



Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – short life of the state

Dr Łukasz Nowok ThD, h.c. – University of Silesia, Katowice BA Ewa Pazdan
– The Silesian University of Technology, Gliwice BA Artur Kopka – Humanitas
Univesity in Sosnowiec

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ABSTRACT: The Independent State of Croatia was established on April 10, 1941 as a result of the attack on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by the forces of the fascist Italian Republic supported by Ustasha troops. The state that was established then operated only for a few years, but it had a significant impact on the further fate of Croatia and Serbia.

KEYWORDS: Croatia, Ustaše, genocide, World War II, judiciary, ethnic minorities, education

I. INTRODUCTION

6 April 1941 year about dawn Luftwaffe started bombing Belgrade. Was this beginning II war world For country, which From two he tried for years behave *kind neutrality* to Countries Axis and forces Allied. This alone day Before noon branches Wehrmacht took pass Jerdap, constituting natural

border With Romania, and Italian aircraft started bombardment coasts Dalmatia.

II. MOBILIZATION

Army Yugoslav was In this time considered behind one With stronger In Europe, and her prestige she was lifting tradition Army Kingdoms Serbia With times wars Balkans and AND war world. From that one pores have passed Already But long years, and current army NO she was folding myself Just With Serbs, But was creation patchy nationally, What many times it illustrated all voltage What had place In kingdom. WITH end March 1941 year army Yugoslav she counted 600 000 people. Spectrum coming war forced command down carry out mobilization. According to assumptions command army, after her carrying out army it should to count together 1.7 million soldiers grouped In 28 divisions infantry, 12 divisions cavalry and branches fortresses. Number But NO she replied quality weapons. The Yugoslav army was outdated and did not have equipment that could effectively oppose the Wehrmacht. It is true that it had tanks, but in incomparably small numbers compared to its opponent, and besides, they were

French machines, some of which came from World War I: light Renault FT-17 and FT-18, and R-35. By to achieve intended state passenger car army thirty March 1941 year ordered full, secret mobilization, which deadline start appointed only on 3 April¹.

Mobilization hadend 15 April. 3 April In points congregants In Serbia it stood myself about 90% reservists, whereas In Croatia less than 50% appointed. On areas Croatian Ustasha Additionally announced boycott mobilization, What In significant measure contributed myself down Yes lowappearance. Day later, 4 April 1941 year, With ministries army it has come command consignor incomplete still branches on places concentration. It led this down situation, That considerable Hi reservists she had to look their own

1 A. Broniarek, World War II. Balkans 1940-1941, Warsaw 1980, p. 59.

branches. As By this was little, many commanders only it was getting there down their own units, and StaffGeneral found in Belgrade NO had sufficient knowledge about real standing army.

III. MILITARY CAMPAIGN

IN night With 5 on 6 April about hour 5:15 Wehrmacht started attack In direction cities Skopje, Veles and Strumica. The war has begun. ABOUT 6:30 planes German 4. Flights wind have done raid on Belgrade. Weak artillery anti-aircraft NO was In standing defend cities Before German by planes. Army kingdoms down defense zones air she could expose Just 6. Regiment Jager Aviation, In which pilots they served being built on German license Messerschmitts Me-109. Despite weak preparations Serbian pilots, it worked them myself shoot down until 10 German planes. They paid this But loss 15 their own machines. Despite fierce defense, German air raids destroyed all quarters cities and led down death 20 000 inhabitants. In their result she stayed destroyed also Belgrade radio station, What, as it



turned out the next day, it did painful consequences For Staff General.

Only 7 April about hour 15:00 Primates Command finished mobilization In Belgrade. Was but entirely deprived communications With rest troops, Because ruff communications command still NO finished mobilization, and Belgrade radio station was destroyed, What made it impossible message any the news down fighting branches. This alone day branches German 12. Army took Skopje, Veles and Strumica, entirely disorganizing Yugoslav army. On others fronts, along borders With Romania, Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria, actions war still myself NO started. The next one day, 8 April, German 1. Group Armored she assumed strong hit on lines Sofia–Belgrade, From right away breaking through Yugoslav defense and took Pirot. Day Later 11. Division Armored halved Yugoslav 5. Army and took Niš, Aleksinac and Ražanj, cutting off opponent In mountains. 10 April army armored Third Reich they stopped on foregrounds Belgrade. Despite with liquid, although ineffective resistance Serbian parts army Wehrmacht he continued your victorious procession.

10 April Primates Command spent command For 4. army, by carried out instant attack In direction Sarajevo, in order to containment burning forward troops German. But 4. Army, submitting myself mainly With Croats, spread myself down houses after knocking off troops German on trespass down Zagreb already about hour 19:30. Development accidents led down proclamation independent Croatia, What it put end further efforts war Kingdoms Yugoslavia. Army Serbian they fought still By four days and only 14 April asked for suspension weapons².

IV. NEW CROATIA

After fast defeated army Yugoslav, staying In Zagreb one of leaders of Ustasha, Slavko Kvaternik, announced rise new countries. 10 April 1941 year about hour 17:45 behind through radio Zagreb³ he proclaimed rise *Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*⁴. Simultaneously With announcement uprising countries, sent down Hitler writing expressive request about care above Croatia and her inhabitants. Was this blow

measured By Slavko Kvaternik In system signed 10 May 1940 in Italy By Pavelić and Ciano, talking about Croatian-Italian union.

Moreover, the current Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia called on Croatian soldiers to lay down their weapons and ruthless subordination myself new authorities countries. Call Tentacle finished actions war on area Croatia. Proclamation Independent countries Croatian worried Pavelić, residing In this time in Florence. Fearing myself about your status, 11 April Poglavnik he declared desire team work NO Just With Italy, But also With The third one Reich⁵. This alone day minister make it happen foreign Reich, Joachim von Ribbentrop, he cabled down Zagreb With information, That priority In party protectorate they own Italians. He called myself by this on system With May 1940 year. 12 April Ante Pavelić set off With Florence In company 200 residing in Italy and stocked in Italian weapon Ustasha down Zagreb. Meanwhile, Colonel Kvaternik, staying in Zagreb, sent a proposal to Berlin for the provisional government he had created, asking for its acceptance, as well as for recognition of the new state and its personal, customs and economic union with the Italian Republic. He also asked for permission to form an army Independent State of Croatia⁶.

Meanwhile, Pavelić was detained in Karlovac on April 14 by representatives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who demanded confirmation of the current agreement and Croatia's renunciation of Dalmatia, which he did.⁷ The next day, Poglavnik arrived in Zagreb, where he took power from Deputy Prime Minister Kvaternik and accepted the government he appointed. In turn, he appointed Kvaternik himself as Minister of Military Affairs and included him in the Headquarters as one of the Doglavniks. On the same day, Fascist Italy, the Third Reich and the Kingdom of Hungary recognized the existence of the Independent State of Croatia⁸.

An additional one success Poglavnik and his advisors was block promise devotion Dalmatia Italians. All right formulated By doctor laws document was addictive devotion historical province Croatian From unanimous consent Accommodation Main Street and government Independent countries Croatian⁹. Conversations with regard delineations borders new countries were rolling myself down 25 April 1941 year. In their in progress it was established, That Croatia will return down borders With times king Tomislav¹⁰, that is will embrace Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Srem, Medjumurje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Instead

2 There, p. 66.

3 J. Wilamowski, K. Szczepanik, Ustasze and Croatian separatism..., p. 90.

4 From Croatian: *Independent State of Croatia*.



behind resignation With Dalmatia, representatives Italian government they forced on Pavelić vocation king Croatia, originating With Italian home reigning.

7 May 1941 year government Independent countries Croatian appointed on throne cousin Italian king, Aimone¹¹, prince Spoleto. Prince Aimone accepted crown Croatia 18 May 1941 year, taking on simultaneously name Tomislav II Savoy. Despite this fact never no he came down Croatia¹².

5 ADAPD XII-2, doc. 317, p. 432.

6 J. Kozeński, Aggression on Yugoslavia, Poznań 1979, p. 140.

7 E. Kvaternik, *Rijeci ičinjenice, Buenos Aires 1955, p. 191.*

8 ADAPXII-2, doc. 336, p. 451.

9 J. Kozeński, *Agresja...*, p.152.

10 He reigned in the years 910-928.

11 Born on March 9, 1900 in Turin, Prince Aimone Roberto Margherita Maria Giuseppe Torino di Savoia as a member of the House of Savoy was the great-grandson of the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II. Moreover, through his father,

The remaining issues disputed With Italy settled 18 May, In time meetings Pavelić With Mussolini. Italians they obtained then majority islands on Adriatic Sea and lying down on Croatian coast cities Split and Kotor, and too control above Croatian finances. They obtained also union customs¹³. Considerable concessions to Mussolini caused growth tensions In country Croatian, By What Pavelić behind advice Slavko Kvaternika he

started to lead politics increasingly more approaching Independent Country Croatian down Third Reich¹⁴.

Efficient functioning countries required From Pavelić many times radical activities. First like this decision was in September 1941 year sending potential political rival, which was Vladko Macek, down camp concentration in Jasenovac. The reason closure ex deputy prime minister In camp concentration was his lack consent on conducted From June extremely nationalistic politics government.

All it started myself Already 4 June, When this minister make it happen internal spent decree about protection culture Croatian, In which, on pattern Third Reich, forbidden *Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and dogs* introduction down parks, restaurant and communication public. This alone day took place myself In Zagreb common conference representatives government Third Reich and

Independent countries Croatian, In during which time taken decisions about resettlement down Croatia about 260 000 Slovenians, who they stayed recognized behind alpine Croats. Identical quantity Serbs titre deport With areas Bosnia and Srem down Serbia¹⁵. Simultaneously branches Ustasha started widely extensive shares extermination, which victims they fell hated Orthodox Serbs, Gypsies and Jews. Among victims they appeared myself Orthodox episcopal Dwarf and Banja Luka, and too metropolitan Bosnian and patriarch Serbian, and 158 pops.

