 8% each, while the share of the most popular weekly, the ladies' magazine *Gloria*, is about three times higher. *Jutarnji*, *Globus* and *Gloria*, as well as the daily *Slobodna Dalmacija*, dominant in Dalmatia, are a part of the largest media group EPH (majority-owned by the German WAZ group). Austrian Styria, which owns *Večernji*, has also branched out into low-priced news-cum-ads newspaper and other media under the trade name of *24sata*, claiming to daily reach a third of the total population. Austrian VCP holds a majority stake in *Nacional*.

In autumn 2010, two public TV channels competed with two private channels on a national level and there were 21 local and one regional TV stations. The central evening news edition, previously a monopoly of public TV-channel 1, had a vibrant competition: In October 2010, private Nova TV had an average audience of some 17.5%, the earlier public monopolist 13.5% and the second private TV-channel, RTL, 11%. Nova is part of the CME group (owned by Jewish philanthropist Ronald S. Lauder and Time-Warner) while RTL is part of the Bertelsmann group, with two Croatian companies sharing a 25% minority stake.

Three national and eight regional programs of public radio compete with 3 private national and over 150 private

regional or local programs. A local radio station in Zagreb, *Antena*, was at the top of the national audience league in October 2010 with just under 10% of the population, followed by the private national radio chains, *Narodni* and *Otvoreni* with 7.5 and 5.5 % respectively. Public radio channel 1 came fourth with only 4.5%.

Finally, there is a strong increase in the frequency of internet use—at present over half the population is on the internet “at least once a month,” and three-quarters of those use it every day. Numerous political web-portals are active, but even the most frequented ones are yet to reach more than 5% of the population.

Thus, statistics tell the story of a rather differentiated sector, with important private components as correctives of political influence on the media. The truth is more complex. The influence of politics and the public sector remains quite important, particularly in electronic media, owing to their traditional control of sources of information, their command of different regulatory agencies and the advertising importance of public companies in the economy. Generally speaking, however, an improvement of journalistic independence has gradually taken place, as explained below.

On the other hand, private ownership has not proven itself as a particularly pervasive guarantor of the freedom of the press or upholder of journalistic deontology either. Like in many other transition countries, it seems to be occasionally tempting to use the control of media for extorting political favors, using advertising money to influence editorial policies or snatching small hidden advantages like showing products in editorial or entertainment contexts. Yet, on the whole, increased competition has had a beneficial effect on journalistic bluntness and, occasionally, on reporting responsibility.

There is also a potential problem of foreign influences on editorial policies. Most private media are wholly or majority owned by foreign companies and in some cases the origin of the private ownership is somewhat murky and leaves room for speculations about possible backgrounds. Being a part of a larger enterprise with given global or regional profit-seeking strategy is in itself bound to put some restraint on editorial freedom. As everywhere else, the cyber revolution has

hastened the trend toward more entertainment, glamor, gossip, banalized news etc.

Politically more important is the influence on the political agenda of the region exercised by the foreign programs under headings of “strategic information,” “public diplomacy” and the like. As a buffer between East and West, former Yugoslavia had most of the time been the subject of intense interest by diplomacies, intelligence and media of the two blocks. After the failure of big powers to prevent the breakup of the country, some of them increased their political and military presence during the 1990s. Media activities were used, as envisaged by the cyber age military-diplomatic doctrines, in the pursuit of strategies and in influencing political agenda in the area.

### **Importance of inherited value premises**

Information systems mirror the value premises of their societies. Since these values change only gradually and have long historical echoes, an understanding of their mutations over time helps to explain some of the present media outlook.

As a member of the Croatian wartime cabinet (beginning in late August 1991), I early learned what perplexing results this could lead to in practice. A small example: After almost 40 years of experience with Western style governance I was surprised to find that Cabinet proceedings—of a wartime government at that!—were witnessed by at least half a dozen journalists and, at least in the early stages of a session, by TV-crews and photographers. Occasionally the Cabinet would go into closed session but it happened that journalists were permitted to stay if they “promised to keep quiet” about the debate, thus perverting their classical role as reporters.

This strange practice had originated during the Communist period and was at the time used to legitimize the decision-making process in the eyes of the public: Important strategic decisions were, of course, made by the highest party body but it was left to the Cabinet to legitimize them by formally—and in public—discuss the matters and give them a legal crusting. Discussions of a coalition government in the new democratic setting had quite a different political significance but the arrangement was not discontinued, formally because of fear that such a step

would compare unfavorably with the former practice.

The routine of inviting TV crews to initial stages of weekly Cabinet meetings has survived to this day. The government uses it to highlight important points on its schedule without having to expose itself to searching questions by reporters. It is an example of how the government, having lost the monopoly in setting the political agenda of the nation as it had during the Communist reign, still disposes of considerable means of using the media which have taken over this role. For example, the main news editions of electronic media—both public and private—closely follow activities of the president and the prime minister, often reproducing in prime time even their most banal remarks on whatever is being pushed as the dominant theme of the day. The settings for such free PR-rides for dignitaries vary from the time-honed practice of ribbon-cutting to visiting school classes, factories and hospitals, with a retinue of ministers and other functionaries usually following the star performers.

Monthly questions-and-answers programs on the public radio such as “The Way Government Governs” (starring the prime minister) or “Take Coffee with the President” do involve some probing of the political power by journalists and the public. Their regular format, however, represents in itself essentially a residue of a view of political power inherited from the Communist period. To my knowledge, nobody has ever contemplated to balance such a program series with one called “How the Opposition Opposes.”

The frequency with which the opposition is invited to expound its ideas fluctuates somewhat with the results of opinion polls or the proximity of an election. Mainstream parliamentarians of different colors usually get opportunities to present their views in current reporting, in interviews in local or national media or roundtables, which are a specialty of public TV. There are also a number of experts of different political coloration who are frequently used. However, parliamentarians outside the two opposed blocs—representatives of the groups strongly opposed to the mainstream policies and truly independent intellectuals with divergent views—find it usually much more difficult to have their voice heard, although it is most often

democratic and non-violent. The “sin” of political conformism is, of course, not particularly Croatian—it is almost a rule in most of the Western world. In Croatia it may have been a major factor behind the increasing electoral absenteeism observed during the 2010s.

A certain bureaucratic frame of mind—both as a legacy of the past and a sign of underdevelopment—is one of Croatian society’s big inherited problems and it permeates much of the output in media. There is an urge to legislate all sorts of human endeavor, including matters which many other countries leave to trades and professions or regulate by executive decrees. A large number of laws are therefore rushed through the Parliament without adequate professional and legal whetting and with a minimum of attention in media. Most of the Croatian adoptions of the EU *acquis communautaires* have also followed this route. Drafts of other laws, which follow a regular legislative procedure, usually reserve a month for what is called “public debate”. This is a broad term covering discussions in professional circles but is also a living remnant of times when such debates could be administered in the press. It is interesting to note that exceedingly few laws are born as the result of a *previous* truly public debate and the free exchange of ideas and proposals.

A particularly harmful consequence of bureaucratic thinking—in fact a true kiss of death for responsible media—is the insistence on form and symbols rather than content. The Communist party used to cultivate its own perception of society by arranging extensive media coverage of certain repetitive and symbolic events (Tito’s birthday being the best known example) on the state and local level. Meetings of the party committees were usually recorded on camera to show the true power-brokers, with an overlay of edited speaker text to preserve an image of unity.

This subservience to form is nowadays shown in a more or less mechanical and massively repeated news coverage of symbolic events of other nature. It reflects a greater variation of values and institutions, but the media continue to be only marginally interested in the reality behind such symbolic or protocolled events. They dutifully record hundreds of wreath-laying ceremonies for the victims

of the Homeland war but fail to earnestly prod into existential problems of veteran families. Extensive coverage of ritualized prize-awarding ceremonies in all walks of life—largely themselves a leftover from old times—often masks the absence of truly great accomplishments. News coverage abounds with religious processions or folklore manifestations but there is no urge to openly and in prime time discuss acute problems of the Church or the depth of the crisis in agriculture. Coming and goings of foreign diplomats are extensively reported but they are very seldom, if at all, asked pointed questions about crucial issues.

The list is practically endless and indicates that media still do not fit into their new role and responsibilities. Recollections of past troubles, but also blanks in general culture and experience, contribute to the recalcitrance of some newsmen to fully shoulder their own professional responsibility in the treatment of important aspects or the background of a topic. To make things worse, editors in some quarters continually tolerate or even encourage news items filled with innuendoes or incomplete or downright misleading statements.

Yet, seen on the whole, diversity and competition created by the privatization of media has improved the speed and the quality of political and economic reporting. A number of journalists are level-headed and persistent even under difficult and complex circumstances. The most important shortcoming of the press remains its failure to free itself from protocols and symbols and use its new power to help formulate the nation’s longer-term development problems, programs and policies. This would help fill a serious void created by inexperienced and badly organized government structures and a largely inept political establishment.

Some may, of course, argue that it is not the role of media to fill the voids left by the political establishment and that it is the establishment itself that has to be transformed. To what extent should the media be held responsible at all for the proper organization of society and the stability of its institutions? In functioning old democracies with stable institutions the problem is largely non-existent—in fact, aggressive news coverage usually blows in fresh air and initiates necessary

new thinking in staid bureaucratic institutions. In transition countries, let alone a newly independent state like Croatia, the problem is rather how should the press intercede without further weakening already feeble government institutions and making them even more amenable to all sorts of outside pressures?

My final paragraphs deal therefore with a particular technique of political spin, which makes the media an important creator of perceptions in public opinion and an attractive hunting ground for politicians and, occasionally, foreign psyopers.

### **Spin and other signs of professional failures**

Even old democracies are not immune to media spins as a way of influencing their national political agenda. Their particular genesis and interpretations in Croatia—where they usually appear as so-called “affairs” (*slučajevi*)—can be understood if we keep in mind its roots in the Communist period. To preserve the monopoly of political power in the hands of the Party elite, Titoist Yugoslavia usually let leading politicians who fell out of favor retire without much public ado.

The best known exception to the rule was Milovan Djilas, who actively sought the role of dissident and was jailed for it. Another exception was Andrija Hebrang, Croatian Party leader, jailed and murdered in 1949, a case intensely discussed for the first time some 35 years later, after Tito’s death, and then mainly in books and a few newspaper articles. Lower-echelon politicians or managers who lost powerful backing were, on the other hand, sometimes subjected to harsh criticism by the media, usually with a limited response, if any. In its most interesting application, the technique was used as a byzantine type of political infighting, with clashes between minor figures watched as an indication of relative strength and prospects of their sponsors higher up.

Under the new democratic rule this “affairs” method was expanded from a means of delegitimizing political (or, much less, business) figures to also spinning the public debate away from matters which did not fit into the current political agenda. The method became increasingly used even as an instrument of influencing political preferences in the longer run. Applied more broadly in a pluralist society, it often produces somewhat similar mental results as in the

one-party state. While it once could serve as a gauge of who was up and down within a fixed power structure, its frequent use in a newly pluralist society—usually under sensationalist and accusatory cover—makes many people, and particularly many politicians, primarily look for hidden or conspiratorial motives behind it.

Many of the “affairs” have dealt with serious and deeply troublesome issues (corruption, organized crime, crooked privatization schemes, influence-peddling, espionage etc.) but were often based on limited and uncorroborated documentation or hearsay, often intentionally provided or leaked to the press. The gist of many such narratives might have been partly or wholly true, but the involved media often failed to present them in a balanced way: Both sides of a story did not always get the same opportunity to be heard, leaked documents were not thoroughly checked by journalists’ own independent inquiries, etc. In the past, many “affairs” quickly degenerated into a medial lynch only to be followed by inconclusive judicial probe, with the cases dismissed for lack of evidence, particularly if the political will to further investigate was missing.<sup>3</sup>

The technique of letting investigative journalism take the form of “affairs,” usually accompanied by a more or less unchallenged repetition of accusations, had become almost a trademark of some of the media, including even a few program series on public TV. It could be argued in their favor that such programs were in a sense counterweight to a previously mentioned *de facto* reverence of political power by many public and private media organizations and to their reticence to report the facts, which the establishment could find embarrassing. But the price paid for both phenomena,

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<sup>3</sup> Subsequently added post-scriptum: In the beginning of 2011 there has been a marked positive change in the official resolve to prosecute even high-placed officials accused of corruption. It could prove to be a decisive turning point in weeding out the worst cases of unsavory practices which in turn would create a healthier environment for responsible journalism. In a parallel development, and as a reflection of the trend towards an improved rule of law, even the newscasts have become more straightforward and more frequently open also to non-conformist opinions. It remains to be seen whether the trend will persist even under changing political conditions.

the reverence and this particular brand of “engaged” journalism, has been high.

A stream of loosely substantiated stories, and the following medial posse, has had a destabilizing effect on a society still insecure with its new institutions and identity. It contributed to an atmosphere of often undefined but wide-spread discontent, a feeling of insufficiency and defeatism as well as questioning the integrity of most actors in the public field.

The role of the media as a responsible, independent, countervailing power to the political establishment has been seriously compromised by loose journalistic criteria and by some journalists occasionally acting as “sociopolitical workers.” In their new democratic version, such journalists were not necessarily controlled by the government; in fact they have often been vehemently critical of it and used the new power of media, believing themselves to be soldiers of a just cause.