Another one form repression were forced conversions on faith Catholic. Striving down creatures homogeneous, Catholic, countries Croatian, minister denominations, Nice Budak, he declared In time conference In Zagreb: *One third Serbs we will kill, one third we will expel, one third we will convert on Catholicism and will stay absorbed By population Catholic*¹⁶. Call this left warm accepted By majority Croatian clergy and alone Ustasha, who they strived down total expelling the Serbs With terrain new one Croatia. Whole policy Independent countries Croatian was subordinate *cleansing* country with people presented by fascist propaganda as enemies nation and continuous fights with reluctant new orderly partisans, and too delivering any raw materials the strongest ally, –what was Third Reich. Authorities country have taken also trial restoration on womb *real* church parts Serbs. IN May forbidden use Serbs Cyrillic, and In June issued ordinance about conversion their on Catholicism, What many times was taking place myself

he was closely related to the dynasty that ruled in Spain before the war, and to the Orléans family, bearing the title of Counts of Paris. On July 1, 1939, he married Irena, daughter of King Constantine I of Greece. On May 18, 1941, he was proclaimed king of the Independent State of Croatia. At the same time, accepting the crown of Zvonimir, he became the last king of Croatia. His full title was: "King of Croatia, Prince of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Voivode of Dalmatia and Tuzla, Prince of Cisterna and Belriguardo, Marquis of Voghera, Count of Ponderano." He abdicated on July 31, 1943, after the capitulation of Italy. He died in Buenos Aires, January 28, 1948.

12 A.N.D. Petacco, *A Tragedy Revealed: The Story of the Italian Population of Istria, Dalmatia, and Venezia*, Toronto 2005, p. 26.

13 ADAPXII-2, doc. 437, p. 615.

14 J. Wilamowski, K. Szczepanik, *Ustaszki and*



Croatian separatism..., p. 92.

15 W. Felczak, T., Wasilewski, Historia

Jugosławii..., p. 481.

16 V. Novak, *Magnum Crimen*, Zagreb 1948,
p. 605.

by use strength. Ultimately estimates myself, That
In result activities authorities Croatian, Orthodoxy
abandoned about 300 000 Serbs¹⁷.

In 1943, when Italy announced its
surrender, King Tomislav II of Savoy abdicated.
However, no new king was elected, and Nikole
Mandić, a person who had almost no influence on
the policy of the Ustasha state, was appointed prime
minister. Fall Independent State of Croatia began in
mid-1944, when Allied forces began supporting the
Ustaše's strongest opponent on the Balkan
Peninsula, the communist partisan Josip Broz. A
year later, Pavelić, seeing the defeat of the
Wehrmacht in the Balkans, ordered the withdrawal
of all Ustaše forces. The evacuation took place in
two columns. One of them, following the German
forces and including state officials and their
families, safely reached Austria, from where each
Ustaše tried to escape on their own. The second
column, composed mainly of rank-and-file
members of the organization, was stopped in the
Austrian town of Bleiburg by British troops and
handed over to Tito's communist troops. Apart from
the Ustasha, among the soldiers handed over to the
communists there were also Chetniks fleeing to
Austria. All of them, despite the status of prisoners
of war granted by the British army, were shot in
May 1945. It is estimated that communist troops
murdered about 50,000 soldiers of the Independent
State of Croatia¹⁸.

III.1 AFTER CREATION

The proclamation of the Independent State
of Croatia was associated not only with the
complete dissolution of the Kingdom of
Yugoslavia, but also with the subordination of the
new state to fascist protectors such as the Third
Reich and the Italian Republic. Moreover, it
involved the adoption of political models in force in
their countries¹⁹. Despite the official inclusion of
the adjective Independent in the name of the
country, every decision the Croatian government
wanted to make had to be approved by both
protectors, which in effect led to the recognition of
both Germans and Italians as occupiers, not allies.

The new Croatian state can be seen as a
territory controlled by the occupying forces of the
Third Reich and the Italian Republic, which at their

will, it received its administrator, police and
military forces, but it has never officially obtained
even powers comparable to those possessed by
various types of autonomies. This may be indicated
by Mussolini's own comment on a letter received in
October 1941 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Third Reich, where he is referred to as a
gaulaier²⁰ Italian. In this situation, Mussolini
supposedly recognized that the German allies were
nothing more as only the associated provinces,
subordinate to Berlin, the most important of which
is currently Italy, and each province should comply
with all the demands of the protector²¹.

According to this ideology, Pavelić had to
reconcile myself with territorial losses to Italy and
Hungary, giving up approximately 5,380 square
kilometers inhabited by 380,000 Croats. In other
areas, he

17 D.Pavličević, History of the Balkans in the
20th century, Kraków 2005, p. 403.

18 L.Rees, Executioners and victims -
atrocities of World War II and their perpetrators,
London 2007, p. 71.

19 H. Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države
Hrvatske*, Zagreb 2002, p 189.

20 A gaulaier is a mid-level local official. The
person holding this position Maybetoday, in terms of
competences and scope of activity, comparable to
the voivode.

21 G. Ciano, *Diario vol. 2 (1941-1943)*, entry
from November 14, 1943, Rome 1964, p. 72.



introduced a dictatorial system of power based on repression and surveillance, modeled on the German system, where privileges were granted primarily to members of the Ustasha movement and people faithfully cooperating with the party.

The system of repression used by the Ustaše was ruthless. Among the people who were first subjected to internment and then sent to concentration camps was the former Prime Minister and leader of the Croatian Party, Vladko Maček. In general political activity, the council sessions were not restored, which was one of the movement's promises related to the restoration of Croatian independence.

Immediately after the declaration of independence, Slavko Kvaternik took steps to ensure the operation of the newly established state. The first one was the adaptation of all institutions existing and functioning within the Croatian Banovina to the new structures. This was largely possible thanks to the transfer of full powers by the current ban, Ivan Šubasić through the head of the administrative department, General Slavko Kvaternik²². To ensure the functioning of the state, the general gave orders to the Banovina apparatus to continue administrative activities in the area under his control and to adapt the applicable regulations to the requirements of the new state. In matters of protection, the general relied myself entirely on the existing peasant self-defense formations associated with the Croatian People's Party, which provided approximately 4,000 people in Zagreb alone, while outside it, in the entire Banovina area, they gathered an additional 142,000²³.

After Pavelić arrived in the country and the first government was established, which also included Slavko Kvaternik, it was decided to verify the activities of the state apparatus and groups associated with the People's Party group. Self-defence organizations aroused reluctance and intolerance among the authorities of the Ustasha movement resulting from the functioning of the peasant party in the government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and their involvement in combating the pre-war activities of the Ustasha. Another reason for the reluctance was the lack of control over the self-defense units, because they were subordinated to local officers of the peasant party who served as mayors or commune heads. With for this reason, self-defense formations were disbanded and forced to hand over their weapons to ad hoc groups composed of supporters of the movement and former criminals. These ad hoc Proustash groups were called wild Ustasha. The situation was also

made worse by the existing hostility between the Serbs and the Croats living in the former banovina areas. This led to the formation of Chetnik groups in the new state, with which there were numerous clashes in the following days.²⁴ An additional problem for the entire movement was the actions of the wild Ustasha, which quickly spread they started aim to spread terror and resolve private conflicts between pack members and the local population.²⁵

22 D. Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, Zagreb 1999, p. 124.

23 N. Kisić-Kolanovic, *Vojskovođe drama*, [in:] Časopis za suvremenu povijest, No. 3, Zagreb 1996, p. 384.

24 Z. Dizdar., *Osnivanje i djelatnost četničkih udruženja na području grada i kotara Osijek u monarhističkoj Jugoslaviji (1918.-1941.) (Second dio)*, [in:] Scrinia Slavonica: Godišnjak Podružnice za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje Hrvatskog instituta za povijest, Vol. 6 No. 1, 2006, p 81.

25 <https://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/drugi-dio-feljtona-problem-divljih-ustasa-579232> – accessed on October 31, 2021

The first joy of regained independence among the Croatian population was not the result of sympathy for fascist ideologies, but of dissatisfaction with the geopolitical situation at that time and the hope of actually regaining the country from Serb rule. The initial joy was fueled by the fact of declaring independence after two decades of struggling with the government in Belgrade and not suffering any real losses resulting from the ongoing hostilities. Society's views changed relatively quickly - after the formation of the government and the appearance of gangs *wild Ustasha*.

III.2 TERRITORY

When announcing the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, Slavko Kvaternik declared that all of them would be included within its borders *historic Croatian lands, restoring the area from the reign of the greatest kings Tomislav, Piotr Krešimir and Dmitar Zvonimir*. In fact, this state has never been achieved. According to the original assumptions, the Independent State of Croatia was to cover the territory of the entire Croatian Banovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina up to the border on the Drina and the Bay of Kotor. Additionally, the areas of Sandžak and Novi Pazar inhabited by Muslims were also annexed using the fait accompli method.²⁶ The areas of Istria, Rijeka, Zadar, and the islands of Krk, Cres originally



belonging to Lošinj, and remaining under the Italian protectorate since the end of the Great War, could not even be taken into account when trying to rebuild the country. A similar problem also concerned the areas of Međimurje and Baranja, which were incorporated into the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary during the April hostilities.²⁷ An additional difficulty was the way of governance. The government of the Independent State of Croatia exercised real authority only over a small part of the territory. The rest of the country was divided into zones of influence of the Third Reich and the Italian Republic, where in the Italian zone there were additional military and civilian governments that were supposed to look after the interests of the Republic. A separate problem was the mountain areas, where the partisans were constantly staying, which made it impossible to control these lands.