Unfortunately, almost as a replay of old techniques, it could happen that in pursuing the cause some facts were conveniently forgotten while loosely substantiated (and frequently inconsistent) charges could be repeated and interwoven, almost making them “true” axioms and pillars of faith. Born by the media, these “axioms” were then repeated as a politically correct mantra not only in public places but in large segments of academia as well. Unlike countries with an old democratic tradition and venerable institutions working in a stable environment, there were limited possibilities in Croatia of putting such mantras to serious tests. To keep the public discourse healthy it is therefore almost as important that investigative reporting strictly observes journalistic deontology as it yields significant results.

The importance of making media an independent sanctuary of a free but civilized exchange of facts and opinions has often been missed by those in the international community who have taken upon themselves to make over the freedom of press in Croatia. The support which came from governmental agencies, professional associations and regionally specialized NGOs in the West has mostly been directed to phenomena and instances with overtones of “political work.” It was driven more by the ambition to change the Croatian political landscape than to make Croatian media a harbinger of new times in a deeper and more enduring sense.

**Anton E. Basetić (1879-1921)**  
**The First Victim of Yugoslav**  
**Terror among Croatian Émigrés**  
By Dr. Ante Čuvalo

The assassination of Croatian patriots in the ranks of émigrés was a trait of the infamous Yugoslav secret police, namely, the UDBA, during the time of Tito's regime (1945-1990). Actually, the liquidation of Croatian patriots began long before Tito's time—that is, from the very founding of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 (Yugoslavia after 1929). Persecution of every sort was one of the historical links that bridged the time of the bloody founding of the Kingdom until the even bloodier end of the Yugoslav State. In fact, Greater-Serbian terror in Croatian lands began even before unification. It started on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, 1918, in the city of Vukovar, and we can still feel the ugly stench of death during and after the demise of Yugoslavia. The primary subject of Serbian terror was to be found not only among the Croatians, but also among all those who were doomed to perish for the sake of the "Greater Serbia" project. That megalomania nightmare that swallowed so much blood and lives is, to our regret, alive and well even to this day and it is evidenced daily with equal insolence!

It is only recently that knowledge of those Croatians liquidated in the Diaspora (at the very least 69 of them) after the end of World War II is beginning to come to light in the Homeland. Although "official" Zagreb shows little interest for these and other victims, the truth is slowly seeing the light of day—thanks to the courts of foreign lands, most notably German courts, that are attempting to solve at least some of the assassinations that took place in those countries. In the meantime, little or nothing is known of the terror waged against the Croatian Diaspora prior to 1945. Here we are talking about a portion of Croatian history that is yet

to be investigated and waiting for the Homeland to eventually remember it.

The very first victim of Yugoslav terror in America—and, I believe, among the Croatian Diaspora in general, that followed the fateful union of Croatian Lands with Serbia and Montenegro, was Anton E. Basetić. He was the editor of the Croatian newspaper *Glas Istine (Voice of Truth)* that was published in Chicago. Because of his explicit Croatian patriotism and anti-Yugoslav political stance, he was perfidiously liquidated "in full daylight" in Chicago on November 5, 1921. This was not only the murder of a journalist, but also an attempt to frighten into submission all those who were not willing to link hands and dance the new "Yugo-dance" as accompanied by a "Serbian flute."

**The Life and Work of Anton E. Basetić**

Anton Basetić was born in Primošten on September 17, 1877. Church records show the date as being June 20 in one instance, and September 20, 1877, in another. His father was Ivan, and his mother was Ana, nee Makelja. Anton's family numbered ten children. Originally, his name was *Ante Emilio Bolanča* but upon arriving in America, he changed it to *Anton E. Basetić/Basetich*. It is unclear as to why he changed his surname (and, to some extent, his first name), or why he chose the name *Basetić*, but we found out that his brother Leon (born April 11, 1883) also changed his surname to *Basetić* or *Bolanča-Basetić* upon his arrival to America in October 24, 1907.

Ante Emilio Bolanča set sail into the world from Genoa on the steamship *The Spartan Prince*. He arrived in New York harbor on July 23, 1898. He was received by his friend, *Stjepan Baković*, who lived at 177 Atlanta Avenue in New York. As of the present writing, it is unknown as to what schooling Ante had, or

where that schooling took place; what is known is that he was considerably more literate than the vast majority of Croatian émigrés of that time. So, whether he had a formal education or he was self-schooled is still unknown.

From the information thus far gathered about Ante after his arrival in America, and after a period of time spent in New York City, we see he stayed in Butte, Montana, in 1910 and was known as Anton Basetich. The American Census documents from 1910 confirm that Anton was married at the time to 19-year-old named Elsie, nee Coffin, from South Dakota. From the same Census report, we learn that Anton was a journalist by profession. (The 1910 Census document erroneously records Anton as having arrived in the U.S. in 1903. Perhaps he came to Minnesota in that year.)

A year later, Anton and Elsie were living in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was the editor of the Croatian Newspaper *Radnička Obrana, (The Workers' Defense)*. The Salt Lake City Directory of 1911 records that Anton was the Editor and Manager of the aforementioned newspaper, and that Emil Basetich was the President of the *Slavonian Publishing Company*. It is obvious that in both instances we are dealing with one and the same person. Sadly, Anton's wife Elsie died on December 16, 1912. According to the memory passed on in the family, Elsie died during the birth of their firstborn, a girl. It is not known with any certainty what became of the little girl. It is thought that she was taken in by Elsie's parents.

Following the death of his wife Elsie, most likely during 1913, Basetić moved from Salt Lake City to Duluth, Minnesota. The *Duluth City Directory* of 1913-1914 indicates that the *Slavonian Publishing Company's* manager was Anton Basetich, while Milan Knezevich was the editor of *Radnička Obrana*. The newspaper was

published in that city every Thursday. That same directory of 1915-1916 indicates that Basetich continued to be the publisher of the newspaper, but was located at a new address. As gleaned from the newspaper itself, the title of the publishing company was no longer known as the *Slavonian Publishing Company*, but as the *Croatian Publishing Company*. Clearly, Anton Basetić assumed ownership and editorial management of the *Radnička Obrana*. The newspaper had branch offices in Salt Lake City, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Gary, Indiana.

Though many Croatian newspapers saw the light of day in America, few of them survived for any length of time. One of the rare issues of *Radnička Obrana* to be found is the number dated March 11, 1916. That edition indicates that it was the twelfth year of publication for the newspaper. Clearly, this newspaper managed to survive longer than most Croatian publications in America at that time.

It would seem that around 1916, the *Radnička Obrana* ceased being published and that Anton moved from Minnesota to Chicago. That same year, Basetić purchased the newspaper known as *Hrvatski Rodoljub*, (*Croatian Patriot*). The paper was founded in 1915 and was published by B.F. Tolić in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Basetić transferred publication of the paper to Chicago. This would indicate that he already lived in the city.

This period of time was froth with war and was an especially worrisome time for Croatians in America as well as those in the homeland. Aside from the wartime adversity, a deep political division and separation began to take shape among Croatians: there were those who were prepared to abrogate their national heritage and rights and eagerly accept unity with the Serbian Kingdom, and there were those who stood in defense of the right to Croatian Statehood. Those in

the first group were more vociferous, and political conditions then present stood in their favor. The second group had to contend not only with the pro-Yugoslav element, but also with the burden of trying to prove to America and their fellow citizens (especially so after America's entrance into the war in 1917) that they were not champions of Austria and the Central Powers, but simply desired freedom for their Croatian homeland. So as to bring a shred of light into the political fog that overshadowed the time, a well-known and respected priest, Rev. Ivan Stipanović, established and published a Croatian journal, *Rodoljub*, (*Patriot*) in Chicago in January of 1915. Shortly thereafter, in August, the journal's name was changed to *Hrvatski Katolički Glasnik*, (*The Croatian Catholic Messenger*). It assumed a newspaper format and became the voice of (almost all) Croatian Catholic priests in America. Before the end of that same year, the paper established editorial links with *Narodna Obrana* that was published in Duluth, Minnesota, as well as with *Hrvatski Rodoljub* in Chicago. With such combined forces, a group of Croatian patriots now began to publish *Glas Istine* (*The Voice of Truth*). The editorial board resided at 2979 S. Wentworth Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Anton Basetić was chosen as its editor. It appears that in 1916, Basetić's *Radnička Obrana* changed its name to *Narodna Obrana* and subsequently melded into *Glasnik Istine*. Thus, he became its new editor.

While wartime blood flowed across the European front, a ferocious ideological war raged among the Croatians in America. One group aligned with the *Jugoslavenski Odbor*, (*The Yugoslav Committee*) and welcomed, extolled, and aided the members of that committee on their arrival in the U.S., sending monetary aid and war volunteers. Others were supporters of Croatian independence

and warned about Greater-Serbian ideology and its future evil effects on the Croatian people. A third group followed socialist ideas and also caused national and religious discord among Croatian émigrés across the world. Under such conditions, Anton Basetić assumed editorship of the publication, which by its orientation was Croatian and Catholic, and served as the representative and voice against the Yugoslav forces in Chicago and America.

Even prior to his assumption of the role as editor of the *Glas Istine*, Basetić wrote and spoke against the union with Serbia. A significant event in the Croatian Community of Chicago serves as a primary example of his role among Croatian-American émigrés: on March 10 and 11, 1915, in the LaSalle Hotel located in downtown Chicago, a *Jugoslav Congress* was held. More than 550 delegates and guests to the congress were in attendance. While at the congress they spoke of the "homogeneity of the Yugoslav people" (naturally, the well-known Serbian in America delegate to the Congress, Dr. Paul Radosavljević, a professor at the University of New York, considered all of the Yugoslavs to be Serbs) and of the soon-to-be created Kingdom of the Serbs, Croatians, and Slovenes. A group of Croatians, mostly located around Wentworth Avenue in Chicago, held a massive counter-demonstration. Some 3,000 Croatians gathered for the massive anti-Yugoslav counter-demonstration to hear one of its main speakers, namely, Anton Basetić. Clearly, then, upon his move to Chicago and his undertaking of the role as editor of the *Glas Istine*, Basetić became a person of importance among Croatians not only in this metropolis but across all of America.

Before touching on his tragic death, it is appropriate that we say a bit more about his family. Following the death of his first wife, Elsie (at the

end of 1912), Anton married Sandra (Alessandra, Sanda) F. Herska while residing in Chisholm, Minnesota. Sandra was from Severin na Kupi, located in the Gorski Kotar region of Croatia. Two children were born from their union: Vera, a daughter, was born in 1916, in Minnesota, while Ivan (John) was born in 1919 in Chicago.

### **The Assassination of Anton Basetić**

On November 5, 1921, around 8:15 a.m., Anton Basetić left his home at 140 West 31<sup>st</sup> Street and arrived at the real estate office of *Cannizzo, Jurko, and Company* that was located on 2927 Wentworth Avenue, not far from his home. Although the *Glas Istine* was printed by the *Croatian Printery* located a short distance away, Basetić, from all that can be garnered, chose, out of fear, to receive his mail at the aforementioned real estate office. He picked up his mail on a daily basis. That fateful morning, Marie Pullano, a 19-year-old clerk, was already at work in the office. Upon the entrance of Anton Basetić, she alerted him that two unknown men were loitering aimlessly across the street from the office. He thought she was frightened by them. His response was: "Never mind, I'm here. Don't be afraid." Soon after, these two scoundrels entered the real estate office. Marie and Anton went toward the door. Marie opened one of the double-doors and asked what they wanted. They remained silent. One of the men stepped into the office, drew his pistol, and fired six rounds at Basetić as he stood alongside the young lady. Two of the bullets struck their target—one in his shoulder and another in his neck. A few short minutes later, Anton expired. Marie, the clerk, fainted, while the two thugs disappeared without a trace. The entire tragic drama unfolded in a few short minutes.

All the newspapers in Chicago reported the incident and death of

Anton Basetić. They stressed that his death was of a political nature. One of the newspapers cited the thinking of the police officials, namely, that his murder had the mark of international political intrigue. In the meantime, the news reports fostered the erroneous suggestion that Anton Basetić was a fervent pro-Austrian partisan rather than stressing that he was an ardent patriot for the Croatian cause. Even then, the well-known "logic" was in place: all who were not Yugophiles clearly had to be Austrophiles—later, after World War II, to be labeled as "fascists." Naturally, the police and newspaper reports of the incident failed to engage the question of who was behind the loathsome crime. No serious police investigation of the murder ensued: the police did not concern themselves with who it was that wanted him dead. They simply decided that the murder was "an accounting among the émigrés," hence, the loss of a young Croatian life was of no consequence and not investigated, despite the fact that it occurred in the metropolis of Chicago and in broad daylight.

To this very day, Anton's descendants hold on to the passed-down conviction that his murder was the work of the notorious "Black Hand;" it is known only too well what sort of a bloody role that terrorist organization played in Serbia and beyond. Although the organization was "officially" suppressed in 1917, its adherents continued their criminal work, and Anton Basetić, at the very least, was a victim of their ideology. Basetić was only 44 years of age when he was murdered. He left behind a young wife, Sandra, and two infant children, as well as his child from his first marriage. Out of fear, Sandra, along with her children, moved to Minnesota and spent the next six months there. She returned to Chicago and struggled to raise her children. Among other jobs, she worked as a cook in a student cafeteria at the University of Chicago.

According to the stories passed on by members of her family, she would not speak of the murder of her husband or of any political matters: she had had her fill of such talk. Her goal in life was to raise her children and set them on their way to success in life. By all accounts, she was successful in that goal as were many other Croatian widows of her time and later.