Despite the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia on April 10, 1941 and the establishment of a government a few days later, the country did not have any legally defined border. This was achieved only a month later, on May 13, 1941, by signing a border treaty with the Third Reich, under which it was designated along Croatian-Styrian border line. Five days later, under the Treaties of Rome, the Independent State of Croatia ceded most of Dalmatia, Gorski Kotar and the coast to Italy, receiving in return access to the sea only near the cities of Novi, Senj, Crikvenica, in the gorges of Karlobag and Kraljevica, and near Dubrovnik. In addition, the Croats lost all islands to the Republic except the following: Brač, Hvar, Pag, Šipan, Šćedro, Maun, Lokrum, Lopud and Koločep. Poglavnik's actions in giving up so much of the Croatian

Moreover, the Croats did not agree to describe it in any agreements, as this would be binding myself with the acceptance of the annexation of Međimurje and Baranja. Despite the complaints filed by Poglavnik against the annexation of purely Croatian territories carried out in this way, the representatives of the Reich recognized that the annexation in question was a reward for the Kingdom of Hungary for its participation in the attack on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and compensation for the territories lost as a result of the decisions of 1918.²⁹

The border with Prime Minister Nadić's collaborating Serbia was established on June 7, 1941. According to the signed treaty, it was to run along the old border between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Serbia. According to the agreement, the eastern part of Srijem became part of the Independent State of Croatia, but for security reasons and further plans of the Third Reich related to operations in the Balkans, it became a zone subordinated directly to Berlin.³⁰

The last border treaty was concluded with the Kingdom of Montenegro, for which decisions in this case were also made by the Italian Republic, which was its protector. As a result of the agreement concluded on October 27, 1941, the Italians united all of their dependent territories with the Konavla area, the city of Gruda and the Bay of Kotor.³¹

The territorial situation of the Independent State of Croatia changed after two years, when on September 8, 1943, the Italian Republic announced its capitulation. In this situation, Ante Pavelić declared the treaties concluded with Italy regarding the territory invalid and led to the annexation of the Croatian areas previously controlled by Rome. Poglavnik's decision was approved by the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joachim von Ribbentrop, considering it an action aimed at securing the territory of Croatia and the area controlled by the Third Reich. On September 11, 1943, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Croatia, Mladen Lorković, received information from the German consul Siegfried Kasche about the obligation to refrain from annexing the areas left by the Italians. At the same time, the Reich began to take over Istria, Rijeka, Kvarner and part of the coast with Gorski Kotar, as areas of strategic importance for the military and political activities of the Third Reich.³² Due to the above, the areas remaining after the Italian Republic were only partially within the borders of the Independent State of Croatia.

26 T. Jonjić, *Hrvatska vanjska politika 1939-1942*, Zagreb, 2000, p. 70.

• 27D. Kovačić, Pitanje Međimurja u redarstvenoobavještajnim poznama NDH i Kraljevine Mađarske u Drugom svjetskom ratu [in:] POLEMOS: časopis za interdisciplinarna istraživanja rata i mira, Vol.XIII No.26 2010, pp. 59-78.

language to his protectors contributed to the growth of dissatisfaction not only among the country's inhabitants, but also among his closest collaborators.²⁸

The border with the Kingdom of Hungary was also a problem. Originally running along the Drava River, it did not require additional regulation.



28 N. Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković - ministar urotnik*, Zagreb 1997, pp. 304–306.

• 29D. Kovačić, Pitanje Međimurja u redarstvenoobavještajnim poznama NDH i Kraljevine Mađarske u Drugom svjetskom ratu [in:] POLEMOS: časopis za interdisciplinarna istraživanja rata i mira, Vol.XIII No.26 2010, pp.59-78.

30 <https://web.archive.org/web/20140416205706/http://povijest.net/v5/hrvatska/hrvatska-2-svjetski-rat/2007/gospodarstvo-nezavisne-drzave-hrvatske-1941-1945-1/> - accessed on October 31, 2021

31 N. Kisić-Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković - ministar urotnik*, Zagreb 1997, pp. 304–306.

32 N. Barić, *Uspostava i djelovanje uprave NDH u dijelovima Dalmacije nakon kapitulacije Italije (rujan 1943. -studen 1944.)*, [in:] Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest, Vol.31 No.1/1999

III.2.1 POPULATION

We do not have any accurate population census from the period of the Independent State of Croatia. According to the 1931 census, the area that was to become part of the Independent State of Croatia was inhabited by 6,020,000 people. In turn, according to the budget of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia planned by Vladimir Žerjavić for 1941, this area was inhabited by 6,869,000 people. However, this number should be looked at critically. Most of Dalmatia, which was given to the Italians with 380,000 inhabitants, and occupied by the Kingdom of Hungary, should be subtracted from the expected area. In this way, the country lost an area inhabited by about half a million Croats, while gaining areas inhabited by over a million Serbs. The government encouraged the colonization of Slavonia by the people of Dalmatia, Lika, Zagorje and Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. the areas that were mostly in Italian hands. Offices recruiting colonizers were organized in Mostar, Osijek, Petrinja, Sarajevo, Zagreb and Srijemska Mitrovica.³³

The most accurate seems to be the report of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the end of 1941, created for the needs of the administration of the Third Reich. According to him, the Independent State of Croatia was inhabited by 4 million Croats, including 700,000 Muslims. Moreover, it was found in this area 1,925,000 Serbs, 150,000 Germans, 70,000 Hungarians, 30,000 Slovenians, 40,000 Jews and 65,000 Czechoslovaks, which gave a total of 6,285,000

inhabitants.³⁴

III.2.2. THE POSITION OF WOMEN AND THE FAMILY

Politicians of the Ustasha movement wanted to promote traditional family values among Croats at all costs and, therefore, encourage society to increase the fertility rate. One of the steps taken for this purpose was the organization of Mother and Child Days, during which not only great festivals were held to divert attention from the war struggles, but also mass baptisms of children, during which leading politicians of the movement and their spouses became godparents. During one of such ceremonies, a law was also announced stating that prostitution and abortion, as well as incitement to any of these activities, will be punishable by death.³⁵

According to the movement's ideology, every woman's duty was motherhood and intellectual work. For this reason, the Women's League of the Ustasha Movement was created, the aim of which was to promote the idea of intellectual life and motherhood among the inhabitants of the Independent State of Croatia. The League was also responsible for creating and distributing numerous publications that condemned and criticized women who avoided motherhood. At the initiative of the League, actions were also taken to control the appearance and behavior of women. Wearing skirts shorter than above the knee and low

33 I.Balta, *Colonization in Slavonija from the beginning of the 20th century. stoljeća s sebnim osvrtom na razdoblje 1941-1945 godine*, [in:] Zavoda za povijesne poznanosti HAZU u Zadru, 43/2001, p. 473.

34 F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše and NDH 1941-1945*, Zagreb 1977, p. 106.

35 *Hrvatski slikopisni czednik*, prosinac 1941, unnumbered edition

necklines was forbidden, declaring them immoral. In addition, women who smoked cigarettes were fined for acting against their health and life, and the use of make-up by working women was banned.³⁶

III.2.3 EDUCATION

Already in the first days of the state's existence, the entire educational system was subordinated to the Ministry of Education, headed at the beginning by one of the movement's ideologists, Mile Budak. In the school year 1940/1941, the ministry decided to award all



students *memory certificates guaranteeing promotion to the next class, but without grades. Textbooks and curricula were quickly changed to fit the new ideology and written in the Latin alphabet and Croatian language. The aim of this activity was to educate children and young people about the history of the country as early as possible and to familiarize them with the rules of the Ustasha movement.*

It quickly turned out that young people began to resist such actions of the ministry. On May 26, 1941, government representatives gathered Zagreb high school students at the Sokol Stadium and then ordered Jews and Serbs to occupy a isolated sector. The purpose of this action was separating young people considered inferior, arresting them and deporting them to concentration camps. However, Croatian Catholic high school students showed solidarity and went with their friends, which prevented the implementation of the Ustasha plans. The ministry also made significant efforts to educate the population, obliging everyone over the age of 50 to learn to read and write within six years.

The only university in the country - the University of Zagreb - was renamed the Croatian University. With the name change, Serbs and Jews studying there were expelled from the university. The repression also affected lecturers of Serbian and Jewish origin, as well as employees sympathizing with leftist and communist movements. In 1942, the Faculty of Pharmacy was opened at the Croatian University, and in 1944, the Faculty of Medicine was established as a branch center in Sarajevo. With the opening of the Faculty of Pharmacy, the University Hospital Center was also launched in Zagreb.³⁷

III.2.3 CULTURE

Cultural issues in the Independent State of Croatia, just like in the Third Reich, were completely subordinated to the promotion of a new ideology. The state took complete control over the press, publishing houses and theaters. In many pre-war artists who made great contributions to culture were considered incapable of work and subjected to repression due to their views. Many of them were forcibly conscripted into the army, some were imprisoned (such as Jozo Kljaković and Ivan Meštrović) or sent to concentration camps (Josip Badalić, Antun Barac, Grga Novak and Mirko Deanović), and many were shot (including August Cesarc, Božidar Adžija, Otokar Keršovani, Zvonimir Richtmann and Ognjen Prica). The partisans

36 <https://slobodnadalmacija.hr/sd-plus/stil/martina-bitunjac-i-zene-su-euforicno-stvarale-ndh-148815> - accessed on November 2, 2021

37 <https://web.archive.org/web/20080213125225/http://www.mf.unsa.ba/english/> - accessed on November 1, 2021

were joined by Vladimir Nazor, Ivan Goran Kovačić, Jure Kaštelan, Joža Horvat, Slavko Kolar, Slobodan Novak, Edo Murtić and Vjekoslav Afrić, where they continued their artistic or political activities.³⁸

The authorities of the Independent State of Croatia also resulted in the transformation of the Croatian Encyclopedia Consortium existing in Banovina into the Croatian Bibliographic Publishing Institute, which, together with Matica Hrvatska, which had existed since the 19th century, took over myself publishing works by Croatian writers. In according to incomplete data on publishing activities until 1944, the institute published over 2,000 titles. The largest undertaking was the publication of the five-volume Croatian Encyclopedia, edited by Mateo Ujević.³⁹

In order to adapt the development of science to the needs of the new state, the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences was renamed the Croatian Academy of Sciences, and at the same time a purge was carried out in its ranks, aimed at eliminating employees with *incorrect origins and views. As already mentioned, many creators, scientists and artists* was repressed both for their views and origin. In it was binding myself this with a provision based on the German provision stating that Jews and Serbs have no place in Croatian theaters. This was of great importance because the Ustasha movement wanted all four state theaters (in Zagreb, Osijek, Dubrovnik and Sarajevo) to promote only the purely Croatian theater of the new spirit.⁴⁰

In 1942, at the Venice Biennale, the Independent State of Croatia also presented the works of its artists. The exhibition included works by Jozo Kljaković, Ivan Meštrović (released from prison on this occasion), Ante Motika, and Ivo Režek. At that time, the National Film Institute was also very active, responsible for, among others, films such as *Guard on the Drina*, which was the Croatian response to German propaganda cinema. The institute also published a weekly film magazine, *Hrvatski slikopisni tylednik*.⁴¹



III.2.5 ARCHITECTURE

The architectural pattern applicable in the new state was marked by a focus on Croatian problems, the construction and reconstruction of religious buildings and sanctuaries, the reconstruction of cities and settlements destroyed by the war, and the creation of shelters. As special place in construction was given to the creation of buildings intended to reflect the power of the Ustasha movement and its ideology, i.e. facilities such as educational centers, workers' houses and housing estates.⁴² On April 29, 1941, a law was announced regarding the construction of family houses for workers, which were to be built in Karlovac,

38 *To se zove biti Hrvat*, [in:] Novi List, 28 February 2010, p. 9.