### **In Conclusion—a Reminder**

The martyrdom of Ante Emilio Bolanča, namely, Anton Basetić, was suppressed and silenced at the time of his murder. Silence about him and his assassination has endured for some 90 subsequent years. This silence would have continued had not his two granddaughters, Sarah and Ann, the daughters of his son, Ivan, wished to know the truth about Anton, their grandfather. Sarah succeeded in interesting me in this tragic incident as well. She shared a good deal of facts about her grandfather that I relate in this article. I am sincerely grateful to Sarah for having acquainted not only me, but Croatians in general, about her grandfather. Her family and I are convinced that he was the very first political martyr among the Croatian émigrés following the portentous and fateful year of 1918.

The assassinations of Anton Basetić and of other Croatian patriots across the world remain largely unknown to us. They await further investigation, so that we might give them honorable mention in the history of our Croatian Diaspora, as well as in the history of our homeland.

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**NOTICE:** Small collection of Croatian record albums and assorted books to a good cause or Croatian library. Please contact Nancy Crenshaw at 970-945-6470 or [nancycrenshaw@comcast.net](mailto:nancycrenshaw@comcast.net) for a complete list if you are interested or would like to recommend a recipient.

# IN MEMORIAM



## **C. Michael McAdams (1947-2010) In Memory of a Sincere Croatian Friend**

Charles Michael McAdams, a historian, journalist, and true American friend of Croats passed away on October 29, 2010, in Sacramento, California. He was not known in Croatia until the fall of Yugoslavia, but his name was very familiar among Croats around the world long before those great historical changes occurred. He was not only known to us but became a fellow-member in our fight for freedom.

McAdams was born on May 8, 1947, on an American Marine base in California where his father was an officer. He also served in the Marines, but he was more interested in books than in a military career, and after completing his military duty, he studied and graduated with a diploma in Historical Studies at the University of the Pacific, a well-known private university in California. After that, he received his Master's degree at the Jesuit-run John Carroll University in Cleveland, where he also received a Certificate in Soviet and Eastern European Studies. He continued his education, taking classes in Advanced Studies of Comparative Politics and Ideologies at the University of Colorado and at the University of San Francisco. After completing his coursework for a Doctorate in Education, McAdams became a regional director of the Sacramento campus of the University of San Francisco in 1979 — where he would remain until his retirement in the year 2000.

There is an old proverb that says that true friendships are not chosen, but simply happen. The same could be said of McAdams and his friendship with Croats. Namely, he is of Scottish-Jewish background and a Protestant by religion. He first heard about Croatia as a child because he was a stamp collector, and Croatian stamps came into his hands. But as a student, reading history books and listening to professors, he realized that everything he read and heard about Croats was negative. It was precisely the constant demonization of the Croats that made McAdams want to explore further and find out whether this was all true, just a fog of deception being presented by those who advocated the *status quo* or perhaps the laziness of researchers and professors who, instead of searching for the truth, kept repeating old clichés. McAdams did not believe that history was black and white, and he wanted to dive deeper into Croatia's past. Then a chance meeting happened that would define his future academic career.

Sometime prior to completing his studies, McAdams found himself on California Street in San Francisco. He walked past a European car dealership and noticed a small Croatian flag on one of the cars. He walked in and asked if any Croats worked there, wanting to make contact with Croats in the city. He asked that question precisely of a Croat, Mr. Zvonko Pribanic, a well-known Croatian in California. With that chance meeting, a lasting friendship with Zvonko and the Croats formed. In his search for truth, McAdams came into contact with people whose only wish was that the truth about Croats be told, and a real alliance was born. As Michael read more and researched the "other side," he found out that what was being said about Croats was a myth and not reality. He then decided not only to find the truth but also to share it with others.

To better acquaint himself with Croatian history, McAdams continued his graduate studies at John Carroll University in Cleveland, where his mentor was Prof. George J. Prpić, and where he met and collaborated with other Croatian academics in America. Upon returning to California, Michael became active among the local Croats there, and among other activities, he became one of the founders of the Croatian Information Service in 1974. The other founders were Petar Radielović, Zvonko Pribanić, and Damir Radoš. From then until the end of his life, McAdams did not cease to explain to Americans and others who the Croats really are and what they want. He wrote numerous books and booklets, a number of contributions in almanacs, and more than one hundred articles. One of his most popular books, *Croatia, Myth & Reality*, was translated into Croatian (*Hrvatska – mit i istina*) and other languages, and saw three English editions (1992, 1994, and 1997). He held many lectures, participated in seminars and appeared in TV and radio broadcasts. For years, McAdams prepared and led a segment called "Moments in Croatian History" on the weekly Croatian radio program in California. He was a member of the Association for Croatian Studies, Croatian Academy of America, Croatian-Latin American Institute, Croatian Scholarship Fund, and others. He was a guest lecturer at many universities in America, Australia, and in Croatia after its independence. For his services to the Croats, President Franjo Tuđman awarded him the Order of Danica Hrvatska with the image of Marko Marulić.

McAdams would often jump into “hot” subjects which certainly did not help him in his career, but as a true American Marine, he did not give in to fear. He was not only of the belief that Croats had the right to freedom and independence, but he also enthusiastically joined that struggle. Many people were bothered by McAdams because they could not label him as an “Ustasha” child, a frustrated emigrant, or a mercenary. He openly and loudly spoke his thoughts and opinions, and did not ask for anything, and that gave him the moral strength to face the guardians and propagators of historical myths. McAdams could have (as many others did) followed the line of lesser effort, and he could have repeated what was written in many books, but he found the courage to research “the other side” of history. He never regretted that he “wandered” into Croatian history or spent his time among Croats. With his work he aided in lifting the fog over Croatian history in America and beyond, and by doing so he also aided the fight for Croatian independence.

Many thanks to Michael for his sincere friendship to us who knew him and collaborated with him, and for his dedication to Croatia and the Croats. The search for historical truth carried him to the Croats, and may eternal Truth be the reward for his inexhaustible work and great love for the Croats in America and their homeland.

Dr. Ante Čuvalo

### BRANKO FRANOLIĆ (Rijeka 1925 - London, 2011)



A renowned Croatian scholar, polyglot, linguist, promoter of Croatian language and culture in the West, an ACS member, and a wonderful human being, Branko Franolić died on January 11, 2011.

Franolić was born in Rijeka on July 2, 1925. After World War II, he studied French and English at the University of Zagreb. Winning a scholarship in 1952 to go to Britain gave him the chance not only of studying abroad but of gaining the personal freedom that he so much desired. He became a political emigrant and returned to Croatia for the first time after its independence. He studied at Harlech College, Wales; Cambridge, Strasbourg, and in 1977, he received a doctoral degree in linguistics from the Sorbonne. His mentor was the world renowned professor André Martinet and the title of his dissertation was *Les mots d'emprunt français en croate*, 1976.

While in France, Franolić taught the English language and literature as well as American literature at various schools, including the Sorbonne University. In 1974, he returned to England and taught French and French literature at Beverley College. From 1990 to 1993, he taught the Croatian language and French phonetics at York University-Atkinson College in Toronto. Besides teaching, he was a tireless researcher, especially in the area of the Croatian language and the Croatian Glagolitic and Renaissance literature. He participated in numerous scholarly gatherings, including ACS panels at the annual AAASS conventions.

He published numerous works in various languages. His works in English include: *Was Faust Vrančić the First Croatian Lexicographer?* (1977); *A Short History of Literary Croatian* (1980); *Language Policy and Language Planning in Yugoslavia with Special Reference to Croatian and Macedonian* (1980); *An Historical Outline of Croatian Lexicography* (1983); *An Historical Survey of Literary Croatian* (1984); *A Bibliography of Croatian Dictionaries* (1985); *Language Policy in Yugoslavia: with Special Reference to Croatian* (1988); *Filip Vezdin's Contribution to Indic Studies in Europe: at the Turn of the 18th Century* (1991); *Croatian Glagolitic Printed Texts: Recorded in The British Library General Catalogue* (1994); *Books on Croatia and Croats: Recorded in the British Library General Catalogue* (1996); *Works of Croatian Latinists: Recorded in the British Library General Catalogue* (1998); *A Survey of Croatian Bibliographies: 1960 – 2003* (2004).

In 1996, Franolić received the INA award for his life-long work in the area of Croatian language and he was a corresponding member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Branko Franolić was a supporter of the ACS's mission and work. He was also a personal friend for many years. This distinguished scholar and a humble human being will be greatly missed.

Dr. Ante Čuvalo

#### MEMBERS & FRIENDS

For those of you who have students interested in study abroad programs in Croatia, we offer a listing of programs on language and Croatian culture for summer 2011:  
**Sveučilišna škola hrvatskoga jezika**

#### i kulture

Organized by: Sveučilište u Zagrebu i Hrvatska matica iseljenika  
 Term: June 25 – July 22, 2011  
 Location: Zagreb  
 Contact: Lada Kanajet Šimić, lada@matis.hr  
 Web: <http://international.unizg.hr/medjunar>

odna\_suradnja/ucenje\_hrvatskoga\_jezika/sveucilisna\_skola\_hrvatskoga\_jezika\_i\_kulture

#### Ljetna škola hrvatskoga jezika i kulture

Organized by: Filozofski fakultet u Splitu  
 Term: July 4 – 22, 2011

Location: Split  
Contact: Josip Lasić, jlasic@ffst.hr  
Web:  
<http://www.ffst.hr/odsjeci/povumj/Ljetna%202011..pdf>  
**Zoranićeva arkadija – ljetna škola hrvatskoga jezika**  
Organized by: Sveučilište u Zadru, Odsjek za slavistiku  
Term: July 24 – August 7, 2011  
Location: Zadar  
Web:  
<http://www.unizd.hr/Doga%C4%91anja/tabid/533/Default.aspx>

**Riječka kroatistička škola – ljetna škola hrvatskoga jezika**  
Organized by: Sveučilište u Rijeci, Odsjek za kroatistiku  
Term: second half of June – first half of July, 2011  
Location: Rijeka  
Contact: dr. sc. Sanja Zubčić, szubcic@globalnet.hr  
Web:  
<http://www.ffri.uniri.hr/rks/kontakt.html>

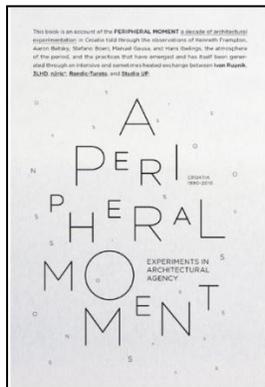
**Mala ljetna škola Filozofskog fakulteta u Zagrebu**  
Organized by: Filozofski fakultet, Odsjek za kroatistiku, Centar CROATICUM  
Term: June 27 – July 22, 2011  
Location: Zagreb  
Web:  
<http://croaticum.ffzg.hr/hrv/MalaLjetnaSkola.html>

**Zagrebačka slavistička škola - 40. hrvatski seminar za strane slaviste**  
Organized by: Ministarstvo znanosti i Filozofski fakultet u Zagrebu  
Term: August 22 – September 4, 2011  
Location: Dubrovnik  
Web: <http://www.hrvatskiplus.org/>  
**Northwestern University Study broad Program in Dubrovnik**  
Organized by: Northwestern University, USA  
Term: June 20- July 29, 2011  
Courses: COMP LIT 375-z Literature and the Arts: Dalmatia and the Mediterranean;  
HISTORY 301-2 New Lectures in History: The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia

Location: Dubrovnik, Split, Zagreb with additional trips  
Contact: Rita Koryan, r-koryan@northwestern.edu  
Web:  
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**Language and Culture in Croatia**  
Organized by: The University of Kansas, USA  
Term: May 21-July 1, 2011  
Location: Zadar  
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## BOOKS & REVIEWS

**Ivan Rupnik: *A Peripheral Moment: Experiments in Architectural Agency, Croatia 1999-2010***, Actar, 2010.



Croatia told through the observations of Kenneth Frampton, Aaron Betsky, Stefano Boeri, Manuel Gausa, and Hans Ibelings, the atmosphere of the period, and the practices that have emerged and has itself been generated through an intensive and sometimes heated exchange between Ivan Rupnik, 3LHD, njiric+, Randić-Turato, Studio UP. An extraordinary wave of architectural experimentation, innovation and overall spatial and formal quality decidedly marked the past decade of the Croatian architectural scene. *A Peripheral Moment* registers its decisive phenomena, presents outstanding practices, and introduces the most exciting examples, seeking to provide

them with an equally exciting theoretical framework and foundation. The explanatory potentials of the book thereby rival the innovative effects of the presented architectures, acquiring broader, if not universal, methodological relevance.

Karin Šerman  
Professor of Architectural Theory  
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**Sabrina Ramet's *Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918—2005***, originally published by The Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Indiana University Press in 2006 and published in Croatian translation by Golden Marketing tehnička knjiga in 2009, was published in German translation by R. Oldenbourg Verlag in February 2011. In this thematic history of Yugoslavia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Sabrina P. Ramet demonstrates that the instability of the three 20<sup>th</sup>-century Yugoslav states—the interwar kingdom (1918-41), socialist Yugoslavia (1945-91), and the rump Yugoslav state created in 1992, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro—can be attributed to the failure of succeeding governments to establish the rule of law and political legitimacy, rather than to ineluctable or abstract historical forces.