1. 39N. Kisić-Kolanović, "Islamic variant" in morphology and culture of NDH 1941 – 1945, [in:] Časopis za suvremenu povijest, God. 39., No. 1/2007, pp. 63-95

40 <https://mvinfo.hr/clanak/snjezana-banovic-drzava-i-njezino-zanieste> – accessed on November 2, 2021

41 M. Grgičević, *Povratak zaboravljene glumice, Dragica Krog-Radoš, glumica i subreta*, [in:] *Vijenac*, No. 338, 15 February 2007

42 <http://kgalovic.blogspot.com/2012/03/arhit-ektura-u-nezavisnoj-drzavi.html> - accessed on November 2, 2021

Osijek Sisak, Varaždin and Zagreb under the name of Pavelicia estates. The housing estates were to be characterized by semi-detached buildings, wide streets and large areas of greenery.⁴³

Moreover, the architectural aspirations of the Independent State of Croatia aimed to express the size of the state through the monumentality of public buildings. The implementation of visionary projects, including winter and sports ports, hotels and higher education estates, was also started.⁴⁴

Since July 1941, when a set of racial laws were introduced, many Jewish architects were summarily dismissed from their jobs, and many synagogues were rebuilt or demolished. Many Orthodox churches also suffered a similar fate.⁴⁵

III.2.6 PRESS

The main daily newspaper of the Independent State of Croatia was *Narodne Novine*. Apart from them, *Hrvatski Narod*, *Hrvatski List* published in Osijek and *Novi List* in Sarajevo were

also published. In turn, *Spremnost*, devoted to political and cultural topics, was considered the most important weekly. All news for the press was provided by the *Velebit* news agency, which was replaced by the *Croatian Notification Bureau* in January 1942. The role of the state radio station was taken over by the former *Radio Zagreb*, now operating under the name *Hrvatski Krugoval*.⁴⁶ In the first months of the country's existence, the radio station increased the power of its transmitter from 4 to 10 kW, and too opened its local branches in Banja Luka, Dubrovnik, Osijek and Sarajevo.⁴⁷

With the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, all media were subordinated to the Advertising Secretariat, headed by Mijo Bzik with the title of Commissioner for Journalism. Immediately after taking up his position, Bzik sent a circular to all editorial offices containing instructions regarding the appearance and composition of newspapers. With according to the instructions, the press was to focus on glorifying the Ustaše movement and the Independent State of Croatia, Croatian culture and traditions, and discrediting the Serbian enemy.⁴⁸

After the end of the war, of the 330 journalists registered in the state, one hundred were punished by the authorities of the Yugoslav Republic with a ban on practicing their profession, 38 were shot, and 131 had to emigrate.⁴⁹

43 J. Martinčić, *Osječ architecture 1918-1945*, Osijek 2006, p 170.

44 <http://kgalovic.blogspot.com/2012/03/arhit-ektura-u-nezavisnoj-drzavi.html> - accessed on November 2, 2021

45 <https://web.archive.org/web/20070927203959/http://www.matica.hr/Vijenac/vij227.nsf/AllWebDocs/mhaa> –accessed on November 2, 2021

46 http://free-sk.htnet.hr/radio_museum/Povijest%20radija%20u%20Hrvatskoj.htm -accessed on November 3, 2021

47 https://web.archive.org/web/20071228044958/http://www.hrt.hr/hrt/povijest/povijest_hrv.html - accessed on November 3, 2021

48 <https://web.archive.org/web/20130608091055/http://blog.vecernji.hr/zvonimir-despot/2013/05/15/tko-je-bio-ustaski-doglavnik-mijo-bzik> - access at on November 3, 2021

49 I. Parašćić, *Censorship in Jugoslavia from 1945 to 1990. godine*, Zagreb 2007, p. 15.

III.3 STATE STRUCTURE

Throughout its entire existence, the Independent State of Croatia did not have a



constitution regulating its functioning. More importantly, during this entire period, there was not even a single attempt to write down and implement one. All documents regulating the operation of the state were signed personally by Ante Pavelić, who was the guarantor of the existence and independence of the Croatian state until the signing of the Treaties of Rome, bearing the title of Poglavnik. After signing the treaties, the king, i.e. in the current situation, Tomislav II of Savoy, became the guarantor.

By then, Poglavnik had managed to sign and at the same time recognize as binding laws on the parliament (which, as we noted earlier, was not finally convened), flags, coats of arms and state seals, on citizenship, on the administrative division into *zhupans*, on the state council, on the Islamic minority, on the Orthodox Church, the borders of the Independent State of Croatia (which, as we already know, had to be absolutely verified) and the uniformed services. First set of laws it was created by Pavelić personally during his stay in Italy in the 1930s, during his internment after the assassination of King Alexander. Later, the bodies supporting Poglavnik in creating laws and expanding the legal system changed extremely often. In the first period of the state's existence, i.e. in 1941-1942, the Poglavnik Legislative Commission was responsible for work on laws, which in the first quarter of 1942 was replaced by the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Justice and Culture. In 1942, work on laws and regulations was transferred to other institutions twice more. In this way, the Croatian National Assembly was first responsible for developing the legal system, which, contrary to appearances, was not endowed with legislative prerogatives. Shortly after recognizing this error, Poglavnik transferred legislative responsibilities to the State Council, which operated until the end of the state's existence in 1945.

Executive powers were completely concentrated in Poglavnik's hands. Not only was he the real head of state until 1943, despite the formal rule of Tomislav II. After the capitulation of Italy, he officially served as head of state. In the meantime, he not only served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister, or leader of the group, but also selected and appointed individual ministers, and later the president, and also gathered most of the judicial apparatus in his hands.

The issue of the Croatian National Assembly should also be clarified here. This body was convened for the first time on February 23, 1942. Even though the original bill called for him to be fully elected by popular vote, myself did not

stand. All its members were nominated to serve as MPs. However, the institution turned out to be unnecessary, as it met only three times throughout the entire period of the state's existence, in 1942.

III.3.1 ADMINISTRATION

According to the law created by Pavelić, the Independent State of Croatia was divided into counties and counties, in accordance with a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. According to the assumption, 22 counties were created, divided into 148 counties and almost a thousand communes, all of which were named after their historical counterparts.⁵⁰ The return to the historical division was aimed primarily at breaking with the administrative division of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and completely shifting the established administrative boundaries.

One of such actions was the merger of the areas located on the border of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina within the county and counties, which, on the one hand, aimed to strengthen Croatian-Bosnian relations, and on the other hand, also strengthened and helped subjugate the eastern part of the country. One of the manifestations of such increased integration was the desire to move the capital of the Independent State of Croatia to Bosnia's Banja Luka. Initially, it was planned to move only the deputy prime minister's office and several less important ministries to Banja Luka, and eventually the transfer of all offices was considered.⁵¹

Ultimately, the plan to move the capital of the Independent State of Croatia from Zagreb to Banja Luka by the end of the war did not go beyond the sphere of projects and preparations.

III.3.2 JUDICIARY

The new Croatian state retained the entire judicial system of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, only in terms of nomenclature returning to the times of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Officially, the entire judiciary was subordinated to the Ministry of Justice and Cult, which subordinated 172 district courts, 19 county courts, one administrative court, one appellate court, as well as two supreme courts - one in Sarajevo and Zagreb. In the first months of the state's existence, additional extraordinary courts were established, such as the shortened court, the people's court, the national defense court and the Ustasha disciplinary court, which were brought under the jurisdiction of Pavelić. Moreover, extraordinary courts could issue death sentences for such trivial offenses as insulting Poglavnik.⁵²

All judgments issued by extraordinary



courts became irrevocable and had to be implemented within a dozen or so hours of their announcement. This meant that the basis of the judiciary in the Independent State of Croatia became extraordinary courts based only on Poglavnik's regulations and not on general laws, thus relegating common courts to a secondary role. In this way, the judiciary became even more bound to the will and decisions of Ante Pavelić, a doctor of law and leader of the Ustasha group.⁵³

For citizens, the legal situation worsened on August 7, 1941, when Pavelić signed the law on *combating crimes against the state, which was entirely prepared by the Director of Public Order and*

internal communication and trade routes by partisans, who also occupied forests and remote agricultural areas.

Another difficulty was the interests of the Italian Republic and the Third Reich related to the economy of the Independent State of Croatia. The Italians sought to obtain and use bauxite and wood deposits located in Herzegovina and Dalmatia. They presented their efforts to obtain bauxite also Germany. At least half a million tons per year could be obtained from the existing bauxite mines in the Independent State of Croatia, which would allow the Third Reich to meet 40% of its annual demand for this material.⁵⁶ Moreover, as the war situation developed, an increasing number of industrial plants came under the management of the Third Reich.⁵⁷

Next one economic problem they had to deal with myself measured by the authorities, there was a rapid impoverishment of the urban population, with almost a third of them finding themselves on the brink of hunger and extreme poverty. Constantly increasing inflation, which was not even attempted to be stopped by increasing incomes, combined with rising unemployment also worsened the state of the country. This situation forced many residents to go to work deep inside the Reich. It is estimated that the total number of people who left voluntarily and were delegated to work in the Third Reich exceeded 200,000 inhabitants of the Independent State of Croatia.⁵⁸

Due to the financial difficulties of the state and citizens, many residents began to hide their collections and goods from collectors. Therefore, a law was introduced prohibiting the concealment and withdrawal of foodstuffs from the market, and increasing the prices of food products was prohibited, introducing the death penalty for both offenses. Many peasants were tried by extraordinary courts and

50 R. Bućin, *Prilog poznavanju institucija: zakonski okvir rada velikih župa NDH*, [in:] Arhivski vjesnik, No. 44/2002., pp. 209-225.

51 V. Murvar, *Banja Luka – glavni grad Nezavisne Države Hrvatske. Zbornik hrvatskih sveučilištaraca*, Zagreb 1942, p.21.

52 N. Srpak, *Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (1941.-1945.)* [in:] *Hrvatski ljetopis za kazneno pravo i praksu (Zagreb)*, T.13, No. 2/2006, pp. 1117-1144.

53 N. Srpak, *Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (1941.-1945.)* [in:] *Hrvatski ljetopis za kazneno pravo i praksu (Zagreb)*, T.13, No. 2/2006, pp. 1117-1144.