Simultaneously, Central European University Press has brought out *Civic and Uncivic Values: Serbia in the Post-Milošević Era*, which Ramet edited together with Ola Listhaug and Dragana Dulić. Focusing, inter alia, on education, media, religion and myth, the volume brings together the work of Stefano Bianchini, Steinar Bryn, Klaus Buchenau, Maciej Czerwinski, Ivan Čolović, Daša Duhaček, Hilde Katrine Haug, Andrew Horton, Nebojša Petrović, Kristen Ringdal, Albert Simkus, Dubravka Stojanović, and Izabela Kisić and Slavija Stanojlović,

with contributions by the editors. The book has also been published in Serbian translation by the Centar za ženske studije i istraživanja roda.

Sabrina Ramet is a professor of political science at the Norwegian University of Science & Technology, and senior research associate at the Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO.

**Esther Gitman: *When Courage Prevailed: The Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945*, St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 2011.**

Dr. Gitman, a survivor of the Holocaust from Sarajevo, devoted her doctoral dissertation to examining the reasons a relatively large number of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) escaped the clutches of the Ustashe and the Nazis (approximately 25% of the pre-War population, a greater percentage than in many European countries). This book is the result of her endeavors.

Dr. Gitman emphasizes that discussing the rescue of Jews cannot properly be limited to the role of heroic individuals, some of whom have been honored by Yad Vashem. She argues that the rescue of one individual sometimes involved the participation of many, if not hundreds, of persons, as the persecuted were shuttled from one hiding place to another. Moreover, she does not view the giving of bribes or token payments as necessarily limiting whether one should be deemed to be a rescuer.

Dr. Gitman describes the remarkable efforts made by ordinary citizens in protesting the internment and mistreatment of Jews in the NDH. She quotes from and cites numerous petitions made on behalf of Jews, one of the most impressive being a May 5, 1941, letter signed by 103 residents of Velika Kopanica, calling on NDH officials to allow the local Špicer family to continue to maintain their store in the village, since, "though Jewish, [they] managed to live in our midst without ever harming any of us, yet [they were] always ready to extend help to all of us." Dr. Gitman

further discusses the role played by a few NDH officials who intervened in a number of instances to save certain Jews (Dr. Gitman especially focuses on the role of the NDH's Minister of Health in sending 169 Jewish physicians to Bosnia to engage, allegedly, in an anti-syphilis campaign).

Despite these individual efforts, the number of Jewish survivors from the NDH would likely have been much smaller had it not been for the policies of the Second Italian Army in occupied Croatia and the presence of the Partisans. Concerning the Italians, though, Dr. Gitman makes clear that they did not always lend a helping hand to Jewish refugees from the NDH—until December 1941 "the Italian government still entertained the idea of controlling Croatia and thus they were reluctant to act in any overt way against Germany." It was only after August 1942 that Italian Army commanders and officials in Croatia generally displayed greater benevolence toward the refugees. Many of the Jews who came to the Italian Zones in the NDH had to withdraw with the Partisans in the face of the German offensive following Italy's capitulation. She describes how the efforts of the Territorial Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Croatia (ZAVNOH) to transport Jewish refugees to the safety of Allied-occupied Italy faced determined opposition from certain Allied officials.

Dr. Gitman devotes a separate chapter in the book to Archbishop Stepinac's work in rescuing Jews. In the debate on Stepinac's bearing during the war, she comes down strongly in support of the Archbishop. However, most persons familiar with the published literature on Stepinac will likely not find much that is new in Dr. Gitman's discussion. It perhaps would have been a much more revealing examination had she included materials discussing the role played by other clerics in saving Jews in the NDH and in the Italian-occupied Zones.

There are some other issues that this book raises which deserved further exploration. For example, Dr.

Gitman notes that the fate of Jews in Sarajevo was much worse than in the remainder of the NDH, a result she attributes to the presence of German military command posts and the negative attitude of the local Muslim population toward Jews. While this may have been true, it is unclear on what basis Dr. Gitman came to this conclusion (perhaps her own family's experiences?).

Certainly, in discussing Sarajevo, one would have expected to see a description of the role of Sarajevo's Archbishop, Ivan Šarić—did he assist in the rescue of Jews despite his open support of the NDH regime? Further, while downplaying the role of individual heroes, it is curious that a book dealing with the rescue of Jews in the NDH fails to at least list the Righteous Among Nations from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina honored by Yad Vashem. Additionally, as its title suggests, the book focuses on the NDH and, as a result, does not discuss the actions of individual Croats in the Italian annexed and occupied zones.

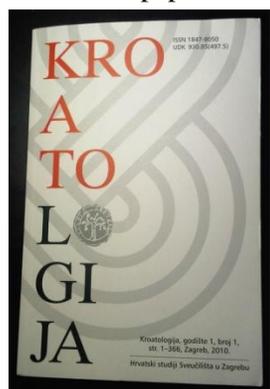
These are relatively minor quibbles. A more disconcerting problem is the apparent poor editing to which the publisher subjected the manuscript. The text is at times disjointed. Some sentences, phrases and concepts are repeated and disparate topics sometimes fail to be brought together into a whole. Further, a number of surprising factual errors are scattered throughout the book [e.g., Otočac (sic!) is described as a "small island on the Adriatic"]. Hopefully such editing issues can be resolved if and when the book is published in an expected Croatian-language edition.

The work's strength clearly rests on Dr. Gitman's use of a wide-range of primary and other sources. Most impressive on this score is her extensive use of oral materials from survivors and rescuers. Dr. Gitman must be commended for having interviewed over 60 individuals (including, among others, journalist Žuži Jelinek, publisher Slavko Goldstein and Partisan leader Vladimir Velebit), based in Croatia, Israel, Serbia and the United States, and conducted over the course of

eight years. This source material and some others reproduced in Dr. Gitman's book provide a solid basis from which further research can be made into some of the extraordinary events described by her.

**John P. Kraljic**

The first issue of *Kroatologija* includes papers from the first



Croatology conference held in 2009 in Zagreb with the purpose to investigate various aspects of Croatian culture in broader, European terms.

A necessity for this approach was underscored in the introductory piece by Prof. Radoslav Katičić to whom this volume is dedicated. A broad array of topics ranging from linguistic, musicological, literary, sociological, theatrical, ethnological, pedagogical, archeological, artistic, and early studies provide a multifaceted insight in contacts the Croatian culture had with Europe over a period of several centuries.



**Nives Opačić. Iza riječi: Prtinom i cijelcem.** Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2010. (334 str. ISBN: 978-953-150-903-9)

In this volume some ninety stories provide narratives about various Croatian words in an engaging and entertaining way, but at the same time

probing deeply into the sociolinguistic and etymological layers.

**Radoslav Katičić. Zeleni lug: Tragovima svetih pjesama naše pretkršćanske starine.** Ibis grafika; Matica hrvatska; Katedra Čakavskog sabora Općine Mošćenička Draga, Zagreb - Mošćenička Draga, 2010.

(491 str. ISBN: 978-953-6927-49-4)

In *Zeleni lug* Katičić explores some of the oldest layers of Croatian heritage, the traditional song, from multiple angles including ethnographic, philological, and literary perspectives, and provides at the same time an amazing journey into Croatian cultural history.



**Hrvoje Turković. Nacrt filmske genologije.** Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2010. (213 str. ISBN: 978-953-150-873-5)

The handbook *Nacrt filmske genologije* summarizes in an encyclopedic manner questions pertaining to classification of the film genres and styles.

Despite the established existing schemes broadly used for practical purposes, Turković undertakes a further theoretical examination which presents film genealogy as a constant interplay between film genre and film evolution.

Publication of the first three volumes of **Croatian Literary Encyclopedia (Hrvatska književna enciklopedija, Leksikografski zavod Miroslav**

Krleža, 2010) marked one of the most important cultural events of the past few months in Croatia. This comprehensive and broad ranging set of four volumes (the forth volume is forthcoming in 2011) provides biographies of writers from the oldest to contemporary periods as well as interpretations of the most important canonical works. Furthermore, it devotes a considerable attention to both domestic and foreign journals in which Croatian authors are published. Separate chapters focus on the questions of genres, style, and periodization within Croatian literature and on its contacts with other national literatures. This project included some 300 literary scholars, critics, theorists, folklorists, and theater linguists.

**Stevan K. Pavlowitch: Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia,** New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

The history of the Second World War in Yugoslavia mirrors the complexity of the Yugoslav state. Any writer attempting to provide a short synthesis is bound to come to grief in trying to provide a presentation which proves fully satisfactory to his or her readers.

Dr. Pavlowitch's efforts led to this relatively slim (333 pages) volume. Dr. Pavlowitch provides a generally fair and objective discussion of the events which led to the invasion, occupation, partition and ultimate restoration of Yugoslavia during the War. In the short space allotted to him, he touches on all the regions of the former Yugoslavia in some detail, including Slovenia and Macedonia. Occasionally, he throws in some obscure but surprising facts to enliven the discussion (e.g., that Italian and German generals serving in occupied Yugoslavia usually communicated with one another in French!).

Perhaps because of its limited space, the book will likely disappoint those interested in learning more about the war in Croatia as well as the role of the Croats. Dr. Pavlowitch devotes a substantial portion of his

discussion concerning the Partisans on Tito and the forces under his immediate command as they zigzagged from Serbia and back and forth across Bosnia and Herzegovina. While that is a story which cannot be overlooked, Dr. Pavlowitch fails to discuss in any detail the Partisan role in Croatia. Vladimir Bakarić and Andrija Hebrang, for instance, are barely mentioned, even though it was the Communist Party of Croatia (CPC) which ultimately raised and controlled the largest Partisan forces in Yugoslavia prior to the liberation of Serbia in 1944. Perhaps more importantly, the CPC had by far the greatest success of establishing Partisan governmental units (the National Liberation Councils) than any other regional or provincial Communist Party organization, a key component in the ultimate triumph of the Communists.

Surprisingly, Dr. Pavlowitch appears to have not consulted the excellent study of Marko Attila Hoare, *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941-1943* (London, Oxford University Press, 2006) which discusses in great detail the equally impressive work undertaken by local Party officials in mobilizing Partisan support in western Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With respect to the Chetniks, Dr. Pavlowitch generally takes the view that Draža Mihailović had more pronounced pro-Yugoslav sentiments than many of his Greater Serbian supporters and that his level of control over Chetnik commanders in, for example, Croatia and Bosnia remained weak. These points, especially, the former, are certainly debatable.

Surprisingly, though he exhibits great attention to detail in his writings, the book includes a few noticeable errors. For instance, he states early on that Josip Frank initially supported Yugoslav unification in 1918 only to reverse course later in that year. Josip, however, died in 1911, while his son Ivo became a leader of his father's faction of the *Pravaši*.

The book does fulfill the task of presenting a very general overview of World War II in the former

Yugoslavia. His work makes use of the demographic studies of war losses by both Bogoljub Kočović and Vladimir Žerajević, notes Stepinac's discomfort with the Ustashe (though he equivocates on whether Stepinac played a positive or negative role during the war), summarizes the troubles faced by the Croatian Peasant Party and discusses the killings of Croatian soldiers and civilians by the Partisans. However, those studying the period will need to rely on other works to obtain a fuller appreciation of Croatia's role in the Partisans' ultimate victory.

**John P. Kraljic**

**Nikica Gilić**  
*Introduction to the history of Croatian fiction film*

(Leykam international, 2010).

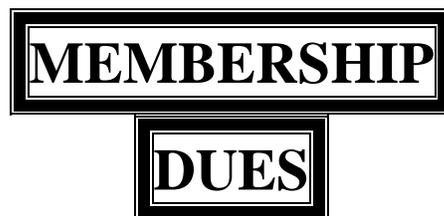
This overview of Croatian fiction film focuses on the features so far neglected in the historical studies and overviews of cinema in Croatia: stylistic features and lines of development, as well as the mechanisms of creating the artistic value and its critical assessment. Because of the importance and popularity of the cinema, the book is written for wider cultural audiences. It explains the main methods of writing a history of cinema, defines Croatian film as a cultural tradition (without negation of Yugoslav or any other pertinent context), while fusing the chronological approach to the typology of styles and of poetical orientations. Starting with the beginnings of film art in Croatia (the work of Joza Ivakić and Oktavijan Miletić), the book covers attempts of organizing a true social structure of cinema in the 40s, during the second world war and early years of socialism, claiming that the 1950s, the so called "classical" period brings about the first significant density of high artistic achievements, peaking in the work of Branko Bauer. The coverage of the 1960s "auteorial"



cinema differs from previous historical undertakings by stressing the importance of Vatroslav Mimica's films, describing the coexistence of classical and modernist styles of filmmaking. Discussing the resilience of genre cinema as well, the historical overview ends with the films screened in 2010. Among the authors covered in more details are, in addition to the already mentioned, Ante Babaja, Zvonimir Berković, Krsto Papić, Rajko Grlić, Zoran Tadić, Veljko Bulajić and others.

ACS members and friends who are cinephiles may be interested to learn that a thematic issue of KinoKultura devoted to Croatian film and edited by Aida Vidan and Gordana P. Crnkovic has just come out. It can be read at the following website:

<http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/11/croatian.shtml>. It includes essays providing a historical overview of Croatian cinema and its various branches, interviews with several directors, as well as a series of reviews by some of the most eminent film scholars from Croatia and abroad. We expect that this issue will also appear as a book in the near future.



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