*Security, Eugen Dido Kvaternik. The act assumed collective responsibility of a given community for crimes detected in its territory and actions against the Independent State of Croatia and its officials.*⁵⁴

III.4 ECONOMICS

From the very beginning, the established state had to face numerous difficulties, including economic problems. One of the first and greatest burdens that the Independent State of Croatia had to face was participation in the creation of the budget of the Third Reich. It should be noted here that during the war, less than a third of the Third Reich's budget was actually generated by the German state, while the rest came from payments made by the allied countries.⁵⁵

The Croatian state was deprived of income from the maritime economy, which was contributed to by the Italian occupation, while a significant amount of income from agriculture was taken away by the Hungarian occupation. Another problem was the control of a significant part of the country's

54 *Izvod iz iskaza Mile Budaka 26. svibnja 1945* [in:] I. Petrinovic, *Prema Mile Budak – a portrait of a single politician*, Split 2002.

55 R.W. Lindholm, *German Finance in World War II* [in:] *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1/1947, pp.121-134.

56 I. Goldstein, *Hrvatska 1918-2008*, Zagreb 2008., p. 245.

57 J. Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941–1945: Occupation and Collaboration*, Stanford 2001.

58 G. Miljan, I. Miškulin, *Povijest 4. udžbenik povijesti za 4. razred gimnazije*, Zagreb 2009.



sentenced to death. The reason for this action was not to resell its agricultural products to the Croatian monopoly at low prices, and to sell some of them on the black market.⁵⁹

III.4.1 CURRENCY

On July 8, 1941, the newly established Croatian State Bank introduced the Croatian kuna, which was divided into 100 bani, as a means of payment. According to the original assumption, the kuna could be obtained at bank branches by exchanging the Yugoslav dinar in a 1:1 ratio until November 29, 1941. Also based on the original assumption, the kuna was to be based on the gold parity, according to which one kuna was to be covered with 17.9 milligrams of gold.⁶⁰ However, despite the introduction of the new currency, customs duties and taxes were still collected in the kingdom's remaining dinars, Italian liras and German marks.

By the end of 1941, the Croatian State Bank took over the assets left by the National Bank of Yugoslavia in the amount of 19.5 billion dinars, of which 7.5 billion were exchanged for kuna. At the end of the year, the state coffers received the equivalent of 8.4 billion kuna, which the Third Reich paid as a debt repayment for Croatian goods purchased by the Wehrmacht on credit.

It is estimated that thanks to the exchange in the ratio of 1:1, by April 1943, there were 23.1 billion kuna on the market. Already in December 1944, this amount was 150 billion kuna, and at the time of the collapse of the Independent State of Croatia it reached 241 billion kuna. Despite the optimistic looking numbers, it was not a reason for joy for state administrators. It is estimated that a quarter of the given amounts ended up in the hands of the partisans in various ways, and the ever-growing need to meet war expenses led to high inflation reaching several hundred percent annually.⁶¹

V. INTERNAL POLICY

The first laws aimed at ensuring state security were passed and implemented on April 17, 1941. The recipe said that *who in any way violates the honor and vital interests of the Croatian nation or in any way threatens the survival of the Independent State of Croatia or the state authorities, even if the act remained in the draft phase, is guilty of treason and should be put to death.*⁶² A provision on preparatory courts was also introduced, providing only the death penalty. On May 27, an appeals court for Zagreb was established. Initially, the main people appealing

against first-instance court sentences were Jews and Serbs, but very quickly this group began to be joined by everyone who expressed dissatisfaction with the regime's actions or

59 *Collector of the Order and Naredaba*, [in:] Narodne novine, 17. IV. 1941.

60 <http://www.kunalipa.com/katalog/povijest/20-stoljece-2.php> - accessed on November 1, 2021
1. 61J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-1945; occupation and collaboration*, Zagreb 2010, pp. 783-790.

62 R. Blažević, A. Alijagić, *Antižidovstvo i rasno zakonodavstvo u fašističkoj Italiji, nacističkoj Njemačkoj i ustaškoj NDH*, [in:] *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Rijeci*, no.31 (2)/2010, pp. 903-904.

were suspected of belonging to the communist party. At it was also praised that anyone who, by writing, printing, publishing and distributing books or newspapers, ridicules the then order and speaks against the Independent State of Croatia and its leaders should be brought before a summary court. A few days later, the provision was supplemented with an additional crime, which included listening to banned radio stations and disseminating information obtained from them.⁶³

On April 30, the so-called *racial laws*. *The first laws defined who Croats were and what crimes harmed the stability and security of the state. On June 4, 1941, a law defining the role of Jews in the state came into force. According to this provision, Jews and Roma were deprived of civil rights and all freedoms.*⁶⁴ A few weeks earlier, the government introduced in the Independent State of Croatia the obligation to use racial markings, such as the Star of David, known from the Third Reich. On October 10, 1941, the authorities introduced a regulation nationalizing all Jewish property.⁶⁵

On June 27, 1941, one of the main ideologists of the movement and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Croatia, Mladen Lorković, announced: *the Croatian nation must be cleansed of all elements that are the misfortune of this nation, that are alien to this nation, that dissolve its healthy forces in this nation, that have pushed this nation from one evil to another for decades and centuries. This element are Serbs and Jews.*⁶⁶ Terror, deportations, repressions and other forms of discrimination affected all minorities living in the Independent State of Croatia, with the exception of Germans, who became a privileged minority whose unique



position was guaranteed by numerous laws and regulations.⁶⁷ One of such laws was announced on October 30, 1941, guaranteeing the German minority unlimited rights in the use of the German language and the German flag in the territory of the Independent State of Croatia.

It became a racial part of the ideology myself also a theory about the origin of the Croats, linking them with the Aryan people who came to the Balkans and subjugated the Slavs living there. Moreover, Pavelić's regime recognized the Muslim population living in Bosnia and Sanjak as Croats.⁶⁸

IV1 TERROR

In the first days of the state's existence, gangs of so-called *wild Ustaše composed mainly of criminals and former criminals*. These groups very quickly began to get out of control and commit acts of violence

63 R. Blažević, A. Alijagić, *Antižidovstvo i rasno zakonodavstvo u fašističkoj Italiji, nacističkoj Njemačkoj i ustaškoj NDH*, [in:] *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Rijeci*, no.31 (2)/2010, pp. 903–904.

64 I. Goldstein, *The Holocaust in Croatia*, Pittsburgh 2016, p. 115.

65 I. Goldstein, *The Holocaust in Croatia*, Pittsburgh 2016, p. 170.

66 *Hrvatski nation*, June 28, 1941.

67 <http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=5890> - accessed on November 3, 2021

1. 68M. Jareb, *Jesu li Hrvati became Goti? Odnos usta i vlasti Nezavisne Države Hrvatske prema neslavenskim teorijama o podrijetlu Hrvata*, [in:] *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, No. 40, Vol. 3/2008, pp. 869-882.

against the Serb population, often ending with murders.⁶⁹ When Serb uprisings began to break out in Herzegovina in July and August 1941, Poglavnik ordered the disbanding of the wild Ustasha to prevent further unrest. Over the next few months, the courts, on Pavelić's orders, often passed death sentences for the Ustaše who allowed myself murders and violence against civilians.⁷⁰

In the Psat and Krbava counties, covering the areas of Lika and western Bosnia, terror against the civilian population ended in September 1941, after the dismissal and trial of Ustasha officials who were found to have incited anti-Serbian activities. However, at that time, groups of insurgents had

already been formed there and would take up action in later years myself fighting the Ustasha.⁷¹

It is estimated that by the end of 1941 as a result of activities *100,000 Serbs were murdered by the wild Ustasha. This anti-Serb terror led to the Chetniks' revenge against Croats and Bosnian Muslims, as a result of which 90,000 Muslims were murdered in eastern Bosnia alone in 1942.*⁷²

IV2 CONCENTRATION CAMPS

System camps concentration camps acting In Independent State Croatian In no way NO he reminded known U.S way functioning camps Nazis. Here everyone camp was independent institution, having to fulfill one specified functions—speed up death enemies nation, That is Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. Apart from problem existence alone camps, In which cruelty it was gaining new meaning, there is the problem of the rather specific approach of the Croatian Catholic Church to Affairs extermination nation Serbian. IN within less than four years existence independent Croatia it worked about 40 camps concentration camps, With which after war revealed Just 22. First camp assumed 10 May 1941 year In towns Danica, as place detention and extermination Jews. Behind persuasion representatives church Catholic, everyone Croat spending Ustasha member nation Jewish, had to receive behind him thirty brands, as symbolic retaliation behind biblical thirty pieces of silver⁷³. IN August 1941 year left running camp, which gained titre *Balkan Auschwitz*, Jasenovac.

IV21 JASENOVAC

3 of August 1941 year, In unique day concluding a covenant By Independent Country Croatian and Vatican, left appointed down existence camp concentration camp in commune Jasenovac⁷⁴, which was originally intended to function as a labor camp. In his composition apart from Main part engaging area former brickyards and machinery plants In Jasenovac, were coming in still camps In Sisak (camp children), Ciglanje, Kozar and Stara Gradišće (camp feminine). Apart from alone idea creation camp, population over there detained more it was terrifying presence among camp crew representatives church Catholic. Representatives those this members order Franciscans, who In

time war NO they carried help victims

69 N. Barić, *Položaj Srba u domobranstvu Nezavisne države Hrvatske, 1941. - 1945* [in:] *POLEMOS: časopis zainterdisciplinarna istraživanja rata i mira*, Vol. V No.9-10/2002, pp. 162-163.



70 N. Barić, *Banja Luka 1941.-1942./1943. godine: previranja unutar vlasti Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, [in:] *Pilar: časopis za društvene i humanističke studije*, Vol. XIII No. 25-26 (1-2)/2018, pp. 91-156.

71 F. Jurić, *Ustroj civilnih i vojnih tijela vlasti NDH u Velikoj župi Krbava i Psat sa sjedištem u Bihaću 1941.-1942. godine*, [in:] *Zbornik Janković*, Vol. IV No. 4/2019, pp. 379-385.

72 A. Korb, *Understanding Ustaša violence*, [in:] *Journal of Genocide Research*, No. 12/2010, pp. 2-12.

73 J. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, Warsaw 2006, p. 107.

74 S. Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia*, New York 2008, p. 34.

repression, But themselves they were their perpetrators. Among the frequently changing commandants of the camp was the Franciscan friar Miroslav Filipović-Majstorović, who had previously been the chaplain of the Ustaše troops stationed in Banja Luka. However, before he was appointed camp commandant, on February 7, 1942, he took an active part in the massacre of the Serbian villages of Drakulić and Šargovac. More than 2,700 Serbs were murdered then⁷⁵. The favorable reports about Filipović-Majstorović that came to the Headquarters after the massacres in Bosnia resulted in him being appointed commander of the Jasenovac camp in May of the same year, becoming the first Franciscan to administer a concentration camp. A month later, he was punished by the order for the murders he committed in February by being removed from the order and excommunicated. This occurred exactly seven months after he was ordained a priest⁷⁶. Despite being excluded from the church and the fact that he was also a member of the Ustasha movement, he walked around the camp wearing a Franciscan habit, which, combined with the extraordinary cruelty (he was able to personally murder old people and children by beating them with a hoe), which he committed against the inmates, ensured his nickname was Fra Sotona (Brother Satan)⁷⁷. He served in Jasenovac until October 27, 1942, when he was transferred to the position of camp commandant in Stara Gradiška.

Another Franciscan, which steel myself icon Jasenovac was father Petar Brzica, which he served in the camp guard in degree lieutenant. 28 of August 1942 year crew camp she arranged his own kind competition, relying on handmade murdering prisoners. Winner showed myself NO Who other,

How father Brzica, which In within one day beheaded head 1360 inmates⁷⁸. Prize In competitions was watch In gold-plated envelope, bottle fault and half pig. As for the number of victims of Father Brzica during the mentioned competitions, there are some discrepancies. Nikola Nikolić, in his work on the crime in Jasenovac published in 1969, gives the number of 670 murdered⁷⁹. In turn, an article from the Zagreb weekly *Nedziela* from October 1942 describing the case talks about 1,100 murdered⁸⁰.

Ammunition was not used to murder prisoners, as it was more needed by the units fighting the partisans. This resulted in the development of various cruel murder techniques and the adaptation of all kinds of tools for this purpose. Children were often murdered by being driven into previously dug pits and thrown with grenades. Other tools included carpenter's axes used to split heads, axes used to quarter prisoners alive, and iron hammers used to beat old people and cripples to death. Specific *the murder weapon was a knife, used before the war to work in the field, and during the war it was called a srbosjek*⁸¹. It had a short blade attached to a leather glove, which, when put on, formed a right angle with the hand, and was originally used to cut ears of grain. The Ustaše used them to kill by cutting the throat or stabbing them into the cervical vertebrae, and occasionally by cutting the clavicle artery and leaving the victim to bleed completely. Saws were often used during executions to cut the victims in two or saw their heads off. Women in the camp were treated equally cruelly. There were many cases where camp guards cut off their breasts with pocket knives or

75 L. Lukajić, *Fratrī and uste kolju*, Belgrade 2005, p. 341.

76 <http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6863> - accessed on January 9, 2016

77 From Croatian: *Brother Satan*.

78 B. Lituchy, *Jasenovac and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia*, New York 2006

79 N. Nikolić, *Taborišće smrti-Jasenovac*, Belgrade 1969, p. 293.

80 *Nedjelja*, Zagreb, October 19, 1942

81 Meanshe is literally the butcher of the Serbs.

cut open their bellies. Women imprisoned in Jasenovac were often brutally raped with iron bars, with which they were then beaten indiscriminately in the legs and torsos.⁸².



Murders were carried out too By jumping after arranged on earth victims down moment crushing organs internal, What Just it prolonged agony. In addition frequent *entertainment* guards was nailing inmates down door, plucking languages, cutting breasts, Whether smoking alive. Many victims left Too deprived eyes, which sent were In a gift Poglavnik, which In your own office he allegedly had to hold jar containing approx 20 kilograms gouged out Serbs eyes⁸³. According With calculations conducted By Yugoslav historian Vladimir Dedijera, In alone Just Jasenovac served In within whole his activities 119 priests Catholic and 22 Franciscans⁸⁴.

In April 1945, when the defeat of the Ustaše was certain, the partisans infiltrated the camp in Jasenovac and led to the outbreak of the uprising on April 22. Of the 600 prisoners who rebelled, 520 died in clashes with the guards and only 80 managed to escape. A few days after suppressing the rebellion, the Ustasha set fire to the camp buildings⁸⁵. When the partisans entered the camp at the end of April, they found only ruins and the burnt bodies of the last prisoners.

Unlike the remains of the Nazi camps, there are no censuses or equipment left of the Ustasha outposts, but there are hundreds of photographs taken by the torturers. However, the final number of victims of the Jasenovac camp is still unknown. Very cautious estimates made by the Education Center established in the camp in 2006 say about 47.627 murdered Serbs, 16.173 gypsies, 13.116 Jews and 6.229 representatives of other nationalities, giving a total of 83.145 victims⁸⁶. There are also estimates of over 700.000 murdered⁸⁷. The Simon Wiesenthal Center, in turn, gives the number of 600.000 victims of the camp⁸⁸.

IV.22 POST-WAR SETTLEMENT ATTEMPTS

After the war, an attempt was made to hold the Ustasha regime accountable for its crimes. There were a number of publications presenting Croatian nationalists in the worst light, but there were also works with a rather balanced tone. There have also been works attempting to acquit the Ustasha of the crimes they committed.

There is also a rather interesting fact about the operation of the camp in Jasenovac, overlooked by most historians. In 1945, one of his former prisoners, a communist Đorđe Milaša, published his memories from the period of his stay there. He stayed in Jasenovac from the opening of the camp in August 1941 until April 1942, when he was transferred to the camp in Stara Gradiška, from

where he was released in early

82 <http://www.arhivrs.org/Doc.aspx?id=65&cat=5&subcat=47&lang=cir&gal=20&slika=145> – accessed on June 10, 2012.

83 K. Deschner, *And the cock crowed again*, vol. 2, Gdynia 1996, p. 267.

84 V. Dedijer, *The Yugoslav Auschwitz and the Vatican*, Beograd 1992, p. 416.

85 <http://www.humanitas-international.org/showcase/chronography/timebase/1945tbse.htm> – accessed on June 10, 2012.

86 <http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6711> – accessed January 9, 2016.

87 T. Dulić, *Utopias of Nation. Local mass killings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1941-1942*, Uppsala 2005, p. 281.

88 <http://web.archive.org/web/20060512122324/http://motlc.learningcenter.wiesenthal.org/pages/t034/t03448.html> – accessed on June 10, 2012.



1943. Well, he draws attention to the decent treatment of prisoners, the opportunity to participate in masses and services - both Catholic and Orthodox, he also writes about a fairly efficient post office between the camp and the outside world, which delivered parcels from families to prisoners, and, most importantly, parcels these were not opened by the guards, and the condition for their receipt was that the prisoner opened them in the presence of the official issuing them. Miliša also points out that inmates were delegated to perform various works within the camp, such as building walls and watchtowers between parts of the camp, unloading trains, and running the camp office, and after completing their work, prisoners could move freely around the area, camp, and even use the library created for them⁸⁹.

After the war, publishing and possessing the book was banned, and the author himself was sent to the concentration camp founded by Josip Broz on the island of Goli Otok. The book was republished only in 1999. A similar fate befell a significant number of publications attempting to critically approach the issue of Ustasha concentration camps published in the 1970s, and their place in the press or on bookstore shelves was taken by subjective works signed by the government in Belgrade. A good example here is the profile of the Croatian writer Bruno Bušić, who started a polemic with the materials published by the government regarding the Ustaše movement and the camp system. He published his articles mainly in magazines *Hrvatski tylednik*⁹⁰, of which he was one of the editors-in-chief. His last work was *Nova Hrvatska*, published in 1975⁹¹, in which he proved that Broz's communist government was distorting history. Immediately after its release, he fled to Paris, where in 1978 he was brutally murdered by the Yugoslav SDB⁹². However, the Bušić case ended only in 2005. First, in 2000, the writer was rehabilitated, and former SDB agent Vinko Sindičić confessed to his murder. After another five years, Bušić's body was brought from Paris and buried with honors at the Mirogoj cemetery in Zagreb, in the avenue of merits.⁹³

A similar fate also befell other historians and publicists who wanted to critically present the problem of Ustasha activities, or who tried to present the actual number of murdered people, which the communist regime artificially inflated. As I wrote earlier, there is little documentation left regarding the transports and admission of new prisoners by the camps. Most of the documents were burned at the end of the war, while those that were somehow saved are now in Belgrade in the

Serbian Military Archives and are classified as top secret, which makes it impossible to thoroughly investigate the case of prisoners in Ustasha camps. Great differences in numbers murdered could already be seen in the estimates regarding the Jasenovac camp itself, presented in the previous fragment. Another interesting example is the camp in Jadovno near Gospić. It operated for an exceptionally short time, from May to August 1941. It was supposed to be a concentration camp for Serbs from the Lika region, and its quick dissolution was facilitated by the occupation of the Lika region by Italian troops. According to the Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia published in 1960, 35,000 people were murdered in the Jadovno camp during the three months of its operation. For comparison, the Naprijed

89 Đ.Miliša, *U mučilištu-paklu Jasenovac*, Zagreb 1945.

90 From Croatian: *Croatian week*.

91 From Croatian: *New Croatia*.

92 SDB - *Služba državne bezbednosti*, from Croatian: *State Security Service*.

93 J. Schindler, *Doctor of Espionage: The Victims of UDBA*, Sarajevo 2010, pp. 35-38.

newspaper⁹⁴, published by the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1944, writing about the same camp, stated that until 1944 - that is, for a period of three years from the establishment of the camp and after its closure - a total of 1,744 prisoners were taken from the Lika region.

Thanks to all the manipulation of data regarding concentration camps on the territory of Croatia, which has been going on since the emergence of partisan forces in 1941, we, as historians, cannot state the facts about the actual number of prisoners and murdered in the camps. The fact is that Ustasha concentration camps existed. It is also a fact that mainly Serbs died in them. Additionally, the rhetoric carried out by the communist Belgrade government *the Jasenovac myth, defining all Croats as Ustasha and guilty of crimes, brought the expected results. Currently, until the Belgrade archives are opened, we are not even able to correctly estimate the number of prisoners, let alone those murdered.*

IV3 THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH

Pavelić, as zealous Catholic, cooperation With The Vatican treated as seriously How cooperation With The third one Reich. Croatian prelates With railway they strived behind any price down alliance With



Ustasha, who as the only ones they were guarantor anti-communist resistance and creation countries, In which this church Catholic will be had priority Before Orthodox church and others religions. Incumbent In this time position archbishop Zagreb doctor Alojz Stepinac, NO anticipating threats, which Maybe result With support fascist grouping, and acting For All right Croatian church he ordered clergy support Ustasha. After proclamation Independent State of Croatian, archbishop he wrote down subordinate yourself clergy: *Here events, which our nation brought down meetings With dream and desired ideal. Here times, In which NO speaks Already Tongue, But blood by yours secret bond With this one earth, In which we saw light God, and With nation, With whose myself we derive. If it's necessary to underline, That and In ours breasts livelierit killed heart?*⁹⁵

After temporary euphoria induced vision new Catholic countries, Already 11 May 1941 year one With parish priests he announced archbishop about murder 260 Serbs In towns Clay, and about creation camp concentration In Jasenovac. The crime in Glina was supposed to be the first official and at the same time such cruel action against representatives another nationalities. The Ustaše offered the Orthodox Serbs living in the town to convert to Catholicism, which was intended to prevent further repression of their community. When the Serbs agreed and went with their entire families to the local church on May 12, 1941, the Ustasha closed the door behind them, barricaded them and put them under temple fire. As a result, 250 Serbs were burned. The remaining ten who did not go to the church were beaten to death by the Ustaše with sticks⁹⁶. However, attacks on the Serbs living in Glina had been ongoing since May 6. During these five days, the Ustaše murdered approximately 370 Orthodox Serbs in the surrounding forests or kidnapped them to neighboring villages, where they handed them over to Croatian inhabitants.⁹⁷

94 From Croatian: *Forward*.

95 S. Goldstein, Scar and glory, "Gazeta Wyborcza", Warsaw 1998, no. 232, August 19.

96 M. Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat, 1941-1945, Stuttgart 1964, p. 101*.

97 J. Tomasevich, *War and revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: occupation and collaboration*, Stanford 2001, p. 398.

Archbishop Stepinac's problem was that he supported the new regime too enthusiastically.

Poglavnik's support and acceptance of the function of an Ustasha clergyman in 1942 deprived him of the opportunity to officially oppose the new government.⁹⁸ There was also too radical support for the Ustasha organization by some of the lower clergy. Some clergy joined the Poglavnik Administrative Division. Among them was the leader of Catholic Action, Ivan Guberiora. Another priest, Father Božidar Bralo, was appointed commander of the security office in Sarajevo, initiating anti-Jewish actions there, and yet another, Father Diomizije Juricev, announced in July 1942 that killing seven-year-old Jewish and Orthodox children is not a sin and is pleasing to the eye. God⁹⁹. However, as far as possible, the Archbishop of Zagreb tried to soften the Ustaše policy. Already in May 1941, after the first mass murders, he appealed to the country's authorities to relax their policy towards Serbs and Jews. In November 1941, Stepinac convened a synod of Croatian bishops, where the bishops unanimously condemned the acts of violence committed by the lower clergy¹⁰⁰. The possibility of officially admonishing the government was also prevented by the fact that Pavelić gained the support of Pope Pius XII, who, along with signing the concordat, gave Poglavnik his blessing for the re-Catholicization of the country. It took place during a ceremonial audience on May 18, 1941¹⁰¹. The archbishop himself, on the one hand, legitimized the Ustasha power as a representative of the entire Croatian church, a member of parliament and a military vicar, but on the other hand, he conducted extensive activities aimed at saving mainly Jews from the pogrom. The very support given by the Pope to the Ustasha gave them free hands to repress dissenters. Hence, he did not intervene when Archbishop Stepinac informed him about the questionable sincerity of almost 250,000 converts forced by the Franciscans to abandon their Orthodox faith. Moreover, it was the Franciscans who helped many Ustashes escape from the country at the end of the war, providing them with their monasteries as a hiding place. Even Pope Pius XII made the Vatican properties available as a refuge for many Ustaše who took an active part in extermination campaigns¹⁰². Archbishop Stepinac was arrested on May 17, 1945 by the authorities of socialist Yugoslavia. Only on September 30, 1946, was he brought to court. Accused of collaboration with the Germans, forced conversion to Catholicism and insulting the people's government¹⁰³ On October 11, he was sentenced to 16 years in prison and imprisoned in Lepoglava¹⁰⁴. After five years, the seriously ill priest was released from prison. However, he was banned from leaving his home



parish in Bezaric. Later, on January 12, 1952, he was elevated to the dignity of cardinal by Pope Pius XII, but he was never able to go to Rome to collect his cardinal's hat in person.¹⁰⁵ He died eight years later, on February 10, 1960. He was buried on February 13 in St. Mark's Cathedral in Zagreb¹⁰⁶. A week after the cardinal's death, Pope John XXIII personally celebrated mass for him, which was considered the beginning of the beatification process¹⁰⁷.

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- 98 S. Koper, Croatia..., p. 28.
99 M. Phayer, The Catholic Church and the Holocaust 1930-1965, Poznań 2011, p. 70.
100 J. Morley, Vatican Diplomacy and the Jews during the Holocaust 1939-1943, New York 1980, p. 151.
101 K. Deschner, And the cock crowed again..., p. 263.
102 There, p. 267.
103 S. Koper, Croatia..., p. 35.
104 M. Bunson, John Paul II's Book of Saints, Huntington 1999, pp. 90-92.
105 S. Koper, Croatia..., p. 35.
106 http://www.opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/T/TS/wieci/b_a_stepinac.html – accessed on June 10, 2012
107 S. Koper, Croatia..., p. 35.

On February 14, 1992, the parliament of the independent Republic of Croatia annulled the 1946 trial and symbolically rehabilitated the cardinal. On February 17, 1994, Pope John Paul II approved the decree on the cardinal's martyrdom, which involved recognizing him as blessed.¹⁰⁸ The beatification mass was celebrated by the Pope on October 3, 1998 at the Marija Bistrica sanctuary near Zagreb.¹⁰⁹ The act of beatification was supported by Croatians and Croatian Jews, who believed that the cardinal deserved such recognition due to his sacrifice in saving Jews during World War II¹¹⁰. However, the beatification process caused much controversy among dignitaries of the Roman Church and the Orthodox Church¹¹¹.

IV4 ATTITUDE TOWARDS SERBS

Serbs constituted 30% of the population of the Independent State of Croatia. The animosity between the representatives of both nations, which had been growing over the years, began to grow with the creation of the Croatian Banovina. A significant part of Serbs did not want to live in a region dominated by Croats.¹¹² This led to an escalation of the situation between the Ustasha movement and the local population. Additionally,

the situation was made worse by the emergence and commencement of activities by groups of Chetniks.¹¹³

Immediately after the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, officials associated with the party began to deliver speeches stigmatizing Serbs and presenting them as the greatest internal threat to the existence of the state, and pointing to the immediate need for their extermination or assimilation, which immediately led to the first persecution. Laws discriminating against Serbs were quickly introduced. The first victims were Serbian veterans of World War I living in Slavonia. On April 19, 1941, a law came into force allowing their land to be confiscated without compensation and exile outside the borders of the Independent State of Croatia.¹¹⁴ Shortly thereafter, a mass dismissal of Serbs from all public positions was carried out too they were forced to leave the northern part of Zagreb. Additionally, all Serbs remaining in the capital were banned from moving around myself around the city during the day and wearing an armband with the letter P, which was supposed to indicate Orthodox believers, and the use of the Cyrillic alphabet was banned. Interestingly, the order to wear the armband did not apply to Bulgarians, Romanians and Russians living in the Independent State of Croatia.¹¹⁵

The ambassador of the Third Reich, Siegfried Kasche, during a meeting with Slavko Kvaternik on June 4, 1941, provided the general with information about the resettlement plan from Styria to the territory of the Independent State of Croatia 300 thousands of Slovenians and 60 thousand Serbs, of which 4 thousand

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- 108 http://www.opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/T/TS/wieci/b_a_stepinac.html – accessed on June 10, 2012.
109 Such the delay was caused by the war between Serbia and Croatia in 1991-1995
110 S. Koper, Croatia..., p. 35.
111 <http://www.opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/P/PR/hi-era.html> – accessed on January 9, 2016.
112 K. Regan; *Serbian cultural club and Banovina Hrvatska*, [In:], *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Vol.40 No.2/2008, pp. 397-424
113 D. Zdravko, *Bjelovarski ustanak from 7 to 10 travnja 1941 [in:] Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Vol. 39 No. 3/2007, p. 606.
114 B. Begovic, Z. Mirković, *Pravni poredak Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, Beograd 2018, pp. 11-19.
115 *Hrvatski nation*, no. 85, 8. svibnja 1941



were to be Orthodox clergy with their families.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the Croats deported over 200,000 Serbs from their territory in 1941-1943.¹¹⁷

Simultaneously with deportation actions, they began mass extermination actions. One of the first extermination operations was carried out on April 28, 1941 in Gudovac near Bjelovar, where the Ustaše shot 190 Serbs. The next one was the murder in Glina, where Serbs were burned alive in an

Orthodox church. About 15 prominent Serbs from Banja Luka, including Bishop Platon Jovanovic, were arrested and shot in the city square on May 5, 1941. Soon after this event, the Ustaše began mass arrests of influential Serbs and interned them in camps scattered throughout the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. Most of them died in the Jadovno camp located in Lika. According to estimates, during the first two months of operation, 13,000 people died, which, compared to the 24,000 murdered in the Gospić-Velebit-Pag camp complex (which also included Jadovno), is a terrifying number.¹¹⁸

In the Donji Lapac district, the mass murder of Serbs began on July 1, with the shooting of 161 people in the village of Suvaja, 70 of whom were children under 15 years of age. The Ustaše spent the next two days in the village of Osredci, where they murdered 32 people. Also on July 3, 152 people were murdered in the village of Bujanj, of which 83 bodies were identified based on population censuses. Several more villages were completely burned down along with their inhabitants.¹¹⁹

The policy of terror led to growing resistance among local Serbs and led to the outbreak of the Serb uprising in Herzegovina on June 24. So-called *The Viddan Uprising was a reaction to the terror of the wild Ustaša. Both Serbs and people sympathizing with the communist party took part in the uprising. Three days later, the uprising spread to the Donji Lapac region. General Vladimir Laxa was delegated to suppress the uprising and fought the insurgents until the end of July 1941.*¹²⁰

In the spring of 1942, on the orders of the Third Reich, the policy of the Independent State of Croatia towards the Serbs was relaxed. In accordance with Berlin's demands, Serbs were allowed to take up military service in the troops of the Croatian state, and in the aviation legion, which was to be delegated to help the Third Reich. The families of Serbs who took up service were released from concentration camps and recognized as full residents of the Independent State of Croatia.

Moreover, to alleviate religious issues, a decision was made to establish the Croatian Orthodox Church.¹²¹ Moreover, officers of the Ustaša movement began to conclude agreements with individual units of Chetniks, who from then on were to support the Ustaša in the fight against the communists, in return receiving treatment, ammunition and protection.¹²²

IV5 ATTITUDE TOWARDS JEWS

116 A. Lisac, *Deportacije Srba iz Hrvatske 1941. godine* [in:] *Historic zbornik*, Zagreb 1956, p. 126. 117 T. Jonjić, *Hrvatska vanjska politika 1939-1942*, Zagreb, 2000, p. 5.

118 S. Goldstein, *1941.: godina koja se vraća*, Zagreb 2007, p. 240.

119 D. Delac, *Dan ustanka naroda Hrvatske. Savez antifašističkih boraca i antifašista Republike Hrvatske*, Zagreb 2012

<https://web.archive.org/web/20120617030857/http://hic.hr/hrvatsko-slovo/hrv-slovo170709.html> –

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November 5, 2021

121 N. Barić, *Položaj Srba u domobranstvu Nezavisne države Hrvatske, 1941. - 1945.*, [in:] *POLEMOS: časopis zainterdisciplinarna istraživanja rata i mira*, Vol.V No.9-10/2002, pp. 159-175.

122 J. Tomasevich, *War and revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: occupation and collaboration*, Stanford 2001

The first weeks of the existence of the Independent State of Croatia brought not only the confirmation of old Yugoslav anti-Semitic laws, but also the introduction of new laws aimed at the complete extermination of the Jewish community.¹²³ All Jewish property was confiscated and nationalized. Moreover, all people of Jewish origin were banned from working in the public service, and mass dismissals were carried out of those employed in the state administration, army and economy. Further, Jews were treated similarly to Serbs, depriving them of apartments in the heart of the capital. And at the turn of 1941 and 1942, the synagogue in Zagreb was demolished, and immediately afterwards, the demolition of synagogues in larger cities in Croatia was carried out.

Many Jews were detained and deported to concentration camps in Hungary and Poland, as well as to the Jasenovac camp. According to estimates, during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia, 20,000 Jews died in local



concentration camps and another 7,000 were sent to Auschwitz.¹²⁴

A certain exception among the countries allied with the Third Reich was the act introduced at the end of 1941 regarding *honorary Aryanism*. According to its content, the title of *honorary Aryan and the rights of Croats*. The title could be received for services to the Croatian cause made even before the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia.¹²⁵

All anti-Jewish laws were abolished a few days before Pavelić's escape from Zagreb, when control over the entire territory had already been lost.

IV6 ATTITUDE TOWARDS MUSLIMS

From the very beginning of their activity, the Ustaše considered Bosnian Muslims to be Croats who had lost their way on the path of faith.¹²⁶ With the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia and the annexation of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the theory began to be propagated that Bosnian Muslims were the purest part of the Croatian nation. The government itself has taken steps to spread awareness of Muslims' belonging to the Croatian nation. For this purpose, representatives of the Muslim faith, such as Mehmed Alajbegović, Hakija Hadžić, Osman Kulenović, Meho Mehičić and Hilmija Bešlagić, were appointed to the government as ministers. Moreover, the House of Artists in Zagreb was transformed into a mosque, and the square surrounding it was renamed Trg Kulina Bana.¹²⁷

VI. SUMMARY

As Trpimir Macan wrote: *The Ustaše were guided by the idea of creating a state, not the principles of fascism and national socialism. The Ustasha Movement did not develop into any ideological formation. It was neither fascist, nor national-socialist, nor communist, nor democratic.*

123 R. Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation: The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism, 1941-1945*, Pittsburgh 2013, p. 13.

124 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jasenovac#RelatedArticles> – accessed on November 5, 2021
125 J. Tomasevich, *War and revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: occupation and collaboration*, Stanford 2001

126 M. Barać, N. Kisić-Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam 1941. – 1945.*, [in:] *Migracijske i etničke teme* 26/2010, pp. 85-92.

127 http://daz.hr/salon_zagreb_33.htm – accessed on November 2, 2021

*Hence, the NDH was not a fascist or national socialist phenomenon, nor a work of German or Italian ideology. It was simply a state. It was created by the Croatian nation, which found itself in the whirlwind of events in 1941, and every opportunity had to be taken advantage of in the fight for the state. From the point of view of the Axis powers, the NDH was an accidental product of the war, and from the Croatian point of view - a logical implementation*¹²⁸.

It's hard to disagree with these words. The new Croatian state was created as a result of a coincidence of events. It was the result of a war that would have taken place anyway, if not within 20 years of the Pact of Compiegne, then later. If not because of the Third Reich, then it was Hungary or the Soviet Union that suffered the most. Nevertheless, World War II would have broken out anyway. For the Balkans, this was the only way to resolve the growing mutual animosity. The Croatian state proclaimed in 1918 would never have entered into a personal union with the Kingdom of Serbia if it were not for the extreme weakening and shortages of supplies left by the rule of Budapest, additionally strengthened by the quite controversial claims to Dalmatia made by the Italian Republic. If it were not for these claims, Croatia would probably remain independent and try to improve its condition on its own. However, the emerging threat from a state that had supported its previous opponents during the war was too high to try to maintain its independence on its own.

The Italians forcing Croatia into a union with Serbia would also not have led to the creation of the Ustasha movement and the state. totalitarian. Within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, each state was guaranteed equal status and rights. However, the situation changed after the death of King Peter Karadziorziewicz and the assumption of the throne by his son Alexander. Only the introduction of dictatorship by the monarch and the weakening of Croatia and Slovenia in favor of Serbia led to the fueling of local nationalism and radicalization of views among the inhabitants of other parts of the kingdom. The subsequent change in the name of the country, which deprived Croats of the right to their own name in the international arena, and the attack in Skupstina provoked by the royal services led to the creation of the Ustasha movement, which almost automatically became an emanation of the will of the nation. The will to return to the state before



December 1918 and the independence of Croatia, so much desired after six centuries of personal union with Hungary and almost two centuries of being a component part of the Kingdom of Hungary without its own estate representation¹²⁹.

From the beginning, the Ustasha movement was perceived by the majority of society as a group of people dissatisfied with the authorities and ready to fight them, either through propaganda or acts of terror. The situation began to change when soldiers led by Ante Pavelić entered Zagreb alongside the Wehrmacht. Although even then, most of the population was happy that the country was regained. The decline in support was brought about by the decisions of Poglavnik and his government aimed not only at Serbs, who were considered enemies, but also at Jews who had always lived in Croatia. Despite the radical solutions, it cannot be said with certainty that the Independent State of Croatia was intended to be a fascist state from the very

128 T. Macan, *NDH: Pristupi i dvojbe*, [in:] *Dizdar*, Tko je tko u NDH, Zagreb 1997.

129 From 1102, Croatia was in personal union with the Kingdom of Hungary. In 1799, Maria Theresa, as empress, removed Croatia's independence from the Hungarian kingdom, creating it into a banovina, deprived of its own council. It should also be mentioned here that under this law the government in Budapest began to pursue a radical policy of Magyarization - the use of Latin and Croatian languages in offices and schools was banned (they were previously equivalent to Hungarian as official languages in the Kingdom of Hungary).

beginning. It was supposed to be, above all, a state free from anyone's authority. Unfortunately, further history showed that at that time and in those conditions, full independence was impossible to achieve.

It was created in 1941 year *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, which stewards they stayed representatives fascist organization Ustaša, was reborn among Croats dreams about own country. After once first From 1102 year Croatia appeared myself on map as free country, With own government, army and policy. Independent Croatia existed But less than four years. IN May 1945 year Independent Country Croatian left buried by socialist dictator, would-be waiter Josip Broz about nickname *Tito*. *Tito* how typical dictator no endured opposition, and his heavy hand and brutal policy

she did some digging on long years all Balkan dreams about independence. Despite many times resembling about yourself traffic Ustasha, hard socialist policy covered hot temperaments Croats and Serbscoat socialist stagnation. End years sixties distance voice group reformers from Zagreb, who they accused authorities state about supporting Serbian domination and discrimination language Croatian.

November 1971 brought a student revolt at the University of Zagreb against discrimination against Croats. Students from other Yugoslav institutions quickly joined the Zagreb university. However, Broz reacted quickly. As befits a Croatian who does not tolerate resistance, he suppressed it himin the bud. At that time, members of the communist party began to make their voices heard, brought up in the spirit of Croatian nationalism, and who were to play the first fiddle in the reborn Croatia in the future. Only the death of the communist marshal in 1980 brought some relaxation. It marked the end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The lack of a firm hand and the economic crisis of the state did not cope with the resurgent Slavic nationalisms.

The end of the 1980s introduced Franjo Tuđman onto the political scene. A man who, at the age of nineteen, witnessed the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia, and from 1944 was a member of the communist partisans. For anti-government speeches, he was expelled from the party in 1971 and sentenced to two years in prison. Now, as chairman of the Croatian Democratic Community, an organization dedicated to awakening and promoting Croatian national consciousness, he was elected president of Croatia.

Year 1991 brought everything nations Balkan war. War born of nationalism and needs possession own, independent countries. Bloody clashes, which they allowed myself two From Always fighting about priority on Balkans countries, no Just led down destruction centuries old heritage cultural both countries, But also In shed behind nation and faith blood forged new order Peninsula Balkan. Order, which applies down day today. Even today choosing myself down Serbia or Croatia, countries Yes down myself similar, We can observe powerful antagonisms.

Down today inhabitant each With these countries strongly identifies myself That yours religion, That your own Language, down whose law many times was him received, and with Yes similar down myself colors national. Down today too on both nations stigma two the most tragic For this region wars. Croats no they forgave Serbs



destruction and slaughter accomplished In years 1991-1995. Serbs With railway, still they remember mass faces, which have done army Independent countries Croatian. and All shows, That Yes strongly roote dantagonisms no allow down changes this state still By many years.

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